

NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF EMPLOYMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS AS A PATHWAY FOR REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT: EXPERIENCES FROM SELECTED FIRMS IN DELTA STATE.

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ABSTRACT

The study looked at National Directorate of Employment and Small Business as a Panacea for reducing unemployment with selected businesses in Delta State. To aid this investigation, two objectives were raised as; to determine the extent the activities of the National Directorate of employment reduces unemployment problem in the economy and to determine how government incentives to Small business contribute to the reduction of unemployment in the economy. Also, two research questions and hypotheses along the objectives guided the study with questionnaires for data gathering. A sample population size of 138 was determined using probability test. In analysing the data collected, the descriptive technique using simple tables showing frequencies and percentages was used while Chi-square was employed to test the hypothesis based on its scientific nature. The findings revealed that Small Scale Enterprise contributes positively towards the reduction of unemployment in the economy. It also reveals that government through its agencies like National Directorate of Employment has contributed positively towards the reduction of unemployment rate in the economy. Arising from the findings, it was recommended. There should be re-appraisal of the government aid to the programme of small-scale enterprises. Government should intensify its effort in its policy making as it affects the generation of employment, proper assessment and evaluation of government incentives for small businesses and motivational support schemes.

1. INTRODUCTION

The population of every economy is divided into two categories, the economically active and the economically inactive. The economically active population (labor force) or working population refers to the population that is willing and able to work; including those actively engaged in the production of goods and services (employed) and those who are unemployed. Whereas, unemployed refers to people who are willing and capable to work but are unable to secure suitable and paid jobs(Tijani, 2004).A business whether big or small, simple or complex, private

or public is created to provide competitive prices. Small business is also seen as one which is owned, managed, controlled by one or two persons, it is not family influenced in decision making, has an undifferentiated organizational structure, has relatively small share of the market and employ less than 50 people. Big businesses can hardly survive without the Small business as they give the important links between the big business and the consumers.

Before the advent of Small business, Nigerian economy from 1970-1979 was grossly over dependent on crude oil. The oil boom of the 1970's offered an opportunity for true national economic development Onodugoet'al(2010).. Despite the oil boom, there was massive corruption, deficient policies, poor policy implementation, favoritism and total lack of sensitivity on the part of government. The oil boom could not alleviate poverty or reduce unemployment especially graduate unemployment, due to the mismanagement that engulfed the resources which would have been used to tackle the menace of unemployment. But this work will show the role of Small business and government agencies in reducing unemployment in the economy. There were genuine attempts by the federal government to make sure that Nigerian's play active and important role in the development of the economy, thus, special attention was paid into the development of Small business in the 1970-74 national development plan. This was in recognition of their roles in the development of the economy. In an attempt to fight the unemployment crises-unemployment, under employment, low wage employment and outright social exclusion which have resulted in human resources wastage, several attempts have been made by the government, which to a large extent have not yielded the much expected results. Among these includes the N-power programme (empowering Nigeria Youth for prosperity) by Late President Musa Yaradua. The N-power programme is for eligible Nigerians looking for work (Teaching/Agriculture) it is also linked to the Federal Government Policies in the economic employment.

You-Win programme was established on (11th October, 2011) by Dr. GoodluckEbelechukwu Jonathan. It is a yearly youth enterprise development with flash learner; it connects winners to get grants soon (Finance Ministry). The current administration under President MohammaduBuhari has the Youths Entrepreneurship Support (YES) project to empower youth with loans to start businesses and the N-Power programme which is offered in mode and methodology from the currently running N-Power intervention, which is not only youth-oriented but fully driven by youths themselves under the supervision of the federal government. It will create silos of engagements to be managed by young people themselves under the supervision and regulation of the government.

A federal government approach towards addressing the crisis situation of high graduate unemployment that create silos of youth engagement with government based on the visions and aspirations of the youths themselves. The programme will also support and promote the

development of millions of Micro, Small and Medium scale youthpreneurs as investments made in the youth who are our greatest assets will actually determine the development trajectory of the country over the next 50 years. The N-Power is in the seven point agenda born out of the vision 20-20-20 of the present administration and support the mandate of National Directorate of Employment.

NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF EMPLOYMENT

The National Directorate of Employment was established in 1989 and empowered by the National Directorate of Employment Act NO. 24 to carry out the following functions:

- a. Design and implement programmes to combat mass unemployment.
- b. Articulate policies aimed at developing work programmes with labour intensive potentials; and
- c. Obtain and maintain a databank on employment and vacancies, in collaboration with other government agencies. NDE was established to combat high unemployment in the country as a result of the Structural Adjustment programme during the economic downturn of the 1980's.

In the bid to achieve these social objectives, those Small business and related governmental agencies have their fair share of hindrance and problems. Moreover, other problems include managerial problems, poor organizational skills, absence of proper control mechanisms, poor functional management and lack of good planning.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Unemployment is one of the development problems that face every developing economy in the 21st century. International statistics shows that industrial and service workers living in developing region accounts for about two-third of the unemployed population.

Small business and other governmental agencies are expected in every economy, community or society to play vital role towards the reduction of unemployment rate, among the roles include:

1. Reducing unemployment among the teeming unemployed graduates
2. Promoting the development and establishment of Small Business to boast employment generation.
3. Supporting the activities of the agencies established by the government for employment generation like the National directorate of employment.

In the bid to achieve these social objectives, those Small business and related governmental agencies have their fair share of hindrance and problems. These problems are either internal or external. The internal problems are hinged on the incompetence and inadequacies of those at the helm of affairs; poor policy implementation with corrupt attitudes and practices among the practitioners while external problems are mainly based on environmental factors. Moreover, other problems include managerial problems, poor organizational skills, absence of proper control mechanisms, poor functional management and lack of good planning.

In view of the above mentioned and identified weaknesses, there is a need to research into the contributing factors that have led to the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of these policies, and implementation, which by extension have not allowed efficiency to thrive in those establishments, agencies and small business.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the extent the activities of the National Directorate of employment reduces unemployment problem in the economy.
2. To determine how government incentives to Small business contribute to the reduction of unemployment in the economy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Do the activities of National Directorate of Employment reduce unemployment in the economy?
2. Has government incentives to Small business contributed to the reduction of unemployment?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Ho1: The activities of the National Directorate of Employment do not reduce unemployment in the economy?

H1: The activities of the National Directorate of Employment reduce unemployment in the economy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Small Business in Nigeria: An Overview

Small and medium scale enterprises are a sector of the economy that has attracted and retained governments' attention in the past two or more decades. The nation needs the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) because they contribute meaningfully to economic development. They are in the forefront of output expansion, employment generation, income redistribution, promotion of indigenous entrepreneurship and production of primary goods to strengthen industrial linkages. The sector is responsible for about 70 percent of the total industrial employment in our country and between 10-15 percent of the total manufacturing output. The agricultural sector which comprises mainly of SMEs have promoted indigenous technology and increased utilization of local raw materials. They are the strongest promise we have for industrial growth.

In many developed and developing countries, the government assists them with favorable policies, plans and programmes in reversion of the older practices of giving interest to the big business. This official reversal may not be unconnected with promoting of economic self-reliance and especially with the realization and acceptance of the fact that import substitution strategies of the big business could not fully accomplish an accelerated move to sustain growth owing to the vulnerability of the practice. According to a government hand book published by the Federal Ministry of industry and Technology (1992), there are social and economic objectives and benefits involved in setting up small and medium scale enterprises". These include:

1. Employment generation especially for people in rural areas.
2. Stimulation of indigenous entrepreneurship
3. Reversal of rural-urban migration;
4. Greater utilization of local raw materials
5. Promotion of local enterprises;
6. Linkages with larger enterprises;
7. Training for unskilled workers.

Historical Development and Orientation of Small Scale Industry in Nigeria

Economic history is well stocked with enough insights into the humble beginning of present day Grand Corporation. That is to say that, small scale industry orientation is part and parcel of Nigeria. evidence abound that almost all of the multinational giant corporations were cottage

enterprises, growing as their industry grew, and through their own sheer ability either reproduce existing products more cheaply or improve their ability. Moreover, our great grand parents made resounding successes in their respective trading concern; for instance: yam, barns, Iron melting, farming, cottage industries and the likes.

The respective government policies in Nigeria, accorded and gave priority to the country's small scale enterprises. This has been in recognition that they constitute the fountain head of vitality for the variation economy and consequently, their problems have been viewed as those of the nation, by virtue of their number, diversity, penetration in all sectors of production and marketing contribution to employment and to the prosperity of the particular areas in which they operate. Prior to Nigeria Independence, the business climate was almost totally dominated by the colonial and other European multinational companies like United African Company (UAR), Unilever Plc, Patterson Zochonics (PZ), Leventis etc. These companies primarily engage in bringing into Nigeria finished goods from their parent companies overseas. They dominated Nigerian economy due to their vast business experiences and strong capital base.

However, the Nigerian Industrial Development Bank (NIDB), towards the tail end of the 1950s was founded to assist potential entrepreneurs to get involved in Agriculture exploration of national resources, commerce and Industrial production. A remarkable breakthrough in small scale business came about through the Indigenization Decree 1972 and later in Nigeria Enterprise Promotion Act 1977. In its 1970-74, National Development Plan, the Federal Government gave special attention to the development of small scale industries particularly in rural areas. This was in recognition of the roles of small and medium scale industries as the seedbeds and training grounds for entrepreneurship. It is worthy of note that the federal and State Government have both contributed to the growth of small scale industries in Nigeria especially in the rural areas of recent time, various fiscal and non-fiscal incentives have been established for investors and entrepreneurs in the small scale sector of the economy of special mentioning was the strategy adopted by the federal government towards the training and motivation of the unemployed graduate to be gainfully employed in out of school entrepreneurship development programmes.

Furthermore, the Peoples Bank of Nigeria (PBN) was also in the mission of granting soft loan to unemployed youths and artisans, and this aimed at diverting the attention of youths from government salaried jobs, to that of gainful self solely employment. National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and the People Bank of Nigeria were solely charged with the responsibility of generating employment through their various programmes for thousands of unemployed Nigerians.

What Is Unemployment

The term unemployment refers to people who are willing and capable of work but are unable to find suitable paid employment. According to Briggs (1973) unemployment is the difference between the amounts of labour employed at current wage and working conditions and the amount of labour not hired at these levels, while Gbosi (1997) defined unemployment as a situation in which people who are willing to work at the prevailing wage rate are unable to find jobs. "The unemployed is a member of an economically active population, who are without work but available for and seeking for work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (World Bank, 1998).

The natural rate of unemployment is the average rate of unemployment around which the economy fluctuates. In a recession, the actual unemployment rate rises above the natural rate, in a boom, the actual unemployment rate falls below the natural rate. When an economy is not growing, jobs aren't being created and unemployment rises. There are many causes of unemployment, to mention but a few. Over regulation is an important cause of unemployment. Too much burden on a business shoulders cannot allow the business to expand in order to create more job. Because of this, if one is unemployed, it will be impossible for him or her to find work. There are too many paper work and too many regulations that stifle job creation effort. This leads to a two tier system, usually, with those who are already employed having a job for life and those who do not have a job are unable to find one and are forced to live on welfare.

A cause of unemployment that cannot be over emphasized is lack of information about the available jobs. If people are not informed about a particular job opportunity, they will be deformed. Dissemination of information is fundamental in any market, likewise the job market.

Unemployment in Nigeria

The population of every economy is divided into two categories, the economically active and the economically inactive. The economically active (labour force) or working population refers to the population that is willing and able to work, including those actively engaged in production of goods and services (employed) and those who are unemployed (Okey, 2005). The next category, the economically inactive population refers to people who are neither working nor looking for jobs. Examples include house wives, full time students, and invalids, those below the legal age for work, old and retired persons.

Unemployment is one of the developmental problems that face every developing economy in the 21st century which Nigerian economy is not an exception. Nigeria, is no doubt, a blessed country, with abundant natural resources, good climate, green vegetation, lovely and highly intelligent people. The major challenges to the country are; instability in price of crude oil, Niger Delta crises, epileptic power supply, leadership and financial indiscipline, corruption and over-

dependence on oil. The ability of the government to address these problems will go a long way in repositioning the economy for the better.

According to Tribune Business (2010). The Nigerian economy was once driven and sustained by agriculture, which contributed about 95 per cent to the gross domestic product (GDP) and 75 per cent employment in the early 60s.

The economy remained agrarian despite the discovery of in commercial quantity in 1956, until the early 70s when there was an increase in the demand for oil and a rise in its price at the international oil market in 1973. This brought Nigeria to the lime light as a major oil exporting country.

Emphasis was shifted from Agriculture, which was able to absorb excess labour, to oil between 1973 to 1980, oil accounted for 95 per cent of Nigeria's total export.

The agricultural sector was relegated, and due to poor government attitude towards the sector, youths abandoned it in search of white-collar jobs and fortune in the oil sector. This brought about massive rural-urban migration. Of the few that were able to get jobs, some were under employed. Presently, it is very difficult to get adequate data on the number of unemployed in the country with a population of about 140 million, according to the 2006 census figure.

According to National Bureau of Statistics, the unemployment rate in Nigeria is;

Year	Rate
2005	2.9%
2006	2.9%
2007	5.8%
2008	4.9%
2009	4.9%

Voluntary unemployment is rare in Nigeria because of the harsh economic climate which has compelled both husband and wife of an average family to contribute to meet the financial needs of their home. Child labour, to generate income for the family, has also become a culture, especially among the illiterates and the rural populace. University graduate unemployment is on the increase as the Universities keep on turning out job seekers every year without new job opportunities being created. The recent sack and ongoing downsizing of bank workers have also worsened the unemployment situation with many bread winners losing their jobs at the eve of this year.

Though it is allowed for the management of banks to determine the staff strength, as posited by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) governor, MallanSanusiLamidoSanusi, one should also bear in mind the socioeconomic implications of creating unemployment.

The textile industry, which contributed greatly to providing employment opportunities in the past, has collapsed, with many factories closed down due to epileptic power supply by the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA), now known as the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN). The very few surviving ones depend on generators which has increased their cost of production. Many companies have left the country for neighboring countries because of inadequate power supply by PHCN. The collapse of most of the textile factories, coupled with poor government policies on importation and high prices of locally made goods have turned Nigeria to a dumping ground for all kinds of textile materials and fairly-used clothes, shoes etc. The local manufactures cannot compete favorably, in terms of prices, with their foreign counterparts, who enjoy relatively lower cost of production because they operate in a well-organized economy. As a result of a failed system and PHCN's inefficiency, many of the artisans and secondary school graduates take to riding commercial motorcycles popularly called Okada. This poses another danger to the future of the country because most of them engage in criminal activities, and they become available tools in the hands of criminal-minded people.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES TO REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT

A national employment policy and action plan was launched by the government to deal with youth unemployment in the country. The plan is to ensure employment creation in the programmes of all ministries, departments and agencies. The government's policy on employment is to create and promote productive employment opportunities in all sectors of the economy, with the goal of enabling all persons who are available and willing to work, secure a sustainable livelihood through full productive and freely chosen employment

Real wage unemployment: This is unemployment as a result of a kind of market failure, a failure of the labour market to respond to changes in demand. If demand for work rises, it is logical that they will demand greater real wages similarly, if demand falls workers should expect to suffer lower real wages for the same work. Real wage unemployment is usually caused by a combination of strong trade unions giving employee greater power over deciding wage conditions with the threat of industrial action (strikes etc) with strong unions, firms will not be able to reduce wages when demand is low, leading to bankruptcy (unemployment) or layoffs of workers (unemployment).

Wage stickiness: Employees on long term contracts will have a fixed wage over a long period of time.

Minimum wage: This is a characteristic of most modern economies, guaranteeing every worker a minimum standard of living. This is undoubtedly wonderful, if the minimum wage is set too high, the labour market will be inflexible

Frictional Unemployment: This is unemployment generated through incomplete information of the labour market.

Cyclical Unemployment: Over the economic cycle demand changes and regardless of how flexible wages are, unemployment will rise or fall.

EFFECTS OF HIGH RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

High rate of unemployment has presented a major challenge for the economy in two major areas. One of such areas, it has eroded the funding base and secondly, it has increased the demands on government through the use of welfare programs because of the consequences for poverty and inequality resulting from high unemployment. Secondly, the economic costs that are produced from unemployment: Due to unemployment, the economic GNP will be less than the potential GNP gap. The gap is positive but can be slightly negative if the actual GNP exceeds potential GNP Ahigbo(2005).

THE NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF EMPLOYMENT (NDE) AS A GUIDE TOWARDS ENHANCING SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES IN NIGERIA

The National Directorate of Employment was set up by the Federal government in November 1986, to work out strategies for dealing with the mass unemployment in the country especially among school leavers, University and polytechnic and college graduates. It has articulated a number of programmes to give effect to government objectives of generating employment such as:

- i. Small scale industries and graduate employment program.
- ii. National youth employment and vocational skill development programme
- iii. Special public work
- iv. Agricultural programme

Mission and Vision of NDE

The NDE charter is to ensure that NDE is committed to employment generation, poverty reduction wealth creation and altitudinal chance to enhance Nigerian Youths to be self-employed and contribute to the economic growth and development of the Nation its mission and vision

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on psychological theory of entrepreneurship particularly as it relates to David McClelland (1961) work on Achieving Society. McClelland had postulated that for achievement, which he called achievement motivation (n-ach), by an individual is a precursor of entrepreneurial activities and a strong motivation for engaging in entrepreneurship. McClelland asserted via achievement motivation laboratory experiment about the effect of achievement on people's motivation. From the experiment he observed that most people do not possess a strong achievement based motivation, those who do, display a consistent behaviour in setting goals. The achievement motivation theory was based on the following assumptions:

- i. Achievement is more important than material or financial reward.
- ii. Achieving the aim or task gives greater personal satisfaction than receiving praise or recognition.
- iii. Financial reward is regarded as a measurement of success, not an end in itself.
- iv. Security is not a prime motivator, nor is status.
- v. Feedback is essential, because it enables measurement of success, not for reasons of praise or recognition.
- vi. Achievement-motivated people constantly seek improvements and ways of doing things better.
- vii. Achievement-motivated people will logically favour jobs and responsibilities that naturally satisfy, their needs i.e. offer flexibility and opportunity to set and achieve goals.

McClelland firmly believed that achievement-motivated people are generally the ones who make things happen and get results and that extends to getting results through the organization of other people and resources. Basically, item vi and vii are disposed to the present study in that youths of Nigeria especially Delta State who are achievement-motivated will constantly seek on how to improve the things they do. The implication here is that doing things better will naturally open up new ways and job opportunities which will absorb the unemployed Anyanwu, (2001).

Prior studies on entrepreneurial development among scholars presented varied perspectives and findings.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Taiwo (2014) carried out an empirical research on impact of entrepreneurship development on job creation in Nigeria. He found out that in any giving economy, entrepreneurship development

always give birth to job creation which will force people to do something that will better their lives and the country at large. He evaluated the relationship between job creation and entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. It was clear from his observation that job creation or employment opportunity in an economy can be traceable to entrepreneurship training and development.

Anyadike, Emeh and Ukah (2012), they took a study on Nigeria's growing unemployment situation and how it increasingly dwindles the potentials of the country, especially following official figures from the Bureau of statistics that puts the figure at about 40 million Nigerian

Youths captured in World Bank statistics in 2009 are unemployed. Having utilized the secondary source data, the paper remained extensively on current articles from ardent scholars on entrepreneurship development and government statistical documentations. The authors concluded that government should make entrepreneurship sellable to the people by inculcating it into the educational curriculum at every state of the educational sector and also utilize a re-modelled NYSC scheme educate the youths more on the importance, essences and need for entrepreneurship development.

METHODOLOGY

The study was a survey design. A sample size of 138 was derived from the population using probability. In analyzing the data collected, the descriptive technique using simple tables showing frequencies and percentages was used or employed. Chi-square was used to test the hypothesis based on its scientific nature.

Test of Null Hypothesis (Ho1)

i. Statement of Hypothesis

Ho: The activities of the National Directorate of Employment do not reduce unemployment in the economy.

ii. The statistical tools used.

Data for testing this hypothesis was obtained from question no 6. From the questionnaire, the chi-square used in this study is as follows:

$$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

S

Where X^2 = is the computed chi-square

O	=	is the observed frequencies
E	=	is the expected frequencies
S	=	Is the summation sign

(iii) Testing the hypothesis

Calculation of chi-square for hypothesis one Ho1:

Responses	O	E	O-E	O-E ²	O-E ² E
Yes	111	84.7	26.3	691.7	8.17
No	20	15.3	4.7	22.09	1.45
Total	131	100			9.62

Computed chi-square (X^2) = 9 m.62.

Table value = 3.84 (X_{20})

$$df = (m - 1) (n - 1)$$

$$df = (2 - 1) (2 - 1) = df = 1 \times 1 = 1 = 3.84.$$

(iv) Decision rule.

A decision rule is the statistical objective procedure, which guides the researcher as to whether a particular hypothesis is accepted or rejected from a set of data.

In testing the above hypothesis, the decision rule state that at 0.5 level of significance with 1 degree of freedom, of the calculated value of chi-square $X^2 > X_{20}$ reject Ho and accept H_1 , where X_{20} is the calculated value of 3.84.

Take the decision

The chi-square shows that the calculated value of 9.62 is greater than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree freedom and at a probability level of 0.5. So the (H_{01}) null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis H_1 upholds, that the activities of the National Directorate of Employment reduces unemployment in the economy.

Test of Null Hypothesis (H_{02})

i. Statement of Hypothesis

H_{02} : Government incentives to Small Scale Enterprises do not contribute to the reduction of unemployment in the economy. ii. The statistical tools used.

Data for testing this hypothesis was obtained from question 8 from the questionnaire as analyzed in table above. Chi-square was used as the statistical tool to test the hypothesis. The formular for chi-square for this study is as follows.

$$X_2 =$$

$$X_2 = \text{computed chi-square}$$

$$O = \text{Observed frequencies}$$

$$E = \text{Expected frequencies}$$

$$S = \text{Summation sign}$$

iii. Testing the hypothesis

Calculation of chi-square for hypothesis two (H_{02})

Responses

O	E	O-E	O-E ²	O-E ²	E
Agreed 89	68	21	441	6.49	
Disagreed	40	31	9	81	2.6
Undecided	2	1	1	1	1
Total	131	100		10.09	

Computed chi-square (X_2) = 10.09

Table value = (X_{20}) 5.991

vi. State the decision rule.

The decision rule states that 0.5 level of significance, with 2 degree of freedom, if the computed chi-square value $X^2 > X_{20}$, reject null hypothesis (H_0) and accept alternate hypothesis (H_2), where X_{20} is the table value of 5.99.

v. Take decision

The chi-square shows that the calculated value of 10.09 is greater than the table value of 5.99 at 2 degree of freedom and at a probability level of 0.5.

This result show that the alternate hypothesis (H_2) that represents the positive response tested significant and it was accepted that Small Scale Enterprises plays important role in supplying the needs of large industries.

Test of Null Hypothesis (H_0)

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

That Small Scale Enterprise contributes positively towards the reduction of unemployment in the economy. It also reveals that government through its agencies like National Directorate of Employment has contributed positively towards the reduction of unemployment rate in the economy.

In addition, the study also proves that government polices to a reasonable extent contributes in tackling unemployment problem in the economy

CONCLUSION

- i. The activities of National Directorate of Employment have contributed towards the reduction of unemployment in Nigeria.
- ii. That Small Scale Enterprises has contributed positively towards the improvement in the standard of living by reducing the rate of unemployment.

RECOMMENDATION

- i. There should be re-appraisal of the government aid to the programme of small-scale enterprises. Government should also ensure a continued maintenance of those agencies it has created to aid the small business enterprises in reducing unemployment and boosting employment through it's established agencies.
- ii. Government should intensify its effort in its policy making as it affects the generation of employment through the activities of small scale enterprises scheme for the unemployed.

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