

Factors Affecting the Implementation of National Youth Employment and Vocational Skill Development (NYEVSD) in Niger State

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out the factors affecting the implementation of the National Youth employment and vocational skill development in Niger state. A structural questionnaire was administered on the master trainers and trainees of the National Directorate of Employment in Niger State to find out how the factors affecting the programme. Ten master trainers and 40 trainees were used for the study. The findings among other things revealed that inadequate training equipment and tools, lack of adequate allowances given to the trainers and the trainees, short duration of training programme and inability of some trainers to communicate in English were the problems affecting the programme. Based on these findings it was recommended that the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and National Orientation Agency (NOA) should enlighten the public on the importance of vocational education programmes. Funding of technical and vocational education programmes should not be left to government alone. Non-governmental organization (NGO).

Introduction

The nationwide economic depression of the early 80's caused a rapid deterioration in Nigeria's economy. NDE (1987) indicated that by the end of 1985, the unemployment situation in Nigeria, has reached desperate and alarming situation. In urban areas, where the educated tend to congregate, the unemployment rate was specially high, running to over 10% and in the rural areas, it was no less severe. The youths and graduates ranked highest on the list of all unemployed Nigerians (ranging upwards of three million) and three quarter of them were under 25 years of age.

To address this problem, therefore, the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) was launched nationwide on the 30th of January 1987 by the then Chief of General Staff, Vice Admiral Augustus Aikhomu on behalf of the President, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida. The unique assignment of the directorate was to create employment with emphasis on self reliance and entrepreneurship. To give the new organization a legal backing, decree No.24 was promulgated on the 19th of October, 1986, giving the directorate the mandate to:

1. Design and implement programmes to combat mass unemployment
2. Articulate policies aimed at developing work programmes with labour intensive potentials; and
3. Obtain and maintain a databank on employment and vacancies in the country with a view to creating a clearing house to link job seekers with vacancies in collaboration with government agencies. (NDE Head Office Bulletin 1989).

In carrying out these mandates, the directorate employs different strategies through four well articulated programmes, each of which is run as separate department. They include:

1. National Youth Employment and Vocational Skills Development Programme;
 2. Small Scale Industries and Graduate Employment Programme;
 3. Agricultural Sector Employment Programme; and
 4. Special Public Works Programme.
1. National Youth Employment and Vocational Skill Development Programme: This programme emanated from the realization that the majority of the unemployed are youths without productive and marketable skills. Hence, the four main schemes of these programmes according to the NDE annual report (1989) are concerned with skill acquisition. These are the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme, Waste to Wealth Scheme, School on Wheels Scheme and the Disabled Work Scheme.

These programmes were backed by the necessary administrative, monitoring and support personnel thus, enabling optimum use of resources and prompt response to the requirements of the public. Further to these, the following were some of objective of the NDE programmes:

1. To provide fulltime employment on the job training, and useful work experience;
2. To provide unemployed, underemployed, or low income persons with useful work and training to assist in developing maximum occupational potentials and to have regular competitive employment;
3. To provide opportunities for training new vocations and assuming the responsibilities as contributing members of the society.

Small Scale Industries and Graduate Employment Programme: This programme was designed to encourage and aid unemployed Nigerians to set up and run their own businesses. To help the participants translate their business ideas into viable commercial ventures. The NDE conducts courses in entrepreneurship prior to making loans available to them some of the following schemes;

- i. Job creation loan guarantee scheme. The directorate has a working relationship with some commercial banks. Applicants were required to submit their credentials as collateral and a grantor. The loan is repaid within a given period of time. This programme is particularly attractive to unemployed graduates.
- ii. Matured people's scheme. This scheme is targeted at those who are either retired or are preparing to retire from paid employment and willing to maintain an economically productive life.

Agricultural Sector Employment Programme: This programme is designed to provide self-employment in Agriculture for school leavers and graduates with degrees, Higher National Diplomas, National Certificate of Education and National Diploma in Agriculture or its related disciplines. Those interested in farming are given the relevant training and orientation and provided with land and loans to start fanning ventures. The NDE implements its agricultural programmes at the state levels in collaboration with state governments. Each

state has an NDE Agricultural programme committee which sees the organization and implementation of the programme. It has the following agricultural schemes; School leavers Agricultural scheme, reactivation of dormant farm projects and other activities.

Special Public Works programmes: This programme is designed to provide immediate temporary employment to a large number of the unemployed. The objective is to utilize this valuable manpower resource in carrying out necessary public works. Among labour intensive techniques and enable the participants obtain short term employment whilst acquiring new skills and trade experience.

The non graduates among them are secondary school and trade centre leavers, some are given a wage of N150.00 while the graduates receive about N200.00. The directorate pays the wages while the government provides the tools and materials used by the participants.

Statement of the Problem

The objective of the National Youth Employment and Vocational Skill Development (NYEVSD) is to reduce unemployment rate and enhance self reliance among Nigerian secondary school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions.

In recent times there were complaints that certain factors are responsible for the programme not meeting its objectives of its establishment. Some of these factors are inadequate training equipment and tools, lack of adequate training allowance, distance to and from training centers etc. Paul and Blessman (1985) noted that the effective training of a person in any vocational or technical career programme depends on allowances and training equipment. In view of this, there was a need to determine the factors responsible for the programme not being implemented well.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out the factors affecting the implementation of National Youth Employment and Vocational Development programme in Niger State. Specifically the study found out that the following:

1. The factors affecting the poor performance of the beneficiaries' during the training.
2. The adequacy of the tools and equipment supplied for the training.

Research Questions

The study answered the following research questions:

1. What are the factors affecting the performance of the beneficiaries during the training?
2. How adequate are the tools and equipment supplied for the training?

Methodology

Design of the Study

This study employed the survey research design. A survey research is one in which a group of items or people is studied by collecting and analyzing data serving the views of people considered to be representative of the entire group (Nworgu, 1988).

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study was made up of all the master trainers and trainees of the programme. Forty trainees and 10 master trainers were used as sample of the study. They were randomly chosen during an interactive session held in 2009.

Method of Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was used for the study. The two groups of the respondents were given the same instrument. These groups are the master trainers and the trainees. It was administered personally by the researcher. It consisted of two sections. Section A is on personal data while the second section consisted of the items addressing the research questions of the study. The instrument was validated by three experts and its reliability was determined using the cronbach Alpha and was found to be 0.7.

Method of Data Analysis

The researcher made use of mean to analyse the data collected. The mean was used to determine the extent of acceptance of the identified factors. A four-point scale was employed for the analysis of the data. In order to determine the level of agreement a decision rule based on real limits of numbers were used. Based on these therefore, an item with a value of 2.50 and above was taken as agreed while values of 2.49 and below was taken as disagreed.

Results

Research Question 1

What are the factors affecting the performance of the beneficiaries during the training?

Table 1: Responses of the Participants on the Factors Responsible Affecting the Performance During the Training

S/N	Statement s	N ₁ = 10, N ₂ = 40			Remark
		\bar{x}^1	\bar{X}^2	\bar{x}^t	
1.	Monthly allowances not adequate	3.33	2.93	3.13	Agree
2.	Allowances not regular	3.99	3.96	3.68	Agree
3.	Most trainers are illiterates	2.94	3.16	3.50	Agree
4.	Training points too far away from their residencies	1.45	2.06	1.75	Disagree
5.	Some trainers were not willing to train very well because their allowances were too small	1.48	1.70	1.59	Disagree
6.	Duration of the training is too short	3.21	2.93	3.70	Agree

Key:

\bar{X}^1 = Mean of beneficiaries

\bar{X}^2 = Mean of trainers

\bar{X}^t = Average mean

N_1 = Number of trainers

N_2 = Number of beneficiaries

Table 1 revealed that the two groups of respondents agreed on items 1,2,3 and 6 with a mean score of 3.13, 3.68, 3.50 and 3.70 respectively, while they disagreed with items 4 and 5 with a mean score of 1.75 and 1.59.

Research Question 2

How adequate are the tools and equipment supplied for the training?

Table 2: Responses of the Participants on the Adequacy of Tools and Equipment Supplied for the Training

S/N	Statement s	$N_1 = 10, N_2 = 40$			Remark
		\bar{X}^1	\bar{X}^2	\bar{X}^t	
7.	There are adequate tools and equipment for training	2.94	3.16	3.50	Agree
8.	Beneficiaries were taught to identify the tools and equipment	3.08	2.53	2.85	Agree
9.	Workbenches are adequate	1.83	3.03	1.93	Disagree
10.	They are allowed to construct projects	2.11	1.90	2.05	Disagree
11.	They are given jobs to take away home work	1.49	2.51	2.00	Disagree
12.	Master trainers allowed the participants to use tools, equipment regularly	2.95	3.20	3.75	Agree

Key:

\bar{X}^1 = Mean of beneficiaries

\bar{X}^2 = Mean of trainers

\bar{X}^t = Average mean

N_1 = Number of trainers

N_2 = Number of beneficiaries

Table 2 above revealed that the participants have agreed on items 7, 8 and 12 with mean score of 3.50, 2.85 and 3.75 while they disagreed with items 9, 10 and 11 with a mean score of 1.93, 2.05 and 2.0 respectively.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of the findings for this study was based on the findings revealed by the items in the tables overleaf.

The results on the factors affecting the performance of the beneficiaries during the training showed that the monthly allowance given to the beneficiaries was not adequate,

considering the distances from their homes, which made most of them absent themselves from training. The little allowances paid to them was not regular, there were backlog of arrears.

The distances from the trainees residences to training points did not contribute to their failure to attend, except that some trainers were not giving adequate training to their trainees, claiming that their allowance too was small. Omolewa (1991) opined that adequately trained workers are more efficient and productive than poorly trained. These workers used their expert knowledge and advanced technical skills to establish and advance their businesses and economic well beings. In a related development, Aina (1989) stated that the subject of funding vocational and technical education is clearly the central pilot of any programme.

Audu (2005) asserted that vocational education (formal or informal) should be adequately funded to ensure a well deserved output. In the same vein, Stephen (2005) stated that rehabilitation services should be funded; necessary teaching facilities should be provided and various enlightenment should be organised for the general public.

The results in Table 2 showed that all the respondents agreed with three items and disagreed with three items. They agreed that the tools and equipment were adequate at the training centers, the trainees were able to identify these tools and equipment and that the trainees are allowed to use the tools and equipment regularly. Meanwhile, the training session use to be rowdy due to the shortage of workbenches, sometimes they work in shift, and they were never allowed to construct projects on their own neither to carry away, instead, most or all the jobs they undertake are either for the master trainer's use or for jobs outside.

For the purpose of deriving maximum results from this type of training, tools and equipment should be adequate. Against this backdrop Mason (1988), he stated that tools, facilities and equipment in vocational and technical training are those goods and services that help to facilitate training. This is also in consonance with Paul and Blessman (1985), who stated that adequate facilities are needed to teach appropriate skills, because the beneficiaries will learn very little if there is no available instructional facility.

Recommendations

- Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:
- Funding vocational education programmes should not be left to government alone. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), philanthropists should be encouraged to participate.
 - Public-private partnership should also be promoted in the NDE programme.
 - The NDE in conjunction with National Orientation Agency should intensify their enlightenment campaign to the public.

- The government should provide reasonable monthly allowance to the beneficiaries and the trainers considering their backgrounds.
- The master trainers should be literate especially in English, so that there would be no communication gap and also be able to do some mathematics.

Conclusion

At present, there is no alternative to vocational education in alleviating poverty. Through this system beneficiary of any vocational not be parasites; he could be able to secure a standard means of livelihood, assist some of his relatives and contribute towards the development of the society and the nation at large.

National Youth Employment and Vocational Skill Development programme was not taken too serious because of the way the government or its agencies are handling the implementation of the programme, as such it will affect the attainment of the objectives of its establishment in Niger State.

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