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Mini Review

Artificial Intelligence in Africa's Burgeoning Population. Brief Review of Cremer and Kasparov for Augmentation

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Abstract

This brief review focuses on Artificial Intelligence in Africa's burgeoning population. Amongst the problems discussed in this article is the limited resources which is an aftermath of population increase. More so, increase in population does not necessarily mean more resources cannot be created just as is seen in the case of China which has managed to float a polarized economy. In other words, Africa is in this situation as a result of mismanagement and misappropriation. What is of interest is the fact that Cremer and Kasparov have emphasized the augmentation of AI with human activities. This is a situation whereby employees can work alongside AI mechanisms as against total replacement of employees. Unfortunately, this may not be achievable in Africa where the little resources that are made available are unprofessionally handled. This implies that a lot of people would be out of jobs. But if Cremer and Kasparov's ideas are considered; it may be too expensive to co-manage, dangerous in a ravaging pandemic situation or archaic by the time the future becomes completely AI.

Introduction

According to the brief prepared by the Organization of African, Unity (OAU) and Economic commission for Africa (ECA) [1], the main issues with population is not in numbers but in the welfare of humanity. This can be described as a realistic view considering that the direct consequences of having an increase in population includes the total well-being of a group of persons who occupy a definite territory. Unfortunately, Africa which is developing more or less takes a central stake in all of this. Be that as it may, we might be tempted to enquire why Africa should be considered significant after all, countries like China, India, US, Indonesia, Pakistan and Brazil have their share in the population issue.

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The obvious truth is that in terms of economic development, infrastructure and investments, Africa stands at a distance to these countries. That is to say that the poverty margin within these countries cannot match that of Africa. And this buttresses the idea that most parts of Africa are more or less underdeveloped. For instance, Nigeria alone had an estimated population of 217,597,665 with a recorded GDP per capital of \$1,969 in 2017. This was documented by Worldometer [2] as just 0.46% of the world's share of GDP. According to the [3] World bank statistics in 2022, this is not even close to where India (\$2.66 trillion) or Indonesia (\$1.05 trillion) stands talk less of the US and China with \$20.89 trillion, \$14.72 trillion respectively. With this information one can begin to imagine how ironical it seems that China with the highest population has managed to stay on top not just economically but technologically wise as well. The main problem with Africa has always been the mismanagement of resources by corrupt government entities and this begs the question, with the growth in Africa's population in poverty and the replacement of human abilities in the various sectors, can the deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) aid development or augment human activities as suggested in the Cremer and Kasparov article [4]?

However, there have been controversial arguments as to what or what not the AI should be made to do. Scholars (Ibid) are of the opinion that the AI should rather augment human activities not replace them. But how exactly is this going to be achievable? During the Covid19 pandemic, we noticed how it became important to introduce AI mechanisms not just in medical field but also in other significant sectors in order to avoid the risk of contracting infections. What this means in essence is that in order to limit contacts between humans, robots with human like assimilation were introduced. What is more is that technology seeks to make efficiency the order of the day and so a machine can be programmed to attend to tasks faster than humans. Can these AI mechanisms really augment humans without recording complete inactivity on the part of humans? Cremer and Kasparov [4] argues that humans are intuitive and distinct in emotions unlike the machines that cannot feel. Unfortunately, this is not the reality in the employment sector as human employees are reduced in order to maximize the more efficient machines which possibly saves time and rakes in more profits for the company. Moreover with the review, changes and trends in technology, it might be possible to replicate robots with exact human like qualities in the near future. In other words, robots that can be emotionally active as well as intuitive. Hence for a country like Nigeria where corruption and job insecurity thrives it is logical to postulate that this might be a case of worsening the status quo. The chart below by National Bureau of Statistics indicates the trend on unemployment in Nigeria within 2017-2021 [5] (Figure 1).

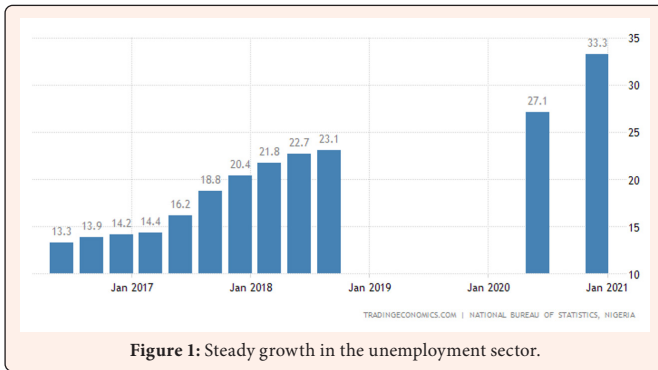


Figure 1: Steady growth in the unemployment sector.

As indicated on the above chart, there is a steady growth in the unemployment sector. The figures reads from 13.3 in 2017 to 33.3 in 2021. This is even more consequential when juxtaposed alongside the growth in population .

Conclusion

Finally, although few studies [6] have highlighted that there is no sufficient evidence that indicates that AI has affected wages, and the demand for Pro Artificial intelligence skills, the reason may not be far-fetched. This is most likely due to the reality that Nigeria has not embraced the use of these sophisticated technologies in the work space. Therefore, the discovery that the study also finds that artificial

intelligence does not replace workers rather it complements their efforts might be valid to an extent. What this implies is that should Nigeria decide to join its counterparts in fully absorbing AI technologies at this stage, it might be detrimental. Yet, the full implementation of this machines is important. The case with the Covid19 ravaging pandemic is a significant case which displayed the significance of these automated machines. Different states in Nigeria recorded huge contraction cases and due to its poor management, a lot of patients and doctors died in the process.

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