



Impact of n-power programme on poverty alleviation among the youths in Taraba state: A case study of Jalingo local government area, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study was conducted on impact of N-power programme on poverty alleviation among youths in Taraba state “A case study of jalingo local government area”. The specific objective were to; describe the socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries, determine the impact of N- power programme on poverty alleviation among youths and identify the problems associated with N-power programme in the study Area. The study was targeted on three (3) component of N-power programme namely: N-Tech, N-Health and N-Agro respectively. Data were collected from 90 respondents randomly selected using structural questionnaire and the data were analysed using frequency, percentage and t-test analysis. The results on socio-economic characteristics of the respondents indicated that majority (95.6%) of the respondents were youths with age less than 50 years, who are the beneficiaries of this programme. Majority (66.7%) of the respondents were male, most (77.8%) of the respondents were married due to the impact of this programme. Majority (94.4%) of the respondents attained higher education which enable them to be beneficiaries of the programme. Majority (97.8%) of the respondents had household size less than 11 persons. Therefore, they have to work hard to sustained their selves and family. Most of the respondents were doing one job or the other. Majority (80%) of the respondents earned between N30000-40000 has their monthly income, with this their standard of living have been improved compared to when they were jobless earning nothing at the end of the month. The result on t-test analysis revealed that the N-power programme have alleviated poverty among the youths in the study Area. This was based on the t-calculated value (4.53) was greater than the t-tabulated value (3.18). This also implies that N-power programme have positively impacted the lives of the beneficiaries in terms of their income, assets, and access to job / skills acquisition. This indicated that with N-power programme their income have been increased, some were able to acquired assets such as tricycle, motorcycle, land, build houses etc. And have access to job/skills acquisition such as teaching, extension service, health service, computer operators, shoe markers, among others. Recommendations were made based on the findings of this study: Government should prepared a workable exit policy from the beginning of the programme and Government should also ensure that their monthly stipend were paid in due time.

Keywords: Impact, N-power, programme, poverty, Alleviation, youth, Taraba state and Nigeria

1. Introduction

The N-power is one of the social intervention schemes initiated by the Federal Government of Nigeria under the present administration of President Muhammadu Buhari. It was designed to help provide job creation and empowerment for young Nigerians to acquire and develop life-long skills to become solution providers in their communities and to become players in the domestic and global markets. At this time however, the initial modular programmes in N-Power are designed for Nigerian citizens between the ages of 18 and 35. In the quest to actualize the policy frame and safe guard the needful social safety nets, N-power is aimed at addressing the challenges of unemployment especially among graduate youths as it is categorize into Graduate Teachers Corps which is targeted at 500,000 graduates. N-power knowledge is targeting 25,000 non-graduates while N-power Build targets 75,000 non-graduates recruitment. Through Npower, young Nigerians youths will be empowered with the necessary tools to go and create, develop, build, fix and work on exceptional ideas, projects and enterprises that will change the communities, the economy and the nation at large (Obada, 2017) ^[5].

Poverty and unemployment are twin evils bedevilling the

Nigeria state today. Reports from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2005) shows how the “population in poverty has maintain a steady increase from 17.7 million in 1988 to 66.7 million in 2004.” In 2010, the national Bureau of Statistics reported that 60.9% of Nigerians were living in poverty. The world poverty clock in 2018 stated that Nigeria assumed the ignoble position of being the poverty capital of the world after overtaking India, with about 86.9 million of her population in extreme poverty (Vanguard, 2019).

Some systemic hiccups, including insufficient information and wrong Bank Verification Number (BVN) have been identified as factors threatening to wreck the N-Power programme, introduced by the Federal Government, as a social safety net to reduce the rate of graduate unemployment plaguing the country. Specifically, the programme, which took off in December 2016 year is designed to provide a stopgap for 500,000 unemployed graduates of tertiary institutions over the next two years (Bennel, 2017) ^[2]. While the Federal Government is responsible for their monthly stipends. But some months into the programme, it has started facing different challenges, with about 13,000 participants alleging that they have not been paid their monthly stipend (Aderonmu, 2017) ^[1]. For instance, the Nigeria Interbank Systems (NIBSS),

which provides the technical support for the programme has identified sundry challenges, including failure on the part of the beneficiaries to input correct Bank Verification Numbers (BVN) and other details to match the information initially provided for processing.

Statement of the problem

Poverty and unemployment remains one of the biggest social problems in Nigeria today. Available data from NBS (2010) shows that more than half of Nigerians population is currently living in poverty and remain a worrisome phenomenon demanding urgent national attention. This is not unconnected to the fact that the poverty rate continues and had remain unabated in society which gives room for other social vices such as armed robbery, burglary etc as corroborated by Olajide and Diah (2017) reports which there asserted that insecurity in Nigeria can be linked with growing poverty rate.

To tackle this problem, successive government has implemented a range of measures, including NAPEP, SURE-P and currently the N-power scheme. The NSIP initiative addresses a range of social problems such as curbing poverty, unemployment and increasing school enrolment. The N-power initiative which is the job creation component of the policy aims at reducing poverty and unemployment and is targeted at the Nigerian youths.

Despite the efforts of the past and present administration to implement schemes/initiatives that will alleviate poverty and create jobs and skills acquisition among our teeming youths but there is still some obstacle hampering the success of the scheme. Therefore, this study is imperative to ascertain whether N-power programme has any positive impact on poverty alleviation among the youths in the study Area.

The specific objectives were to

1. describe the socioeconomic characteristics of the beneficiaries.
2. determine the impact of N- power programme on poverty alleviation among the youths in study Area.
3. Identify the problems associated with N-power programme in the study Area.

2. Methodology

The study Area

Jalingo Local Government Area lies between latitude 8° 47' and 9° 01' North and between longitude 11° 90' and 11° 30' east. Jalingo is the state head quarter with an estimated population of about 193, 392,500 people (NPC, 2006). It share a common boundaries with Ardo-kola, Lau and Yorro to the North, to the South by Gassol, to the East by Bali and to the West by Karim-lamido Local Government Area. The study Area occupies landmass of approximate 3,871km². The ethnic groups are: Jukum Kona, mumuye, fulani among others. The people have a rich heritage and predominately farmers. The study Area has a tropical type of climate marked a distinct dry and raining season, the dry season commences in November and end in March while raining season starts in April and ends by late October. It has an average annual rainfall of 1219mm. The wettest months are August and September while the driest months are January and February, with a relative humidity of 13% (Taraba State Dairy, 2018). March and April record the highest temperature of 35-40c while December and January record

the lowest temperature of 21-25c.

Method of data collection

Both primary and secondary sources of data collection were used for this study.

Sampling Techniques

The beneficiaries of the programme (N-power) constituted the population of the study. Simple random sampling techniques were used for this study. The programme comprises of three (3) components namely; N-Agro, N-Tech and N-Health. Out of the three (3) components 30 beneficiaries were been randomly drawn from each component to make up a sample size of 90 respondents.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used for the analysis of this study. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were used to capture objectives I and III while inferential statistics such as T- test was used to analysed objective II.

T- test is express mathematically as;

$$t = \frac{X^1 - X^2}{\text{stex}}$$

Where:

t=T test

X¹= level of their income, Assets and access to jobs /skills Before the N-power programme.

X²= level of their income, Assets and access to jobs /skills After the N-power programme.

Ste X = standard of error

3. Results and Discussion

Socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries (youths)

The result from table:1 shows that (27.8%) were between age of 20-29 years, (67.8) were between age of 30-39 years while (4.4%) were between age of 40-49 years. This revealed that majority (95.6%) of the respondents were youths with age less than 50 years, who were the beneficiaries of this programme. Result from table:1 shows that (66.7%) were male while (33.7%) were female. This indicated that majority (66.7%) of the respondents were male. The result from table :1 shows that (77.8%) were married while (22.2%) were single. This implies that most (77.8%) of the respondents were married due to the positive impact of the programme. Result from table:1 shows that (94.4%) attained tertiary institutions while (5.6%) attained Secondary schools. This indicated that majority (94.4%) of the respondents attained higher education which enable them to eligible for the programme and contributed their quarter for the development of the economy. Result from table:1 shows that (8.9%) had household size below 5, (88.9%) had household size between 5-6, while (2.2%) had household size between 11 and above. This implies that majority (97.8%) of the respondents had household size less than 11 persons. Therefore, they have to work hard to sustained their family. Result from table:1 shows that (33.3%) were traders, (5.6%) were farmers, (11.1%) were hair dressers, (27.8%) were computer operators while (22.2%) were shoe makers. This revealed that most of the respondents were doing one job or the other. Also result from table:1 shows that 80% earned between N30000-40000, (11.1%) earned between N40000-50000 while (8.9%) earned between N50000 and above income per

month. This implies that majority (91%) of the respondents earned more than N30000 has their monthly income, with this their standard of living have been improved compared to when they were jobless earning nothing at the end of the month.

The impact of N-power programme on poverty alleviation among the youths

The result from table: 2 shows that t-value calculated was (4.53) while the t-value tabulated was (3.18) under 3 at 0.05% degree of freedom. This implies that the N-power programme have alleviated poverty among the youths in the study Area. This was based on the t-calculated value (4.53) was greater than the t-tabulated value (3.18) then we reject the null hypothesis (Ho) which started that there is no significant impact between N-power programme and poverty alleviation among the youths. And accept the alternative hypothesis (Ha) which started that there is significant impact between N-power programme and poverty alleviation among the youths. This also implies that N-power programme have positively impacted the lives of the beneficiaries in terms of their income, assets, and access to job / skills acquisition. This implies that with N-power programme their income have been increased, some acquired assets such as tricycle, motorcycle, land, build houses etc. And have access to job/skills acquisition such as teachers, extension workers, health workers, computer operators, shoe markers, among others.

Problems associated with N-power programme

The result from table: 3 shows that (38.9%) opined on lack of proper exit policy, (27.8%) opined on lately payment of their monthly stipend, (16.6%) opined on inconsistent payment of stipend, (8.9%) opined on unlawful disengagement of participants, (5.6%) opined on BVN issue/problems, while (2.2%) opined on inconsistent of the participants to their place of primary assignment. This indicated that the major problems associated with N- power programme were; lack of proper exit policy by the Government and lately payment of their monthly stipend to the beneficiaries.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study indicated that the N-power programme have alleviated poverty among the youths in the study Area. This also shows that with N-power programme their income have been increased, some acquired assets such as tricycle, motorcycle, land, build houses among others. And have access to job/skills acquisition such as teaching, extension service, health service, computer operators, shoe markers, etc. But the major problems associated with N- power programme were: lack of proper exit policy by the Government and lately payment of stipend to the beneficiaries. Recommendations: Government should prepared a workable exit policy from the beginning of the programme and Government should also ensure that their monthly stipend are paid in due time.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of beneficiaries (n=90)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (years)		
20 – 29	25	27.8
30 – 39	61	67.8
40 – 49	04	4.4
50 and above	-	-
Gender		
Male	60	66.7
Female	30	33.3
Marital status		
Married		
Single	70	77.8
Educational status		
Non – formal education	20	22.2
Primary education	-	-
Secondary education	05	5.6
Tertiary education		
House hold size	85	94.4
Below 5	08	8.9
6-10	80	88.9
11 and above	02	2.2
Occupation		
Trading	30	33.3
Farming	05	5.6
Hair dressing	10	11.1
Computer operation	25	27.8
Shoe making	20	22.2
Monthly income (Naira)		
30000-40000	72	80
40000-50000	10	11.1
50000 and above	08	8.9

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 2: Impact of N- power programme on poverty alleviation among the youths in the study Area (n=90)

Variation	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	DF = at 0.005%	Decision Rule
N-power has no Significant impact on poverty alleviation among youths.	4.53	3.18	3	Reject the Ho and Accept the Ha

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 3: Problems associated with N-power programme in the study Area (n=90)

Variable	Frequency	Percentages %
Lack of proper exist policy	35	38.9
Lately payment of stipend	25	27.8
Inconsistent payment of stipend	15	16.6
Unlawful disengagement of participant	08	8.9
BVN problem	05	5.6
Inconsistent of participant to their place of primary assignment.	02	2.2
Total	90	100

Source: Field survey, 2020

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