

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

The global community has been relentless in its effort at furthering the course of humanity in all dimensions, especially in the aspect of efficient resource management to ensure progress in the improvement of conditions of living since the whole essence of natural endowment and technical advancement of any kind is towards human satisfaction or values. Paradoxically, human beings, being the end beneficiaries of the values that accrue from efficient human resource management are also part and parcel of the resources to be managed since they constitute initiators and participants in the feat of development or progress that engenders the necessary values. However, there is no part of the global community that has been able to engage its entire people that are willing to work (participate in the process of development).

This is to say that unemployment is sparsely present in all countries of the world.

Despite falling unemployment levels in developed economies like Europe (7.1 percent in 2014 to 6.7 percent in 2015), global job crisis is not likely to end, especially in emerging economies in view of the continuous high rates of unemployment World Wide as well as chronic vulnerability of employment in many developing economies (ILO,2016). The final figure for global unemployment in 2015 was estimated to stand at 197.1 million to reach 199.4 million as well as 1.1 million likely to be added in 2017 (ILO, 2016). The significant slowdown in emerging economies coupled with a sharp decline in commodity prices is having a dramatic effect on the world of employment (Ryder, 2016); many working women and men are having to accept low paid jobs both in emerging and developing economies and also, increasingly in developed countries, and despite a drop in the number of unemployed people in EU countries and the U.S.A, too many people are still jobless (Ryder, 2016).

The foregoing is not unconnected to the fact that agricultural potentials have not been

fully exploited across the globe; the sector account for a comparatively small share of the global economy, but remains central to the lives of a great number of people. In 2002, of the world's 7.1 billion people, an estimated 1.3 billion (19 percent) were directly engaged in farming, but agriculture (including the relatively small hunting fishing and forestry sectors) represented just 2.8 percent of overall income (World Bank, 2012) as cited in Alston et al (2014). It is therefore indicative that there is huge potential to be exploited in agricultural sector which most countries have realized and are taking the path through agricultural development.

Nigeria, despite its enviable riches, both in human and material resources is woefully caught in the web of unemployment crisis. It is worrisome that Nigeria which occupies an area of 923,768sq.km out of which 82 million hectares are arable lands, has 140,431,790 people as at 2006 as revealed by the 2006 population census and an estimated current population of 187 million as revealed by United Nations ([www.worldmeters.info/world-population](http://www.worldmeters.info/world-population)) is still being ravaged by poverty largely because of increasing rate of unemployment. According to National Bureau of Statistics (2012), 69 percent of Nigeria's estimated population live in poverty. It described it as one of the effects of high rate of unemployment in the country which was put at 12.1 percent in the first quarter of 2016 ([www.Tradingeconomies.com/nigeria/un](http://www.Tradingeconomies.com/nigeria/un)) and 13.9 percent in December –fourth quarter of 2016 (National bureau of statistics, 2016).

By the time Nigeria became independent in October 1960, agriculture was the dominant sector of the economy, contributing about 70 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), employing about the same percentage of the working population, and accounting for about 90 percent of foreign earnings and Federal Government Revenue (CBN, 2010). The sector was self-sufficient in food production (Anyanwu, et al 1997, Tomori, 1979, CBN 1997). The influence of agriculture also manifested in the fact that during the early period of post-independence up to mid-1970s, there was rapid growth of industrial capacity and output, as the contribution of the manufacturing sector

(which largely depended on agricultural output) to the GDP rose from 4.8% to 8.2 (CBN, 2010). This pattern changed when oil suddenly became of strategic importance to the world economy and invariably Nigerian economy through its supply-price nexus. Then began the dramatic shift of policies from a holistic approach to benchmarking. Nigeria became an importer of some of the agricultural products it was exporting especially food grains; the import bill rose from 45 million dollar in 1966 to 1,964.8 million dollar in 1981. The agricultural sector's contribution to GDP declined and reached an all-time low of 21.8 percent between 1976 and 1980; growth rate was negative figure between 1971 and 1975. In addition, earnings from the sector declined in relative terms to about 1.6 percent; the ratio of agricultural exports to imports dropped between 1960 and 1969 to as low as 0.09 percent in 1981 (Olayemi, 1986)

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