N-POWER PROGRAMME AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN AKWA IBOM STATE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT
This paper is a comparative analysis of the N-Power programme and unemployment in Akwa Ibom State. The study compares unemployment rate in the state before N-Power (2005- 2015) and during N-Power (2016 – 2018Q3). Trend analysis was adopted and the average unemployment for the two periods were compared. The average unemployment before the N-Power programme stood at 22.23% while that during N-power programme stood at 33.45%. This shows that unemployment has still been on the increase in Akwa Ibom despite the adoption of the N-Power programme across states in the federation. To further proof this, the Student's t-test was employed and the result shows that there is no significant difference between unemployment before N-Power and unemployment during N-Power in Akwa Ibom State. It was therefore recommended that efforts geared towards long-term employment in the state should be adopted rather than short-term empowerment programmes. Also, beneficiaries of the N-Power should be made to stay on the programme until they find paid employment rather than laying them off after two years to join the mass unemployed paupers.
**Keywords:** Unemployment, Skill Acquisition, N-Power, Programmes

INTRODUCTION
In an attempt to reduce unemployment in Nigeria, government over the year has made efforts aimed at youth empowerment/employment. Some of these attempts include: National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Economic Employment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), Open Apprenticeship Programme (OAP), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Subsidy Re-Investment Programme (SURE-P) and Youth Enterprise and Innovation in Nigeria (YouWin). However, it is on record that the interventions highlighted above have failed to substantially reduce youth unemployment in the country (Umar, 2016). Such development is attributed to factors such as lack of clear cut policy framework and national strategy to combat unemployment, non-sustainability/continuity of programme and frequent changes in philosophy, poor/inadequate budgetary provision, lack of coordination, and weak monitoring and evaluation (Bashir, John, and Mbaga, 2017). Despite these programmes, unemployment has been on the increase in Akwa Ibom State. Recent statistics put the unemployment figure of the state at 37.7% in the third quarter of 2018 and under employment rate of 20.1% of which it is the highest throughout the country (NBS, 2018). Rivers was the second highest reported unemployment rate with 36.4% followed by Bayelsa with 32.6%. Also, Abia recorded 31.6% and Borno reported 31.4% unemployment rate in the quarter under review. The report further states that the top five states with the highest unemployed population were Rivers (1,673,991), Akwa Ibom (1,357,754), Kano (1,257,130), Lagos (1,088,352) and Kaduna with (940,480).

Figure 1: Unemployment by States in third quarter of 2018
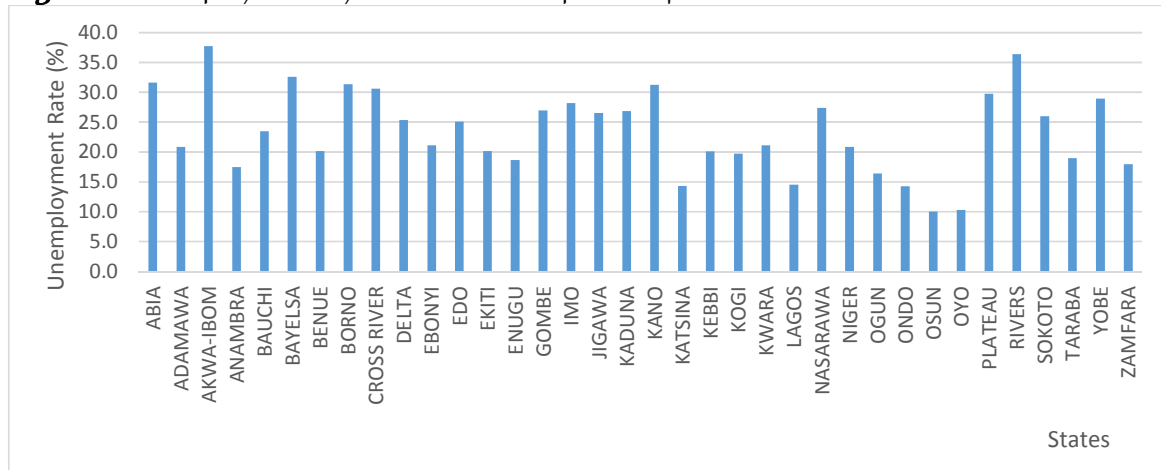
Source: Author Computation

A key surprising issue here is that states such as Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Bayelsa and Cross Rivers who are endowed with abundant natural resources and huge allocation from the federal government are noted for high unemployment in the country. Kudos to Osun and Oyo states which are observed to have the least unemployment rate of 10.1% and 10.3% respectively. Unemployment in Akwa Ibom State over the years has been on a rising trend. This is coupled with high poverty in the state of which it is a sugary condition for crimes to thrive if the situation is not handled properly.

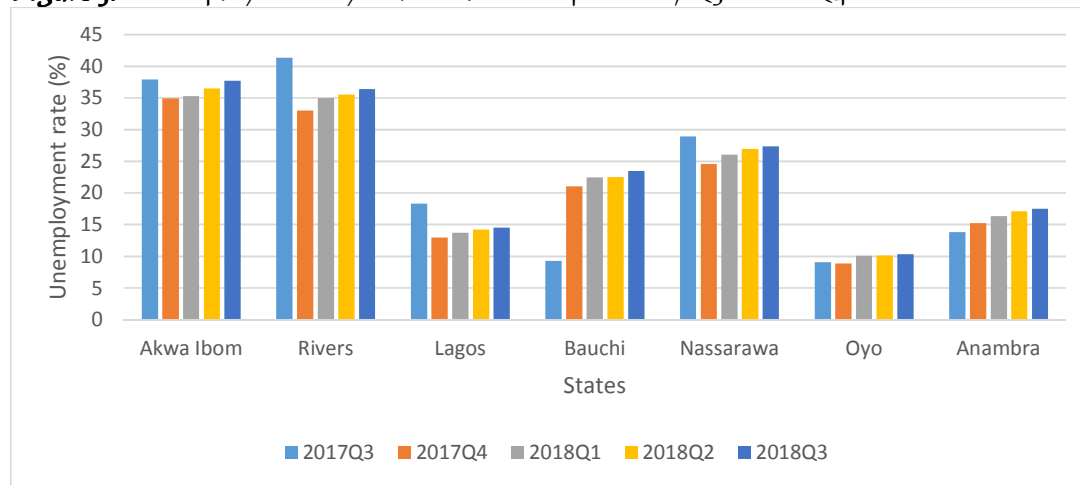**Figure 2:** Trend of Unemployment in AKwa Ibom State
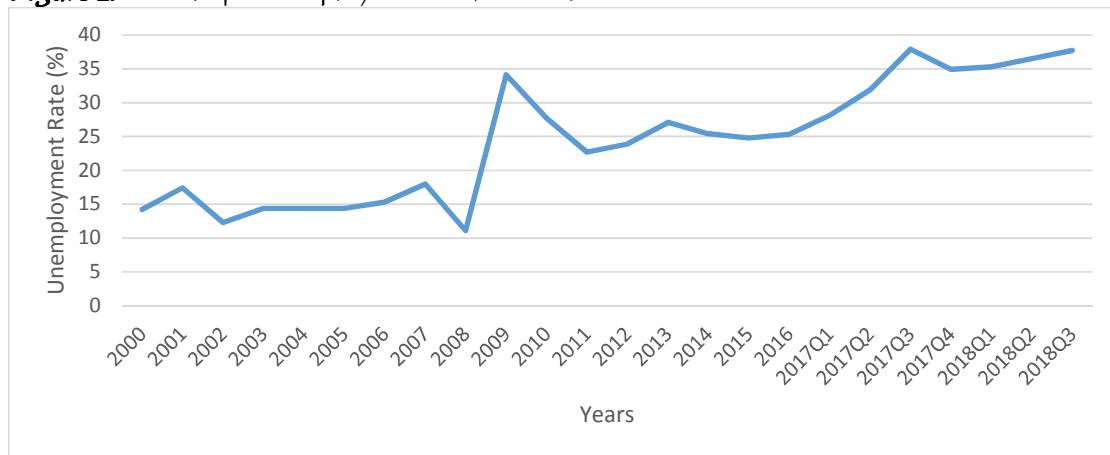
Source: Author Computation
A cross-state comparison shows that unemployment in the South-South has been at the highest level so far.

Figure 3: Unemployment by Selected States from 2017Q3 – 2018Q4

Source: Author Computation

It is observed from figure 2 above that unemployment rate in the South – South States has been on the highest levels (Akwa Ibom and Rivers) while the South – West experiences the least unemployment rate (Oyo, and Lagos). Also, the North Central (Nassarawa) experiences unemployment rate far above that of the North – East (Bauchi) over the review period. The Federal Government of Nigeria recently in June, 2016 officially launched a new programme called N-Power which is explicitly designed to drastically reduce youth unemployment; providing young graduate and non-graduate with skills, tools and livelihood to enable them advance from unemployment to employment; and to promote entrepreneurship and innovation (Bashir, John, and Mbaga, 2017). The first phase of N-Power beneficiaries will target Nigeria's critical needs in Education, Health, Agriculture, Technology, Creative construction and artisanal industries. Generally, the programme is an intervention to directly improve the livelihood of a critical mass of young unemployed Nigerians. (FGN, 2016). The programme is segmented into N-power Teachers (Graduates), N-Power Knowledge (Non-graduates), and N-Power Build (Non-graduates). Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development of any great nation. Despite the current high level of unemployment, harnessing Nigeria's young demography through appropriate skill development efforts provides an opportunity to achieve inclusion and productivity within the country. Large-scale skill development is the main policy thrust of the N-Power Programme (FGN, 2016).

Analysis of unemployment in Akwa Ibom State indicates that unemployment is rapidly growing. From 2000 to 2004 unemployment averaged 14.54 indicating a 1.41% increase within the period. Similarly, for the period 2012 to 2016 unemployment averaged 25.3 which is a 78.17% increase from 2000 to 2016. The population of unemployed has been increasing over the years. Public policies directed at addressing unemployment have faced different challenges including finance, the absence of good administration and implementation, inconsistent policies, unimpressive responses from would-be trainees, and unqualified

resource personnel handling the training programs. Programs that were expected to be successful but did not meet those expectations were those created in the 1980s and have not drastically improved in spite of modifications over the years. For example, the National Accelerated Poverty Reduction Program (NAPEP) was too big for its meagre budgetary allocation over the years. Many of the available funds for the program went to overhead and administrative costs in offices spread over the entire country, limiting its impact. Similarly, the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) had no openings of its own to engage unemployed youth, providing only vocational training to young school leavers. There have been insufficient funds to provide start-off capital for the youth who complete their training. It is against this background that this paper intends to examine the influence of N-Power programme in tackling unemployment in Akwa Ibom State. In doing this, the paper compares unemployment in the state before the advent of N-power and unemployment during the N-power programme. The paper is divided into five sections. Section 1 introduces the paper while section 2 captures the literature review. Section 3 deals with the methodology employed in this paper while section 5 captures conclusion and recommendations.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Conceptual Clarifications
N-Power

N-Power is a youth empowerment scheme sponsored by the Federal Government of Nigeria. N-Power addresses the challenge of youth unemployment by providing a structure for large-scale and relevant work skills acquisition and development while linking its core and outcomes to fixing inadequate public services and stimulating the larger economy. N-Power aspires to provide a platform where most Nigerians can access skills acquisition and development. N-Power is designed for Nigerian citizens between the ages of 18 and 35. The modular programmes under N-Power will ensure that each participant will learn and practice most of what is necessary to find or create work (FGN, 2018). The N-Power programmes are broadly categorized into two broad categories: N-Power Graduate Categories and N-Power Non-Graduate Categories. The N-Power Graduate category also known as N-Power Volunteer Corps is the post-tertiary engagement initiative for Nigerians between 18 and 35. It is a paid volunteering programme of a 2-year duration. The graduates will undertake their primary tasks in identified public services within their proximate communities. All N-Power Volunteers are entitled to computing devices that will contain information necessary for their specific engagement, as well as information for their continuous training and development. N-Power volunteers provide teaching, instructional, and advisory solutions in 4 key areas which include:

i.   N-Power Agro: N-Power Agro Volunteers will provide advisory services to farmers across the country. They will disseminate the knowledge that has been aggregated by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in the area of extension services.

ii.   N-Power Health: N-Power Health Volunteers will help improve and promote preventive healthcare in their communities to vulnerable members of the society including pregnant women and children and to families and individuals.

iii.   N-Power Teach: N-Power Teach Volunteers will help improve basic education delivery in Nigeria. N-Power Teach Volunteers will be deployed as teacher assistants in primary schools around Nigeria.

iv.   N-Power Tax: N-Power volunteers will be selected to work as Community Tax Liaison Officers to work in their states of residence with the state's tax authorities. The N-Power community tax liaison officers will have responsibilities which will include answering online inquiries, customer management, creating awareness of tax compliance (FGN, 2016).

The N-Power Non-Graduate category is designed to train and empower non-graduates with skills that they can use for the betterment of themselves and the economy at large. The programme offers training and certification programme for all successful candidates.

The N-Power Non-Graduate category provides provide training and certifications in 2 key areas which include;

i.   N-Power Knowledge: The N-Power Knowledge programme is the Federal Government's first step towards diversifying to a knowledge economy. This programme will work alongside the planned eight innovation hubs across the country to provide incubation and acceleration of the technology and creative industries. The programme is a 'Training to Jobs' initiative, essentially ensuring that participants can get engaged in the marketplace in an outsourcing capacity, as freelancers, as employees, and as entrepreneurs.

ii.   N-Power Build: N-Power Build is an accelerated training and certification (Skills to Job) programme that will engage and train 75,000 young unemployed Nigerians in order to build a new crop of a skilled and highly competent workforce of technicians, artisans and service professionals (FGN, 2016).

Theoretical Literature

The N-Power is a platform for empowerment and skills acquisition. Therefore, the Dreyfus model of skill acquisition which was first applied to nursing sciences (Gobet and Chassy, 2008) is employed in this study. The study of Skill Acquisition draws from the early works of Professor Stuart Dreyfus, a Mathematician and Professor Hubert Dreyfus, a philosopher-from their study of chess players and pilots. This model posits that in the acquisition and development of a skill, one passes through five levels of proficiency namely: Novice, Advanced beginner, Competent, Proficient, and Expert. The levels reflect changes in two general aspects of skill performance. One is a movement from reliance on abstract principles to the use of past, concrete experience as paradigms. The other is a change in the perception and understanding of a demand situation so that the situation is seen less as a compilation of equally relevant bits and more as a complete whole in which only certain parts are relevant (Benner, 1982).In the novice level, beginners have no experience with the situations in which they are expected to perform tasks. In order to give them entry to these situations, they are taught about them in terms of objective attributes. These attributes are features of the task that can be recognized

without situational experience. Novice practitioners are also taught rules to guide action in respect to different attributes. The main difficulty that the novice faces is the inability to use discretionary judgment. Since novices have no experience with the situation they face, they must use context-free rules to guide their task performance.

The advanced beginner is one who can demonstrate marginally acceptable performance. This person is one who has coped with enough real situations to note (or to have them pointed out by a mentor) the recurrent meaningful situational components, called aspects. In the Dreyfus model, the term "aspects" has a very specific meaning. Unlike the measurable, context-free attributes or features that the inexperienced novice uses, aspects are overall, global characteristics that require prior experience in actual situations for recognition (Benner, 1982). An instructor or mentor can provide guidelines for recognizing such aspects. While aspects may be made explicit, they cannot be made completely objective. Aspect recognition is dependent on prior experience (Ekong and Ekong, 2016). The advanced beginner, or instructor of the advanced beginner, can formulate guidelines for actions in terms of attributes and aspect that integrate as many attributes and aspects as possible, but they tend to ignore the differential importance. In other words, they treat all attributes and aspects as equally important (Ekong and Ekong, 2016). Competent level typified the period by which the learner has been on the job two to three years. It develops when the learner begins to see his or her actions in terms of long-range goals or plans. The learner is consciously aware of these plans and the goal or plan dictates which attributes and aspects of the current and contemplated future situation are to be considered most important and which can be ignored. For the competent learner, a plan establishes a perspective, and the plan is based on considerable conscious, abstract, analytic contemplation of the problem. The competent learner lacks the speed and flexibility of the learners who have reached the proficient level, but the competency stage is characterized by a feeling of mastery and the ability to cope with and manage the many contingencies of the profession. The competent learner's conscious, deliberate planning helps to achieve a level of efficiency and organization. In some organizations, learners at this stage can benefit from decision-making games and simulations that give them practice in planning and coordinating multiple, complex demands. The competent level is supported and reinforced institutionally, and many learners may stay at this level because it is perceived as the ideal by their supervisors. The standardization and routinization of procedures, geared to manage the high turnover in most organizations, most often reflect the competent level of performance (Ekong and Ekong, 2016)

With continued practice, the competent performer moves to the proficient stage. Characteristically, the proficient performer perceives situations as wholes, rather than in terms of aspects, and performance is guided by maxims. Maxims are used to guide the proficient performer, but a deep understanding of the situation is required before a maxim can be used. Maxims reflect what would appear to the competent or novice performer as unintelligible degrees of the situation. Experience teaches the proficient performer what typical events to expect in a given situation and how to modify plans in response to these events. Because of the experience-based ability to recognize whole situations, the

proficient performer can now recognize when the expected normal picture does not present itself. The holistic understanding of the proficient performer improves his or her decision making. Decision making is now less laboured since the performer has a perspective about which of the many attributes and aspects present are the important ones. At the expert level, the performer no longer relies on an analytical principle (rule, guideline, or maxim) to connect her/his understanding of the situation to an appropriate action. The expert performer, with her/his enormous background of experience, has an intuitive grasp of the situation and zeros-in on the accurate region of the problem without wasteful consideration of a large range of unfruitful possible problem situations. It is very frustrating to try to capture verbal descriptions of an expert performance because the expert operates from a deep understanding of the situation in that, as the Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition posits, the expert performance is holistic rather than fractionated, procedural, and based upon incremental steps (Ekong and Ekong, 2016).

Empirical Literature
Many studies have been conducted on the aspect of skills acquisition and unemployment. Bashir, John, and Mbaga, (2017) investigated on Skills Acquisition Programmes (TSAP) and its implications on job creation. They submit that unemployment is a national catastrophe that can be tackled with sustained efforts geared towards providing young people with requisite knowledge, skills and conducive environment to develop. These could be achieved through the Technical Skills Acquisition Programmes which is capable of providing means of livelihood, help in poverty reduction and mass employment of youth and promotes entrepreneurship. They recommend provision of legal framework and national policy for combating unemployment, adequate budgetary provision for Technical Education, political and economic stability and access to flexible financial services. Ekong and Ekong (2016) in their study investigated how unemployment problem is tackled through skills acquisition by the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in Akwa Ibom State. They used both secondary and primary data from secondary sources for the period 1987 to 2012. They found that positive link exists between skills acquisition by NDE and unemployment reduction in Akwa Ibom State even though without daunting challenges. They recommend more spread of NDE training centres to all the Local Government Areas in the state for more benefits to be realised.

Adofu and Ocheja (2013) investigated the conduct of Skill Acquisition and training in alleviating poverty and unemployment in Kogi state, Nigeria. This relationship between entrepreneurship skill acquisition and poverty/unemployment was analysed using descriptive statistics. The descriptive tools consisted of the use of percentages and frequencies presented in a tabular form. A chi-square test (χ^2) was employed to test the validity or otherwise of the effect of entrepreneurship skill acquisition on poverty alleviation and unemployment reduction in Nigeria using primary data obtained in six local government areas that made up the four district of the state. The result shows that 65% of the respondents accepted that lack of entrepreneurship skills among youth is responsible for the high rate of poverty/unemployment in Nigeria. The result also revealed that at least 60% of the people that benefitted from the skills acquisition programme can

now afford the basic necessity of life. The study therefore recommended that since most of the people that benefited from the programme could afford the basic necessity of life, the government should begin to think of the way of developing the programme to the status of poverty/unemployment eradication programme. Amadi and Abdullah (2012), in their study on perception of capacity building among youths involved in vocational skills development reported a greater percentage of the sampled youth reported high and moderate levels of their capacity building: implying that the vocational skills acquisition and development was a successful scheme. They however recommended that the constraints that impede the success of the scheme be addressed by policy makers to make the outcome of the skills training more successful. Ogunlela (2012) explore the impact of National Directorate of Employment Programmes on graduate employment and unemployment in Kaduna State of Nigeria, using both secondary data as well as oral interview. He found out that the impact of NDE on graduate employment in Kaduna State has not been particularly positive and much still needs to be done. Only modest achievement in the area of generation of graduate employment has so far been recorded, calling for a thorough reappraisal of its programme in order to overhaul the system.

Ogundele, Akingbade, and Akinlabi (2012) reported that the contribution of Skill Acquisition and training on unemployment reduction through youth empowerment and social welfare service improvement will be much significant if encouraged at all the level in the state especially at local and community level. This position approximate Ohize and Muhammed (2009), who opined that nongovernment organization, can play a vital role in Training and Skill Acquisition. Such can be attributed to Youth Empowerment Scheme which has been noted to be proactive in enhancing economic uplift of the youths by providing them with vocational skills and counselling services aimed at reorienting their attitudes towards self and social development (Ekong and Ekong, 2016). On Non-formal Education Programmes and Poverty Reduction among Young Adults in Southern District of Cross River State, Akpama et al. (2011) observed that acquisition of vocational skills lead to a significant reduction of poverty among young adults who participated on skills acquisition programmes. Entrepreneurial studies are inter-disciplinary training that focuses on the tools needed to start a new business or vocation. They recommend that since Nigeria is fast becoming a predominantly youthful society with high rate of unemployment, it requires training the youth in entrepreneurship skills in technical vocational education and training to tackle unemployment which has reached alarming proportions. Uloko and Ejinkonye (2010) in their study on entrepreneurial education and training for job creation remarked that when youths are empowered through the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, there is the possibility that they will use the skills to create new avenues for wealth. Empowering the youth to set up businesses involves proper acquisition of skills through education and training. Such acquisition opens one's eyes to forecast business opportunities using appropriate entrepreneurship skills.

In their study on strategies to combat youth unemployment and marginalization in Anglophone Africa, Kanyenze, Mhone, and Sparreboom (2000) emphasises that trainings in vocational and technical skills will reduce youth marginalization in Anglophone Africa.

In the survey of six Anglophone countries of Africa including Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, they found that these countries have instituted various programmes of skills acquisition but unemployment is still on the rise. They, therefore suggest that youth unemployment should not be seen as an incidental or special anomaly of an otherwise employment friendly environment, but as a manifestation of the overall structural problem that affects adults as well as youths. Therefore, the point in contention is that policies aimed at enhancing the welfare and employability of youths should preferably be undertaken in the broader context of policies aimed at enhancing the overall labour absorption capacity of African economies. Ezeji and Okorie (1999) while stressing the importance of skills acquisition in national growth, emphatically contended that "Nigeria's social and economic problems will be drastically reduced if people are given adequate vocational training in skills, raw materials, machineries and equipment". It is only with skilled men that materials can be harnessed, manipulated and transformed into products. With quality skills acquisition programmes, countries like America, Britain, Germany and Japan have rehabilitated drug addicts, school dropouts and several destitute who eventually contributed meaningfully to the economy and the development of high volume of productivity in their countries.

METHODOLOGY
Basic Research Design
This paper uses secondary data from secondary sources. The parametric statistics is also employed in the study. The data used in this study ranges from 2000 to 2018Q3 but in comparison of the two periods, the data used are from 2005 to 2018Q3 so as to reduce the problem of unequal sample size from both sides.

Sources of Data
Data on unemployment were obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics on Labour Force Statistics of 2005, 2017, and 2018.

Analytical Technique
The data are analysed using charts and graphs as well parametric statics of which Student's t-test developed by Fisher is used in particular. This approach is deemed appropriate because a specific experimental treatment (N-Power programme) to one of the sample is assigned. This approach therefore helps us to know whether a difference might be observed between the two periods after such treatment. According to Ndiyo (2005), "Occasionally, a researcher may have test scores from two independent groups …assign a specific experimental treatment to each group. After being exposed to this treatment, the two groups are compared with respects… The formula for the t-test is given below:

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma xa^2 + \Sigma xb^2}{Na + Nb} \left[\frac{1}{Na} + \frac{1}{Nb} \right]}$$

Where x_a and x_b sample means computed from samples of sizes N_a and N_b respectively drawn from population a and population b.

Unemployment in Akwa Ibom State Before and During N-Power

Before N-Power

Akwa Ibom State before N-power has been experiencing fluctuations in the unemployment rate. For the period 2000 to 2004, unemployment in Akwa Ibom State averaged 14.54 and grew by 1.41% within the period. The trend of such dynamics is presented below:

Figure 4: Trend of unemployment in Akwa Ibom State (2000 – 2004)
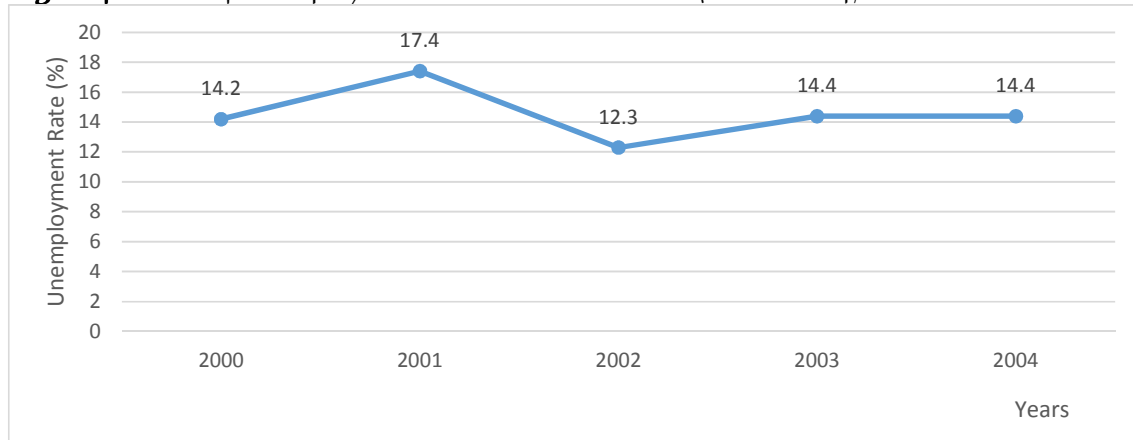
Source: Author Computation

From figure 4 above, unemployment increased from 14.2% to 17.4% indicating a 22.54% increase, and then declined to 12.3% in 2002. It rose further to 14.4% in 2003 and remain on the steady state till 2004. For the period 2005 to 20010, unemployment averaged 18.58 indicating a 90.97% growth within the period.

**Figure 5:** Trend of unemployment in Akwa Ibom Sate (2005 – 2010)
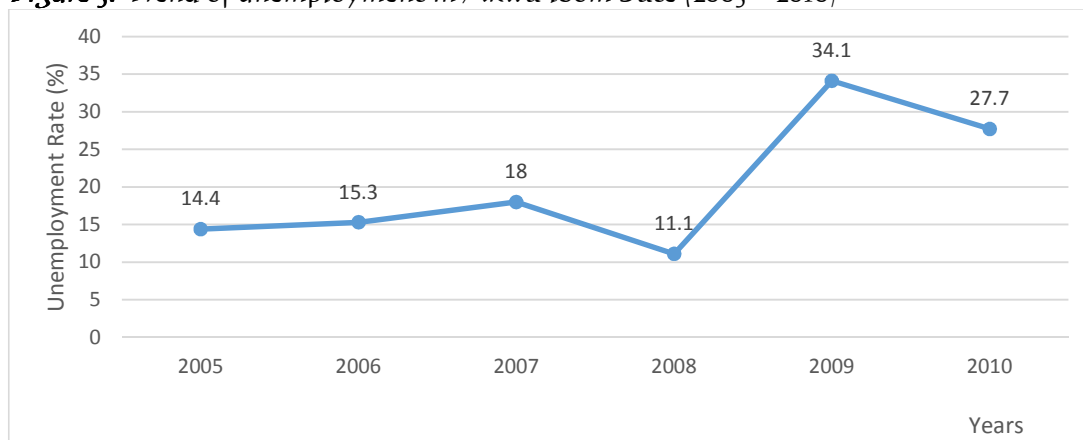
Source: Author Computation

The figure above shows that unemployment was 14.4% in 2014 and declined to 11.1 in 2008 but rose to a peak of 34.1 in 2009 and further declined to 27.7 in 2010. Between 2011 and 2015, unemployment averaged 24.78 and the state witnessed a growth rate of 9.25%.

**Figure 6:** Trend of Unemployment in Akwa Ibom State (2011 – 2015)
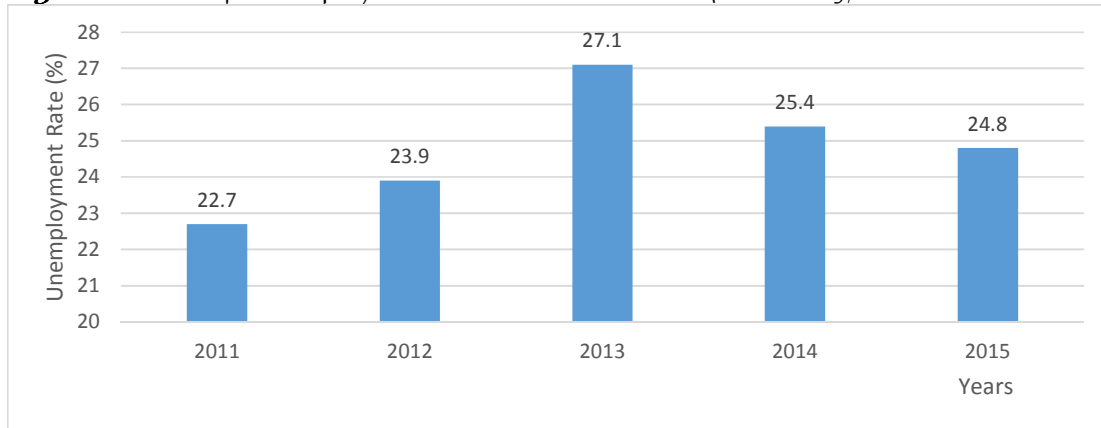
Source: Author Computation

Unemployment ranges from 22.7% to 27.1% within the period with the highest of 27.1% experienced in 2013 but later declined to 25.4% in 2014 and further to 24.8% in 2016.

Unemployment during N-Power

Due to the short time frame of the commencement of the programme so far (from 2016 to 2018 being our period of analysis), quarterly data are used to expand the data points. For the period 2016 to 2017Q3, unemployment has been on the fast increases as shown in figure 7 below.

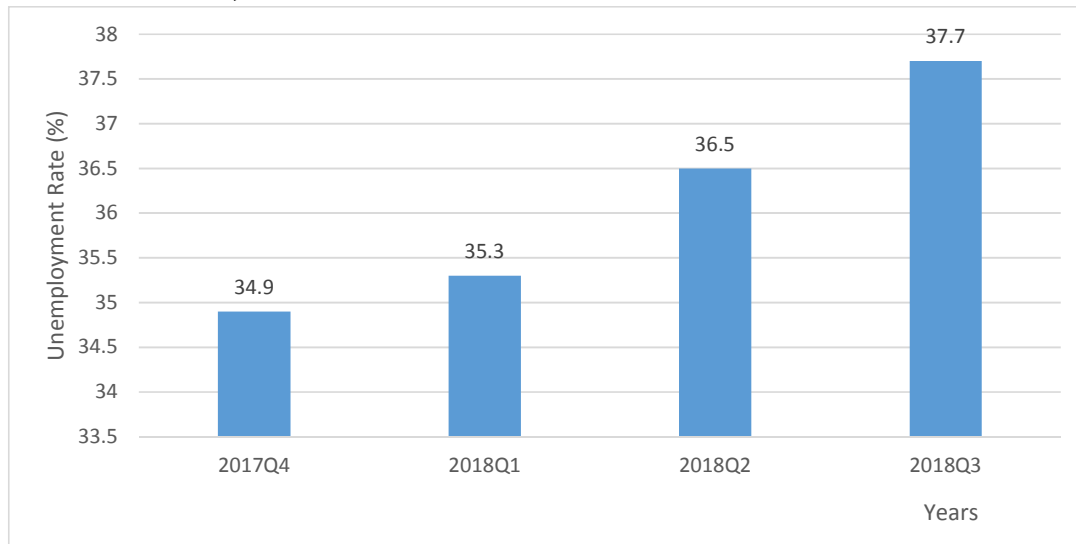Figure 7: Unemployment in Akwa Ibom State (2016 – 2018Q3)
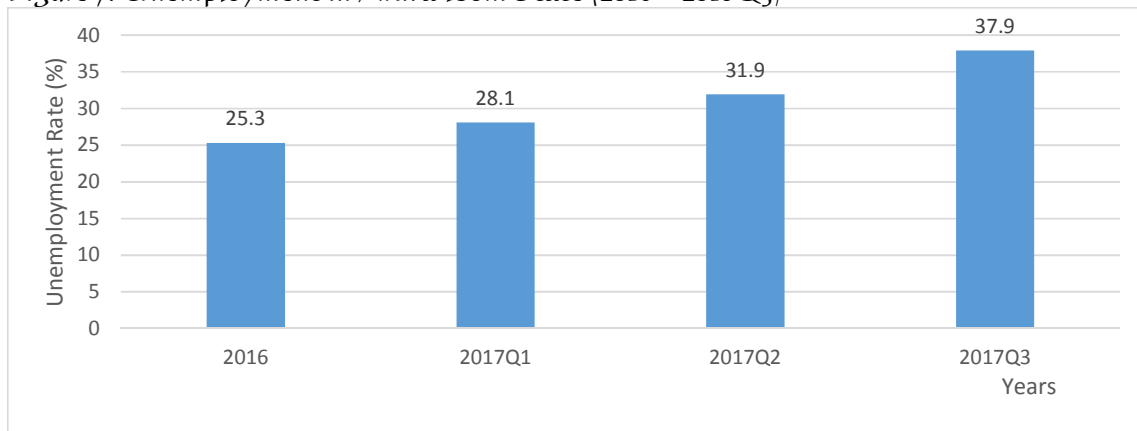
Source: Author Computation

Unemployment within the period ranges from 25.3% to 37.9%. This swift increase depicted above shows that unemployment average 30.8 and grew by 47.83% within the period.

Similarly, for the period 2017Q4 to 2018Q3, unemployment has been on fast increase in the state as shown below.

Source: Author Computation

Unemployment ranges between 34.9% - 37.7%, averaged 36.1% and grew by 8.02%. For comparison to be made from the above inference, the summary of the data for the two periods are presented below:

Table 1: Average Unemployment Rate Before and During N-Power

Average	Before N-Power	Average	During N-Power
2005 - 2010	18.58%	2016 – 2017Q3	30.8
2011 - 2015	24.78%	2017Q4 – 2018Q3	36.1%
Overall	22.23	Overall	33.45

Source: Author Computation

From table 1 above, we can observe that unemployment averaged 22.23% from 2005 to 2015 which is the period before N-Power under consideration here but averaged 33.45% during the N-Power programme. We can therefore conclude that the N-Power programme has not been influential in curbing unemployment in Akwa Ibom State. For a further proof of the conclusion made from the table above, t – test proceeds as follows:

Step1: The null hypothesis is stated

There is no significance difference in unemployment between the period before N-Power and the period during N-Power.

Step 2: Select the degree of freedom and significance level

The degree of freedom $(n_1 + n_2 - 2)$ is 25 (27-2) while the significance level is 5% (0.05).

Step 3: Using the Excel command, calculate the t-statistic

The calculated t-statistic is equal to 0.4374.

Step 4: Obtain the critical value of t

From the t-table, the critical t value is read from 27 under 0.05 and corresponds to 2.05.

Step 5: Decision making

Since the $t_{(calculated)}$ is less than the $t_{(critical)}$, the null hypothesis is accepted at the 5% level of significance.

Step 6: Inference

Since the null hypothesis is accepted, we can conclude that there is no significant difference between unemployment before N-Power and unemployment during N-Power in Akwa Ibom State. Hence, N-Power has not significantly influences unemployment in Akwa Ibom State within the period of analysis.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

It is observed that N-Power has not significantly influences unemployment in Akwa Ibom State within the period of analysis. N-Power is just an empowerment programme. After two years, the presumed employed is returned to the labour market and still forms part of the unemployed paupers if the beneficiary did not invest on income yielding ventures that he/she can rely on after the programme. Policies aimed at enhancing the welfare and employability of youths should preferably be undertaken in the broader context of policies aimed at enhancing the overall labour absorption capacity of citizens of the state. It is a slap on the state that even with the huge resources available, a large chunk of the citizens is unemployed and wailing on the shackles of poverty.

Another perspective that can be attributed to this finding is that beneficiaries of N-Power are also workers elsewhere thereby limiting others who do not even have jobs from benefiting from it. This culminates to no change in employment level even though the programme seems to be faring quite well. A situation in which the anticipated beneficiaries are not benefiting from the set programme, such cannot have its full influence on the employment level.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper was a comparative analysis of the N-Power programme and unemployment in Akwa Ibom State. In doing this, the paper compares the unemployment level in the state before the introduction of N-Power with the unemployment level during the N-Power programme. With the use of the Student's t-test, the result shows that there is no significance difference between unemployment rate before the introduction of N-Power and unemployment during the N-Power. Hence, the finding reveals that N-Power have no significant influence on the unemployment situation in the state. Further finding reveals that unemployment is quite alarming in the South – South region of Nigeria with Akwa Ibom leading recently. In this light, this paper recommend that efforts geared towards long-term employment in the state should be adopted rather than short-term empowerment programmes. Also, the government of the state should see to welfare of her citizen by ensuring that jobs are created in ministries and parastatals and these are made open for all rather than embarking on underground recruitment exercise. Most importantly, beneficiaries of the N-Power should be made to stay on the programme until they find paid employment rather than laying them off after two years to join the mass unemployed paupers.

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