

UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS AND GOVERNMENT POLICY RESPONSE: A STUDY OF N-POWER PROGRAMME

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to identify the implications of unemployment crisis to youths' empowerment in Nigeria, find out the extent to which government employment policy response through N-Power Programme has reduced unemployment in the country and to suggest other ways of strengthening N power programme as well as creating employment in the country. The study was conducted in three states of Nigeria namely Edo, Lagos and Kogi States. A total of 510 participants and beneficiaries of N-power programme from batch A-C were purposively selected to take part in the research. Descriptive statistical research tools such as frequency, table and percentage were used to analyze the data collected. Hypotheses were tested using Chi- Square. Findings of the study revealed that unemployment crisis in the country hinders youths' empowersments in Nigeria as the trend makes youths to engage in all forms of social vices in order to make a living. Government employment policy response through N-Power Programme helped Nigerian youths who are beneficiaries to improve their standard of living by empowering them to make investment. Despite the success of the programme, it did not reduce unemployment rate in the country. The study recommended that government should recruit more unemployed graduates in the N-power programme.

Key words: Unemployment, N-power, government, policy, response

1.INTRODUCTION

Unemployment refers to a circumstance in which a person who is actively seeking job is unable to find employment (Chappelow, 2020). A recent study conducted by Mlatsheni and Leibbrandt (2011), points out that the remarkable incidence of unemployment and worklessness is likely the most crucial factor to the perpetuation of social exclusion on a broad and significant scale.

As stated by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020), unemployment happens when employees who wish to work are unable to obtain employment, resulting in a reduction in economic production; nonetheless, they still need sustenance. When the unemployment rate is high, it indicates that the economy is in crisis; meanwhile, when the unemployment rate is

exceptionally low, it indicates that the economy may be doing well. Unemployment may be divided into four categories: frictional, cyclical, structural, and institutional unemployment. Government agencies gather and publicize unemployment statistics in a number of methods, depending on the agency.

Unemployment is grouped and categorized based on the average population of job-seekers who are actively seeking work but are not employed. In contrast, we may reliably estimate the number of jobless adolescents inside that cluster of categories by selecting our total data from that cluster of categories. "Youth" is defined officially and academically as "individuals within a population who are between the ages of 18 and 29 years" and is defined as "individuals within a population who are between the ages of 18 and 29 years." As a result, with true statistical data at our disposal, we can confidently hypothesize, express our opinions, make suggestions, and pass judgement on nearly everything pertaining to youth unemployment and its causes (Yu, 2013). ‘

Job was described as a state of being unable to obtain adequate paid employment in the Guardian Newspaper (2021), according to an editorial published in the same publication. Unemployment is one of the most serious concerns facing Nigeria, since it has resulted in a slew of problems such as insecurity, banditry, abduction, and other criminal activities. As a consequence of the lack of a well-performing sector that can absorb or reduce unemployment, the country's structure has collapsed, resulting in a high level of poverty that encourages many young people to engage in criminal activity. Other factors have contributed to Nigeria's high unemployment rate, which has presented a severe threat to the country's large population of over 100 million people. In addition, there is corruption, since favouritism and nepotism have increasingly become key factors in job placement and replacement in both the commercial and governmental sectors. According to the Guardian, employment in Nigeria are no longer allocated solely on the basis of merit, depriving well-qualified Nigerians the opportunity to work in any area of the country.

However, Nigeria has been facing the problem of high rising rate of unemployment for decades now and this situation has led to large number of citizens of the country, notably graduates roaming about the street of Nigeria without job. Unemployment crisis in the country has led to series of security problems as some unemployed took to different types of crime such as armed robbery, kidnapping, internet scam popularly known as Yahoo Yahoo among others. According to Muhammad, et al, (2011) cited in Olawunmi and Adedayo (2017), unemployment has had a number of social and economic implications, including a rise in crime, a loss of respect and identity, a decrease in buying power, psychological damage, and corruption, to name a few. Unemployment is a set of major development issues that is becoming more serious throughout Nigeria. According to Alanana (2003) cited in Olawunmi and Adedayo (2017), unemployment is potentially harmful since it sends out alarming signals to all sectors of the economy.

Nigeria is a low-income nation (with a severe poverty level) with a strong informal economy and substantial young unemployment. As a result, the Nigerian government launched the N-power (young empowerment training) initiative to address the important challenges. However, there is a paucity of research on the extent to which the programme had reduced unemployment in Nigeria. Against this backdrop this study throws up a couple of questions; what are the consequences of unemployment crisis to youth's development in Nigeria? Has government employment policy response through N-Power Programme reduced unemployment in the country? What are the ways of strengthening N-power programme as well as creating employment in the country? We shall attempt to provide answers to the above questions.

The general objective of the study is to interrogate unemployment crises and government policy response with a study of N-Power Programme of Federal Government within the period under study. The specific objectives are to: identify the implications of unemployment crisis on youths' empowerments in Nigeria; find out the extent to which government employment policy response through N-Power Programme has reduced unemployment in the country; and suggest ways of strengthening N-power programme as well as creating employment in the country.

To this end, the paper has been discussed around the following major sub-themes: The literature review, theoretical review, empirical review, methodology, results and discussion of findings. Finally, followed by conclusion and policy recommendations.

2.LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 An Over view of the N-Power Programme

N-Power is a programme established by Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari to alleviate young unemployment and promote social development. Unemployed graduates and non-graduates between the ages of 18 and 35 are eligible for the programme (Okogba., 2017). It is a two-year compensated programme aimed at engaging beneficiaries in their respective states of residency. According to Agbakwuru (2019), the Nigerian federal government revealed on July 13, 2019, that they had spent a total of \$279 billion since they began paying programme participants in December 2016 to June 2019. N-Teach, N-Health, N-Agro, N-Build, N-Creative, and N-Tech are the six categories now available in the system. Only graduates who have completed the necessary one-year NYSC programme are eligible for N-Teach and N-Health, but N-Agro, N-Build, N-Creative, and N-Tech are open to both graduates and non-graduates (Onehi, 2020). The Federal Government launched a new Npower category in 2021 called N-knowledge, which is aimed at Nigerian youth. The goal is to assist youths in learning lucrative and useful computer hardware skills. Npower was able to effectively teach 1,500 youths and provide them with resources such as laptop computers. According to Yusuf (2021), the program's specific goals are to: intervene and directly improve the livelihood of a critical mass of young unemployed Nigerians; develop a qualitative system for the transfer of employability, entrepreneurial, and technical skills; create an ecosystem of solutions for ailing public services and government diversification policies; develop and enhance Nigeria's knowledge economy; and provide opportunities for fresh graduates to become entrepreneurs.

According to Kabeer (2018), the program's objectives include lowering the country's unemployment rate, allowing the transfer of entrepreneurial, technical, and employable skills, and providing a solution to active public service and government diversification policies. The N-Teach, N-Health, and N-Agro graduate categories are further separated into three domains. The N-Build Scheme is designed to provide non-graduates with the essential and useful skills to become self-employed. Based on the above, the scope of this article is confined to the N-Power scheme, with the goal of evaluating its influence on young unemployment, poverty reduction, and skill development.

2.1.2 Unemployment

Unemployment, according to Ajufu (2013), has become a big concern in the life of Nigerian youths, resulting in increasing militancy, violent crimes, kidnappings, restiveness, and delinquent behaviour on the part of the youth. Unemployment among young people has catastrophic consequences for both the individual and society as a whole, both mentally and

economically. The study investigates the subject of young unemployment and considers its implications. Unemployment has emerged as a significant issue plaguing the lives of Nigerian young, resulting in dissatisfaction, dejection, and a reliance on family and friends, who are also dealing with their own issues at the same time. The high incidence of unemployment among Nigeria's youngsters has contributed to the country's high levels of poverty and insecurity, which are both on the rise. Unemployment is a global economic concern that contributes to poverty and a lack of opportunity (Ajufo, 2013). For several decades, Nigeria has experienced significant negative social, economic, and political developments as a result of high levels of youth unemployment and underemployment, which have been exemplified in particular by an increase in militancy, violent crimes, kidnapping, restiveness, and political instabilities. The current global financial crisis, which has decimated companies and the chance of finding work for young people in Nigeria, have further exacerbated the problem (Fanimu and Olayinka, 2009). In their studies, Adejumola and Tayo-Olajubulu (2009) and Musari (2009) both agreed that unemployment has been recognized as a significant contributor to a variety of social vices, such as armed robbery, poverty, prostitution, political thugs, abduction, and other forms of extortion. Unemployment is a big issue afflicting Nigeria's population today, with youngsters bearing the brunt of it. Nigeria's youth unemployment rate hit an all-time high of 29.7% in 2018, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, with 13.2 million young people out of work. As a consequence, the majority of young people lack the financial resources to meet their fundamental needs. In view of the above, the government has launched several youth empowerment initiatives to empower adolescents and enhance their living standards on multiple occasions. The National Social Investment Program (NSIP), which includes the National Cash Transfer Program (NCTP), Trader Moni, School Feeding Program, and N-Power, was launched in 2015. The N-Power initiative is aimed at empowering teenagers via training and involvement in public organizations (Ifatimehin, et al., 2020).

2.2 THEORETICAL LITERATURE

2.2.1 Structural Functionalist and N-Power Programme

The structural functionalism has its roots in the organicism (Comte) of early 19th century. Organisms of Comte (and later that of Spencer and Durkheim) influenced the functional Anthropologists Malinowski and Redcliffe Brown. Durkheim's timeless analysis and Weber's emphasis on social taxonomies (ideal types) began to shape modern/contemporary structural perspective while Talcott Parsons (1937) developed the Social Systemic Functionalism which identified the structure of social action. A sociological theory called structural functionalism aims to explain how society works by concentrating on the connections between the numerous social institutions that make up society (such as the government, law, education, and religion). For instance, education serves a number of crucial social purposes in a society, including socializing and learning. The functionalist approach contends that the problem of unemployment in Nigeria results from the apparent imbalances in the nation, which are relevant to the topic of interest—the unemployment crisis in terms of economic empowerment and the supply of social and personal well-being. To mitigate this situation, N-Power Programme becomes the structure through which the state can attempt to bring about cohesion and harmony by distributing resources to the poor (unemployed graduate) to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor (Ayub and Gbaa, 2020).

2.2.2 Elite Theory and N-Power Programme

Mills (1956) is this theory's main proponent. According to Mills, a small, wealthy elite that has similar beliefs and interests and has similar privileged upbringings holds all political power. According to this theory, institutions were designed so that those at the top of the institutional

hierarchy monopolized power, and the majority of the population was portrayed as a passive, helpless mass that the powerful elite controlled and subjected to psychic management and manipulation. Therefore, the political judgments of the elite cannot be separated from the N-power programs. Evidence shows that the stipend (between N28,000 and N30,000) paid to the beneficiaries on monthly bases for a period of 2 years does not match the World Bank adjusted international poverty line to be \$2.15 per day (Deon et.al,2022). This means that everyone living on less than this amount per day will be considered in extreme poverty. According to Onah and Ugwuibe (2022), the paradox is that those saddled with the duty of implementation of N-Power programmes are non-poor and holders of political power. There is little question that N-power programs' ideological underpinnings and logic serve to reinforce the injustices, disparities, and robbery that are inherent in the current socioeconomic system, which codified the class privilege of a few against a many. The younger generation in Nigeria now faces a fairly gloomy future as a result of this. This rather has created a bleak future for the younger population in Nigeria. The synergy between monumental elite poverty reduction programmes is no other but debilitating evidences of looming unemployment rate on the faces of masses and increasing systemic upheavals across the country.

2.3 Empirical Literature

The issue of unemployment crisis and Federal Government of Nigeria response has occupied the studies of well-meaning researchers in recent times. Some of these studies are reviewed thus: A study on "The impact of N-Power programs on poverty alleviation in Rivers State, Nigeria" was undertaken by Enyioko in 2020. According to the report, Rivers State's kids are empowered by N-Power programs. It also mentioned that graduates from universities and polytechnics constitute the majority of those who benefit from N-Power programs. Inadequate information, failure to pay participants' stipends when they are due, bribery and corruption, providing the wrong bank verification number, the program's overbearing involvement of politicians, the high transportation costs participants must pay to get to and from work, website and internet issues, and inadequate program funding are among the major factors affecting how well N-Power programs are implemented to reduce poverty in Rivers State, according to the study.

The N-Power Program Implementation Process and the program's contribution to the socioeconomic wellbeing of participants in Akwanga Metropolis of Nasarawa State were the focus of a study by Abin (2018). According to the study, N-Power improved the beneficiaries' financial, material, and social well-being. One of the gaps the study aims to fill is that the study neglected the study area. The competency and resource use of N-Power teachers: implications for effective and efficient teaching in Nigerian primary and post primary schools were also examined in a study by Okoro and Basse (2018). The study only looked at the N-Teach component of the program, and it depended on how well qualified the beneficiaries were in terms of teacher preparation. This study also ignored contribution of the programme to youth empowerment which is another vacuum the study aims to close.

3.METHODOLOGY

3.1Theoretical Framework

The structural functionalism theory is adopted for this study. Functionalism has its roots in the organicism (Comte) of early 19th century. Organicism of Comte (and later that of Spencer and Durkheim) influenced the functional Anthropologists Malinowski and Redcliffe Brown. Durkheim's timeless analysis and Weber's emphasis on social taxonomies (ideal types) began to shape modern/contemporary structural perspective while Talcott Parsons(1937) developed the Social Systemic Functionalism which identified the structure of social action. The leading

proponents of this hypothesis are the aforementioned academics. A sociological theory called structural functionalism aims to explain how society works by concentrating on the connections between the numerous social institutions that make up society (such as the government, law, education, and religion). According to this view, society is a complex system whose components cooperate to foster harmony and stability. It contends that social structures—relatively constant patterns of social behavior—direct people's lives. There is a claim that certain people are pushed toward engaging in specific antisocial behaviors in order to meet the demands of meeting their financial necessities. To mitigate this situation, N-Power Programme becomes the structure through which the state can attempt to bring about cohesion and harmony by distributing resources to the poor (unemployed graduate) to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor.

The N-Power programme is identified as a structure useful for societal harmony, making the theory appropriate to the issue under investigation. The theory's effectiveness in understanding the effects and issues influencing the N-power programme's implementation does not imply that it is without faults. The principle is that the program is for those who are unemployed, but the reality is somewhat different because those who, for example, work two or three jobs nevertheless receive benefits from the programmes. This suggests that the program is not accomplishing its goal. It is evident that programmes administrators are stealing money set aside for the program. This implies that the purpose of the scheme is defeated and in solving a particular problem, more problems emanate. In other words, the theory cannot holistically solve all the employment problems of its target population.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

The population of the study consists of 510 N-power beneficiaries from Edo, Lagos and Kogi states of Nigeria. They were selected from among the beneficiaries of the programme in the three states under Bach A-C. Purposive sampling method was used in selecting the participants in the study in the following order: Edo State 221 participants; Lagos State 196 participants; and Kogi State with 93 Participants. The inclusion criteria are that the participants must be an N-power beneficiary. The study's data collection tool is a closed-ended questionnaire with 20 questions dispersed evenly throughout the sample population. The State Focal Persons or the coordinators of N power programme in the three states helped in the assemblage of the participants where they were given the questionnaires to fill. This study made use of mean score to answer the research questions that guided the study, where Strongly Agree (SA) – 4 points, Agree (A) – 3 points, Strongly Disagree (SD) – 2 points and Disagree (d) – 1 point, which is 4 point Likert scale was used. The hypothesis for the study is tested using Chi Square statistical tool.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 The Consequences of Unemployment Crisis on Youth Development in Nigeria

Table1: Showing respondents responses on the consequences of unemployment crisis to youth's development in Nigeria.

S/N	Please indicate your choice on the following level of agreement	5 SA	4 A	3 UD	2 D	1 SD
1	Unemployment is a multiplier of poverty and impediments to high living standard.	190 38%	150 30	60 12	60 12	40 8
2	Unemployment impedes the economic growth and development of Nigeria	210 42	140 28	50 10	40 8	60 12

3	Because of unemployment youths are used as a tool for ethno-religious clashes	320 64	160 32	20 4	0 0	0 0
4	Use of youths as political thugs	190 38	150 30	60 12	60 12	40 8
5	Emergence of actors in local militancy	290 58	200 40	10 2	0 0	0 0
6	Unemployment leads to wastage of labour force	260 52	230 46	0 0	0 0	10 2
7	It is responsible for various insecurity in the country today.	180 36	300 60	20 4	0 0	0 0

Source: Researchers' field study 2023

From the responses in table 1 shows that 190 of the respondents representing 38 percent strongly agreed that agree that unemployment is a multiplier of poverty and impediments to high living standard, 150 respondents representing 30 % agreed, 60 respondents representing 12 % were undecided in their response, another 60 respondents representing 12 percent strongly disagreed while the remaining 40 respondents representing 8 percent of the respondents disagreed. From the responses 210 of the respondents representing 42 percent strongly agreed that unemployment impedes the economic growth and development of Nigeria, 140 respondents representing 28% agreed, 50 of the respondents representing 10% were undecided, 40 respondents representing 8 percent disagreed while the remaining 60 respondents also representing 12 percent disagreed.

It also showed that 320 respondents representing 64 % strongly agreed that because of unemployment, youths are used as a tool for ethno-religious clashes, 160 respondents representing 32 % agreed, 20 of the respondents representing 4 were undecided while non-neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed. The table shows that 190 respondents representing 38 percent strongly agreed that mass media provide unemployment leads to use of youths as political thugs, 150 respondents representing 30 percent agreed, 60 respondents representing 12 percent were undecided, another 60 of the respondents representing 12 disagreed while the remaining 40 representing 8 disagreed. It also shows that 290 of the respondents representing 58 percent strongly agreed that it leads to emergence of actors in local militancy. In the same manner those who agreed are also 200 in number representing 40 while those who were undecided are 10 representing 2 percent. None neither disagreed nor strongly disagreed.

The table further shows that 260 respondents representing 52 percent strongly agreed that unemployment leads to wastage of labour force, 230 respondents representing 46 percent strongly agreed, none was undecided. None also disagreed while 10 representing 2 percent disagreed. Among the respondent 180 representing 36 percent strongly agreed that unemployment is responsible for various insecurity in the country today, 300 respondents representing 60 percent agreed, 20 respondent representing 4 percent was undecided, while none strongly disagreed nor disagreed.

Test of Hypothesis One: Ho¹Unemployment crisis does not pose a threat to youths' empowerments in Nigeria.

Decision Rule

Where the calculated Chi-Square (χ^2) value is greater than the table or critical value at $p = 0.05$ significance level, with 1 degree of freedom, the hypothesis is rejected But where the calculated Chi-Square (χ^2) value is lesser than the table or critical value the hypothesis accepted

Category responses	of Observed	Expected	(Fo-fe) ²	(fo-fe) ² /fe
Strongly Agree	190	100	8100	81

Agree	150	100	2500	25
Undecided	60	100	1600	16
Disagree	60	100	1600	16
Strongly Disagree	40	100	3600	36
Total	500		χ^2	164

Critical value of χ^2 at 0.05 level of significance

Table Value (χ^2) = 3.841

Calculated value (χ^2) = 164

In test of Hypotheses one the calculated Chi Square value is 164 while the critical or table value at $p = 0.05$ significance level, with 1 *degree f* is 3.841. The Null Hypothesis which stated that unemployment crisis does not pose a threat to youths' empowerments in Nigeria is rejected.

4.2 Government employment policy response through N-Power Programme in Nigeria

Table 2. Respondents' response on the extent government employment policy response through N-Power Programme has reduced unemployment in the country.

S/N	Please indicate your choice on the following level of agreement	5 SA	4 A	3 UD	2 D	1 SD
1	The programme created employment generation among beneficiaries	253 50.6	121 24.2	41 8.2	61 12.2	24 4.8
2	N-power led to poverty alleviation for beneficiaries	141 28.2	291 58.2	5 1	13 2.6	50 10
3	Many youths engaged in skill acquisition through the programme.	303 60.6	104 20.8	13 2.6	61 12.2	19 3.8
4	N-Power Programme did not reduce unemployment rate in the country	199 39.8	193 38.6	55 11	17 3.4	36 7.2
5	N-power created financial empowerment of youths' beneficiaries	410 82	86 16.4	4 0.8	0 0	0 0
6	Beneficiaries were made to be self-reliant and productive	288 57.6	135 27	7 1.4	21 4.2	49 9.8
7	Youths' beneficiaries invested heavily in small scale businesses through the programme	119 23.8	213 42.6	68 13.6	61 12.2	39 7.8

Source: *Researchers field study 2023*

Table 2. shows that 253 respondents representing 52.6 percent responded that they strongly agreed that the programme created employment generation among beneficiaries, 121 respondents representing 24.2 agreed, 41 representing 8.2 percent were undecided 61 respondents representing 12.2 Strongly disagree while the remaining 24 respondents representing 4.8 percent strongly disagreed. Also 141 respondents representing 28.2 percent responded that they strongly agreed that N-power lead to poverty alleviation for beneficiaries, 291 respondents representing 58.2 agreed, 5 representing 1 percent were undecided 13 respondents representing 2.6 disagreed while the remaining 50 respondents representing 10 percent strongly disagreed. Furthermore, 303 respondents representing 60.6 percent responded that they strongly agreed that many youths engaged in skill acquisition through the programme, 104 respondents representing 20.8 agreed, 13 respondents representing 2.6 percent were undecided 61 respondents representing 12.2 disagreed while 19 respondents representing 3.8 percent strongly disagreed. In a similar manner, 199 respondents representing 39.8 percent

responded that N-Power Programme did not reduced unemployment rate in the country, 193 respondents representing 36.8 agreed, 55 respondents representing 11 percent were undecided 17 respondents representing 3.4 disagreed while 36 respondents representing 7.2 percent strongly disagreed A total of 410 respondents representing 82 percent responded that N-power created financial empowerment of youths beneficiaries, 86 respondents representing 16.4 agreed, 55 respondents representing 11 percent were undecided 17 respondents representing were undecided, none disagreed or strongly disagreed. The table also showed that 288 respondents representing 57.6 percent responded that beneficiaries were made to be self-reliant and productivity, 135 respondents representing 27 agreed, 7 respondents representing 1.4 percent were undecided 21 respondents representing 10.2 percent were disagreed while 49 representing 9.8 percent strongly disagreed.

The table also showed that 119 respondents representing 23.8 percent responded that youths beneficiaries invested heavily in small scale businesses through the programme, 213 respondents representing 42.6 agreed, 68 respondents representing 13.6 percent were undecided, 61 respondents representing 12.2 percent disagreed while 39 representing 7.8 percent strongly disagreed.

Test of Hypothesis Two, Ho² There is no significant impact of N-POWER program on formal employment in Nigeria.

Category of responses	Observed	Expected	(Fo-fe) ²	(fo-fe) ² /fe
Radio	253	100	17867	178.67
Television	121	100	1681	16.81
Newspaper	44	100	3600	36
Magazine	61	100	9216	92.16
Internet	24	100	400	4
Total	200		χ²	327.64

Critical value of χ^2 at 0.05 level of significance

Table Value (χ^2) = 3.841

Calculated value (χ^2) = 327.64

Decision Rule

Where the calculated Chi-Square (χ^2) value is greater than the table or critical value at p = 0.05 significance level, with 1 degree of freedom, the hypothesis is rejected. But where the calculated Chi-Square (χ^2) value is lesser than the table or critical value the hypothesis accepted. In test of Hypotheses one on table 27, the calculated Chi Square value is 327.64 while the critical or table value at p = 0.05 significance level, with 1 degree f is 3.841. Our null Hypothesis which stated that there is no significant impact of N-Power program on employment in Nigeria is rejected, indicating that the programme made huge impact on development in the country.

4.3 Ways of strengthening N-power programme as well as creating employment in Nigeria

Table 3. Ways of strengthening N-power programme as well as creating employment in the country

S/N	Please indicate your choice on the following level of agreement	5 SA	4 A	3 Undecided	2 D	1 SD
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1	Government should recruit more unemployed graduates in the N-power programme.	410	80	10	0	0
		82	16	2	0	0
2	Beneficiaries should be given mandatory training and workshops in the area of ICT and agriculture to enhance the beneficiaries' technical skills	170	210	30	50	40
		34	42	6	10	8
3	There should be extension of the programme duration to at least five years.	190	150	60	60	40
		38	30	12	12	8
4	Government should promote agricultural production through N-Power programmes	280	200	5	5	10
		56	40	1	1	2
5	Overbearing hands of politicians in the programme should be removed	220	180	20	30	50
		44	36	4	6	10

Source: *Researchers field study 2023*

Table 3 shows that 410 of the respondents representing 82 percent strongly agreed that government should cover more unemployed graduates in the N power programme. In the same manner, those who agreed are also 80 in number representing 16 percent agreed while those who were undecided are 20 representing 2 %. None neither disagreed nor strongly disagreed. It also shows that 170 respondents representing 34 percent strongly agreed beneficiaries should be given a mandatory training and workshops in the area of ICT and agriculture to enhance the beneficiaries' technical skills. 210 respondents representing 42 percent agreed, 30 respondents representing 6 percent were undecided while 50 representing 10 percent disagreed and the remaining 40 representing 8 percent strongly disagreed. Those who strongly agreed that there should be extension of the programme duration to at least five years were 190 representing 38 percent, 150 of the respondents representing 30 agreed while 60 representing 12 percent were undecided. 60 again representing 12 percent strongly disagreed and 40 representing 8 percent disagreed.

The table also shows that 280 of the respondents representing 56 very strongly agreed that Government should promote agricultural production through N-Power programmes . In the same manner, another 200 respondents representing 40 percent agreed, 5 respondents representing 1 percent were undecided, 5 other respondent representing 1 percent disagreed while the remaining 10 representing 2 percent strongly disagreed. It also shows that 220 respondents representing 44 percent strongly agreed that overbearing hands of politicians in the programme should be removed.180 respondents representing 36 percent agreed, 20 respondent representing 4 percent were undecided 30 respondents representing 6 percent disagreed while 50 representing 10 percent disagreed.

4.4 Findings of the study

1. Unemployment crisis in the country hinders youths' empowerments in Nigeria as the trend makes youths to engage in all forms of social vices in other to make a living.
2. Government employment policy response through N-Power Programme helped Nigerian youths who are beneficiaries improve their standard of living by empowering them to make investment, skill acquisition, among others.
3. Despite the success of the programme in improving the lives of the youth's beneficiary, the programme did not reduce or curb unemployment rate in the country.

5.CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The N-Power programme is a good poverty alleviation measure by the government, but there is need for it to be sustained. N-Power is a Federal Government's policy in the economic, employment and social development arenas established to address the challenge of youth

unemployment by providing a structure for large scale and relevant work skills acquisition and development while linking its core and outcomes to fixing inadequate public services and stimulating the larger economy. The programme is an inclusive one which gives opportunities to both men and women. It is also not limited to the educated elites, by absorbing even the non-literates for the growth of Nigerians and the Nigerian economy. It has to some extent, impacted on the socioeconomic lives of the beneficiaries in the study area, by providing a great significant number of them adequate skills and training. Therefore, based on the findings, the study recommends:

The study recommended that government should recruit more unemployed graduates in the N power programme. Beneficiaries should be given a mandatory training and workshops in the area of ICT and agriculture to enhance the beneficiaries' technical skills. There should be extension of the programme duration to at least five years. Government should promote agricultural production through N-Power programmes.

Government should expand the scope of N-Power programme this will go a long way in reducing the high rate of unemployment crisis in the country.

Government should strengthened its employment policy response through N-Power Programme This will help Nigerian youths who are beneficiaries improve their standard of living by empowering them to make investment, skill acquisition, among others.

Furthermore, Government should improve on the funding of N-Power to accommodate more Nigerians because merely limiting the beneficiaries to youths of the age of 18 to 35 years is not good for social contract especially considering the fact that poverty has no age limit as it cut across.

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