

Youth Empowerment Schemes and Unemployment in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria

¹Emmanuel Olaniyi Dunmade, PhD & ² Kolawole Jayeola Asa, PhD

¹Department of Industrial Relations & Personnel Management,
Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria

²Department of Business Administration,
Elizade University, Ilara – Mokin, Ondo State, Nigeria

Abstract

For Nigeria, the so called giant of Africa to stand out economically as one of the best countries in the continent and also in the world, it must effectively empower its teeming youths. This is not only to better the lots of its young citizens, but also to enable them to contribute maximally to the national economic growth, while equally minimizing the high rate of criminality in the country. Hence, this study assessed the impact of youth empowerment schemes on the unemployment situation in Nigeria, with a focus on Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The study utilized simple random sampling technique through a questionnaire administration. The descriptive statistics used involved simple percentages and tables, while inferential statistics adopted was regression analysis. The findings of the study established: a significant and positive impact of youth empowerment schemes on the youths' employment generation; and a significant impact of N - Power scheme on the youths' self-reliance in Abuja Metropolis. The study hence, recommended the improvement of the country's unemployment condition by the government through a thorough review of all policy schemes targeted at youth empowerment and development activities. This was with a view to minimize replication and clashes in the operational sectors.

Keywords: Job Creation; Job Security; National Development; Youth Empowerment; and Youth Unemployment.

Introduction

Unemployment has recently taken a heavy toll on Nigerian youths. This is due to a situation in which a group of young people from various backgrounds in the country are willing and able to work, but could not find any, with some being seriously starved, while others are losing their lives (Okoye-Nebo, Kenneth & Ugochukwu, 2014). Youth unemployment has recently become one of the first thoughts that come to mind

whenever the country's budget is to be presented. Youth unemployment, with visible signs of joblessness in every nook and cranny of the society, has emerged as one of the Nigeria's most pressing developmental concerns (Lawretta, 2021). Since gaining political independence in 1960, Nigerian economy has undergone major operational changes that have led to structural transformations which have not produced any appreciable sustained

economic growth or development to guarantee enough employment opportunities for her youths (Emeh, 2012).

Nigeria, the most populous nation in Africa and the largest black nation in the world, is endowed with a wealth of natural and human resources. However, a number of man-made impediments have prevented this magnificent nation's potentials from materializing into observable realities. The implications of our country's failure to realize its manifest destiny are consequently numerous and can be seen in the countless instances of deteriorating infrastructure, subpar service delivery, as well as the high rate of poverty and unemployment wreaking havoc on Nigerian society today (Oduwole, 2015). Furthermore, there is ample evidence of the devastation caused by unemployment in the country as hundreds of young Nigerians graduates from various schools are getting into the nearly hopeless and extremely competitive labour market every year. A cursory examination of the Nigerian situation reveals that Nigerian streets are littered with youths engaged in informal economic activities such as street commercial motorcycle riders, hawking and the like. While others resort to one form of criminality or another, with internet fraud, popularly known as yahoo yahoo, being the most common in recent times. These are teenagers who in normal circumstances,

would have obtained profitable employments in some organizations or displayed their skills and ingenuity if there were enabling settings and dependable management structures in place (Obi, Emenike & Chukwurah, 2021).

According to statistics from the National Population Commission (2014), more than half of Nigeria's 180 million people are under 30 years of age. In addition, the National Bureau of Statistics (2017) reported that over seven million jobs have been lost in Nigeria since 2015, including over four million between 2016 and 2017. Therefore, in line with Doreo (2013), youth unemployment in Nigeria is three times higher than general unemployment and is increasing at a pace of 16 percent per year as unemployment occurs when persons are jobless and have looked for work within the previous five weeks. The number of jobless people is divided by the total number of people who are now employed to get at the unemployment rate, which is a measure of how prevalent unemployment is in the country. In Nigeria, unemployment is defined as the percentage of the labour force that was available for employment, but did not work for at least 39 hours in the week before the survey period (Oduwole, 2015).

However, it is difficult to find a family in Nigeria where no one is unemployed,

underemployed, or at risk from unemployment and its social impacts. As the proverb goes, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop", it can be argued that unemployment contributes to social issues like armed robbery, homelessness, prostitution, and other social vices. Since experience has shown that government alone cannot shoulder the responsibility of providing employment for all of its citizens, governments across the globe are in fact, investing a significant amount of resources to reduce unemployment by fostering the growth of private and informal sectors (Obi et al., 2021).

The tremendous rise in the social instability in Nigeria has been greatly exacerbated by the rising percentage of youth unemployment since the majority of the unemployed individuals in the country are graduates of Universities and Polytechnics. So, unemployment is a major cause of serious developmental issues throughout the country as urban youth aged twenty to twenty-four currently have a 40% unemployment rate. Additionally, the rate is 31% for people between the ages of 15 and 19 and this, accounts for two-thirds of urban unemployed people between the ages of 15 and 24, thus, making Nigeria to have historically been marked by high rates of youth unemployment (Alanana, 2003).

Furthermore, Alanana (2003) opined that unemployment is potentially dangerous as it sends disturbing signal to all segments of the Nigerian Society. From the foregoing analysis, it is obvious that while we lament about Nigeria's unemployment crisis, it is imperative to hold that it does not exist in a vacuum. Youth unemployment is due to corruption. Corruption is a global problem and no country of the world is totally free of its menacing grip. The differentiation in the scale of corruption perception index from one country to another, according to Ochulor, Chinenye and Leo (2011) is on the level of its commonness and the honesty committed willingness by the people in putting a halt to it. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, every level of the society has been deeply permeated by a pervasive and debilitating culture of corruption. In this mess, Nigerian youths cannot find jobs because none has been created.

Recent data revealed that compared to the 1970s oil boom, when excessive profits led to wasteful spending in the public sector that disrupted employment dynamics and also altered the revenue bases for policy planning, the Nigerian economy developed substantially in the latter 1970s. The subsequent economic changes and the structural adjustment programme (SAP) were brought about as a result of this and other numerous crises. The primary goal of

the economic structural reform was to completely restructure the Nigerian economy in response to the country's population growth (Lawretta, 2021).

However, the implemented economic and financial structural reforms did not provide meaningful outcomes, leading to an alarming rise in the rate of youth unemployment and the associated social and economic issues in recent years. Every developing economy, including Nigeria, deals with unemployment as a developmental issue (Lawretta, 2021). The younger generation has been more affected by it. Nigerian youngsters, especially graduates, swarm to Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of the nation, in quest of white-collar work. This is due to the notion that the city offers more (work) prospects than other cities in the nation, thus, making a move to the city in search of greener pasture, necessary. This rush has contributed to the FCT's profligate unemployment rate. This is not to imply that there is no unemployment or it is lower in other states of the federation. Based on this, this research seeks to examine the impact of government's introduced empowerment schemes on the youths' unemployment situation in Nigeria, while the specific objectives are:

- i. to investigate the impact of the government's introduced

empowerment schemes on the youths' employment generation in Abuja Metropolis, and

- ii. to assess the impact of N - Power scheme on the youths' self-reliance in Abuja Metropolis.

Hypotheses of the Study

Ho₁: Government's introduced empowerment schemes do not have significant impact on the youths' employment generation in Abuja Metropolis; and

Ho₂: N - Power scheme does not have significant impact on the youths' self-reliance in Abuja Metropolis.

Literature Review

Concept of Unemployment

Akinsola, (2021) described youth unemployment as young individuals aged 18 to 35 who aspire to work, but are unable to get suitable jobs. The concept, according to Fajana (2000), is a condition in which persons who are eager and capable of working are unable to obtain adequate paid job. It is one of the macroeconomic issues that every responsible government must monitor and manage. The higher an economy's unemployment rate, the greater the poverty level and attendant welfare concerns. Therefore, Fajana (2000), Alao (2005) and Wikipedia (2014) acknowledged the existence of following kinds of

unemployment: structural unemployment; frictional unemployment; seasonal unemployment; cyclical or Keynesian unemployment; and technological unemployment.

Structural unemployment occurs when the structure of an industry or the country's economic activities changes. This could be due to the employment of outmoded technology, a lack of capital resources in relation to demand, or the product or service no longer being in demand. Frictional unemployment is caused by industrial friction, in which jobs exist but employees are unable to fill them because they lack the appropriate expertise or are unaware of the existence of such positions. The way the business cycle functions is the cause of cyclical or Keynesian unemployment. This is a situation where there is no enough labor available to meet demands (Okoye-Nebo, et al., 2014).

In other words, when aggregate demand falls below the level of full employment, it is insufficient to buy the output at the level of full employment as seasonal variations in the activities of specific industries are brought on by climatic changes, changes in fashion, or by the very nature of those industries themselves. Technological unemployment results from changes in industrial methods, thus, a circumstance

where machines take the role of people as constant technological advancements have improved the mechanization of the production process. Personal factors like advanced age, physical or mental illness, poor work habits and insufficient training contribute to residual unemployment (Okoye-Nebo, et al., 2014).

Concept of Youth Empowerment

The terms youth, adolescent, teenager, youngster, and young person are frequently used interchangeably over the world and denote the same thing. Youth is typically used to describe a stage of life that falls between childhood and maturity. According to Konopka (1973), different countries have different definitions of what age a person qualifies as a youth and is therefore entitled to special care. As a result, the World Bank and the United Nations General Assembly define a youth as someone who is between the ages of 15 and 24. The World Health Organization, however, has a different range for what constitutes a youth. According to the organization, a youth is any member of society between the ages of 15 and 34. Note that Nigeria is a member of the aforementioned organizations and that her youths fall within their target age ranges.

The concept of youth empowerment, as employed in this study, is greatly influenced by the meaning of enablement. Accordingly,

Akinsola (2021) described empowerment as a multifaceted social process that aids individuals in taking charge of their life. It is a process that develops people's power (or ability to act) for use in their own lives, communities and societies through taking action on issues that they define as essential. According to this definition, empowerment is a process that results in a positive outcome when all of the steps have been taken. This is the ability to successfully participate and share authority. It gives the ability for self-expression based on personal experiences, the capacity to analyze these experiences critically, and the capacity to derive useful conclusions that causes many parties' behavior to change. It challenges long-held beliefs and exposes conflicts of interest resulting from a desire to distribute authority. Since we only look at information that is already available, it follows that access to information is one of the elements of empowerment.

It is typically participative or all-inclusive in nature, with everyone listening to and appreciating one another's opinions. It frequently requires local organizing, which results in capacity growth. Everyone must be trustworthy and dependable because of the participation character of the process. The claim is that if the youth of Nigeria are given more authority, they will become more cautious in order to be viewed as

capable of attaining empowerment, which in this article is meant to mean the creation of an atmosphere that will allow the youth of Nigeria to fully realize their potential. Thus, youth empowerment is a continuous enhancement of youth development, structures, institutions, and programmes in order to create a social condition, ensure youth rights, advancement, and safeguarding their welfare for effective functioning and self-actualization (Bulus, Gubak & Gubam, 2020).

Therefore, youth empowerment is frequently discussed as a bridge to intergenerational equity, civic participation and democratic development. In light of this, the concept of youth empowerment is referred as the process of continuous improvement through which all young people work to meet their fundamental social and emotional needs. These include the need for safety, a sense of belonging, a sense of purpose, and a spiritual foundation, as well as the need to develop the knowledge and abilities necessary to function and contribute in daily life (Bulus, Gubak & Gubam, 2020).

Some of the Government's Introduced Empowerment Programmes for Youths in Nigeria

Over the years, the government has institutionalized programs and launched social campaigns to improve the lots of

Nigerians, particularly the youth, in an effort to prevent the collapse of the Nigerian state. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the Green Revolution (GR), the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), the Farm Settlement Scheme (FSS), the Micro Credit Youth Empowerment Program, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the Family Economic Advancement Program (FEAP), the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Program (SURE), the N-Power, among other programs, are notable among the programmes. However, the N-Power program was the subject of this study since it reached all groups of young people in the nation, which made it a compelling choice (Zuwaira, Abdulrahman & Muhammad, 2020).

Overview of N-Power Scheme

In June 2016, the International Development Association received a credit from the World Bank group in the amount of \$5 billion to help establish programs for Nigeria's economic development. As such, the National Social Investment Program, the Federal Government of Nigeria's social safety net programs were established with an additional \$1.3 billion from its budget. From that time, these programmes - financial aid, job training, and social intervention initiatives have directly impacted more than 4 million people. The N-Power programme

was created in this line to reduce the widespread unemployment among young people and promote social security (Dauda, Adeyeye, Yakubu, Oni & Umar, 2019). This was due to the fact that a society's ability to develop economically and biologically depends on its youths (Okonkwo, Onyeze & Ochiaka, 2019).

N-power scheme began on the 9th of June 2016. This was with the first part to target acute hardship of the Nigerian youths in the sectors of agriculture, education, and many others. Thus, it was introduced by the current government of President Mohammed Buhari with a view to improve the socio-economic conditions of some jobless Nigerian youths as it was meant to equally serve as one of the pillars in enhancing sustainable development in the country (Zuwaira, Abdulrahman & Muhammad, 2020).

N-Power is an initiative for job development and empowerment of the Federal Government of Nigeria's National Social Investment Program (NSIP) (FGN). In essence, it is a program to improve employability that aims to instill the learn-work-enterprise culture in young people between the ages of 18 and 35. In fact, the FGN's vigorous investment in youth development aims to address some of the long-standing shortcomings in public

services, including the low teacher-to-student ratio in public elementary schools, the high prevalence of preventable diseases, and the dearth of tax-paying individuals. Additionally, the Nigerian government hopes to use N-Power to mobilize a sizable volunteer workforce to address some issues with public services and boost the overall economy livelihood (Nwaobi, 2019).

The programme also emphasizes teaching our non-graduates pertinent technical and business skills to improve their prospects for employment (livelihood). The main objectives of N-Power are to intervene and directly improve a critical mass of young unemployed Nigerians' quality of life; to develop a qualitative system for the transfer of employability, entrepreneurial, and technical skills; to create an ecosystem of solutions for failing public services and government diversification policies; and to develop and enhance Nigeria's knowledge economy (Nwaobi, 2019).

As a result, the various N-Power categories are as follows:

Section one known as Graduate Category: (A) N-Power Volunteer Corps: This comprised (i) N-Power Teach; (ii) N-Power Teach (Stem); (iii) N-Power Health; (iv) N-Power Agric.; and (v) N-Power Voids.; while section two identified as Non-Graduate Category: This encompassed (i) N-Power

Knowledge; (ii) N-Power Build; (iii) N-Power Junior; and (iv) N-Power Innovation (Nwaobi, 2019).

In terms of structure, the N-Power volunteer corps is a post-tertiary participation program for Nigerians between the ages of 18 and 35 that includes a two-year paid volunteering program. Operationally, graduates carry out their major responsibilities in designated public services located in their close-by areas. Additionally, they are entitled to computing services that provide the data they need for their specific engagement as well as data for ongoing training. N-Power Teach Volunteers specifically assist in enhancing the delivery of basic education in Nigeria by serving as teaching assistants in primary schools (Nwaobi, 2019).

Again, as a part of the N-Power Teach initiative, N-Power Teach (STEM) recruits recent graduates with aptitude for and interest in computer programming (and other related fields) to help with the implementation of the STEM curriculum for primary and secondary schools developed by the Federal Government. Similar to this, N-Power Health volunteers work to enhance and promote preventive healthcare in local communities for families, individuals, and vulnerable parts of society (including pregnant women and children). Volunteers with N-Power Agro supposedly offer advice

to farmers throughout the nation by sharing necessary information and compiling information on Nigeria's agricultural resources. Similar to this, the voluntary Asset and Income Declaration Scheme (VAIDS) aims to persuade partially and fully compliant as well as noncompliant taxpayers to voluntarily declare their true income and assets and pay the necessary taxes to the government. Essentially, this program is intended to last for a year. After that, competent participants might have received job offers from the appropriate tax authorities, and the remaining participants were transferred to N-Power Teach to complete their programme (Nwaobi, 2019).

However, under the second category, N-Power knowledge, young Nigerians are trained to establish a knowledge economy equipped with world-class skills and certification in order to become relevant in domestic and global markets. Similarly, N-Power Build is a vocational training component of the NSIP plan dedicated to the training and certification of unemployed Nigerian youths with the goal of constructing a highly competent and qualified workforce of technicians, artisans, and service professionals in Nigeria. The trade disciplines of N-Power construction are as follows: automobile, carpentry and joinery, electrical, installations, masonry, painting and decorating, plumbing and

pipefitting, welding and fabrication. This program is intended to last twelve months, divided into three months in training facilities and nine months of apprenticeship with employers from the relevant industry. The beneficiaries (trainees) also receive a monthly stipend of N10,000 in addition to the necessary training materials (consumables and tools). Moreover, tool kits are provided as a complimentary exit package to trainees who meet the requirements for the apprenticeship part of the programme (Nwaobi, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

According to Raw (2005), a theory is a collection of connected concepts, definitions, and ratios that offer a systematic understanding of phenomena by defining relationships between variables, describing, expounding on, and making predictions about the characteristics of the phenomena. Thus, the motivation theory of Abraham Maslow was examined and used for this study.

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchical Need

Theory of Motivation

The hierarchical need theory of motivation was put forth by psychologist Abraham Maslow in 1943 and 1954. According to the theory, satisfying needs can motivate people and that some needs are more important than others. Maslow developed the hierarchy of

needs, which is still relevant to all aspects of human endeavour, based on this concept. He did this by identifying five stages of needs, including physiological need, need for safety and security, need for love and belonging, need for self-esteem, and need for self-actualization. (i). Physiological Needs: these include the need for sleep, sex, food, clothing, shelter, and other fundamental physical requirements. (ii) Safety and Security Needs: these needs come into play when the physiological demands are mostly met. (iii) Belongingness, Social and Love Needs: after basic physiological and safety needs have been met, a third layer begins to emerge (Ibeh, 2015).

However, a person needs friends, a romantic partner, kids, affectionate relationships in general, and even a sense of community. (iv) Self Esteem Needs: Maslow identified two types of self-esteem needs: a lower version and a higher version. The bottom one is the need for other people's esteem, as well as the needs for power, fame, glory, attention, reputation and respect. The demand for self-respect, which includes emotions like assurance, skill, accomplishment, mastery, independence and freedom, is part of the higher form. (V) Self - Actualization Needs: Maslow referred to this level as having self-actualization needs in several different ways. His term for it is growth motivation (as opposed to deficit motivation), needs

(sometimes known as B needs, as opposed to D needs) and self-actualization. These are requirements that are unrelated to equilibrium or homeostasis as once activated, they remain felt. In fact, as we "feed" them, they probably get stronger. They entail a persistent drive to achieve potential and "be all that you can be." It is everything that comes down to becoming the most whole and complete (Ibeh, 2015).

Thus, this suggests that once a need is met, it ceases to serve as motivation. These needs were referred to as survival needs by Maslow. The benefits of vocational training inspire an individual to participate in a programme according to this theory, which is relevant to the current study. As youths take part, they learn things that help them to survive, live happy lives, provide for their own needs, connect with others and most importantly, contribute to the advancement of the society. Maslow emphasized that these demands are in order or hierarchy, despite being full in nature. He established the hierarchy of needs, which is now applicable to all human endeavours (Ibeh, 2015).

Empirical Review

Emeh (2012) conducted a study titled "tackling youth unemployment in Nigeria: the Lagos State development and empowerment programmes initiatives",

with both primary and secondary sources used for data generation. The finding confirmed significant impact of empowerment programmes on the employment situation in the Lagos State.

Likewise, Dauda et al. (2019) examined the impact of N-power programme on youth enterprise in Minna metropolis on 225 respondents with the use of a cross sectional survey design for the generation of data. The study adopted Pearson's product moment correlation for testing its hypotheses. Thus, the result established non – existence or insignificant link between the N-power scheme and any of the following variables, employment generation, poverty lessening and skill acquirement.

Methodology

This study employed survey research design that endorsed the adoption of questionnaires for eliciting data from the respondents at the Nigerian Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Descriptive research was used with so as to statistically deduce the obtained information on the population. The population for this study was Three Thousand, Two Hundred and Fifty – Eight (3,258) youths who benefited from the Federal government of Nigeria's introduce N – Power scheme. The figure was centered on the provided

information during the field work. Then, Taro Yamane's formula was employed to determine the sample size which was Three Hundred and Fifty – Six (356), where

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

and n = Sample size, N = Population of the study

e = Tolerable error (5%)

The study applied primary source of data collection as this was through the use of questionnaire to collect the required information from the participants. Therefore, simple percentage, tables and regressions analysis were adopted for analyzing the collected data. The simple percentage and tables were used to describe the respondents' demographic characteristics, while regression analysis was utilized to test the study's hypotheses through the application of SPSS (22 version).

Results and Discussion

Tables 1 through 3 present the results of the study's analysis as Three Hundred and Five (305) out of Three Hundred and Fifty - Six (356) copies of the questionnaire administered on the participants were correctly completed and given back being 86 % response rate. So, the analysis was built on 305 copies of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Participant Characteristics	n	%
Gender		
Male	174	57.0
Female	131	43.0
Total	305	100.0
Age Range		
Below 20 years	50	16.4
21-30 years	165	54.1
31-40 years	84	27.5
41 years & above	6	2.0
Total	305	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	172	56.5
Married	95	31.0
Divorced	30	9.9
Widow/Widower	8	2.6
Total	305	100.0
Educational Qualification		
WAEC/SSCE	40	13.0
OND/NCE	72	23.7
B.Sc./HND	161	52.9
M.Sc./MBA	32	10.4
Total	305	100.0
Occupation		
Health	76	25.0
Agriculture	47	15.4
Technologist	59	19.5
Teaching	122	40.1
Total	305	100.0
Years of N- Power Employment		
6 Months	24	7.8
1 Year	63	20.6
2 Years	85	27.9
More than 2 Years	134	43.8
Total	305	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Results in Table 1 showed that 57.0% of the participants were male, while 43.0% were female, thus, it indicated that majority of those who benefited from the government's introduced empowerment scheme (N – Power) in the Federal Capital Territory

(FCT), Abuja were males. It was also shown that 16.4% of the study participants were below the age 20 years, 54.1% were of age 21-30 years, 27.5% were of age 31-40 years, while 2.0% were of ages 41 years and above. This implied that most of those who

benefitted from the N – Power scheme were those whom the scheme was actually targeted. That is, those who could make judicious use of the given opportunity. Marital distribution illustrated that 56.5% were single, 31.0% were married, 9.9% divorced, while 2.6% were widow/widowers. This suggested that youths who were single benefitted most from the scheme as these young ones were expected to be committed more on the programme since there were less or no family disturbances.

In relation to the educational qualification, 13.0% of the participants had WAEC/SSCE, 23.7% had OND/NCE, 52.9% had B.Sc./HND, while 10.4% had M.Sc./MBA. The implication of this was that the targeted sets of youths were those who benefitted

most, that is, the young and jobless graduates in the country. The distribution further exhibited that 25.0% were in Health, 15.4% in Agriculture, 19.5% as Technologists while 40.1% were in Teaching. It could be inferred from this that youths in education that benefitted most would be able to give their best in terms of their wealth of acquired knowledge to their younger ones in the primary and secondary schools. In addition, 7.8% of the participants have been in the schemes for 6 months, 20.6% for 1 year while 43.8% have been there for 2 years and above. This indicated that most participants have enjoyed the government's scheme (N – Power) quite reasonably, and it have thus, ameliorate their sufferings occasioned by their initial joblessness in the county.

Testing of the Hypotheses of the Study

Ho₁: There is no significant impact of the government's introduced empowerment schemes on the youths' employment generation in Abuja (FCT).

Table 2: Summary of Regression Analyses on Impact of the Government's Introduced Empowerment Schemes on the Youths' Employment Generation in Abuja (N=305)

Variable	B	SEB	β	t	p
(Constant)	5.610	.201		27.945	.000
Empowerment Schemes	.523	.049	.481	10.725	.000
R^2		.481			
R^2		.231			
Adj. R^2		.229			
F		115.033*			

*p < .05. Dependent Variable: youths' employment generation

Source: Authors' Computation, 2022

Table 2 showed the impact of the schemes on the youths' employment generation in the FCT. It was presented that

the impact of the government's introduced empowerment schemes on the youths' employment generation yielded a coefficient of a multiple correlation (R) and square (R^2) of .481 and .231 respectively. These values were statistically significant at 0.05 probability level. In other words, government's introduced empowerment schemes could account for 23.1% of the observed variance in the youths' employment generation.

Thus, the stated null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that there was a significant impact of the government's introduced empowerment schemes on the youths' employment generation in Abuja. This result validated the findings of Emeh (2012)'s study which confirmed significant impact of empowerment programmes on the employment situation in the Lagos State.

Ho₂: There is no significant impact of N - Power scheme on the youths' self-reliance in Abuja Metropolis.

Table 3: Summary of Regression Analyses on N-Power scheme on the youths' self-reliance in Abuja Metropolis (N=305)

Variable	B	SEB	β	t	p
(Constant)	5.438	.181		29.999	.000
N - Power scheme	.387	.045	.407	8.702	.000
R^2		.407			
R^2		.165			
Adj. R^2		.163			
F		75.718*			

*p < .05. Dependent Variable: youths' self-reliance

Source: Authors' Computation, 2022

Table 3 presented the impact of the N - Power scheme on the youths' self-reliance in Abuja Metropolis. It was exhibited that the impact of the N - Power scheme on the youths' self-reliance yielded a coefficient of a multiple correlation (R) and square (R^2) of .407 and .165 respectively. These values were statistically significant at 0.05 probability level. In other words, the N - Power scheme could account for 16.5% of the observed variance in the youths' self-

reliance. The stated null hypothesis was then rejected. This suggested that there was a significant impact of the N - Power scheme on the youths' self-reliance in the FCT. This finding was in contradiction with the Dauda et al. (2019)'s research that established non-existence and insignificant link between the N-power scheme and any of the following variables, employment generation, poverty lessening and skill acquirement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The fact that youth unemployment is widespread in Nigeria is self-evident. Its concurrent implications on both the youth and the entire country cannot be ignored as they result in withering of agricultural techniques, persistent poverty, hunger, social vices and insecurity at an alarming pace in Nigerian society. It is therefore unfortunate that young individuals and graduates who are competent, eager, and able to work cannot find work and hence, earn nothing. As a result of this, they cannot handle any household or societal obligations that loom over them at all times for the reason that such people are dissatisfied. These frustrated youth form time-bomb and are susceptible and can be manipulated by unscrupulous forces in society to perpetrate all manner of crime and mayhem, which they would properly despise if they were gainfully employed. Youth empowerment and development, as plain as they are, are the magic batons that can change the story over time.

However, resulting from the finding of this study, it could be concluded that Federal government's introduced youth empowerment scheme such as N – Power had significant and positive impact on the youths' employment in the country.

Recommendations

Following the findings of the study's analysis, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Governments should take steps to improve the country's unemployment condition. One way to achieve this is to have a critical review of all policy schemes targeted at youth empowerment and development activities so as to minimize replication and clashes in operational sectors. Also, these schemes should not be forgone on the platform of political suitability; rather, they should be appraised based on their potential to achieve the goals for which they were developed.
- ii. Governments should mandate financial institutions to expand their activity further than their existing "comfort zones," like National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and local government, etc., while the ongoing enlightenment and education programmes about the opportunities that exist in the environment should be effectively implemented.

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