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The Impact of N-Power Programme on Youth Empowerment and Poverty Reduction in Nigeria: A Study of Kano Central of Kano State (2019-2024)

**¹Nasir Ahmad Sarkin Dori, PhD., ²Yakubu Abubakar Kantudu
& ³Shamsuddeen Ahmad Suleiman**

¹Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Federal University
Dutse Jigawa State

²Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Yusuf Maitama Sule
Federal University of Education Kano

³School of Social and Management Sciences, Maryam Abacha American University of
Niger, Maradi, Niger Republic (MAAUN)

Email: ¹nhanasir2003@yahoo.com, ²yabubakarkantudu@gmail.com Phone: ¹08037032235
Corresponding Email: nhanasir2003@yahoo.com

Abstract

The paper examines the impact of the N-Power Programme on the Youth Empowerment and Poverty reduction in Kano Central. The study also used questionnaire and interview as primary source of data and documentary method as secondary source of data to complement the research findings. The study used simple percentage method for data analysis. The study also used incremental model of decision making as the theoretical framework. The research proposition was also used to determine whether there is any significant relationship between the impact of the N-power programme and the poverty reduction and Youth Empowerment of the Kano Central. The study discovered that N-power programme has empowered youth through financial independence, ICT proficiency, business set up, software engineering proficiency in Kano Central thereby creating more employment and medium and small scale entrepreneurship among the trainees and beneficiaries in the area. This generated employment, income, saving and investment which reduced the rate of poverty among the teaming youth in the area. The study findings recommended that government should introduce mandatory training on ICT, agriculture and teachers training to the beneficiaries in order to empower more youth and increase their employability after the expiration of the N-power scheme. Government should also introduce interest free soft loans to interested volunteers to start up a small or medium scale business and to be deducted from their monthly stipend. Government should introduce effective measures for monitoring and close supervision of the programme for future sustainability.

Keywords: Employment, N-power Programme, Poverty, Youth Empowerment

Introduction

Poverty and unemployment are twin economic evils that bedeviled the Nigerian state and economy today. Reports from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2005) has shown that population living in poverty has a steady increase from 17.7 million in 1988 to 66.7 million in 2004. In 2011, the National Bureau of Statistics reported that Nigeria assumed the ignoble position of being the poverty capital of the world when it overlooks India with about 86.9 million of her population (Vanguard, 2019). To corroborate this assertion (NBS) on its 2012 National Baseline Survey, posts, that more than ½ of the Nigeria Youth are unemployed. Unemployment rate of 33.3% in 2022 (NBS, 2022). Poverty

and unemployment rate continued to rise and manifested into social problems of more monumental and complicated proportion and despite the various attempt by the government to address the solve limit continued to persist. Federal government since 1999 has been introductory poverty reduction policies and programmes to address the situation. Notably, Obasanjo Administration (1999-2007) initiated the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) to alleviate poverty. As observed by Aiyele (2015) NAPEP was established in 2010 as the primary agency of the Federal government to eradicate poverty in Nigeria.

The core programmes under NAPEP include the Youth Empowerment Scheme and National Resource Development and Conservation Scheme. He further elaborated that despite the huge financial implication of the scheme, the poverty and youth unemployment have continued unabated. Another poverty reduction programme was introduced by Jonathan Administration (2012-2014). It was the subsidy Reinvestment Scheme (Sure-P) designed and implemented to alleviate poverty in Nigeria. The core programme of (SURE-P) with regards to poverty reduction include: the mass transit scheme, vocational training scheme and Community Service or Youth and Women Empowerment (CSWYE).

However, the SURE-P initiative has been criticized for lack of transparency and corruption. Abu (2015) in his study on subsidy reinvestment and employment generation in Nigeria (2012-2014) concluded that the programme has not lead to the employment generation in Nigerian Youth, because unemployment and wide scale poverty in the country still remain high. Recently, Buhari Administration has also designed and implemented the on-going National Social Investment Scheme (NSIP) as strategy for combating poverty and unemployment through capacity building, investment and direct financial support to enable the citizen exit from the twin evil of poverty and unemployment. The core programme consist of four component which include the job creation and Youth Empowerment (N-power), National Home Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP), National Cash Transfer Programme (NCTP) and Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP). NSIP was generally aimed at encouraging the poor and vulnerable household to easily access income for livelihood through provision of access to targeted fund in order to improve the household ability to absorb economic difficulty or shocks.

The N-power Scheme was introduced as employability and enhancement programme by the Federal Government with the objective of imbining to learn- work enterprise culture in youth between the ages of 18-34 (NSIP, 2018). The scheme was available for the graduate and non-graduate, the graduate category was further divided into three (3) areas namely, the N-Teach the N-Agro and the N-Health. For non-graduate category comprised of N-Building Scheme which is geared towards equipping the youth with the necessary skills to be self-employed. From the foregoing discussion, this paper will be limited to the N-power programme with a view to assess its impact on the enhancement of the youth empowerment and poverty reduction in Kano Central Senatorial District from

(2005-2019). In the recent years, poverty and unemployment have certainly remained two of the major social problems that undermine the Nigerian society. From the review of the literature and information derived from NBS (2010) it was confirmed that more than half of the Nigerian Youths are currently living in poverty and are unemployed.

This situation has continued to be a disturbing phenomenon that require, urgent nation attention, worse still the situation has further spread across the nation to the extent that the rate of poverty rose and almost became unabated, Kano state is not an exception to the rule because, the rate of poverty and unemployment have reached the alarming proportion leading to the myriads of social problems notably human trafficking, child labour, destitution, human kidnapping, Armed Robbery, phone snatching and violence like political thuggery etc. In response to these problems, successive government in Nigeria initiated a range of policy measures such as NAPEP, SURE-P and currently the NSIP. The NSIP is a social investment programme designed to address specific social problems like poverty reduction, youth empowerment tackling unemployment, ensuring increase in the school enrolment in primary and secondary schools with emphasis on girl child education. However, the policy implementation geared towards achieving the objectives of the foregoing programme like any other has become a very difficult task in the Nigerian context.

This is because the previous efforts made to address the situation of poverty and unemployment among the youth's folk has not recorded any the positive result due to poor or faulty implementation. This study therefore, intends to assess the impact of the N-power programme on the poverty reduction, youth empowerment and the general improvement of the standard of living of the Kano Central Senatorial District.

Methodology

The research design for this study is a cross-sectional survey. The reason was to allow the research generate information for the large sample that represents the elements in the study area and be subjected to statistical analysis. One local government area from the Kano Central was selected namely Gwale where a sampled population of all beneficiaries of N-Power in the area including male and females were used. A cluster random sampling technique was also used in selecting one hundred (100) samples for the study. This was drawn from the components of the N-power as N-Teach/ICT, N-Health and N-Agro for the distribution of the questionnaires and for the personal interview four (4) of the N-power officials for each unit of the local government area and four (4) N-power beneficiaries were also selected for the interview.

Instruments used for this study were questionnaire and personal interview. One hundred (100) questionnaires were administered and collected on three working days. And about four (4) N-power officials and four (4) N-power beneficiaries from each component of

the schemes were interviewed through face to face interaction in each unit of the Gwale Local Government Area of Kano Central. The data collected were analyzed and interpreted using a descriptive statistic and analytical tables. Simple percentage was used to determine the frequency of opinion of the various respondents, interview data were analyzed and interpreted through transcription of the responses of the interviewee.

Conceptual Clarifications

N-Power Programme

N-power is a job creation and empowerment programme of the national social investment programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria. The N-power programme has been designed for Young Nigerian between the ages of 18 to 35. It is a paid volunteering programme of two years duration. In the specification of the programme graduates are required to undertake their primary task in identifying public services within their proximate communities. All N-power beneficiaries were entitled to compute device that contained information necessary for the specific engagement as well as information for their continuous training and development (N-power Information Guide, 2019).

Categories of the Programme

The programme is divided into the following categories:

- Graduate category which comprise of N-power volunteer corps.
- Non-Graduate category comprising of N-power knowledge and N-power build. Goal of the Programme.

Key Areas of N-power

According to N-power information guide (2017) volunteers i.e. expected to provide teaching instruction and advisory solutions in four (4) key areas.

N-power Teach/ICT Proficiencies

These categories of beneficiaries are expected to help improve basic/secondary education delivery in Nigeria. N-power Teach volunteers are deployed as teacher's assistant in primary/secondary school they appear to be under satisfied in Nigeria. They are not expected to replace for current teacher, but to work as supporting teacher across the country, assisting with teaching, school management and other function within the school. Where possible thing are also required to assist in taking basic education to children in marginalized communities (N-power information guide, 2017). N-power Teach (STEM) is also a component of N-power Teach Programme. Through this programme, young graduate with the skills and interest in computer programme and other related field and required to assist in the implementation of the Federal Government's Scheme Programme for primary and secondary school in the country (N-power information guide, 2017).

N-Power Health

Under this programme the beneficiaries are required to assist in improving and promoting preventive health care in their communities to vulnerable members of the society including pregnant women and children and to families and individuals. This area is reserved for those who read health and medical related courses of certificate course and diploma level (N-power information Guide 2017).

N-Power Agro

Under this programme the beneficiaries are intended to provide advisory service to farmers across the country. They are expected to disseminate the knowledge that has been amassed by the Federal Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development in the area of extension services. They are also required to gather data of Nigeria's Agricultural asset. This area is meant for youths who were educated in Agricultural related courses (N-Power Information Guide, 2017).

The Voluntary Asset and Income Declaration Scheme

V AIDs seek to encourage non-compliant and partially compliant tax payer to voluntarily declare their correct income and assets and pay the appropriate tax liaison officer and have the following key responsibilities which include the tax promotion, document reviews, record keeping, answering online inquiries, customer management report writing among others. This key area engaged youth with post tertiary qualification in computer and information science related course (N-power Information Guide, 2017).

Youth

The concept of youth has been defined by many authors and international organizations. However, there is no universally accepted definition of the youth. The notion youth, varies as much as there are scholars, writers, cultures and societies for instance, the United Nation (2004) defines youth to include all individual between the age of 15 and 24. The World Bank (2007) expands this definition of youth to include all young people between the years of 13 to 30. Also the Nigeria second National Youth Policy (2009) describes the youth as all young male and female aged between 18 and 35 years who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The above definitions of youth are primary anchored on the parameter of age bracket. Yet being a youth may mean more than just age bracket.

Youth do not just constitute the age cluster but the inherent characteristic sought after in the youth and which can be universally agreed upon other potential energies and innovativeness. These notable features may be leading in either childhood or adulthood. Perez Morale (1996) noted that no matter what the age ranged the years of the youth may

be, the point is that anyone, we talk and think about youth implies a group of youth people in a society who have a lot of energy new ideas and new ways to see life and face problems.

In a nutshell, the boundary defining the transition from childhood to adulthood is not clear. Therefore, defining youth as a globally accepted to some exact age range can be very difficult task. The age range often used by the United Nations and others are simply for statistical purposes. Apart from the statistical defining of the lesson is youth's the meaning of the term "Youth" have continued to change in response to fluctuating political economic and socio-cultural circumstances. For the purpose of the study definition of youth by National Youth Policy (2009) is adopted since Federal Government appears to have used the definition as a guide to determining beneficiaries of the programme.

Empowerment

There are no universally accepted definitions of empowerment in the literature. In some of these definitions empowerment is seen as a goal and in some as a means (Partders 2008, Gibson, 1991). Pertuders (2008) defined empowerment as an increase in the person's control over the determinants of their quality of life, through (necessarily) an increase in either health (e.g. through self-confidence, self-efficiency, autonomy), or consciousness raising, skills development, competence), or freedom (negative or positive). According to Kabeer (2003) empowerment refers to the ability to make choices to be disempowered means to be denied choice, while empowerment refer to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choice acquire such ability.

He however, noted that certain conditions are necessary for choice to happen: Alternative must exist; this implies the ability to have different choices. As such poverty and disempowerment generally go hand in hand, because they limit people's ability to meet their basic needs, therefore depended on other which rules out the capacity for a meaningful choice. Alternative must not exist, they must also be seen to exist power relations are most effective when they are not perceived as such, these form of behavior could be said to reflect "Choice" but are really based on the denial of choice. Kabeer (2003) noted that the idea of 'empowerment' can be explored through three dimensions which are closely related as agency. Resources and Achievement Agency represents the processes through which choices are made and put into effect, it is central concept of the empowerment. Resources are the means or one union through which an agency operate and achievement refers to the outcome of the Agency respectively. Each of the foregoing dimensions are inter-related for the purpose of study (Per Ader, 2008).

Poverty

Poverty can either be defined in absolute or relative terms. Absolute poverty is a condition where a person or group of persons are unable to satisfy their most basic and elementary requirements for human survival in terms of food, clothing, shelter, health,

transport, education, and recreation facilities. Relative poverty is a comparative state of deprivation among individuals, or groups.

Lawan, (2014, p. 179) poverty affects many aspects of the human conditions, including the ability of the individual to generate adequate income that would improve his living standard and, of course, the ability to have access to social, educational, economic and political opportunities that would ultimately improve his general participation in what goes around him. Therefore, poverty is an individual's inability to consume enough to fulfil basic preferences or needs. Therefore, poverty is inability to acquire basic necessities or needs for life such as inadequate food, shelter, clothes and income. It could also be inadequate and inaccessibility of socio-economic amenities such water, education, health, electricity, roads and housing.

The motive behind poverty alleviation programmes is to increase accesses to these socio-economic amenities in order to improve standard of living and reduce the level of poverty. Townsend, (1997) cited in (Lawan, 2014, p.179) had perceived poverty as it manifest in the sphere of the economy as deprivation; in politics and in sociology as discrimination; in culture and ecology as vulnerable, all of which reinforce one another. Therefore, a critical look at this definition reveals that millions of Nigeria today are economically, socially, politically deprived in terms of easy access to employment opportunities, income, good standard of living, good schools, hospitals, roads, water supply, electricity and involvement in politics.

Unemployment

According to Douglaston, (2006) cited in Bala & Ahmad, (2020) sees unemployment as a situation in which people who are willing to work at the prevailing wage rate are unable to find jobs. World Bank, (2009) defined unemployment as the percentage of the labour force without job, but is able, capable and willing to work. Furthermore, International Labour Organization, (ILO, 2004) argued that unemployment is the number of the economically active population who are without work, but are available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work.

Challenges of the Programme

The implementation of the N-power programme has been facing a lot of bottleneck which impede effective operation of the scheme such as

- **Problem of payment of the monthly stipend:** - most of the beneficiaries receive their allowance late, some often do not receive for few month which has negatively affected the scheme (Abu, 2018).
- **Problem of over utilization of the facilities, provided for the scheme:** - The N-power programme being a recently introduced scheme has been adequately equipped with the

required scheme facilities and this coincided with the high demand for the programme by prospective volunteers (Abu, 2018).

- **Inability of the N-power officials to comprehend and articulate the problems reported by the participants:** - it was confirmed that the managers of the programme were unable to understand and squarely address the plight of the beneficiaries of the scheme which posed a seniors challenge to the effective implementation of the programme lack of a definite teacher education training to the N-teach participant: - the N-power programme does not provide teacher education training to the volunteers who were junior secondary schools. Okoro and Bassay (2018) noted that, N-power volunteer who were assigned to note that N-power volunteer who were assigned to teach were not adequately empowered by the N-power take up the teaching profession.
- **The N-power programme has a limited scoped and made limited impact on the lives of Nigerian youth:** -the N-power programme has been focused mainly in urban areas and has not made a significant impact on poverty reduction and youth empowerment. Therefore its impact did not trickle down to remote village and rural areas of Nigeria. Some months to the enrolment of the participant into the programme, it has started facing challenges with about 13,000 participating alleging that they have not been paid their monthly stipends. For example the Nigeria interbank system (NIBSS) which provides the technical support for the programme has identified challenges which include failure of the participants to input correct bank verification number and other bank details to match the information initially provided for processing. This situation is not different in River state, Edo, Enugu, Kaduna and Kano state (Aderomi, 2017). Problem of bank account detail and BVN error: - some beneficiaries of N-power have been facing problem of bank detail and BVN error especially at the initial stage of the enrolment of the beneficiaries.
- **The elitist nature of the N-power programme:** - the N-power programme has been locally designed to address the problem of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria through its core components but in reality it was design to serve the interest of the elite or politicians and the selection of the participant is vilely based on favoritisms or other political consideration. Problem of deployment of volunteer to a distant place of primary assignment Lack of provision for a soft and interest free loan to beneficiaries based on the findings of this study, it concludes that the beneficiaries.
- **Lack of accurate and reliable information of the participants to the N-power programme:** some participants the N-power were disqualified for various reason ranging from being over-aged, to falsification of information or currently being employed in the public service.

Empirical Review

Few studies were conducted to investigate the impact of the N-power programme in Nigeria with reference to poverty reduction and youth empowerment. It was confirmed that

N-power programme has made significant impact on the lives of the Nigerian youths. Abiu (2018) noted that the programme impacted on the socio-economic live of the beneficiaries and cited Akwanga Metropolitan of Nassarawa State. He confirmed that the programme improved the socio-economic condition of the beneficiaries in the areas such as enhancing financial independence, raising the standard of living and enabling the beneficiaries the ability to make choice and control their lives. As the representation of the interview conducted with the N-power participant comprising of all beneficiaries in the two local government areas of Kano Central (Tarauni and Dala) both male and female between the age of (18-35) years with the period of (205 to 2019). It was established that there were three component of N-power programme executed to engage the youth in the various sectors such as education, health, and agriculture, but the N-teach component has the greater proportion than other component of the scheme.

The research findings also confirmed that the engagement of more N-teach beneficiaries in the programme was as a result of the dire need of the primary school for more teaching staff and because the significant proportion of the youth applied for the N-teach category. This point seemed to agree with the opinion of Okoro & Bassey (2018) who approved with the execution of N-power scheme to fill the vacuum and improve basis education. As the representation of the interview conducted with the beneficiaries of the N-power programme comprising of all male and female from the two local government areas namely Tarauni and Dala. It was confirmed that the programme has helped hundreds of youth and encouraged them to stand on their feet financially. It has succeeded in reducing poverty and significantly empower youth through enhancing their knowledge and skills to make them more employable. It was also confirmed that the programme encouraged the beneficiaries to invest their saved stipend in a small or medium scale business after the scheme. As the representation of the interview conducted by the N-power official in the two local government of the Kano central comprising the eight (8) staff. It was confirmed that the programme has succeeded in the empowering youth and eliminating poverty by making them to stand on their feet financially.

The research findings seems to corroborate with a study by Abu (2018) who examined the socio-economic impact of the N-power programme on the lives of the Akwanga Metropolis Nassarawa state. The study discovered that the scheme contributed immensely in improving the standard of living of the beneficiaries. As the representation of the interview conduct the N-power participant comprising all beneficiaries male and female in the local government of Kano central between ages of (18-35) years within the period of (2016-2019). It was confirmed that the major issues or challenge of the programme was the delay in payment of monthly stipend. Sometime there was the problem of errors in the bank account details of the beneficiaries and problem of deploying the beneficiaries to the place of primary assignment far away from his/her resistance.

Similarly as the representation of the interview conducted with the eight (8) N-power official in the two local government areas of Kano central. It was confirmed that the major challenge facing N-power programme was that of delaying the paying of monthly stipend and that of error in the bank account detail of the participants. These challenges were similar to the ones highlighted by Abu (2018) who opined that, the problem of N-power scheme was associated with unpaid or late payment of monthly stipend to volunteers.

Also concurred by Okoro & Bassay who agreed that the programme did not adequately empower beneficiaries with the teacher education training before engaging them in teaching primary pupils. As the representation of the interview conducted with the beneficiaries of N-power in Kano central. It was confirmed that the militating problem of the N-power scheme could be minimized if the government improving in the paying of stipend allowance introduces a mandatory training to N-teach volunteers to improve their teaching skills and upgrades the existing facilities, provided for the scheme considering the increasing number of N-power applicants. As the representation of the interview conducted with the staff of N-power in Kano central. It was confirmed that as part of the possible solution to the militating problem of N-power scheme.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (Years)		
18- 20	10	10%
21- 23	10	10%
24- 26	10	10%
27- 30	25	25%
31- 32	20	20%
33- 35	25	25%
Total	100	100%

Source; Field Survey, 2024.

Table 2: Sex Distribution of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	58	60%
Female	42	40%
Total	100	100%

Source; Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3 Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	50	50%
Married	30	30%
Divorced	10	10%
Widowed	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source; Field Survey, 2024

Table 4: Educational Distribution of the Respondents

Educational Background	Frequency	Percentage (%)
NABTEB	10	10%
JCHEM	05	05%
SCHEW	05	05%
DIPLOMA	20	20%
NCE	20	20%
DEGREE	40	40%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 1 presents socio-demographic characteristic of N-power beneficiaries in the study. In related to age distribution, the table indicated that most 25 (25%) of the beneficiaries were in age range of 27- 29 while 10 (10%) has the least percentage. Furthermore those between age range of 30- 35 were 25 (25%) had the second highest percentages, beneficiaries aged between 30- 32 years come third with 20 (20%) while in the fourth position were respondent were between ages of 21- 23 years with 10 (10%). This data implies that most of the N-power beneficiary may have attained at least post-secondary education from age of 27- 29 years. Overall beneficiaries from age 27- 35 dominated the list of respondents. The implies is that the programme have engaged most of the youth on the age where they need to be empowered for the improvement in their living standard and human capital development.

For sex distribution the table indicated that majority 60 (60%) of the beneficiaries were male while 40 (40%) of them were female representing minority in the study. The fact that male beneficiaries dominated the composition of the respondents shows that male actively involved in labour force than the women. Similarly in relation to marital status, it was revealed that majority 50 (50%) of the beneficiaries were single while there was just 10 (10%) who were endow with least percentage. Furthermore 30 (30%) were married representing the second highest percentage while 10 (10%) representing were widows occupying the forth position. The data received highest percentage of the beneficiaries. It can be deduce from the data that unemployment may be one of the reason why most of the youth are not married.

Most youth seem to be scared of marriage probability because they cannot take charge of family responsibilities. In regard to the educational background the table indicated that most 40 (40%) of the beneficiaries had bachelor degree while those senior community health and environmental works (CHEW) education were the least with 05 (05%).

In the second position were beneficiaries with National certificate of education (NCE) with 20 (20%), beneficiaries who acquired diploma were 20 (20%) were in third position furthermore 10 (10%) of the respondent had National Business and technical examination Board (NABJEB) education occupying forth position while those with junior Community Health Environment works (JCHEW) education take the position respectively.

Table 5: Distribution of N-Power Programme by Category Benefited in Kano Central Area

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
N-teach/ICT Proficiency	50	50%
N-agro	10	10%
N-GSM/Software repairing	30	30
N-power VAIDs	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 5 represents the distribution of beneficiaries of N-power by category of the programme, the table revealed that most 50(50%) of the beneficiaries were in the N-teach/ICT Proficiency stand of the programs while 10(10%) of the beneficiaries who were in the voluntary asset and income declaration scheme (VAIDs) has the least percentage. Furthermore 30(30%) were involve in N-GSM/Software repairing stand. This was followed by 10(10%) of the beneficiaries who participated in N-agro with third position the dominance of the N-teach in the study may not be a coincidence. It appears that the number of the N-teach/ICT beneficiaries engaged generally greater than other stand of the programme.

The interviewed respondents indicate that 90% of the ICT tech/proficiency beneficiaries opened shops and engaged in soft/hardware repairing, selling and buying computer accessories. Some of them also got employment as teachers in different primary and secondary schools in Kano state. This indicates that the programme enabled the beneficiaries to be employed and have steady source of income, saving and investment opportunities. Therefore, the programme invariably reduced the rate of poverty and empowered youth through financial independence, ICT proficiency, teaching profession and business set up in the area.

Table 6: The Impact of N-Power on Youth Empowerment Poverty Reduction in Kano Central Area

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Financial independence	32	30%
Business set up/teaching career	68	70%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey. 2024

Table 6 shows that 32 (30%) beneficiaries achieved financial independent and secured capital to start business while 68 (70%) beneficiaries set up different business and secured teaching profession.

Table 7: Successful Performance of the Programme

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Number of beneficiaries set up a business and secured teaching career	92	90%
Number of beneficiaries without business	8	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 7 shows that 92 (90%) of the beneficiaries established their business or entrepreneurship while 8(10%) of the beneficiaries did not established any business or enterprise due to improper utilization of the fund and training they acquired. Therefore, this indicates that the programme was successful and yield positive result in the area because 90% of its beneficiaries had set up business of their own. This is a tremendous achievement which indicated that the programme achieved its objectives of reducing poverty and empower youth.

Table 8: Rating of N-Power by the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
A) Excellent	47	50%
B) Very Good	26	30%
C) Good	16	10%
D) Poor	7	5%
E) Very Poor	4	5%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 8 shows the rate of the performance of the programme by the respondents. It also indicates 47 (50%) respondents agreed that the performance is excellent while very good is 26 (30%) and good 16 (10%). 10% felt that the performance of the programme so far is poor. The respondents that agreed on the rate of performance of the programme is excellent, very good and good are greater. Therefore, the performance and activities of the programme in eradicating poverty and youth empowerment was excellent.

Table 9: The Challenges of N-Power Programme in Nigeria

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Delay in payment of allowances	42	40%
Distance to Working Place	5	10%
Lack of close monitoring and supervision	25	20%
Lack of adequate funds	28	30%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 9 presented challenge of N-power programme in the provision of youth empowerment and poverty reduction in Kano Central Senatorial District Gwale. The table indicates that most 60(60%) of the beneficiaries opined that delay in payment of allowance

were the fewer. Furthermore, 10(10%) felt that another challenge of N-power is the distance to working place, another 10(10%) felt that the scheme lacks close monitoring and supervision by government and finally lacks adequate fund. This is the reason why the beneficiaries are not been paid adequate money to start business

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this paper, it concludes that the beneficiaries of the N-power in the Kano central composed of N-teach, N-health and N-agro, VAIDS. Volunteer assets and income distribution schemes, however the number of N-teach beneficiaries was greater than other component. The contribution of the N-power programme to youth empowerment and poverty reduction and other aspect of the problems such as acquisition of working experience, setting up of small and medium scale business by the beneficiaries were insignificant. And that the issues and challenge that militate against effective implementation of the N-power programme were delay in the payment of allowance, unpaid allowances, distance to working places, lack of teacher training. Other challenges were elitist nature of the programme and the issues of over-utilization of the limited facilities provided for the scheme. Problem of bank detail error faced by the beneficiaries at the time of initial enrolment in the scheme. Federal government should ensure a prompt and timely disbursement of fund for the payment of the beneficiaries of the N-power on or before 25th of every month and machinery should be put in place to effectively monitor the prompt and timely payment of such stipend to the beneficiaries to ensure strict compliance.

The N-power programme official should make sure that, those beneficiaries who have issues patterning the late or non-payment and (Bank detail and BVN of monthly stipend are timely and judiciously treated. The posting or deployment of the N-power beneficial should be based on the proximity to the place of their primary assignment to avoid unnecessary spend on transport and enable the beneficiaries to save some surplus money for meaning venture after their trainings. The N-teach component of the scheme should be given adequate teacher education training before deploying them to teach in order to ensure effective performance. Federal government should provide a package of interest free loan to the N-power beneficiaries which will be deducted instrumentally from their monthly stipend. Federal government should introduce special training and retraining programme on ICT, agriculture and teacher education through mandatory training and workshops.

The state and federal government should join hand to verify the participants in order to afford those who missed out the first phase to come on board. The state and federal government should reactivate moribund industries and enterprises and expand the horizon of the N-power programme in that direction. In line the increase in job creation and increase source of income of the unemployed people, there is need to reactivate the small scale industries and enterprises in which rural dwellers can be more involved. Production center

for tradition hand craft could be set up and managed by the rural dwellers to provide manufacturing of baskets work pottery and leather work.

Federal government should also devise means of effective control and monitoring of the programme by establishing the position of team of supervisors effective internal and external audit, partnership with other organizations like state youth empowerment to assist in fast- tracking the activities, performance, compliance, transparency and accountability of the programme for future success and sustainability.

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