



DIVERSIFICATION INTO AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AS A PANACEA TO THE PROBLEMS OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN NORTHWESTERN NIGERIA. A CASE STUDY OF KANO STATE

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Abstract;

The aim of the study is to examine the effect of diversification into agricultural production as a panacea to the problem of unemployment in northwestern Nigeria. Using simple statistical analysis, result of the study have indicated a negative and significant relationship between agricultural production and unemployment rate from the year 2015 to 2020. The study recommends that government in Nigeria should improve on mobilization of people to understand and harness the processes of diversification. It should also try to improve and provide more infrastructural facilities such as power supply, markets, roads, seaports, airports, etc to help in easy movement of goods and services.

Keywords: *Diversification, Agricultural, Production, Problems, Unemployment.*

Introduction

Economic diversification is a way to change the economy in such away that it escaped from using only one sector as source of revenue and in order to create other sources of income which will come from the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, comprising greater part of the population. There are many advantages accrued to diversification strategies to the economic performance of any nation especially the developing countries like Nigeria.

- It helps to reduce the level of risk involved in relying on a single sector.
- It explore other potentialities involved in other sectors.
- It leads the economy to a more sustainable direction.

As a matter of fact economic diversification has been advocated since long time in the development plans of many countries. In Nigeria, today about 33% of its

population are affected by abject poverty, despite the country's huge wealth in fossil fuel (Chukwuma 2018). It is also observed that oil which would suppose to be a great blessing to Nigeria has become a way to shift the attention of people to oil wealth and total neglects of other sectors like solid minerals and agriculture. Maria in Chukwuma et al. Prior to the discovery of oil in Nigeria agriculture is main leading provider of employment to the people and revenue generation to the government. The attention was drastically shifted from agriculture to the oil sector where very little employment opportunities is involved compared to agriculture. This has resulted into massive unemployment and decline of all other sectors progressively due to the decline in agricultural sector. The same problem is applicable to solid minerals sector which in those days also contributes heavenly to the survival of Nigerian economy.

The oil sector in Nigeria has been in a serious problem such as price volatility, mismanagement, corruption, international oil shocks, politics etc this make the economy to fall into dysfunction and crises arose, consequent upon this, there have been suggestion and calls by experts and other stake holders to diversify the economy. The federal government of Nigeria decided to diversify the economy through its agencies which become very necessary. In line with this, the government of Nigeria has put into action the following initiatives in agricultural sector since 2015. Moreover, according to the news letter published by the presidency of digital engagement (PODE) on Monday April, 23 2015; the listed initiatives are i. Anchor borrowers program, ii. fertilizer initiative, iii. food security council, iv. presidential economic diversification initiative (PEDI) supporting the revival of failed industries (especially in agro processing) facilitating new investments, reducing regulatory problems and enabling access to credit facilities at a cheaper rate. Our major concern in this research is the rice production to evaluate the effect of diversification strategies and how it solve the problem of unemployment in the northwestern Nigeria.

Northwestern Nigeria has wasted its opportunity to develop despite its huge prospects in agriculture, mining industrialization and tourism as well as the abandoned human resources characterized by 70% of youth in which majority of them are unemployed or under employed. The economy of the northwestern Nigeria has depended on the oil revenue which come from the central government over the years. Majority of the people who lived in object poverty in Nigeria are from the northern geographical zone of Nigeria due to the prevalence of un-employment and low of income. Diversification become very necessary for Nigeria in general. In light of her voluminous challenges. It will also be of great benefit to the people especially those at northern part of Nigeria to maximize and utilize its huge deposit of abandon human and material resources and to rebuild an economy and exercise the benefits among which are

reduction of un-employment, reduction of poverty and reduction of insurgency. Other benefits are as follows development of technology, attraction of foreign investment, economies of scale, development of human capital raise national competitiveness and raise the standard of living.

Diversification however can not be possible without an enabling environment that will make it possible. The major areas of potentials for diversification are agriculture mining, industries and tourism in a mode of economic growth and development diversification of an economy requires to be done through agriculture, entertainment, information and communication technology, financial services, tourism e.t.c it is worthy however, to note that circumstance specifically affiliated to the area must be considered as such. Agriculture is considered to be imperative in the northwestern Nigeria.

Justification of the study:-

The problem of total reliance on oil sector as a means of revenue generation has made the sector to be infected by many debilitating problems as such, the whole economy in dwindling in addition to social unrest. Diversification has now become so important in Nigeria. There is need for research studies by scholars, academics and other experts in this area to assess, corroborate and contribute to this great project.

More over, many researches has been done in this area but, most of them concentrate on how and why to diversify the economy however, this research will deliberate on the effects or consequences of those various economics diversification strategies toward solving the problem of unemployment which is prevalent in northwestern Nigeria..

Research Objectives:-

The research aim at examining the effects of various diversification strategies such as in agriculture toward reducing unemployment in northwestern Nigeria. Other specific objective is;

1. To examine the impact of diversification into agricultural production on the provision of employment and reduction of un employment, in the northwestern Nigeria.

Research questions;

1. To what extent diversification into agricultural production impacted on the problem of un employment in northwestern Nigeria?
2. To What extent diversification into the agricultural production reduce the problem of un employment in northwestern Nigeria?

Research hypothesis;

HO1. Diversification into agricultural production has no any impact on the problem of unemployment and insurgency/banditry in northern Nigeria.

HO2; Diversification into non oil mineral production has no any impact on the problem of un employment and insurgency/banditry in northern Nigeria.

Literature Review

Contextual Review

The Nigerian economy has relationship with its foreign policies, natural resources and other sectors (Tourism, Health, Manufacturing, Agriculture, Aviation, Education etc.). Each of the sectors play greater role to the economy according to government efforts and developmental interest in the sector. Nigeria if not of recent depends solely on oil sector to earn revenue and is one of the largest producers of oil in Africa with a maximum production capacity of 2.5 billion barrel a day. Ojo (2018) states that the country boost of 28.2 billion barrels of crude oil reserves and total proven gas of 165 trillion standard cubic feet (scf), including 75.4 trillion standard cubic feet (scf) of non-associated gas. The level of revenue that accrued from the oil sector made Nigeria government to rely on the oil sector for future and resent revenue generation to the detriment of other sectors of the economy. Prior to the discovery of oil, Nigeria was largely dependent on non-oil products such as agriculture, manufacturing and mineral resources. Statistics shows that agriculture sectors contribute about 95% to her foreign exchange before oil sector boom. Oil sector's total revenue was 54.4% in 1972, as against 45.6% share from non-oil sector in the same year and 82.19% in 1974. then in 1978 and 2018 total revenue fall to 61.8%. Since 1984, the oil sector share in total revenue has continued to rise, though with occasional falls in between periods (CBN, 2017). According to CBN report (2018), Nigeria has experienced increasing revenue generation from the oil sector that supposedly have been plough into productive ventures, but the economy is still characterized with high rate of unemployment of 14.2% and 18.8%; high rate of inflation of 18.7% high interest rate of 22.42% and 22.61% in 2017 and 2018 respectively. Sunusi (2003) concluded that Nigerian economy over dependence on the oil sector has made her susceptible to fluctuation, making diversification of a paramount concern.

Un employment rate in Nigeria have increased from 11.92 to 15.99 million in the year 2017, out of this figure the larger portion of it is aggravated to the northern Nigeria because of its fragile situation and due to its educational, infrastructural and economic in adequacies.

Before the year 2009 there are indications (historically) of some elements of insurgency which took place in some parts of northern Nigeria for instance, the

maitatsine riot in Kano, Borno, Gombe and Adamawa states but the most recent insurgency began with Boko Haram breaking out in 2009 where they started as armed rebels against the government of Nigeria.

Banditry in Nigeria however, can be traced back to the time before the civil war when government collapsed in some certain parts of the country resulting in political violence, criminal insurgency. Currently in the northern Nigeria, the activities of Bandits is increasing and the nature of their activities ranges from kidnapping to armed robbery, cattle rustling, rape, murder etc. They engaged in moving into forests and to the neighboring places riding on fast moving motor cycles in the nights and sometimes in the after noon heavenly armed. They mostly carry out their activities in the absence of security personnel or at a weakpoint of security. Many people were victimized in this act.

Theoretical Review

This study is based on Markowitz (1959) theory of diversification of financial assets. The theory described diversification as a strategy that seeks to combine a portfolio of assets with returns that are less than perfectly positively correlated in an effort to lower risk (various) without sacrificing returns. Conroy (1974, 1975) theoretical approach to economic diversification was linked to Markowitz's theory of diversification of financial assets. In this theory, a single sector is considered as an individual regional investment and collective sectors is considered a portfolio of investments. The relationship between risk (economic instability) and expected returns (employment, income, outputs) could be termed as a regional economy with a portfolio of sectors. In this context, economic diversification aims to reduce instability in aggregate income, output and employment (return) to the region by allocating resources to the portfolio of sectors. An economy with a lower standard deviation (risk) indicates a more diversified economy (Wundt, 1972). In economic diversification, portfolio of sectors, their resources and returns are pooled together to reduce the risk and achieve more and better returns for sustainable economic growth and development. According to Freive (2017) economic diversification is very relevant for poorer developing countries to create jobs and foster economic development. The chart in panel A and B 1 below shows how a nation moved away from mono-economy to economic diversification into various sectors of the economy. The flow from economic diversification to economic growth and development and from economic growth/development to economic diversification is a causal relationship. The process has a relative effect on the economic aggregates such as employment, political and social stability. This indicates that diversification leads to economic growth and

development and that economic growth and development requires economic diversification. Also, a flow from mono economy leads to economic stagnation.

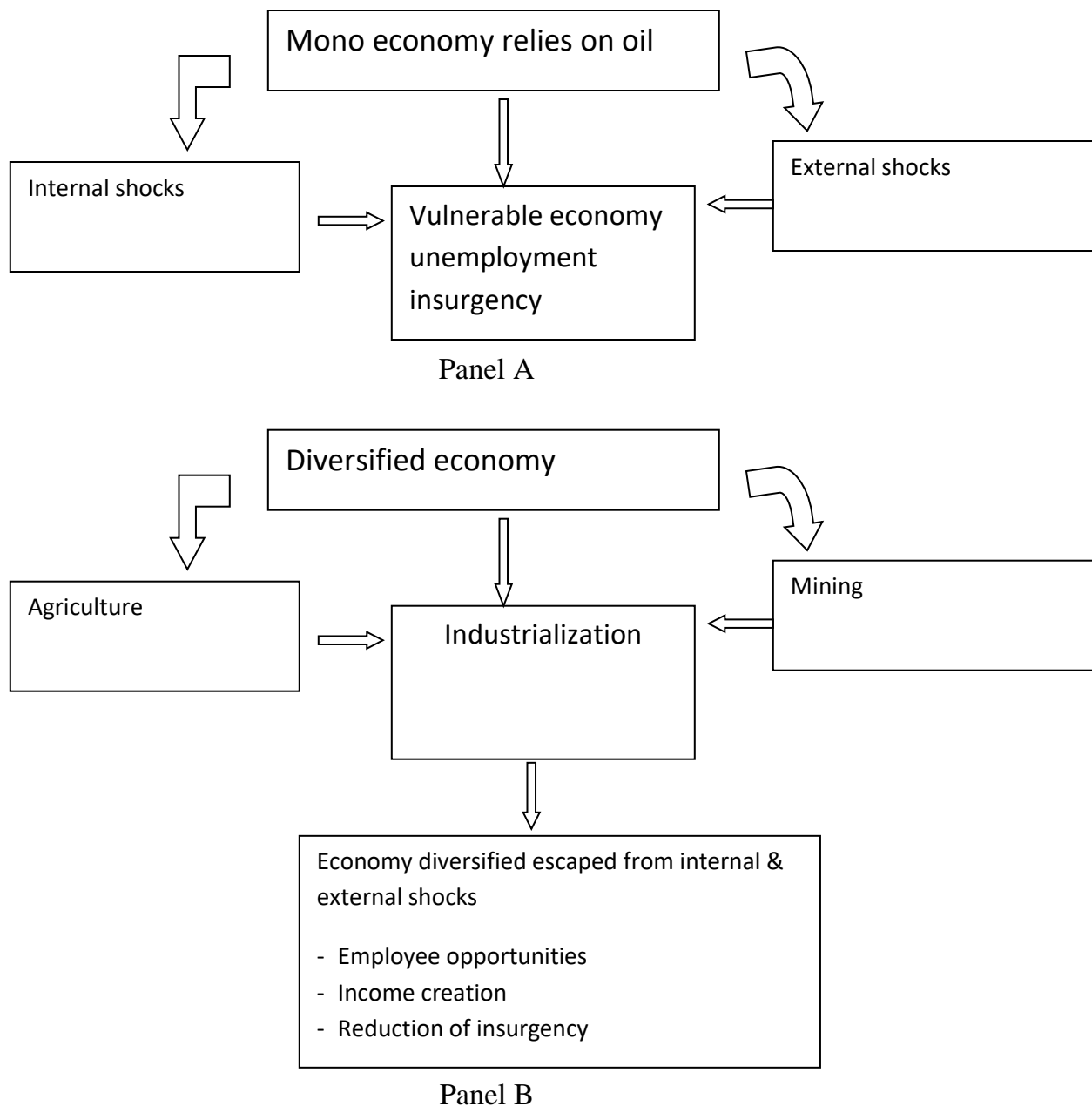


Figure I (Table I) showing hand diversification will improve the situation of in employment and insurgency.

Source: Sunday ethoetal in Suberu, Ajela, Akande

Role of agriculture in provision of employment in the northwestern Nigeria

For long period of time, agriculture has been the back born of numerous economies globally. It is clearly that throughout the world growth and development of their economy is connected to the development in agriculture. In Nigeria for instance and particularly in the northern part, agriculture is the source of income as a provider of food and revenue to the government before the discovery of oil in the 70s. the following are some of the ways how diversification in agriculture will enhance employment opportunities in the northern Nigeria.

According to research due. Com (2020) agriculture is fundamentally significant in guaranteeing food and nutritional security enhancing industrialization and provision of internally generated revenue to the government. Moreover, agriculture provides significant source of employment in most developing countries including Nigeria. It represents the 25% of the work pound in Brazil, 32% in Egypt 2.7% in Israel and 70% in Nigeria (research due.com) Therefore, the importance of agriculture in creating employment and establishing a sustainable economy can not be over emphasized. Infact it is evidently shown by Okuneye 1995 in research due.com show that in the northern Nigeria small scale farmers dominate the production scene and produce 85% of total production. The farmers at small scale rely mostly on agricultural labour market next to zero types of investment funds or storage facilities

Empirical Review

There are a lot of empirical studies on diversification. Olure-Bank (2015) studied on the diversification of the Nigerian economy towards a sustainable growth and economic development, using descriptive method of analysis. The finding of the study was that, there is urgent need to diversity Nigerian economy through Agriculture. The researcher recommended innovation as a sensible and durable way to sustain Nigerians economy. Kaya, (2019), developed a theoretical model to analyze whether a reenter state can diversity its economy away from the rent revenue and hence sustain the economic development and preserve the status-quo. The findings of the research indicated that a reenter state can achieve an optimal level of economic diversification provided that the conditions stated in the findings are met even without a political change. Adams O.K (2016) opined that, there is an urgent need for the diversification of the

Nigeria economy into the agricultural sector in order to have an economy that looks solid in nature through improvements of all its sectors. The study of Adams O.K (2016) further shows that, there exist a positive relationship between economic growth in Nigeria and diversification into the agricultural sector, this studies also try to show how diversification enhance stable and viable economic growth and development in Nigeria.

Abouchakra, (2005) studied on economic diversification as a way to sustainable development using explanatory and descriptive research designs to make analysis. The findings confirmed a positive link between economic diversity and sustainability, and that economic diversification can reduce a nation's economic volatility and increase its real activity performance. Again, they discovered that, there are metrics that policy makers can use to measure these key economic dimensions and ways that they can promote their nation's long-term economic health and stability. Ovwororo A (2017) using Pearson R correlation technique and using data analysis of simple statistical tools of measures of central tendency sections mean, it is found that diversification of Nigerian economy through entrepreneurship development despite the uncountable number of problems and challenges such as poor access to loan facility over taxation, inadequate infrastructures e.t.c.

The World Bank (2018) carried out research on how to strengthen economic diversification in Nigeria through connectivity using explanatory descriptive research design to draw conclusions. The result of the finding posits that with large population and growing middle class, Nigeria's big home markets are constrained by limited connective infrastructure thereby reducing the ability to reach wider markets. The lack of connectivity also dampens regions and this further hamper the prospects for poverty reduction. In other to stimulate diversified long-term growth, the report suggests that the country would initiate policies that will promote spatial integration and sub-national specialization which will help to create a nationally integrated market for goods and services and also attract much needed private investment Joshua, Happy and Dankumo (2016) have shows a positive and significant relationship between agricultural non oil out put, production and telecommunication and growth in G.D.P of non oil sectors, while manufacturing negatively though significant to the GDP in Nigeria.

Owan, Ndibe, V. and Anyanwu (2020) have studied on diversification and economic growth in Nigeria; result of their study have shown that non oil gross domestic product have impacted positively and significantly on economic growth, while rate of exchange had an inverse but significant relation economic growth in Nigeria. The study covers a period from 1981 – 2016.

Olure, Adeyinka. and Salako. (2016) have investigated the impact of the non oil mining export to the growth of Nigeria an economy to be specific the mining sector has a positive and significant impact on the growth and development of the Nigeria economy.

How diversification into agriculture reduce the problem of unemployment and insurgency/banditry in northern Nigeria

From the causes of insurgency/banditry, unemployment is one of the reasons why the youth in the north are involved in the act. When diversification in agriculture and non oil mining is done properly, most of our younger people will be employed into farms and mining areas, where they will be engaged. According to Musa 2020 a young man work is paid an amount between ₦1500 to ₦2500 on average daily basis for those who work in a farm, for those in rice milling, the amount depends on the work capacity of the milling machine but no matter how small of its capacity, a minimum average of ₦30000 per month and per person is made as workers salary in northern Nigeria which is equivalent to the public sector minimum wage. Similarly, the non oil mining, there is no clear amount as daily weekly or monthly payment of the workers due to the nature of the work. In this area sometimes the workers own the enterprises and their rewards depends on what they excavated out from the ground using simple tools or sophisticated and the quality, preciousness and quantity of the material obtained but, it is more lucrative, financially sound than in agriculture.

Similarly, the provision of employment opportunities by agriculture and non oil mining in the north will help the poor youth of the north east (Boko Haram), to north west (Bandits) and north central (Herders) to be free from poverty and become fairly improved economically. Many crops are grown in this area and large size of land is cultivated, as such diversification in agriculture have resulted in establishment of rent farmers and reinforcement of the existing ones. Because of consumer preference, rice consumption is increasing in the northern Nigeria and makes rice to become a staple food across every community in this

area. Nigeria rice production rose from less than 2.1 million on the metric tons in 2015 to 3.7 million metric tons in 2017 to 4.0 million metric tons in 2018 (Kamal Omoigui, Kamara and Ekeleme 2020). From these figures about 80 – 85% of the rice produced comes from northern Nigeria. This requires more resources into the cultivation of rice to be specific, the human resources. New rice mills are established at both large, medium and small scales which provide employment opportunities. According to rice farmers association of Nigeria (RIFAN) there is over 25,000 rice mills in northern Nigeria of both small and large scale. In addition, over 12.5 million people are engaged in rice farming and processing in northern Nigeria. This actively has employed the teeming youth.

Similarly, the issue of herders farmers crises can be resolved by re-organizing farmers and herdsmen to have a cordial business relationship by exchanging their output under negotiation upon the farmers to sell their residual to the cattle herders in exchange of their animal dung that serve as means to fertilizing the farms. On the side of non oil mining, instead of retiring and displacing the illegal miners which is done in the year 2009 and consolidated up to the year 2020, and which contributes to insurgency. With diversification the illegal miners are re-organized formalized, to be legal and other fresh people are recruited into the enterprise. Diversification into the system will help to bring more ideas, skills and other techniques to boost non oil mining in all the areas concern in northern Nigeria. This can attract our unemployed youth to be engaged into the system so as to be employed by the miners or themselves as self employed

METHODOLOGY

The data used in this research is purely secondary type because of the insecurity involved in northern Nigeria it is a pool panel data. The data consist of variables such as general GDP, non oil GDP, unemployment rate, internally generated revenue (IGR) of all the effected northern states of Nigeria and for the period of 3 years starting from January 2015 to December 2018 (36 months). The data is collected from the C.B.N office of bureau of statistics.

Population

The population of the study comprises of all the population of northern Nigeria which consist of 19 states and the federal capital Abuja (FCT). The sample size

is derived from the total population. Purposive sampling techniques are involved in the selection, where sample is selected based on the areas for the purposes of involvement in Agricultural diversification and non oil mineral production in northern Nigeria. Emphasis is made on 10 out of 19 states for agricultural diversification and only 3 states of non oil mineral production for the purpose of this research. Already farmers groups of 25 members were made prior to the study under farmers cooperative. The 25 members each farmers group in 10 local government areas from 10 states selected are the sample size. There fore the sample size is 2500 people from the agriculturalrelated farmers cooperatives selected. In the non oil mining side, the registered miners associations are considered from 5 northern states where mining activities effectively takes place. Already there are miners cooperatives of 50 members each, 3 of them will be considered from each state making a total of 750 miners.

Research Design

The design adapted in this research is qualitative research design due to its suitability to the purpose of the study and has been used by many researchers such as Olure A.M 2016, Grace O.E. 2016, Uzonwanne 2015 and Amaka M.G 2018.

Model Specification:-

To apply the ordinary least square and regression models to test the hypothesis. In addition factor analysis will be used to analyze the data collected.

Research Findings;The following table revealed rice production level at dry and wet seasons in 20 local government areas of Kano state from 2015 to 2020.

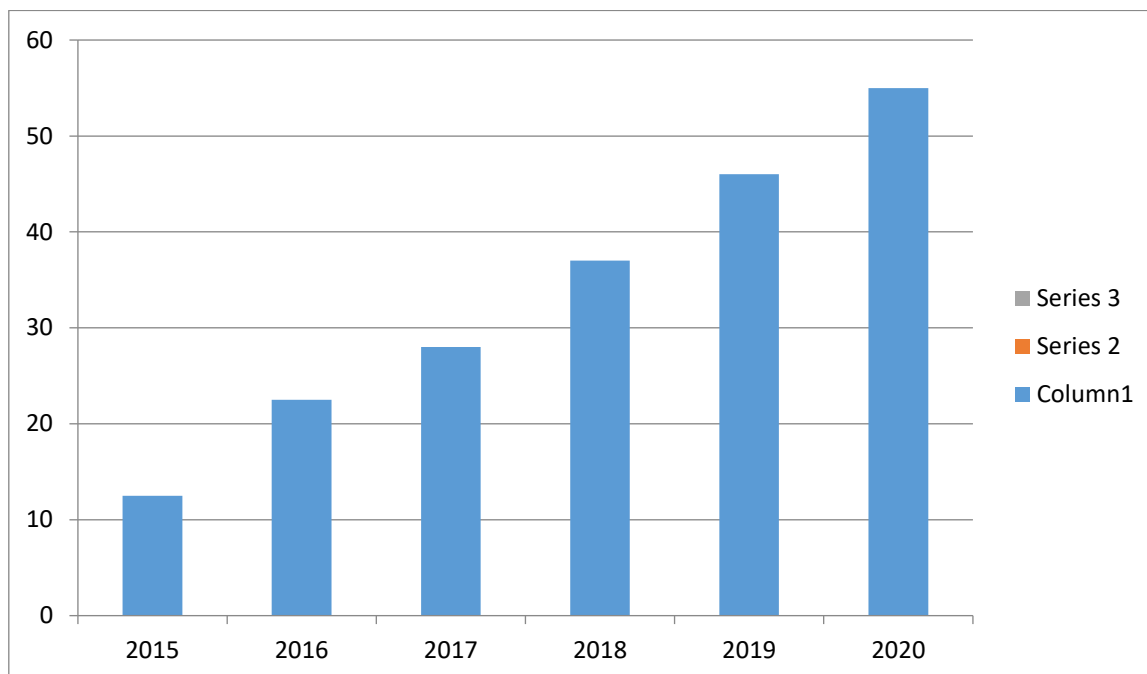
NAME OF L.G	YEAR PRODUCED	QUANTITY IN METRIC TONS	NAME OF L.G	YEAR PRODUCED	QUANTITY IN METRIC TONS
Kura	2015	2,000	Sumaila	2015	900
	2016	3,000		2016	1000
	2017	3,000		2017	500
	2018	4,000		2018	1500
	2019	4,000		2019	2,000

	2020	4,000		2020	3,000
GarinMal am	2015	800	Gabasa wa	2015	560
	2016	1,000		2016	700
	2017	1,500		2017	900
	2018	2,000		2018	1200
	2019	2,100		2019	2000
	2020	3,300		2020	3000
T/wada	2015	1,000	Shanon o	2015	600
	2016	1500		2016	650
	2017	2000		2017	700
	2018	2000		2018	1000
	2019	2400		2019	1500
	2020	2000		2020	2,000
Doguwa	2015	600	Garko	2015	800
	2016	800		2016	900
	2017	1600		2017	1200
	2018	2,000		2018	1500
	2019	2,700		2019	2,000
	2020	3,000		2020	2500
Kumbotso	2015	250	Ungogo	2015	250
	2016	600		2016	400
	2017	1,000		2017	1000
	2018	1800		2018	1200
	2019	2000		2019	1500
	2020	2100		2020	1800
Kiru	2015	800	Kabo	2015	300
	2016	1500		2016	400
	2017	2500		2017	700
	2018	3,000		2018	1000
	2019	3,000		2019	1200
	2020	3500		2020	2000
Tofa	2015	250	Warawa	2015	500
	2016	500		2016	1000
	2017	700		2017	1000
	2018	1200		2018	2000

	2019	1500		2019	3000
	2020	2000		2020	3200
d/tofa	2015	500	Kunchi	2015	700
	2016	700		2016	1000
	2017	780		2017	1500
	2018	1200		2018	1800
	2019	2000		2019	2000
	2020	2100		2020	2500
d/kudu	2015	500	Karaye	2015	1000
	2016	800		2016	1500
	2017	1000		2017	2000
	2018	1500		2018	2200
	2019	1800		2019	2800
	2020	2000		2020	3000
Gwarzo	2015	800	Bichi	2015	200
	2016	1500		2016	700
	2017	2000		2017	1000
	2018	2100		2018	1200
	2019	2300		2019	1500
	2020	3000		2020	1800

The table below shows the trend of Kano state in the production of paddy rice within 20 local governments at a cumulative frequency level from the year 2015 to 2020.

Years x	Frequency	Cf
2015	13,410 Mt	-
2016	21,400 Mt	34,810mt
2017	28,780 mt	63,590mt
2018	35,400mt	98,990mt
2019	45,300 mt	144,290mt
2020	52,800 mt	197,090mt
	197,090 mt	



The findings of this research shows a significant and negative relationship between non oil GDP and unemployment rate in northern Nigeria however positive and significant relationship is detected between non oil GDP and non oil mining GDP in northern Nigeria after all the preliminary tests of multi coloniarity and hereroscadercity. Again a negative and significant relation ship is recorded between diversification into agriculture and insurgency/banditry in northern Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the study findings diversification in to agricultural production especially rice production and processing will help to reduce the problem of unemployment of youth in northern Nigeria despite the fact that the type of unemployment in this area is more of cyclical and hence GDP of non oil have a negative but significant relationship with unemployment rate. Non oil mining however will also generate more employment opportunities especially in Zamfara and Niger states where the illegal miners were displaced and culminated into banditry, the mass agricultural production will also offer solution to the herders and farmers crises because, there will be an exchange of animal feeds to the herders and money or animal dung to the farmers under a

seriously organized system such as in Kano and Jigawa areas. This will help to reduce the problem of poverty among people in the northern Nigeria.

Recommendations

- Government should provide more ways of enhancing diversification into agriculture and non oil mining in northern Nigeria.
- It should also provide more infrastructural facilities such as roads, power supply, security e.t.c. in order to increase productivity and easy access to markets, sea parts, air ports e.t.c. in this part of Nigeria

Government should increase its various ways of mobilization of the people in this geographical zone through education and learning schools, media houses and other learning centers to understand the meaning and importance of diversification for economic growth and development.

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