

EDUCATION AND YOUTHS EMPLOYABILITY IN CAMEROON

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ABSTRACT

Background: This paper investigates into the effect of education on employment status, and employment options of youths in Cameroon using cross sectional data of the fourth Cameroon Household Survey (ECAM IV).

Methodology: We first used the Binary Logistic Regression to analyze the effect of education type and educational attainment on the employment status of 14459 youths in Cameroon, and later, the multinomial logistic model to investigate the effect of education type on the employment option of a different sample of 13589 Cameroonian youths employed in the Binary Logistic Model.

Results: Education type had a significant effect on employment status and employment option while educational attainment influenced only employment status. This showed that youths with TVET had greater chances of being employed than their counterparts of general education and the likelihood to be employed reduces with better educational levels. Similarly, TVET reduces the likelihood of being employed in the informal and public sectors compared to being employed in the formal self-employed sector.

Conclusions and Recommendations: Based on these findings it is recommended that TVET be subsidized in order to challenge the dominance of general education, and urgent educational reforms are also needed, to meet up with the labor marker exigencies of Cameroon.

Keywords: *Employment Status, Employment Option, Education Type, Education Attainment, Youths, Cameroon.*

INTRODUCTION

Employment and most especially that of the youth has become a problem and now a global crisis. People aged between 15 and 24 constitute more than 60 per cent of the world's population (Nkengim, 2016), and with about 12 per cent of global them facing unemployment, it means 800 million youths around the world are without jobs and this has in recent times been aggravated by the outbreak of Corona-19 (Talom, 2020). The outcome of the growing number of youth unemployment has caused world leaders to rethink and re-strategize in respect to the type of education which will enhance work integration for their youths (Takam, 2020).

For Africa, youths constitutes one of its greatest assets owing to the fact that the continent has the highest youthful population of about 506 million, and will double by year 2030 (Colin, 2014). This will unfortunately, of Africa's stock of employable youths, 21 per cent are unemployed, 61 per cent found in the vulnerable informal sector employment and only 18 per cent having decent employment (Talom, 2020). The average youth unemployment rate for African countries is relatively high especially in countries like Botswana and Namibia having about 37.9 and 39.5 per cent respectively (Ndobia, 2017). The 2020 Arab spring revealed that lack of employment opportunities for youth can undermine political stability. And according to World Bank Survey (WBS) [2016], 40 percent of youths who joined rebel movements in Sudan, Central Africa Republic (CAR), and Boko haram jihadist movement were motivated by lack of jobs (Nkengim, 2016). Another disturbing consequence of youth unemployment in Africa is the massive brain drain of some of the continent's best talents to the western world.

The unemployment situation in Cameroon is not very different from that of most African countries, and with youth unemployment of about 6 per cent, about 1.2 million youths aged 15 to 25 are unemployed in Cameroon (Tamghe, 2019). The situation is even worse if we widen the age group to 32 years, considering that this is the age limit to gain entry into public service employment. The high youth unemployment in Cameroon can be blamed on the high population growth rate of 2.6 per cent (Tatoum et al., 2018), the fragility of the economy (with few industries), the armed conflict in the two English speaking regions, the recent outbreak of COVID-19 and above all, the mismatch of education to labor market skills (Talom, 2020).

The Cameroon's growth and employment strategy paper (GESP) of 2020 elaborates policy measures of curbing general unemployment as well as that amongst youths. Such policies includes the regular recruitment of youths into the public service through special recruitments such as the one of 25 000 youths in 2020, the recent recruitment of 1000 basic education teachers and the ongoing recruitment of 2 000 PhD holders into higher institutions (Pinilla et al., 2020). Other measures involve the initiation of "big push" projects like the Lom Panga hydro-electric dam project, the Mvele project and the construction of multiple stadia like the Japoma and Olembe stadia aimed at providing job opportunities to the country's increasing youthful population (Talom, 2020).

Parker (2004) and Anh (1999) established a link between education and employment, while Margolis & Simonnet (2003) analyses the important role played by education type in the school-to-work transition process, and also emphasized on the importance of professional or technical education. Parcarella et al., (2015) analyzed the positive net effect of educational attainment on employment status showing how the former increases individual skills, and making them more productive. This ends up increasing their chances of labor market participation.

Cameroon's Education can be categorized into general, technical, vocational training and apprenticeship. But because Law no. 2018/010 of 18th July 2018 recognizes apprenticeship as a form of vocational training (Nkengim, 2016); education will be classified into three broad categories - general, technical, and vocational training.

In her quest to impact youths with the necessary potentials which will permit them obtain and/or create decent jobs after studies, the Cameroon government has put in place four separate ministries in charge of education (Ndinka, 2016). These are the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB), the ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC), the ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP) and the ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP). Their creations go with enormous budgetary allocations which have continued to increase over the last two decades. In 2020, MINEDUB was allocated 232.7 billion, MINESEC 386.9 billion, MINESUP 65.2 billion and MINEFOP 18.7 billion francs CFA; and these four put together account for about 14.2 per cent of the 4 951 billion annual budget (Takam, 2020).

Primary education in Cameroon run for 6 years and operates a general education program under the auspices of MINEDUB, and with schools owned by the government, private individuals and the mission. In the pursuit of the second millennium development goal (MDGs) of ensuring primary education for all children by 2015, the Cameroon government in collaboration with her development partners made primary education free since the year 2000. This has paid off and increased enrolment rate to 98 per cent while completion rate in primary schools has also increased to 68.3 per cent (Baye et al., 2016).

After completion of primary education, pupils make the choice of either enrolling for general (grammar) secondary schools or technical secondary schools. By 1970, the enrolment rate for secondary general education reached 95 per cent while that of technical secondary was barely 5 per cent (Asongwe, 2019). This has been blamed on the limited attention given to technical education by public authorities and the misconception that the latter was meant for the less intelligent children. However, the situation has improved with time and more than seven thousand grammar schools now run side by side with about eight hundred technical schools across the national territory, with an enrolment rate of 41.9 per cent (Ndille, 2020). But the enrolment gap between grammar and technical education have not witness any significant change, given that only 28 per cent are registered in technical education while 72 per cent are enrolled for general education (Takam, 2020).

While the curriculum designed for general secondary schools emphasizes on disciplines like languages, history and philosophy, that for technical is centered on transmitting practical skills and training students for commercial and industrial occupations such as accounting, electricity, building and wood work (Baye et al., 2016). Even though such practical skills favor creativity and self-employment among students of technical schools, more attention continuously accorded to general education given that the number of technical secondary schools especially in the English speaking regions of the country remains relatively low and most of the existing ones go without adequately trained teachers and the necessary didactic material (Takam, 2020).

The introduction of higher education in the country dates back to 1962 through the creation of the University of Yaounde, which began in September 1962 with a student enrollment of 600, spread in three faculties (Faculty of arts and social science, Faculty of science, and the Faculty of law and economics (Fonkeng, 2016). In addition to the three faculties, specialized schools were later attached to the University to prepare graduates for professional careers. Prominent among these

specialized institutions were the school of medicine (CUSS), the institute of international relations (IRIC), and the school of engineering (ENSP). Today, Cameroon counts more than 120 authorized private tertiary institutions.

One important goal of higher education was to professionalize most of the programs, but unfortunately, not even the Bachelor-Master-Doctorate (BMD) program has permitted this dream realized. More than 70 per cent of University enrollment is for general or academic courses while the rest 30 per cent in technical vocational education training (TVET) (Poon et al., 2020). This is probably explained by the limited number of places offered for TVET courses in public Universities usually through competitive entrance examinations or the high fees expected in private Universities- considered too high for the average Cameroonian (Takam, 2020)

The creation of MINEFOP in 2011 following decree no. 2011/126 was to organize standards for apprenticeship and promote TVET so as to reduce global unemployment particularly among the youths. Its co-operation with international partners like the USA and South Korea governments has permitted the construction of three vocational training centers in the cities of Douala, Limbe, and Sangmelima (Madia et al., 2021). programs like the national employment fund (NEF) and the integrated support program for the informal sector (PIAASI) which have helped in reducing unemployment were initiated thanks to MINEFOP activities (Tamghe, 2019). The national employment fund promotes employment in financing on the job training, vocational training and self-employment based on the labor market requirements. PIAASI on the other hand promotes the transformation of the informal sector to the formal sector activities, thus reducing vulnerable employment which is very common among those in the informal sector (Ngouhou et al., 2021). Other important government projects to fight the youth unemployment dilemma includes the creation of the National Youth Observatory which serves as an intermediary between youths and the government (Nkengim, 2016), the initiation of the Support program for Youths in Rural Areas (PAJER-U) and a special youth triennial plan worth 102 billion FCFA launched in 2017 targeting about one million youths and assisting them with TVET as well as financing youths entrepreneurial projects (Asongwe, 2019).

However, the above government projects have failed to significantly reduce youth's unemployment in Cameroon. Therefore can the problem be due to the fragility of the economy or the type of education? As a result, the paper sought to investigate:

- The relationship between education type and employment status in Cameroon,
- How educational attainment relates with employment status of youths in Cameroon.
- The link between education type and employment option of youths in Cameroon.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The Human Capital Theory (HCT)

HCT examines the relationship between education and employment, economic growth and social well-being. It is an extension of the capital concept and states that expenditures on education, job training, and health are capital investments that will yield economic and social returns at the individual and social levels. It holds that Education and training would lead to greater productivity, which ultimately will be translated into economic returns through employment. According to the

theory, the level of cognitive stock of economically productive human capability is a product of innate abilities and investment in education and health. Therefore increasing it will yield higher productivity and better efficiency of workers. Human capital refers to the skills, habits, and other attributes each person possesses and that contributes to the production of the final economic output. Examples include factors such as education, training, intelligence, skills, and others like punctuality and interpersonal skills (Becker, 1964).

Originating from Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" in 1776, the HCT has experienced significant developments. Becker (1964) highlights a key similarity between what is normally considered as capital and human capital. According to him, traditional capital such as stock, steel plants, or assembly lines produce a yield - they are investments that produce further income. Therefore the more educated an individual; the more he produces, thereby increasing the worth of a firm. Although widely accepted in educational policies, many scholars in the political economy of education and labor have challenged the core narrative of HCT. The screening theory sees higher education not as a site of self-investment in cognitive formation that delivers economic returns, but as a system that signals a competitive position in delivering economic returns (Yerima, 2014). The above narrative shows that HCT unequivocally speaks volume of the relationship between the type of education and employment status. The HCT can be used to explain the relationship between education and employment status in that the different types of education transmit different types of human capital to their learners, which in turn influence the employers' perception in recruitment. However, HCT records limitations in that it lacks realism of method (Anh, 1999), and imposes a single linear pathway on the complex passage between heterogeneous education and work and does not explain how education augments productivity, or why salaries have become more unequal among people with the same level of education (Hanush, 2016). Its assumptions that education increases productivity in the workplace and result to higher individual wages provide little insight into the processes through which education training are translated into higher wages.

The HCT can be used to explain the relationship between education and employment status in that the different types of education transmit different types of human capital to their learners, which in turn influence the employers' perception in recruitment.

The "Search and Matching" Theory

This is a theoretical model describing the process for looking and finding a job in the contemporary world, developed by Dale Mortensen of California University and Diamond Peter of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It describes how search frictions, lack of information, as well as the mismatch between skills and interests offered by workers and wages hinder the efficient matching of job-seekers with job openings. These obstacles affect job transitions and depress labor market dynamism, and can lead to temporal and prolonged unemployment (Parcarella et al., 2015).

The job search theory is grounded on the assumptions of imperfect information and rationality of the labor market participants (Oreopoulos, 2012). These constraints will make a participant to accept an employment contract on a temporal basis while struggling to get more information on labor market differences, considering that the hypothesis of rationality allows the participants to always go for the best employment contract. Despite its widespread impact, the search and matching model has faced criticisms for failing to fully account for several empirical phenomena in contemporary labor markets, notably the cyclical and persistence of vacancies, unemployment, and job creation as well as the persistence of inflation in response to monetary shocks. One of the

key criticisms of the theory is focused on its failure to accurately predict the effects of the internet on employment (Quiggin, 2015), which should have declined with the coming of the internet which increased the information available to both employers and employees.

The Segmented Labor Market (SLM) Theory

Also known as the dual theory of labor market founded by a group of economists who challenged the classical explanation of the functioning of the labor market, arguing that both the neo-classical and classical treatment leave many major labor market policy issues unexplained. These include the wage dispersion, and as a result income distribution, unemployment and discrimination. The segmentalist approach shifted emphasis from supply side of labor market to the demand side (Parcarella, 2012), insisting on the fragmented nature of labor markets and the importance of institutional and social influences of pay and employment. The Dual labor market theory is the simplest form of the segmentation theory (Doeringer, 1980), which holds that internal labor markets are generated by several factors not envisioned in conventional economic theory.

According to the theory, labor market is composed of two sectors: Primary and secondary sectors, with very limited mobility between them, resulting in queues for primary sector jobs. The primary sector assumed to consist of “good” jobs while the secondary sector is characterized with insecure jobs, low wages, non-involvement of workers in the decision-making process and poor working conditions (Doeringer, 1980).

The theory questions the existence of a direct linkage between the productive capacities of an individual and his/her wage, as well as the allocation of such an individual across jobs, implicit in the neo-classical and human capital version of labor market theory. Industrial organization, product market, technological conditions, managerial control strategies and systems of labor market regulation are all recognized as having an influence on the structure of jobs and in contrasts to the orthodox theory of the labor market the distinction between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ jobs is not based on individual differences in productivity. Instead, as firms become the main agents structuring the system of employment, emphasis is placed rather on the development of institutional constraints in relation to pay formation, and the endogeneity of individual tastes (Pischke, 1998). Whereas in competitive theories it is individual characteristics that are crucial, in SLM theories it is jobs characteristics that matter. In addition, the theory tends to add explanations to institutional matters inside the organization.

However, the clear dichotomy between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ jobs in dual labor markets model appears too simple and the distribution of the quality of jobs is more likely to be multimodal rather than bi-modal.

Segmented labor market models suffer from their inability to operationally define the ‘distinct segments’, a problem compounded by the popularity of the simplest variant of this approach of dual labor market model (Parcarella et al., 2015). The Segmentation theory is often said to be less coherent, less rigorous, less fully elaborated than orthodox competitive theory. It is also argued that the main contributions of SLM approach to our understanding of the operation of labor market are theoretical modification and addition to orthodox theory rather than an introduction of an alternative (Pischke, 1998).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Our empirical review centers on the relationships between education and employment outcomes, educational attainment and employment status, as well as education type and employment option.

Ryan et al (2001) used multivariate decomposition estimation technique in analyzing the relationship between education and employment outcomes on a sample of 68,000 youths in Sao Polo. It was established that vocational programs like apprenticeships increases the chances of self-employment in an early working life. Cedefop (2018) found a positive relationship between vocational education and school-to-work transition among youths aged 15 to 24 years using the simple Probit model. Riddell and song (2012) in an investigation into “the distribution of unemployment rates by academic fields in Ghana” using panel analysis and revealed that the supply of graduates does not adjust perfectly to the labor market needs and changes. They argued that vocational education provides useful skills and prepare individuals lacking in them for labor market. The binary Probit model is used in Ndinka (2016) to investigate the effects of educational systems on the employability of secondary school graduates in sub Saharan Africa. Conclusions were that the chances for holders of high school certificates holders to remain unemployed was about 1.6 times lower in countries where more of the youths are vocational programs certificate holders compared to countries where general education was predominant. In a similar study, Cahuc et al (2013) used a simple logistic model to observe that graduates from TVET have rapid and easier employment opportunities than their counterparts of general education. Investigating into the difference in the employability between general and vocational education among youths, Hanushek et al. (2011) used a work-cycle method to obtain similar results with earlier studies that vocational education trainees have higher chances of having positive labor market outcomes.

Results from studies carried out in different parts of the globe on the relationship between educational levels and the employment status show some uniformity. Osborne et al (2007) found that the employment rates among tertiary education graduates is 3.21 times higher than the employment rates of those with lower levels of education in the U.S labor market using simple probit estimation. In the same line, Song (2011) earlier on found that furthering education after the secondary level greatly reduces the incidence of unemployment. His findings also reveal that higher levels of education have a greater influence on people’s capacity to react or adapt to adverse employment crisis and associated risks. Pinet (2004) used same methodology (Multinomial Probit estimation technique) and cross sectional data in analyzing “The incidence of unemployment in North African countries”. Findings show that an additional year of schooling after upper secondary school increases employment chances. Samda et al (2008) on its part identified a strong correlation between schooling and the chances of being employed in the early years after graduation, and conclude that one’s level of schooling has a substantial influence on his ability to succeed in the labor market particularly in the direct transition from school to work.

Makox et al (2017) applied the Probit model to study “The role of education in the employment orientation of Ethiopian women” using secondary data. They found that urban women who had TVET background had 2.82 times more chances of being self-employed than being employees relative to those without such educational background. This could be explained by the fact that TVET embeds creative thinking, a spirit of entrepreneurship and motivates students. Similar results were obtained earlier by Dimba (2015), using the multinomial approach on a sample of 1,527 of the working age in a study of “The determinants of employment choices”. Findings revealed that educational orientation significantly influenced employment choices in Senegal, and

for the three categories of employment choices (self-employment, public sector employment and private wage employment), the likelihood of self-employment after general education as compared to technical education reduces over private wage employment. But the chances of being employed in public sector in relation to obtaining a private wage employment increases by 1.6 times for people with general education compared to those who did TVET. Toronto (2019) used cross sectional data for Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria to study education and job mismatch. Using Chi-square correlation analysis and the multinomial approach, results revealed that with the exception of marital status variables like education type, educational attainment, work experience, gender, location and age all had a significant effect on employment options of youths in Cameroon.

MODEL SPECIFICATION

Two models were constructed to address the issues raised. First the binary logistic model, with the assumption that the employment status of Cameroonian youths is a function of education type, educational attainment, work experience, gender, location, age, range and marital status; expressed in the form:

$$ESY = f(TED, EDA, WPR, GDR, LOC, AGR, MAS) \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

In an econometric form this function is written as:

$$ESY_i = \phi_0 + \phi_1EDT_i + \phi_2EDA_i + \phi_3EXW_i + \phi_4GEN_i + \phi_5LCT_i + \phi_6AGE_i + \phi_7MST_i + \epsilon_i \dots\dots (2)$$

Where ESY denotes youths employment status (unemployed = 0; employed = 1)

EDT, education type (General education = 0; TVET = 1)

EDA, educational attainment (Tertiary education = 0; secondary education = 2 and Primary education = 1)

EXW, work experience (have experience = 0; No work experience = 1)

GEN, gender (female = 0; Male = 1).

LCT, the location (rural =0; urban = 1)

ARG, age range (15 – 25 = 1; 26 – 35 = 0)

MST, marital status (married = 0; single = 1)

and ϵ_i , the error term.

Based on economic theory, apriori expectations are: $\phi_0 < 0, \phi_1 > 0, \phi_2 > 0, \phi_3 > 0, \phi_4 > 0, \phi_5 > 0, \phi_6 > 0, \phi_7 > 0$.

The second model (multinomial logistic model) on the other hand assumes that education type, educational attainment, work experience, gender, location, age, range and marital status determines the employment option of youths in Cameroon. This is expressed as:

$$EOY = f(EDT, EDA, EXW, GEN, LCT, AGE, MST) \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

In an econometric form the function is transformed and written as:

$$EOY_i = \phi_0 + \phi_1EDT_i + \phi_2EDA_i + \phi_3EXW_i + \phi_4GEN_i + \phi_5LCT_i + \phi_6AGE_i + \phi_7MST_i + \epsilon_i \dots\dots (4)$$

EOY denotes youth’s employment option (unemployed = 0; employed = 0), and other variables as defined above.

Based on economic theory, apriori expectations are: $\phi_0 < 0$, $\phi_1 > 0$, $\phi_2 > 0$, $\phi_3 > 0$, $\phi_4 > 0$, $\phi_5 > 0$, $\phi_6 > 0$, $\phi_7 > 0$.

ESTIMATION TECHNIQUE

The binary logistic regression technique was adopted to analyze how the independent variables influence the chances of youth’s employment. However, on the basis of the multiple categories of the dependent variable (employment option), a multinomial logistic regression technique was applied to investigate the effect of education type on the employment option of Cameroonian youths. The Probit estimation model could have equally been used but preferred because the logistic model gave more reliable results than the latter. Secondly for its simplicity and robustness when compared to others. For example the independent variables do not have to normally distributed, neither must it have equal variance in each group. More so, it does not assume a linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Logistic regression coefficients are used to estimate odds ratios for each of the independent variables in the model, and looks at the likelihood that an event can occur or not (Mitchell, 1992).

RESULTS

Regression Results

Table 1: Binary Logistic Regression Results

	B	SE	Odd Ratios	Sig
Constant	-4.348	.271	.013	.000
TVET	.564	.149	1.757	.000
Primary	1.483	.177	4.408	.000
Secondary	.627	.085	1.872	.000
No experience	-2.631	.180	.072	.000
Male	.815	.134	2.258	.000
Urban	-2.709	.153	.067	.020
Age (15-25)	-1.589	.130	.204	.000
Single	.126	.176	1.135	.074
Pseudo R ² (Nagelkerke)	0.202			
C-Statistics (% correctly predicted)	overall 91.8%			
Likelihood ratio test	985.591 (p<0.05)			
Observation	14,459			

Source: Computerized by Authors.

- a. Unemployment is the reference category for employment status. b.
 The reference category for the variables entered in the model (education type, educational attainment, experience, gender, location, age range and marital status) are general education, tertiary attainment, no experience, female, rural, age (26-35) and married respectively.

Results of Multinomial Logistic Regression

Table 2: Results of Multinomial Logistic Regression

Employment Option	Effect	B	Sig	Odds Ratios
Informal employment	intercept	1.015	.000	
	TVET	-2.601	.000	.074
	Primary	1.496	.000	4.464
	Secondary	.073	.000	1.076
	No Experience	1.498	.000	4.468
	Male	-.473	.003	.623
	Urban	-2.093	.000	.123
	Age (15-25)	-.504	.012	.604
	Single	.064	.122	1.066
Formal Private employment	intercept	-.848	.000	
	TVET	1.045	.000	2.843
	Primary	-.473	.000	.623
	Secondary	-2.664	.000	.070
	No Experience	-1.228	.000	.293
	Male	-.435	.000	1.544
	Urban	1.182	.000	3.262
	Age (15-25)	-.127	.017	.881
	Single	.072	.126	1.074
Public Sector Employment	Intercept	-1.500	.000	
	TVET	-1.709	.000	.181
	Primary	-.532	.000	.587
	Secondary	-1.750	.013	.174
	No Experience	.511	.000	1.666
	Male	1.270	.000	3.560
	Urban	.266	.000	1.305
	Age (15-25)	-.274	.026	.760
	Singe	.341	.274	1.406

Pseudo R2 (Nagelkerke)	0.355
C-Statistics (% Correctly Predicted)	73.49
Likelihood Ratio Test	6230.374 (p<0.05)
Observation	13,589

Source: Computerized by Authors.

- a. *Formal self-employment is the reference category for employment option.*
 b. *The reference category for the variables entered in the model (education type, educational attainment, experience, gender, location, age range and marital status) are general education, tertiary attainment, no experience, female, rural, age (26-35) and married respectively.*

The C-statistics which measures the predictive power of the model show that the model can correctly predict and classify youths into formal self-employment, formal private employment, public sector employment and informal employment at an accurate rate of 73.49 per cent. The model fitness information reveal a likelihood ratio test value of 6230.374 (P-value <0.05), thus indicating that the independent variables in the model were globally significant determinants of employment option and there exist a relationship between the independent variables and youth employment option.

The pseudo R² (Nagelkerke) value was 0.355, demonstrating that about 35.5 per cent of the variation in the employment option is explained by the independent variables specified in the model while about 64.5% of the variation is explained by the error term. The value of pseudo R-square is low but this does not pose any real problem because the pseudo R² is not a reliable test of fitness in logistic regression as adjusted R² does in ordinary least square regression (Njong, 2010)

Analysis of Results

Results of the multinomial logistic regression reveal that with the exception of marital status, all other variables specified in the model have a significant effect on employment option of youth in Cameroon. Youths with TVET have 0.074 less chances of being in informal employment than in formal self-employment when compared with their peers having general education background. In other words, TVET encourages formal self-employment to the detriment of informal employment. Looking at the level of education and comparing tertiary with primary and secondary education, we observe an increase in the likelihood of youth to be in informal employment by 4.464 times and 1.076 times respectively. Thus, the chances for a youth being in the informal employment reduces as his educational level increases and increases for those without any work experience, and being single. On the other hand, males, youths living in urban areas and those aged 15 to 25 had lower chances of being in informal employment.

With respect to formal private employment it shows that youths with TVET are 2.843 times more likely to be in the formal private employment than their counterparts with general education background. Those with primary education, secondary education, having no work experience and those aged 15 - 25 are less likely to be in formal private employment, while the male youths living in urban areas and those single, have higher chances of being in formal private employment. Youths with TVET are 0.181 less likely to be employed in the public service than those with general education background. Primary and secondary education attainment when compared with

tertiary education reduces the chances of being in public sector employment by 0.174 and 0.587 times respectively. As for other variables, youths without experience, males, youths in urban areas and single youths have higher chances of being in public sector employment while youths aged between 15 and 25 are less likely to be employed in the public sector.

Educational Type and Attainment and Youth Employment Status

It is observed from the results that TVET has a positive and significant effect on employment status, implying that youths with TVET are 1.757 times more likely to be employed than those with other educational backgrounds. Results also indicate that educational attainment significantly and inversely affect employment status of youths in Cameroon. That is, a lower level of educational attainment will rather increase the likelihood of youths to be employed. In the context of this work, we define employment status as the labor market condition of persons between 15 and 35 years in terms of their ability to either be employed or not in the past one month. Primary education graduate youths have 4.408 times more chances of being employed than University graduates, while secondary school graduates, 1.872 times. By implication as youths achieve higher educational levels their chances of being employed reduces. Thus, we uphold the alternative hypothesis that educational attainments significantly affect employment status of youths in Cameroon. This can be explained by the presence of a large informal sector in the Cameroonian economy and a labor market that absorbs graduates from lower educational attainment given the fact that little skills and education are needed for most of such employments. In addition to this is the fact that Cameroonian entrepreneurs give very little value for human labor and as such will prefer paying less including the state. The prevalence of higher unemployment rates amongst University graduates can also be explained by this fact. These findings are consistent with those of (Fiez, 2009), but differ from those of Osborne et al, (2007) in the case of the U.S labor market.

Education Type and Employment Option

The Multinomial Logistic Regression results indicate that education type has a significant effect on the employment option of youths in Cameroon. TVET reduces a Cameroonian youth's likelihood of being in the informal and public sectors employment and at the same time increase the chances of being in formal private employment sector. For instance TVET were found to have 0.074 times less chances of being into informal employment than their peers with general educational background; and comparing between public sector employment and formal self-employment, it is realized that youths with TVET have 0.181 times less chances of being in a public sector employment than those with general education. As for formal employment the results reveal that having a TVET, one is about 2.843 times more likelihood being in the formal employment than those with general education background. This is explained by the specific skills acquired from TVET programs, which permit job creation rather than become job seekers (for public sector employment) sometimes with low wage rates. Because general education youths lack these specific and professional skills much required in companies they are left with no other option than seek for public service and informal employments. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that education type has a significant effect on the employment option of youths in Cameroon. These results corroborate Makox et al. (2017) and Dimba (2015).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Education type, educational attainment, work experience, age, location, and gender significantly affect the employment status and employment option of youths in Cameroon. TVET when compared to general education increases both the likelihood of youths being employed in Cameroon, and also the chances of youths being employed in the formal sector. To efficiently mitigate the existing youth unemployment in Cameroon, reduce pressure on government for recruitment, as well as reduce the dominance of the informal employment in the country (at all levels of educational attainment), requires a greater emphasis on the promotion and development of TVET. This, in the domain of increasing the subsidization of existing TVET for a better functioning, and the use of urgent measures towards educational reforms like professionalizing existing educational programs at all the levels.

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