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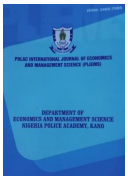

IMPACT OF N-POWER PROGRAMMES ON POVERTY REDUCTION IN ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigates the impact of N-power programmes on poverty reduction in Adamawa state, Nigeria with the objectives of: determine the extent to which N-Power programme generates employment to the youths in Adamawa State, ascertain the activities of N-Power Programme in Adamawa State and identify the factors militating against effective implementation of N-Power programme towards poverty reduction in Adamawa State. Data for the study were primarily sourced through the administration of 400 structured questionnaires designed in five (5) Likert scale format out of which 360 were returned for analysis. The study coveres period of 2021-2023. Structural Equation Model (SEM) was employed in identifying the effect of employment (EMP), standard of living and savings on the impact of poverty reduction in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The result of the study reveals that N-power programme is significantly and positively affecting employment on poverty reduction in Adamawa State as indicated by coefficient (0.22) and probability value of (0.000). Moreover, the study reveals that savings of N-power beneficiaries has significantly improved and it has a multiplier effect on the level of investment in Adamawa State as indicated by coefficient (0.45) and probability value of (0.00). Finally, the study found a negative relationship between N-power programme and standard of living as indicated by coefficient (-.06) and probability value of (0.56). The study recommends that, Government should encourage the strengthening the capability for unemployed youth through entrepreneurial developmental skills. Since unemployed people constitute an increasing portion of the State population.

Key words: Impact of N-power Programmes on Poverty Reduction

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1. Introduction

Nigeria is still seen as Africa's largest economy and one of the fastest-growing in the World. Yet, more than half of the Nigerian population still grapples with extreme poverty, while a small group of elites enjoy over-growing wealth. This depicts a clear picture of the current state of poverty and economic inequality in the country. However, poverty in Nigeria is a paradox in the sense that, level of poverty in the country contradicts the nation's abundant wealth (poverty in the midst of plenty and inequality in the face of economic growth). But the most unfortunate situation is that the country earned over US$ 484 billion (approximately N150 trillion) from oil in the last ten (10) years, yet the state of its teeming population and infrastructure has only deteriorated (Adebayo, 2018). As part of its commitment to improve the living standard of Nigerians, several programmes were introduced and implemented at different periods by different governments such as: Operation Feed the Nation of 1977; Green Revolution of 1980; Directorate of Foods, Roads, and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI); National Directorate for Employment (NDE); Poverty Reduction Programme (PAP); National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) up to the N-power programme.

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and ranked seventh in the world with a population of 206.14 million based on projections of the latest United Nations data (World Population Review, 2020). Nigeria has the largest economy in Africa, ranked 138th in the world based on her nominal GDP

of $496.122 billion and the per capita income projection of $2,400.45 by the end of 2020 (World Population Review, 2020). As impressive as the above figures may appear youth unemployment has been one of the major problems facing Nigeria. According to Anyanwu (2017), a high level of unemployment and underemployment is one of the critical socio-economic problems facing Nigeria and her youths. The magnitude of poverty in Nigeria is worrisome. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2019) has classified Nigeria as one of the poorest nations on the human development index.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Issues

Concept of Poverty: Poverty exists when a person lacks the means to satisfy his/her basic needs (Ogunjimni, 2022). Narayan and Petesch (2002:10) cited in Ali (2016) observed that "poverty also may look quite different, seen through the eyes of a poor man or woman". Poverty is multidimensional in nature. According to Usman (n.d), poverty is commonly defined as a situation of low-income or low consumption. It can also be seen as a situation in which individuals are unable to meet the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, education, security and health. Ajakaiye and Adeyeye (2001) conceptualized poverty as a function of education, health, child mortality and other demographic variables. Aderonmu (2010) defined poverty as lack of command over basic variables. The summary of this definition is that poverty can be seen as a situation in which an individual is unable to provide himself and his family the basic necessities of life, due to economic, social, political and psychological incapacitation.

Concept of N-Power Programmes : N-Power Programmes are connected to the Federal Government Policies on economic, employment and social development area in Nigeria. N-power programmes are programmes established by the administration of President Muhamadu Buhari's Federal Government of Nigeria. This programme is meant to address the challenges of youth unemployment. The programme was established in the year 2016. This programme, provides a structure for large scale and relevant work skills acquisition and development. The Federal Government intends to use the outcome of this programme to address the inadequacy in the public services and also to stimulate the larger economy. According to the n-power website, n-power aspires to provide a platform where most Nigerian citizens between the ages of 18-35 can access skills acquisition and development. N-Power Programmes are currently in operation in the 36 states of Nigeria. The benchmark according to Omilana (2018) is to engage the beneficiaries on different areas of public service, including education (N-Teach), health (N-Health), agriculture (N-Agro), building/construction (N-Build).

Concept of Poverty Reduction: Poverty being one of the social problems in the world has attracted so many comments and conceptualization among intellectuals and scholars. The devastating nature and effects of poverty can be seen virtually in all society, the worst being among the developing nations (third world state) including Nigeria (Ogbe, 2015). It has various manifestations including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihood, hunger and malnutrition, ill-health, limited or lack of access to education and other basic service, increase mortality and morbidity to illness, homelessness and adequate housing, unsaved environment etc., (Ogbe, 2015). It is also characterized by lack of participation in decision making and social discrimination and exclusion from civil and cultural life. In the same vein, Obadan and Odusola (2014) view poverty as a situation of low income and consumption.

2.2 Empirical Review

Ani (2019) also identified some of the challenges of n-power programmes to include lack of fund, delayed attention to mails by Abuja, communication gap between Abuja and State, porosity in the programme because of communication gap and partial consistency. In their evaluation of n-power teacher's competence and resource utilization, Okoro and Bassey (2018:12), remarked that there is urgent need to revisit n-power teacher scheme in the light of a renewed vision of education for all (EFA) and social development. The selection of n-power teachers was not based on teacher's education qualification. It is pathetic that the

staff teachers have saddled the whole classroom responsibilities to the empowered youth without adequate training. This study has reviewed different literatures and studies that are related to poverty reduction programmes in Nigeria. However, from all the multiple studies so far reviewed, it was observed that insufficient studies have been carried out to investigate the impact that N-Power programme has on poverty reduction in Enugu State.

Enyioko, Chintuwa, Akujuru and Abovu, (2019) examined the impact of N-Power programs on poverty alleviation in Nigeria: A study of Rivers State. A survey design was used in the study to generate data. A sample of 400 respondent youths was studied. After going through them 381 copies (i.e. 95.25% response rate) were found useful for the data analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data in this study. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to test the hypotheses. The study found that the major N-Power programs used towards Poverty alleviation in Rivers State included: N-Power Teach, N-Power Build, N-Power Creative, N-Power Agro, N-Power Tech Software N-Power Tax, N-Power Health, and N-Power Tech Hardware. The study revealed that N-Power Programs' beneficiaries were mainly university and polytechnic graduates. The study found that the major factors that affected the implementation of N-Power programs included: Insufficient information, non-payment of stipend to participants as at when due, bribery, and corruption, wrong bank verification number (BVN), overbearing hands of politicians in the program, etc.

Chukwunonye and Newman, (2019), in their study, the impact of N-power programmes on poverty alleviation in Nigeria a case study of River State. They used Survey design in their study to generate data. Their study population comprised the youth in all the twenty-three Local Government Areas of Rivers State. A sample of 400 respondents from the Rivers State youths was studied. Out of the 400 copies of questionnaire administered, 387 copies were retrieved and after going through them 381 copies (i.e. 95.25% response rate) were found useful for data analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics used to analyse data in their study. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (r) was used to test the hypotheses. The found that N-power progradmmes engages quality decisions on Youth empowerment and poverty alleviation River State. Their findings support the social learning theory of career decision making, that suggest environmental conditions and events that influence the choice of career pursuits (McGrath, 2009).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Until recently, little attempts were made to formalize theories on poverty. Social scientists, including Karl Marx, had been primarily concerned with the evolution of economic, political and social inequality. Economists had devoted much interest to the factor shares of production and distribution rather than to the unequal distribution of resources, and where they had studied the latter; they had confined themselves to studies of wages. However, some emerging theories of poverty will be discussed as follows:

Classical Economic Theory of Poverty

Only in recent years has economic theory begun to be applied to the phenomenon of poverty. In classical theory, attention was concentrated on the aggregate distribution of profits, rent and wages. Ricardo, for example, described the principal problem of political economy as the division of the earth"s produce among three classes, namely; the proprietor of the land, the owner of the stock or capital necessary for its cultivation, and the labourers by whose industry it is cultivate". Little or no attention was devoted to the explanation of the distribution of personal incomes and the relationship between personal incomes and aggregate shares of profits, rents and wages. However classical economists that came later began to give increasing attention to inequality in the distribution of earnings and then what happens to factors affecting individual earnings rather than family incomes in explaining inequality.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted quantitative research design in the form of econometric modeling technique by using questionnaire to generate data and used SEM for

analysis of data. Primary data were used to examine the Impact of N-Power Programmes on Poverty Reduction in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

3.2 Data and Sources

For the purpose of this study, the study used primary data mainly because it provides firsthand information needed to achieve the objectives of the study and less of secondary data sources. The data were collected using structured questionnaires containing five Likert scale will be used as a basis of the questions. Primary data connotes the generation of new data sets specifically for research problem at disposal given the aim and objective of the study.

3.3 Method of Data Collection

For the purpose of this study, designed questionnaire was the main instrument that in collecting primary data. The instrument of data collection for the study was structured questionnaire, self-administered through visitations to various schools, training centres and ministries where most of the Npower beneficiaries were posted. The questionnaire format were structured in line with the specific objectives of the study as well as Likert five-point scales ranging from 1-5 (5=strongly agree, 4= agree, 3=undecided, 2= disagree 1=strongly disagree) are going to be used as a basis of the questions and information including the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents. Using Statistical Package for Social Sciences and tabulated for inferences.

3.4 Model Specification

$$Y^* = X^*\beta^* + \varepsilon^* \quad (1)$$

The Structural Equation Model (SEM) can therefore be expressed further as:

$$Y = X_1\beta_1 + X_2\beta_2 + X_3\beta_3 + X_4\beta_4 + \varepsilon_1 + \varepsilon_2 + \varepsilon_3 \quad (2)$$

The Structural Equation Model (SEM) can also be specified as:

Where:

Y^*= Poverty Reduction (i.e. dependent variable proxy by EMP, SD, SV)

X^* = Npower programmes (i.e. independent variables, which include, N-health, N-Agro, N-Teach, N-Tax, N-tech, N-power officials)

$\beta^* = \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ (parameter estimates)

$\varepsilon^* = \varepsilon_1, \varepsilon_2, \varepsilon_3, \varepsilon_4, \varepsilon$ (Error Terms)

NP = N-power, N-Health = N-power Health, N-Teach = N-power Teaching, N-Agro = N-power Agriculture, N-Tax = N-power Tax and N-Tech = N-power Technology

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

For the purpose of this study Structural Equation Model (SEM) will be adopted to analyse the data collected. Structural Equation Model (SEM) is a statistical technique developed for analyzing the inter-relationship among variables in the model. Structural Equation Model (SEM) will employ the combination of quantitative data and the correlation or casual assumptions into confirmatory factor analyzing comprehensive means for assessing and modifying the measurement models as well as a structural model.

Therefore, Structural Equation Modeling will be used for the entire research objectives. These objectives investigate the effects of Government Policy on Poverty Reduction in Adamawa State case study of N-power. However, before considering the structural model for identifying the implication, latent constructs for each of the variables are obtained through the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on the measurement model. The latent unobserved variables will be developed from the observed latent indicators extracted from the set of items in the questionnaire. These set of items are trimmed through the test of uni-dimensionality, validity and reliability on the data. Specifically, factor loadings and covariance will be used for uni-dimensionality.

However, Structural Equation Model (SEM) has been identified to be the best model for the analysis for study under investigation. This is because, the variables that will used in the study does not violate the conditions and assumptions of the model (Structural Equation Model)

3.6 Postestimation Tests

3.6.1 Reliability Test

Reliability and validity are the two most important and fundamental features of any measurement procedure. Reliability is defined as the extent to which a questionnaire, test, observation or any measurement procedure produces the same result on repeated trials.

The reliability of the latent construct was evaluated by measuring internal consistency or the extent to which items on the questionnaire measure the research objectives. The internal consistency was measured using the Cronbach's Alpha test. Cronbach Alpha test is the coefficient of reliability that is commonly used as a measure of the internal consistency or reliability developed by Cronbach, (1951).

3.6.2 Validity and Test of model fitness

In order to determine the SEM validity, certain fitness indexes are considered. Validity on the other hand, is defined as both inter-item correlation analysis and factor loading. Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tathan (1998) posit that it examined the extent to which questionnaire measures what it was meant to measure and construct validity of a questionnaire an inter-item correlation with the assumption that the model is fit when the factor loadings are >0.5.

However, The model is considered fit if the value of the Chi-square test statistic is insignificant and at least one of the incremental fit index such as comparative fit index (CFI), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), goodness of fit index (GFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) and Normed fit index (NFI) meet the pre-determined criteria as shown in table 3.2 below.

Moreover, Measurement Model is considered as part of data preparation because it is used to measure the construct validity by assessing the factor loading, and access normality of the measurement instruments. It is also used to test the relationships between the latent variables and their observed measures; measurement model in this sense portrayed the links between the latent variables and their observed measures (Byrne, 2010). According to Ho (2006), measurement model states the rules guiding how the latent variables are measured based on the observed variables, and it describes the measurement properties of the observed variables. This means that, the measurement model explain the link between observed and latent variables (Ho, 2006). In testing measurement model, the researcher is concern about the Goodness-of-Fit indices (model fit), which determine the degree to which the proposed model predicts (fits) the observed covariance matrix (Ho, 2006). Model fit is determine by the following; Chi-square (χ^2), Relative χ^2 (χ^2/df), AGFI, GFI, CFI, IFI, TLI and RMSEA.

One of the most fundamental measures of assessing the Goodness-of-Fit in SEM according to Joreskog and Sorbom, (1993) is Chi-Square (χ^2) statistics, and the model is said to be acceptable if the χ^2 value is less than three times the degree of freedom (Carlmines & McIver, 1981), which is refers to Relative χ^2. That is; Relative χ^2 should be less than 5. The Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit (AGFI) and Goodness-of-Fit (GFI) indices ranges from 0 – 1.00 (Bentler & Yuan, 1999), with value nearest to 1.00 ($\geq$ 0.9) indicate good fit (Byrne, 2010). Also, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Incremental Index of Fit (IFI; Bollen, 1989) and Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI; Tucker & Lewis, 1973) ranging from 0 – 1.00. According to Ho (2006) and Bentler and Yuan (1999), CFI, IFI and TLI values close to 0.95 for large sample size is indicating good fit. Finally, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) proposed by Steiger and Lind (1980), measures the error of approximation in the population. Browne and Cudeck (1989) suggested that, RMSEA value < 0.05 indicate good fit, while value > 0.08 indicate reasonable errors of approximation in the population. Similarly, RMSEA value of 0.06 was suggested by Hu and Bentler (1999), however, BacCallum et al. (1996; cited in Byrne, 2010) have increased on these cut-off points and argued that, RMSEA values ranging between .08 to 0.10 "indicate mediocre fit", and those values > 0.10 indicate poor fit.

3.6.3. Normality Test

The normality assumption is one of the fundamental assumptions in multivariate analysis (Kline, 2005; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Normality is characterized by the assumption that the data distribution in each item and in all linear combination of items is normally distributed (Hair, 2006). The assumption is that if the variation from the normal distribution happens to be large, all resulting statistical test are invalid. This is because the use of the F and t statistics within the multivariate analysis can cause underestimation of fit indices and standardized residuals of estimations.

3.7.3 Multicollinearity test

Multicollinearity normally occurs when two or more variables are related with one another with high value of correlation say 0.9. The absence of Multicollinearity among variables is also one of the important assumptions of estimating a causal relationship among variables. The correlation between the variable with less than 0.9 indicate that there is no presentence of Multicollinearity. However, to confirm the absence of Multicollinearity among variables, variance inflation factor test is considered with the assumptions that VIF value variable which is < 10 indicating the absence of Multicollinearity.

3.6.4. Measurement of Model

For the purpose of this study impact of N-power Programmes on Poverty Reduction in Adamawa State, Nigeria is the dependent variable which will be measured by the rate of employment, standard of living and level of savings which is proxy by N-power programme (NH), N-health, teach (N-T), N-agro (N-A), N-tax (N-t) and N-tech (N-TCH). As such, five (5), and five (5) relevant questions were theoretically raised to stands for a latent construct of N-power programme (NH), N-health, teach (N-T), N-agro (N-A), N-tax (N-t) and N-tech (N-TCH).

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Summary of Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
EMP1	360	1	5	3.76	.058	1.108	-.782	.129	-.003	.256
SDL1	360	1	5	4.04	.045	.853	-.642	.129	.082	.256
SV1	360	2	5	4.06	.043	.824	-.570	.129	-.267	.256
Valid N (listwise)	360									

Source: Source: Author's Computation, 2023

Above is the descriptive statistic on the impact of N-power programmes on poverty reduction in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The mean value of employment (EMP) is 3.76 units while the minimum and maximum values are 1.000 and 5.000, both questions on employment where answered accordingly by the likert scale respectively. The standard deviation of 1.108 implies that the data deviated from the mean value from both sides by 1.108 units. This shows that there is no wide dispersion of the data from the mean value. The EMP data is negatively skewed or skewed leftward (-1.782) implying that most respondents agreed that impact of N-power programmes created employment in terms of poverty reduction in Adamawa State.

On the other hand, the mean value of Standard of living (SDL) is 4.04 units while the minimum and maximum values are 1.000 and 5.000 respectively. The standard deviation of 0.953 implies that the data deviated from the mean value from both sides by 0.953 units. This shows that there is no much wide dispersion of the data from the mean value. The SDL data is negatively skewed or skewed leftward (-0.642) implying that most respondents agreed that the standard of living of the beneficiaries improved in Adamawa State.

Similarly, the mean value of point of Savings (SV) is 4.27 units while the minimum and maximum values are 1.000 and 5.000 respectively. The standard deviation of 0.756 implies that the data deviated from the mean value from both sides by 0.756 units. This shows that there is no wide dispersion of the data from the mean value. The SV data is negatively skewed or skewed leftward (-0.848) implying that most respondents strongly agreed or agreed that saving (SV) will be improved for future reinvest in other venture within Adamawa State and Nigeria at large.

Table 2: Correlation

			Estimate
EMPLOYMENT	<-->	STANDARD	.33
STANDARD	<-->	SAVINGS	.83
EMPLOYMENT	<-->	SAVINGS	.34

Source: Author's Computation, 2023

The correlation analysis in table 2, Indicate how each of the variable correlate with one another in the model. In this regard, Correlation that exists between employment and standard of living is found to be 0.33, standing of living and savings is found to be 0. 83 while employment and savings are found to be 0.34. This shown that standard of living and savings were highly correlated.

Table 3: Summary of Results

Hypotheses			b	Beta	S.E	C.R.	P	Decision
NPOWER	<---	EMPLOYMENT	.28	.22	.05	4.30	0.00	Accepted
NPOWER	<---	STANDARD	-.07	-.06	.11	-0.59	0.56	Rejected
NPOWER	<---	SAVINGS	.59	.45	.10	4.30	0.00	Accepted

Source: Author's computation using SPSS AMOS Version 21

Note: NP- N-power; EMP:- Employment; SDL:- Standard of living, SV: Savings on poverty reduction, Beta:- S.E.:- Standard Error; CR:- Critical Ratio.

Table 3, contains the coefficients of structural equation results on the impact of N-power programmes on poverty reduction in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The dependent or outcome variable is N-power (NP), while the predictors or independent variable are employment (EMP), standard of living (SDL) and savings (SV). The coefficient of empowerment and savings are positively related to poverty reduction. This implies that when employment goes up by 1 unit, N-power goes up by 0.22. Also, when savings goes up by 1 unit, N-power goes up by 0.45 units. On the other hand, there is negative relationship between N-power programmes and standard of living in Adamawa. This implies that when Standard of living goes up by 1 unity, N-power goes down by 0.06 units.

Moreover, the coefficient of employment and savings are found to be statistically significant at 5 per cent as indicated by probability values of 0.000, 0.56, 0.000 respectively, hence the null hypothesis are accepted. While standard of living found to be statistically insignificant at 5 per cent as indicated by probability values of 0.56 hence the null hypothesis are rejected.

4.2 Discussion of Major findings

i. The result of the study reveals that N-power programme is significantly and positively affecting employment on poverty reduction in Adamawa State as indicated by coefficient (0.22) and probability value of (0.000). Implying that employment was appreciably recorded during N-power programme in Adamawa state up to 22% level. Meaning, any improvement in the N-power programme will improve employment in Adamawa State by 22 per cent which inturn reduce the level of poverty index.

ii. Moreover, the study reveals that savings of N-power beneficiaries has significantly improved and it has a multiplier effect on the level of investment in Adamawa State as indicated by coefficient (0.45) and probability value of (0.00). This implies that when N-power goes up by 1 unit then savings also goes up 0.45 (45%) which provide more room for re-investment in the economy.

iii. On the other hand, the study found a negative relationship between N-power programme and standard of living as indicated by coefficient (-.06) and probability value of (0.56). This implies that when N-power reduces its programme(s) by a unit, standard of living goes down by -0.06 (6%) which affect the standard of living negatively.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the impact of N-power programmes on poverty reduction in Adamawa state, Nigeria. The result study concluded that employment, and savings are significantly and positively affecting the N-power programmes in Adamawa State. McGrath, (2009) opines that the quality of a country is not based on the number of men and women in its armed forces nor is it determined by faithfulness to the application of the principles of zoning and or the allocation formulae of political offices, which in Nigeria is actually a euphemism for sharing public funds. No country becomes great by the number of politicians jostling for political offices or the number of times its constitution is amended in a quarter. The greatness of any nation is in the quality of its people in the worth of its governance and in the empowerment of its youths. The researcher recommends:

i. Government should encourage the strengthening of the capability for unemployed rural and urban dwellers. Since unemployed people constitute an increasing portion of the rural dwellers,
ii. Economic policies should aim at enhancing their youth empowerment and poverty alleviation in Adamawa State performance. Equitable access to financial resources and services should be provided. They will need credit and extension services and assistance in adopting improved youth empowerment and poverty alleviation in Adamawa State practices and technologies that are suited to their capabilities.
iii. Government and the stakeholders should increase the opportunities for empowerment. There should be an increase of opportunities for continued participation of both urban and rural unemployed persons in productive work.
iv. The authorities concerned should promote rural development through N-Power programmes. Integrated rural development is seen as the key for alleviating poverty of the rural dwellers that constitute the greater chunk of the population in Adamawa State.

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