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EFFECT OF CORRUPTION ON EMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION.

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ABSTRACT: *To ensure full employment of human resources has been a major problem in Nigeria over the years. This research investigated the influence of corruption on employment level in Nigeria from 1994 to 2019. Corruption is used as explanatory variable; employment rate is used as explained variable and inflation rate is explored as a control variable. The study engaged regression method for the analysis. The outcome from the inquiry revealed that the combine influence of both corruption and inflation rate have a long run equilibrium connection with the level of employment. Corruption has significant inverse influence on the level of employment. Inflation rate taken in isolation has significant negative influence on the level of employment. Employment rate and corruption are negatively correlated and it is a strong correlation. Employment rate and inflation rate are negatively correlated but a weak correlation. Based on the findings, the investigation concludes that corruption has a significant inverse influence on employment rate in Nigeria. The implication is that, increase in corruption will lead to a decline in employment rate. It is thus recommended that Government should establish more institutions to monitor the activities of EFCC and ICPC since in recent times officials in those institutions are found in corrupt practices.*

KEYWORDS: employment rate, corruption, inflation rate, regression technique, correlation matrix and error correction model.

INTRODUCTION

Attaining full employment level has been one of the main economic objectives of government all over the world. Full employment embodies the highest amount of unskilled and skilled labor that can be engaged within an economy at any given period. Employment could refer to a state of having a paid job whereby there is an agreement between the employer and the employee which stipulates the rules of the work, responsibilities, arrangement, and terms of payment and is recognized by government. Empirical studies have shown that employment has an identifiable positive influence on economic expansion (Loan, 2014; Sodipe and Ogunrinola, 2011).

Employment has been identified so vital in many ways. Poverty can be eradicated by employment because those employed have the chances of evading poverty (Dunga and Sekatane, 2014). The significance of employment is been reflected more tightly in the focus of economic growth. Employment can also lead to higher productivity and wealth creation (Osborne and Mammoud, 2017).

Employment trend in Nigeria has been undesirable over the years. Intention to boast employment has led to the measurement of several variables by studies (Chipeta, Meyer, and Muzindusi, (2017); Loan, (2014); Jelilov, Obasa, and Isik, (2016); Johnny, Timipere, Krokeme, and Markjackson, (2018); Mishra and Palit, (2020); Oloni, (2013); Osei, (2019); Osakwe and Ahamba, (2016); Saucedo, Ozuna, and Zamora, (2020); Yuliana, Robiani, and Mukhlis, (2018)). The above studies examined economic growth, foreign direct investment, exchange rate, money supply, domestic investment, exchange rate, lending rate and inflation rate as possible determinants of employment. The recommendations from the studies and various efforts from government have not improved employment situation in Nigeria. The unemployment rate is still relatively high. Individuals are categorized unemployed when they are available currently to do job and have searched for job over a period of four weeks and beyond but do not have job (Qadar, et al., 2014). Recent figures from the NBS showed that the rate of unemployment in Nigeriaas at the Q2 2020 is 27.1% signifying that about 21,764,614 (21.7 million) Nigerians remain unemployed. Nigeria' underemployment and unemployment rate (28.6%) combined is 55.7%. The Nigerian unemployment rate is increasing when compared with previous figures. Nigeria's unemployment rate was 23.1% in Q3 2018 confirming it increased by 4% points between then and the second quarter of 2020. The scenario has created a room for concern and called for further investigation.

Corruption has been rampant in all the sectors in Nigeria over the time. Corruption could be described as a dishonest and illegal means in which people in position and authority engage in illegal and unethical activities for personal gain. This place corrupt person to enlarge in capacity to influence, take undue advantage on others and cause harm to those not cleave to their request.

Bribery is a well-knownway of corruption, which involves giving or receiving gifts in exchange for special treatment beyond the boundaries defined for a job task. Corruption has been widespread in all sectors in Nigeria and could result to injustice, major disturbance and harm to employees and citizens across these sectors.

Corruption could be petty, grand and systematic when scaled. Corruption could be in the form of blackmail, favoritism, embezzlement, grafts, bribes, payoffs, extortion, and abuse of discretion, Nepotism, networking and influence peddling. Corruption has entered into all economic units in Nigeria; be it judiciary, religion, political, labor union, educational and corporate organizations (Okunola, Umaru, and Hassan, 2019).

Corruption in economic sectors could deprive worthy citizens of various opportunities they merit, while corruption in the place of work could affect employees which in turn could affect the progress of business activities. Promotion that is not of merit is a well-known example of favored progress, which in turn could influence the career development of those employees who ought to have a promotion purely because of exceptional performance and sheer hard work.

Corruption could impact on the performance of employees and eventually the profit of the organization and the nation's economy at large which could further generate more employment. Corruption could have significant influence on employment either in the positive or negative direction based on theoretical debate on corruption. To the best of our research knowledge, studies have not examined the relative impact of corruption on employment generation in Nigeria. This study intend to employ recent date to investigate the connection between corruption and employment rate in Nigeria and also intend to use foreign direct investment as a control variable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Whether corruption causes economic activities to increase or decrease has been a serious debate in literature. Two opposing theories in the debate include sand the wheel theory and grease the wheel theory. The argument in favor of greases the wheel theory is of the view that corruption may assist business firms overcome lethal governmental obstacles which are capable of boasting economic activities. (Leff, 1964) is a prominent of the grease the wheel theory and has been empirically supported by several studies (Omodero, (2019); Onofe, Oriaifah, and Omagbon, (2016); Ben, Udo, Abner, and Ibekwe, (2018); Audu, (2020); Nageri, Nageri, and Amin, (2015); Moaz, Rasha, and Sulaiman, (2016); Wang, (2016); Ayaydin and Hayaloglu, (2014)). Sand the wheel theory is of the opinion that corruption has a destructive effect on business activities. (Mauro, 1995) is a prominent of the sand the wheel theory and has been empirically confirmed by several studies (Cooray and Dzhumashev, (2018); Thach, Duong, and Oanh, (2017); Obamuyi and Olayiwola, (2019); Hoinaru, Buda, Borlea, Vaidean, and Achim, (2020); Alfada, (2019); Odi, (2014); Ojeka, Adegboye, Adegboye, Umukoro, Dahunsi, and Ozordi, (2019); Ertimi, Dowa, Albisht, and Oqab, (2016); Igiebor, (2019)).

Studies have investigated the impact of corruption on economic activities with varied outcomes. Cooray and Dzhumashev, (2018) investigated the impact of corruption on labor market. The study investigated 132 countries that cut across all the continents with the application of regression technique. Corruption has a significant direct negative effect on employment in all the studied nations.

Onofe, Oriaifah, and Omagbon, (2016) examined poverty, unemployment and corruption in the Nigerian public sector from 1996 to 2012. Unemployment and poverty were employed as explained variables while corruption stands as explanatory variable. The measurement utilized

regression method. The outcome revealed that, corruption has positive but insignificant impact on poverty and unemployment. Omodero, (2019) employed multiple regression technique and investigated the association between foreign direct investment inflows and corruption in Nigeria with historical data spanning from 1996 to 2017. The association between the two was is positive and it is significant for the research period. Ben, Udo, Abner, and Ibekwe, (2018) ascertained the influence of corruption on economic growth and sustainability in Nigeria with time series data for the period 1999 through 2016. Exchange rate and inflation were used as explained variable while corruption was used as an explanatory variable with the use of regression method. Corruption influenced exchange rate positively and significantly; corruption influenced inflation rate negatively and the negative link is also significant. Nageri, Nageri, and Amin, (2015) examined the joint effect of corruption and stock market on economic development by employing VECM. The study also seeks to find out the effect of corruption on stock market. Historical data spanning from 1996 to 2012 was used to ascertain the relative effect among the variables. The research found a positive and significant association between stock market and corruption in Nigeria. Audu, (2020) investigated the link between financial market performance and corruption from 2009 to 2018 in Nigeria. Evidence from the regression output indicated that corruption has a significant positive relationship with financial market performance. Moaz, Rasha, and Sulaiman, (2016) analyzed the link between market capitalization and corruption in Syria and other GCC countries. Regression technique was employed for the data spanning from 2003 to 2011 for the analysis. Significant positive link was found among the variables considered. Wang, (2016) studied how economic activities react to anti-corruption move in China. The regression output revealed that anti-corruption move leads to decline economic growth and further submits that corruption is a boaster of economic activities in China. Ayaydin and Hayaloglu, (2014) utilized random effect model to ascertain the influence of corruption on form growth in Turkey. Time series data for the period 2008 through 2011 was collated for the analysis. The relationship was found positive and significant.

Other studies found results that are contrary to the above studies. Cooray and Dzhumashev, (2018) investigated the association between labor market outcomes and corruption in 132 countries cutting across all the continents in the world. Employment served as a dependent variable while corruption served as an independent variable. The output from the regression model indicated a significant negative association among the variables. Thach, Duong, and Oanh, (2017) empirically investigated economic growth and corruption in Asian countries. Regression output indicated an unfavorable influence that come from corruption to economic growth. Obamuyi and Olayiwola, (2019) did a research in India and Nigeria to find out the impact of corruption on economic growth. The research employed human capital, capital formation and political stability as explained variables and corruption as explanatory variable. The regression model output revealed an inverse connection between corruption and all the explained variables employed in the research. Hoinaru,

Buda, Borlea, Vaidean, and Achim, (2020) examined economic growth and corruption in 185 countries with historical data spanning from 2009 to 2018. Regression model was utilized for the measurement. A destructive impact of corruption on economic growth was evidently revealed. Alfada, (2019) with threshold model investigated the association between economic growth and corruption in Indonesia. Data set spanning 2004 through 2015 was used for the study. Corruption was found to have a strong destructive impact on economic growth. Odi, (2014) Did a similar research to that of Alfada, (2019) and also found a negative significant relationship between economic growth and corruption. Ojeka, Adegboye, Adegboye, Umukoro, Dahunsi, and Ozordi, (2019) examined firm performance and corruption in Nigeria. GMM was utilized for the analysis. Data spanning from 2013 to 2017 was used. The study showed that corruption has an inverse impact on firm performance. Ertimi, Dowa, Albisht, and Oqab, (2016) examined the influence of corruption on economic growth in fourteen countries. Time series data for the period 2003 through 2010 were utilized for the analysis. The regression results indicated that economic growth and corruption are related negatively. Igiebor, (2019) also carried out a similar research to that of Ertimi, Dowa, Albisht and Oqab, (2019) and also found that corruption has an unfavorable influence on economic growth.

Literature in relation to effect of corruption on economic performance indicators is lacking in Nigeria. Only few studies have been carried out in the Nigerian context Ben, Udo, Abner, and Ibekwe, (2018); Odi, 2014; Audu, (2020); Nageri, Nageri, and Amin, (2015); Ojeka, Adegboye, Adegboye, Umukoro, Dahunsi, and Ozordi, (2019); Omodero, (2019); Igiebor, (2019); Onofe, Oriaifah, & Omagbon, (2016) which output are with different results and conclusions. The above studies focused on poverty, exchange rate, firm growth, inflation rate and financial market performance. The reviewed epistles revealed that studies have not examined the impact of corruption on employment in Nigeria. This research stands to fill the gap by investigating the effect of corruption on employment in Nigeria with recent data. This will employ inflation rate as a control variable.

METHODOLOGY

In this research, *expost facto* study design is employed to investigate the effect of corruption on the employment level because the data were mainly historical and will not be control. The inquiry employed time series regression technique to look at the association between corruption and employment level, while inflation rate is used as a control variable. The frequency of data is reserved at yearly bases while the duration of the inquiry is taken between 1994 and 2019. The data were collated from the publications of the transparency international, Central Bank of Nigeria statistical bulletin and journal publications. The variables via which data were collated were employment rate (EPR), corruption perception index (CPI) and inflation rate (EXR).

Models Specification

Building an econometric model is done by econometrician as a structure of simplifying the activities of real life, thus a model is an expression of realism(Gbalam and Nelson, 2020). This inquiry adopted a model build by (Ben, Udo, Abner, and Ibekwe, 2018) with slender modification. It is hence build below;

$$EPR = f(CPI, IFR) \quad 1$$

Where: EPR = Employment rate

CPI = Corruption perception index

IFR = Inflation rate

The model is precisely specified in its linear sketch as follows:

$$EPR = Б_0 Б + Б_1 CPI + Б_2 IFR + \varepsilon_t \quad 2$$

Where $Б_0$, $Б_1$ and $Б_2$ are parameters to be estimated

ε_t is the stochastic terms

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Estimate

Explained Variabl: EPR

Technique: Least Square

Date: 08/23/20 Time: 20:02

Sample: 1 26

Observations Included: 26

Variabl	Coef.	Stnd. Eror	t-Stat.	Prob.
C	63.91830	0.729726	87.59220	0.0000
CPI	-0.225389	0.027029	-8.338728	0.0000
IFR	-0.043270	0.014301	-3.025567	0.0060

R square	0.794140	Mean depen.variab	58.82615
Adj. R square	0.776239	S.D. depend. variable	1.587663
S.Er. of reg.	0.751018	Akaike-info-criteri.	2.373393
Sm square res.	12.97264	Schwarz crit.	2.518558
Lg likely-hood	-27.85410	Hanan Quin crit.	2.415195
F-stat.	44.36320	Durbin Watson statist	0.813571
Prob. (F-stat.)	0.000000		

In this investigation, we tend to discover the connection between the explained and explanatory variables through regression technique. An overview of the above preliminary examination revealed that, employment rate in Nigeria and corruption are inversely related and it is found to be significant. It is also related with inflation inversely and significantly. The R-square is 0.794140 which is considerably good but the Durbin-Watson is 0.813571 which is well thought-out unsatisfactory.

Descriptive statistics

	EPR	CPI	IFR
Mean	58.82615	19.42769	16.48615
Median	59.16000	22.00000	12.39000
Maximum	61.18000	28.00000	72.84000
Minimum	56.24000	0.630000	5.390000
Std. Dev.	1.587663	8.065807	15.24422
Skewness	-0.310606	-0.969469	2.775471
Kurtosis	1.811509	3.005190	9.916163
Jarque-Bera	1.948283	4.072799	85.20014
Probability	0.377516	0.130498	0.000000
Sum	1529.480	505.1200	428.6400
Sum Sq. Dev.	63.01682	1626.431	5809.659
Observations	26	26	26

The descriptive outcome from the above table revealed that, EPR has average of 58.82615, CPI has average of 19.42769, and EXR has average of 16.48615. The peak and least values of EPR are 61.18 and 56.24 respectively. The peak and least values of CPI are 28 and 0.63 respectively. The peak and least values of IFR are 72.84 and 5.39 respectively. The Jarque-Bera statistic revealed that, EPR and CPI are normally distributed but IFR is not normally distributed. EPR has a probability of 0.377516; CPI has a probability of 0.130498; and IFR has a probability of 0.000000.

Correlation matrix

	EPR	CPI	IFR
EPR	1	-0.84392367852417	0.4144598423315142
CPI	-0.84392367852417	1	-0.7247921669066016
IFR	0.4144598423315142	-0.7247921669066016	1

The correlation analysis from the above revealed a strong negative correlation between EPR and CPI; while the correlation between EPR and IFR is inverse but not a strong one.

ADF output summary

Variab.	S.L	ADF (level series)			ADF (1st diff.)		
		Test V.	CR. V.	P. V.	Test V.	CR. V.	P.V.
EPR	1% 5% 10%	0.271515	-3.724070 -2.986225 -2.632604	0.9717	-3.605616	-3.737853 -2.991878 -2.635542	0.0135
CPI	1% 5% 10%	-2.366097	-3.724070 -2.986225 -2.632604	0.1609	-4.163393	-3.737853 -2.991878 -2.635542	0.0038
IFR	1% 5% 10%	-3.261215	-3.724070 -2.986225 -2.632604	0.0281	-6.066186	-3.752946 -2.998064 -2.638752	0.0000

Source: Author's computation, 2020

The outcome from the above indicated that, EPR and CPI were not stationary at series level but were stationary at first difference stage, while IFR was stationary at level series and first difference.

Cointegration

Unrestricted Cointegration Rank Test (Trace)

Hypothesized No. of CE(s)	Eigenvalue	Trace Statistic	0.05 Critical Value	Prob.**
None *	0.922301	69.79878	29.79707	0.0000
At most 1	0.297537	8.481002	15.49471	0.4155
At most 2	0.000212	0.005091	3.841466	0.9422

Hypothesized No. of CE(s)	Eigenvalue	Max-Eigen Statistic	0.05 Critical Value	Prob.**
None *	0.922301	61.31777	21.13162	0.0000
At most 1	0.297537	8.475911	14.26460	0.3324
At most 2	0.000212	0.005091	3.841466	0.9422

The trace table revealed one cointegrating equation and the maximum Eigen table also revealed one cointegrating equation existing between the explained and the explanatory variables. That reveals that long run equilibrium link is existing between the explained variable and the explanatory variables.

Estimate

Explained Variabl: DEPR

Technique: Least Square

Date: 08/23/20 Time: 20:34

Sampl (adjustd): 5 26

Observations included: 22 after adjustmets

Variabl	Coef.	Std. Eror	t-Stat.	Prob.
C	-0.196068	0.037933	-5.168753	0.0001
DCPI	-0.248352	0.207552	-3.605616	0.0016
DIFR	-0.400525	0.122815	-3.261215	0.0034
ECM(-1)	-0.204791	0.078099	-2.366097	0.0268

R square	0.746918	Mean dependvariabl	58.54565
Adj. R square	0.706958	S.D. dependvariabl	1.465559
S.Er. of regr.	0.793356	Akaike-info-crit.	2.531682
Sm square residl	11.95887	Schwarz crit.	2.729160
Lg likely-hood	-25.11435	Hanan-Quin crit.	2.581347
F-stat.	18.69150	Durbin Watson statist	1.862199
Prob(F-stat.)	0.000007		

Results in the table above revealed that about 75% of the total systematic variations of the stimulated variable (EPR) have been explained by all the stimulus variables (CPI and IFR) taken together. This is expressed by the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.746918. The degree of freedom after adjustment, the model still explained 70.6958% of the systematic variations in EPR as shown by the adjusted R^2 of 0.706958. About 21% was left unaccounted for by the model,

consequently captured by the stochastic disturbance term in the model. Thus, the model has a very poor fit of the regression line. On the basis of the overall statistical significance of the model as indicated by the F-statistic, it was observed that the overall model was statistically significant since the F. stat. value is 18.69150 and Prob (F-stat.) is 0.000007 at 5% level of significance. This implies that there is significant linear relationship between the explained variable (EPR) and the explanatory variables (CPI and IFR). The outcome showed that CPI has a coefficient of -0.248352, which shows that a percentage change in corruption leads to 24.8352% change in employment rate in the negative direction with the probability of 0.0016 which is significant at 5% level. This shows that increase in corruption in Nigeria leads to a decline in employment rate. This result affirms sand the wheel theory that corruption has a destructive influence on economic activities. Our result also concurs with the findings of Cooray and Dzhumashev, (2018) that corruption has robust significant statistical direct negative effect on employment. IFR has a coefficient of -0.400525, which shows that a percentage change in inflation rate leads to 40.0525% change in employment rate in the negative direction with the probability of 0.0034 which is also significant at 5% level. This shows that increase in inflation rate in Nigeria leads to a decline in employment rate.

In addition, ECM which indicates the speed of adjustment from equilibrium level revealed a coefficient of -0.204791 which is correctly sign with the probability of 0.0268, meaning it is significant. The 1.862199 figure in the Durbin Watson indicated the absence of auto or serial correlation.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of findings

The following are inferred from the findings:

1. Combine influence of both inflation rate and corruption have long run connection with employment
2. Corruption has a significant negative impact on employment rate
3. Inflation rate taken in isolation has significant negative impact on agricultural sector performance.
4. Employment rate and corruption are negatively correlated and it is a strong correlation.
5. Employment rate and inflation rate are negatively correlated but a weak correlation.
6. The error correction term is negatively signed and significant statistically. The speed of adjustment from disequilibrium towards equilibrium state here is 20.48 percent.

Conclusion

The inquiry investigated the effect of corruption on employment level in Nigeria from 1994 to 2019. Corruption is used as explanatory variable; employment rate is used as explained variable

and inflation rate is explored as a control variable. The study engaged regression method for the analysis. The outcome from the inquiry revealed that the combine influence of both corruption and inflation rate have a long run equilibrium connection with the level of employment. Corruption has a significant negative impact on the level of employment. Inflation rate taken in isolation has significant negative influence on the level of employment. Employment rate and corruption are negatively correlated and it is a strong correlation. Employment rate and inflation rate are negatively correlated but a weak correlation. Based on the findings, the investigation concludes that corruption has a significant negative influence on employment rate in Nigeria. The implication is that, increase in corruption will lead to a decline in employment rate.

Recommendations

To boast employment level in Nigeria, the following are recommended:

1. Nigerian government should strengthen ICPC and EFCC in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.
2. Government should establish more institutions to monitor the activities of EFCC and ICPC since in recent times officials in those institutions are found in corrupt practices.

Contribution to knowledge

This is one of the few studies that have investigated the influence of corruption on employment rate in Nigeria. The study contributed to knowledge by measuring the impact of corruption and inflation rate on the level of employment in Nigeria from 1994 to 2019 with regression model.

Suggestions for further studies

This research investigated the effect of corruption on employment in Nigeria from 1995 to 2019. The study utilized regression technique for the analysis. Variables employed include corruption, employment rate and inflation rate. Further studies could utilize other economic growth indicators other than employment rate and employ other econometric tools. Further studies could be conducted on the effect macroeconomic variables on employment rate.

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