

# Perceived Effects of N-Power Social Investment Programme on Youths' Empowerment in Ondo State, Nigeria

**Adekunmi A.O; Abdu-Raheem, K.A; Ojo S.E., Kolawole A.O; and Owoeye R.S.**

Department of Agricultural Economics & Extension services  
Ekiti State, University Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Correspondence Email address: [adesoji.adekunmi@eksu.edu.ng](mailto:adesoji.adekunmi@eksu.edu.ng)

\*Corresponding author: **Adekunmi A.O.**

Accepted: 27/6/2024

Published: 15/7/2024

**Abstract:** The N-power social investment program's perceived impact on youth empowerment in Nigeria's Ondo State was investigated in this study. A multi-stage sampling process was employed to choose 162 program participants from throughout the state. Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, means, standard deviations, and ranking using a five-point Likert scale, were used to analyze the data and ascertain the beneficiaries' level of engagement. The hypothesis was tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient ( $r$ ). The results indicate that the program's male counterparts (64.8%) dominated the beneficiaries, with a mean age of 22.5 years. All of the recipients (100%) could read and write, and the majority of them (78%) were single. Thirty-nine (35.7%) were in N-power Health, thirty-six (33.3%) were in N-power Teach, and fifty-eight (35.6%) were in N-power Agro. Beneficiaries of N-power Teach engaged in a greater amount of teaching and exam supervision than they did in agricultural operations. The correlation analysis results show that the impact of the N-power program and income had a positive significant link ( $r=0.502$ ,  $P\leq 0.05$ ). The impact of the N-power program was significantly but negatively correlated ( $r=-0.1025$ ,  $P\leq 0.01$ ) with educational level. The program's beneficiaries faced several major challenges, including a subpar recruitment procedure, a backlog in receiving monthly stipends, and a lackluster response to the needs of the participants. The study came to the conclusion that in order to reduce unemployment, the government needed to step up her efforts to make the program more engaging for young people. It is advised that sufficient funds be allocated to the initiative, simplifying the hiring process, and providing substantial and consistent monthly allowances.

**Keywords:** *Perceived effect, N-power social investment, Youth empowerment.*

Quick Response Code

Copyright © 2023. The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY- NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited

**Citation: Adekunmi A.O; Abdu-Raheem, K.A; Ojo S.E., Kolawole A.O; and Owoeye R.S.** Perceived Effects of N-Power Social Investment Programme on Youths' Empowerment in Ondo State, Nigeria . *Agric. Econ. Extens. Rural Dev* 12(7) Pp 65-70, 2024

Journal Name

<https://www.springjournals.net/jaeerd>

## INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the rate of unemployment appears to be increasing gradually. This is particularly true for the country's able-bodied population, which comprises over half of the population and a significant portion of the youth population. Based on published figures, over half of Nigeria's population is under 35 years old, and a significant portion of this young population is unemployed or underemployed. (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016; Awogbenle and Iwuamadi, 2010; National Population Commission, 2006). According to World Bank estimates from 2016, 38% of Nigeria's youth do not have a job. The

nation's high unemployment rate has led to economic and social instability, which in turn has resulted in a high level of poverty (Adofu 2013). Increased employment and wealth creation lead to both the eradication of poverty and economic expansion. In spite of the execution of multiple policies intended at fixing this issue, the National Bureau of Statistics (2016) published a recent report on unemployment data revealing that the jobless rate in Nigeria increased to 33.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020. The main obstacles impeding public policies aimed at addressing youth unemployment include a variety of

issues, including unqualified resource personnel overseeing the training program, poor administration and implementation, finances, inconsistent policies, and unimpressive responses from potential trainees. The public has been concerned about the many empowerment programs implemented over time by successive administrations to address the worrisome rate of youth unemployment since the days of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Graduate Internship Schemes (GIS), Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YOU WIN), Community Service Scheme (CSS), Vocational Training Scheme (VTS), Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), and Youth Enterprise With Innovation in Nigeria (YOU WIN) are a few examples of empowerment programs launched by previous administrations to give youths jobs. However, in terms of young employment and job creation, youth unemployment under these public policy initiatives had minimal effect. The National Social Investment Program was then given further authority to tackle unemployment by the Federal Government of Nigeria with the introduction of the N-Power social investment program.

Only people in the program who were between the ages of 18 and 35 were eligible. In all of Nigeria's local government areas, social and economic progress were recognized to be fueled by knowledge and skill. In 2016, the Nigerian government employed and placed 200,000 youth under the N-Power initiative in public elementary schools, healthcare facilities, and agricultural development projects. The government empowered a total of 500,000 adolescents in 2017 by adding additional 300,000 recent graduates. Although the federal and state governments, especially the state of Ondo, have implemented a number of methods to combat unemployment, it is yet unclear how the N-Power program will affect young people's access to employment. For this reason, the research aims to provide answers to the following questions:

- i. What are the socio-economic characteristics of the youths who participated in the N-power programme in the study area?;
- ii. What are the N-power programme activities, youths participated in?;
- iii. To what extent do respondents participated in the N-power programme? and.
- iv. What are the constraints encountered by the N-power programme participants in the study area?

### Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to assess the perceived effect of N-power social investment programme on youth's empowerment in Ondo state, Nigeria

The specific objectives are to:

- describe the socio-economic characteristics of youths who participated in the programme in the study area;
- identify different N-power activities, youths involved in for empowerment;
- determine the extent of participation of youths in the N-power programme; and
- identify the constraints encountered by the youths in their involvement in N-power programme.

Hypothesis Ho: There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of youths and the effect of N-power programme in the study area.

### Methodology

The study was conducted in Ondo State, Nigeria. All the youths in Ondo State constitute the population for the study. However, a multi-stage sampling procedure determined the sampling size. We obtained the registers of the youths who benefited from the N-Power program, which served as a sampling frame, from the National Social Investment Program office. Ondo State comprises three senatorial districts. We selected all three senatorial districts at the first stage of sampling. In the second stage, we employed a simple random sampling technique to select three Local Government Areas (LGAs) from each senatorial district: Ondo-West, Akure-North, and Akure South from Ondo Central District; Akoko North East, Owo, and Akoko South West from Ondo North District; and Odigbo, Ilaje, and Okitipupa from Ondo South District, resulting in a total of nine LGAs. The third stage involved selecting 18 youths who participated in the program. We selected each of the LGAs using systematic random sampling from their registers as the sampling frame. Thus, we selected a total of 122 program beneficiaries for the study. We analyzed the collected data using descriptive statistics like frequency counts, percentages, means, standard deviations, and ranks, and used inferential statistics like Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to test the formulated hypothesis.

### Results and Discussion

The results in Table I show that 34.6 percent of the respondents were 20 years of age or younger, while 31.5 percent were between 20 and 24 years old. The average age of the N-Power program beneficiaries was 22.5, with a standard deviation of 3.24. This shows that the beneficiaries of the program were young, able-bodied individuals. The results also indicate that males (64.8%) dominated the program, and the majority (77.8%) of the respondents were single. All of the beneficiaries had education at one level or another, which made it easy for them to be able to read and write. The finding is consistent with Ogunjimi and Ibiyemi (2016), who discovered that

Table I: Distribution of the respondents based on socio-economic characteristics

Socio-economic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard deviation
<b>Age (in years)</b>				
≤ 20	56	34.6		
20-24	51	31.5	22.5	3.24
25-29	52	32.0		
>29	03	1.9		
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	105	64.8		
Female	57	35.2		
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Single	126	77.8		
Married	30	18.5		
Divorced	06	3.7		
<b>Level of Education</b>				
Primary Education	23	14.2		
Secondary Education	52	32.1		
Tertiary Education	87	53.7		
<b>Religion</b>				
Christianity	105	64.8		
Islam	49	30.2		
Traditional	08	4.9		
<b>Household size</b>				
Less than 3	123	75.9		
3-5	34.0	21.0	2.5	0.8
Above 5	05	3.1		
<b>Monthly income</b>				
≤30,000	32	20.0		
₦31,000 - ₦40,000	105	65.0	₦45,600	23,500
₦41,000 - ₦50,000	20.0	12.3		
Above ₦50,000	5.0	3.0		
<b>Sources of income</b>				
Casual job	110	68.0		
Private job	32	19.7		
Personal job	20	12.3		

Source: Field survey, 2023

males were more involved in community development programs due to the fact that males engage less in domestic chores. The household size of 75.9 percent of the beneficiaries was less than 3, simply because the majority (77.8%) were yet to be married. Christians dominated the program, with 64.8 percent stating that they practiced Christianity. The average monthly income of the respondents was ₦45,600. The low average monthly income among the beneficiaries may be due to the fact that some of them depended on casual jobs, which did not bring them much money. About 68.0 percent of the respondents, which formed the majority, earned their living through casual jobs; 19.7 percent engaged in various private jobs; and 12.3 percent took personal jobs to earn their living.

The results in Table II show the major N-power program activities in which the beneficiaries engaged themselves. The majority (35.9%) of the respondents enrolled in N-power Agro, 33.3% of the beneficiaries opted for N-power Teach, and about 30.8 percent were in N-power Health. The findings reveal that all the beneficiaries participated in various socio-economic development programs in their area, with N-Agro taking care of health, education, and even food security programs.

**Table II: Distribution of respondents based on N-power activities**

N-power activities	Frequency	Percentage
N-power Agro	58	35.8
N-power Teach	54	33.3
N-power Health	50	30.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey, 2023

The results in Table III reveal the extent of youth participation in different activities of the N-Power program. In N-Power Teach, the program's youth primarily engaged in the supervision of examinations, ranking first with a

mean score of 3.56, and second with a mean score of 3.46. Other activities under N-Power Teach where youths

**Table III: Distribution of the respondents based on the extent of participation in the N-power programme**

S/N Activities	Never (freq)	seldom (freq)	Occasionally (freq)	Regularly (freq)	Always (freq)	Mean	Rank
<b>N-power Teach (n=54)</b>							
(i) Teaching	-	02	01	21	30	3.46	2nd
(ii) Preparation of the scheme of work		06	08	12	28	3.15	4th
(iii) Preparation of lesson notes		04	06	20	24	3.19	3rd
(iv) Setting of questions		10	08	10	22	2.67	5th
(v) Supervision of examinations			06	12	36	3.56	1st
<b>N-Power Agro (n= 58)</b>							
(i) Agricultural information dissemination		08	12	15	23	2.91	2nd
(ii) Farming		02	01	20	35	3.51	1st
(iii) Training of farmers	40	10	02	06		0.55	5th
(iv) On-farm data collection	08	12	06	10	22	2.44	3 <sup>rd</sup>
(v) Monitoring & Evaluation of farmers' activities			42	06	10	0.44	6th
(vi) Advisory notes	43	02	03	05	05	0.74	4th
<b>N-power Health (n=50)</b>							
(i) Recording of Files	-	06	04	19	21	3.10	1st
(ii) Processing of Files	-	08	05	17	20	2.98	2nd
(iii) Laboratory tests	45	03	02	-	-	0.14	3rd
(iv) Diagnostic services	50	-	-	-	-	0.00	
(v) Vaccination	50	-	-	-	-	0.00	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

participated were: preparation of lesson notes ( $x = 3.19$ ), preparation of a scheme of works ( $x = 3.15$ ), and setting of questions.

Farming topped the list of activities that the youths participated in at N-Power Agro with a mean score of 3.51, followed by dissemination of agricultural information and collection of farm data with mean scores of 2.91 and 2.44, respectively

Taking and recording patient files took the lead in the.

activities under N-Power Health with a mean score ( $x$ ) of 3.10, while treating patient files followed with a mean score of 2.98. The findings show that youths were more involved or participated more in the areas of N-Power Teach and N-Power Agro. The previous experiences the youths likely had might have helped in their better performances in N-Power Teach and N-Agro than in N-Health. The results in Table IV show different constraints

**Table IV: Distribution of respondents based on the constraints to N-power programme**

Constraints	Mean	SD	Rank
The poor nature of recruitment process	4.52	0.94	1st
Bottlenecks to access monthly stipends	4.52	0.88	1st
Poor response to participants' plights	4.52	0.87	1st
Transportation Stress to the place of primary assignment	3.62	1.04	2nd
Shortage in the programme duration	3.61	1.07	3rd
Lack of training by the beneficiaries in different assignments	3.61	1.06	3rd
Disruption caused by regular deployments of the participants	3.24	1.04	4th
Limitation of the programme to few disciplines	2.10	0.98	5th

Source: Field Survey, 2023

encountered by the beneficiaries of the N-Power program.

The issue of the poor nature of the recruitment process by the handlers of the program had a mean value (X) of 4.52, which came first. Also, bottlenecks to access monthly stipends (X = 4.52) by the beneficiaries and poor response to participant plights (X = 4.52) all came first. The beneficiaries face additional constraints such as transportation stress (X = 3.62), program duration shortage (X = 3.61), and inadequate training for various assignments (X = 3.61), all of which rank third.

The program's limitation to a few disciplines (x = 2.10) ranked fifth, while the regular disruptions caused by

beneficiary deployments, with a mean of X = 3.24, ranked fourth. These findings agree with Okoro and Bassey (2018), who posited that non-payment of some beneficiaries, posting of beneficiaries to long distances, the short life span of the programs, and regular deployment to different areas of primary assignment have been the limitations to the success of the N-Power program.

The results of the correlation analysis in Table V reveal the test of the relationship between the youths' socio-economic characteristics and the effects of the N-Power program on youth empowerment. The findings

**Table V: Correlation Analysis showing relationship between socio-economics characteristics of N-power beneficiaries and its effect on youth empowerment**

Variables	r- value	Significance (p-value)	Decision
Age	0.0236	0.298	NS
Educational level	-0.1025*	0.002	S
Annual income	0.5201	0.071	S
Household size	0.6290	0.042	NS
Social organisation membership	0.3092	0.109	NS

**Source: Field survey, 2023**  
 \*\*\* Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2- tailed)  
 \*\*correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2- tailed)  
 NS – Not significant, S- significant.

show that there were significant negative relationships between the educational level of youths (r = -0.1025, P ≤ 0.01) and the effect of the N-Power program on empowerment. This indicates that the more educated the youths who participated in the program are, the less the effect. On the other hand, a significant positive relationship (r = 0.5201) emerged between the youths' realized annual income at the 5 percent significance level and the impact of the N-Power program. The implication of this is that the more income they realize from the program, the greater the effect of the program on them with regards to their empowerment.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The study assessed the perceived effect of the N-Power social investment program on youths' empowerment. The study revealed that youths participated in various program activities, including N-Agro, N-Teach, N-Health, and N-Health. Youths, however, participated more in N-Agro and N-Teach than in N-Health. The major constraints encountered by the youths were poor recruitment exercises, poor and irregular stipends, and the indifferent government's responses to their immediate demands.

We discovered a significant and positive correlation between income and the impact of the N-Power program on youth empowerment. However, the study established

an inverse relationship between the youth's educational level and the impact of the N-Power program on empowerment.

The study's findings led to the following recommendations:

- (i) The federal government needs to increase their incentives and make them more regular; we should encourage youths to participate more in the N-Power program's various activities.
- (ii) Extending the program's duration will engage participants more, combat unemployment, and boost their chances of acquiring new skills.
- (iii) Organizing training on the program's various activities will increase their competence.
- (iv) To ensure stability in their locations and activities, there is a need to minimize regular redeployment.
- (v) There is a need to encourage youths to participate in more N-Power program activities rather than restricting them to a select few.

### REFERENCES

- Adofu, I and Ocheja, A. (2013). Alleviating poverty through the use of entrepreneurship skill acquisition in Kogi State, Nigeria.
- Awogbenle, A. C. and Iwuamadi, K. C. (2010). "Youth unemployment; "Entrepreneurship Development

Programme as an Intervention Mechanism” African Journal of Business 2 (1): pp 7-9.

National Population Commission (2006). Population and Housing Census Priority Table Vol 4 pp 1-8

National Bureau of Statistics (2016). Unemployment/Underemployment Report Q4 2015 Abuja NBS.

Ogunjimi S. I. and Ibiyemi K. V. (2016). Youth participation in Community Development project in Ikole-Ekiti. A wheel to Community Development

Approach: Journal of Annals of child and youth studies vol? (1) pp.147-158.

Okoro, S. N. and Bassey, U. E. (2018). N-Power Teachers competence and Resource Utilization: Implication for effective and efficient teaching in Nigerian primary and post primary schools, International Journal of Education and Evaluation ISSN 2489-00734 (1) 2018

The World Bank (2016). World Development Report. Washington DC: World Bank Youth Report 2015. [www.youthempowered.org](http://www.youthempowered.org)