

Employment Creation Programmes and Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria: The Case of National Directorate of Employment in Gombe State

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Abstract

This paper is an empirical assessment of various employment programmes of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) on poverty alleviation in Gombe State. The study used a cross-sectional data, collected through multi-stage sampling technique from 400 beneficiaries in six local government areas of the State. The study adopted Logistic regression model. The results indicate that the Vocational Skill Development (VSD), Small Scale Enterprise (SSE), Rural Enterprise Promotion (REP) and Special Public Work (SPW) programmes of the NDE did not have any significant effect on the poverty status of the beneficiaries. However, the SSE programme was found to significantly raise the incomes of the beneficiaries (likelihood of 1.32 times). The SPW programme was found to raise the standard of living. The key conclusion from these findings is that, some of the employments generated by a number of these programmes have succeeded in raising the incomes and standards of living of the beneficiaries; the rise in income was too small to lift them out of poverty (defined as US\$1 per day). One implication of the findings is that NDE should re-structure its programmes towards those that generate employment with significantly higher incomes if the directorate is to contribute to the on-going national effort on poverty reduction.

Keywords: Standard of Living, Income, Poverty Alleviation, Logistic Regression

JEL Code: I32, J21

Contribution/Originality

The paper contributed to the existing literature on NDE's scheme which adds value to entrepreneurship and job creation in the current parlance of development discourse.

1.0 Introduction

The nature of poverty in Nigeria is severe and widespread despite attempts to reduce poverty levels, which have not yielded much impact as evident from worsening conditions of the poor as statistics has shown. According to the World Bank Report (2013), Nigeria has had a good index of economic growth (about 7.4%), including a high rate of growth during the last decade, a well-developed economy and a large number of natural resources. However, Nigeria has one of the highest incidences of poverty in the world, from the late 1970's to the early 1980's, the economy had to contend with severe economic difficulties resulting from the oil shocks, world economic recession, deteriorating terms of trade, debt overhang and macroeconomic imbalances.

Poverty incidence was recorded at 46.3% by the Federal Offices of Statistics (FOS) in 1985. It fell to 42.7% in 1992 and thereafter jumped to 65.6% in 1996 (FOS, 1999). By 2004, it reached 54.7%, but this increased to 60.9% (or 99,284,512 Nigerians) in 2010. Among the geopolitical zones, the Northeast region had average poverty rates at 72.2%, followed by the Northwest region, which had 71.1% and the North-central region, which had 67.0%. Poverty is least dominant in the South-

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West (43.05%), South-South (35.1%), and South-East regions (26.6%), according to NBS (2010) to the Nigerian poverty profile report.

In line with the above, structural reforms policies were undertaken in mid-1986, and the economy recovered slightly, while the number of the poor reduced. By 1992, based on the FOS report, poverty incidence declined to 34%. By the early 1990's, the economy was again beset by high inflation, low protective activities and a return to stagnant economic position. The ratio of people living below the poverty line rose sharply to 61% in 1997 and Nigeria ranked 54th in the Human Poverty Index (HPI) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and among the twenty poorest countries in the world (UNDP, 2001).

The Federal Government with the global convention tried to improve the worsening condition of the poor, by directing public expenditure towards poverty reduction programmes and projects to tackle the causal effects of poverty in the country. These programmes include Better Life for Rural Women Programme (BLP), the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), Family Support programme (FSP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), National Agency for Mass Literacy (NAML) etc. Most of these government policies and programmes, however, have failed to achieve their objectives as millions of Nigerians remained in abject poverty.

A United Nations report on Nigeria's Common Country Analysis, CCA in 2016, has described the country with a population of over 175 million, as one of the poorest and unequal nations of the world, with over 80 million (64%) of her population living below the poverty line of US\$1.90 per day. Specifically, the poverty situation in Gombe State is growing at an alarming and geometric rate, this is because the total rate of poverty in 1980 was 43.31%, 1985 was 68.90%, 1992 was 83.50%, 2000 was 87.20%, and 2006 was 90.22% (GOM-SEEDS II, 2007). By 2016, the poverty rate was reported to be 74.2% according to the National Bureau of Statistics. This clearly shows that the poverty level in Nigeria is high and persistent.

Accordingly, Besley (1997) identified credit and human capital as factors that significantly reduce poverty. Poverty in Nigeria is linked to the problem of employment in its income version, and output growth is conceptualized in terms of the productivity of the employed workforce (FOS, 1999). Also NBS (2016), wrote that, the National unemployment rate in the 4th quarter of 2016 stood at 14.2%. This, if translated into labour, means 29 million able-bodied Nigerians are unemployed. In addition, it is an established fact that the increasing level of poverty has a direct relationship with the unemployment level. Unemployment and a lack of access to regular means of livelihood in many households worsen the conditions of the poor in the rural areas. When people are unemployed, their source of livelihood depletes over time, the cost of living becomes high, and the standard of living goes down, for there is a strong correlation between unemployment and poverty. Hence, to arrest the issue of poverty, its key determinants such as unemployment, needs to be tackled for the government to achieve any reasonable level of success. Therefore, it is expected that government efforts at job creation would reduce the levels of unemployment and ultimately lead to a significant reduction in poverty levels.

The federal government's desire to have a permanent institution to handle the resultant problems of unemployment and poverty led to the establishment of an agency known as the National Directorate of Employment on 26th March 1986 (NDE, 2014). The objective of this agency is to design and implement job creation programmes that will promote attitudinal change, employment generation, reduce poverty and enhance wealth creation (NDE, 2014). An important concern within academics and policy circles is the rising incidence of underemployment and disguised unemployment in

Nigeria, especially amongst the low skilled labour, agricultural and informal sectors, where NDE's interventions are highest. In particular, it has been argued that where the jobs so created are unskilled and low paying, they tend to generate very little increase in incomes that may not raise the beneficiary's standard of living or lift them out of poverty. This study, therefore, sets to examine the impact of the various employment programmes of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) on poverty alleviation in Nigeria, the case of Gombe State, and whether the incomes from the employment generated has significantly changed the standard of living of the beneficiaries.

2.0 Theoretical Issues and Empirical Issues

One of the common views among scholars (e.g. Ashton, 1984, Deleeck, van den Bosch and de Lathouwer, 1992) is that "poverty" connotes material and non-material deprivation and lack of control over resources to meet essential needs. It has been defined as "a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services" (UN, 1995). Thus, those living in poverty suffer a lack of sufficient income or live beneath an unacceptably low-income level and due to limited resources, are unable to afford some essential needs.

Different experts in giving a proper definition to the concept of poverty have made several attempts and its measurement based on their individual perspectives. Generally, Ojowu, Nweze and Ladbury (2002), asserted that poverty concepts are categorized into three namely: absolute poverty, relative poverty and subjective poverty.

According to Haralambos and Heald (1980); Kuper and Kuper (1996), the term absolute or subsistence poverty has to do with basic human needs, and is measured by resources required to maintain physical efficiency. They are simply essential goods and services used to satisfy the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and education. Under this concept, the poor are determined through a yardstick known as the poverty line, which is based on the level of income or consumption of individuals, households or groups in a given society (Balogun, 1999). The poverty line used by the World Bank for international comparison is one dollar (\$1.90) per person per day (Kankwenda, Gregoir, Legros and Ouedraogo, 2000; UNDP, 2016; Ali-Akpajiak and Pyke 2003). Those below the poverty line according to Kankwenda et al., (2000) and Balogun (1999) are the poor and core or extremely poor giving rise to two poverty lines (upper poverty line and lower poverty line). Therefore, absolute poverty arises when there is an insufficiency in access to basic social services. Absolute poverty can be measured through headcount ratio/incidence of poverty, poverty gap/income shortfall, the disparity of income distribution and composite poverty measures as well as physical quality of life index and human development index (Ajakaiye & Adeyeye, 2001; Anyanwu, 1997; Balogun 1999).

Relative poverty is a situation where an individual's or a household's income is less than the average income of the population in the society being considered. Since relative poverty is unique in every society, its measurement depends on the judgment of the society being considered, and this varies across societies. It, therefore, means that people can be regarded as being in relative poverty only by reference to the standard of living of the members of that particular society (Schiller, 1976; Kuper & Kuper, 1996). Relative poverty, in the opinion of Meier (1964) can be measured through inequality by the extent to which the income share of groups of individuals or households differs from the population share of income. The two types of relative poverty measures discussed by Anyanwu (1997), Ajakaiye and Adeyeye (2001) are the average income and the proportion of the population whose income is less than the mean income.

This concept of poverty, which is “expressed in a range of non-material and intangible qualities” (Ojowo *et al.*, 2002), is based on respondents’ perception of their standard of living. The feeling of whether one is poor or not depends on the absolute minimum standard of living below which one is categorized as poor (Vaidyanathan, 2002; Haralambos and Heald, 1980). Measurement of subjective poverty depends on individuals. This is because the perception of being poor or not is determined by individual respondents. Results collected from participatory studies such as ‘voices of the poor’ (Ojowo *et al.*, 2002) are used to measure subjective poverty.

This study is focused on absolute poverty as attempts made by the government to reduce poverty have led to the establishment of poverty alleviation programmes aimed at attacking absolute poverty. Though all the concepts are relevant in the study area and indeed, Nigeria and developing countries. Poverty eradication under absolute poverty is given the most priority. It is the most common form of poverty and attempts by governments to address poverty have focused more on reducing absolute poverty.

The NDE has four core programmes departments: Vocational Skills Development Programme (VSD), Small-Scale Enterprises Programme (SSE), Rural Enterprise Promotion Programme (REP) and the Special Public Works Programme (SPW). The target populations that the NDE programmes aim at addressing are; School leavers, graduates of tertiary institutions, retired persons, people with special needs, women and prospective entrepreneurs, and artisans.

The impact of intervention programmes or projects on poverty alleviation have been empirically investigated by different scholars and researchers in both Nigeria and other countries around the world. Some of these studies include;

In a study, Obike, *et al* (2007) investigated the role of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in poverty reduction in Nigeria, using Abia state as a case study. Structured questionnaires were used to obtain information from 120 respondents, comprising 60 beneficiaries and 60 non-beneficiaries of the NDE services in the study area. Simple random sampling was adopted. The list of names of beneficiaries of the NDE in Abia state and the list of names of farmers who registered with the Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) were the sampling frames for selecting the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the NDE services, respectively. The data collected was analyzed by the use of the Foster, Greer and Thobcke (F-G-T) measure of poverty and multiple regression analysis. The result of data analysis shows that credit, farming experience; children education and farm income were significant determinants of poverty for beneficiaries of NDE, while household size, farm income and children were significant determinants of poverty for non-beneficiaries of NDE services.

The study by Ebenehi (2009) was designed to assess the impact of NAPEP on the livelihood of participants in some local government areas of Kogi State. Data was collected using a questionnaire and analyzed, using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The Double-Difference Estimator (DDE) was used to compare changes in outcome measures. Findings indicate that majority (67%) of the participants were male while 33% were female. About 40% of the participants were of the age range of 44-53, and 62% were married with 60% having a household size range of 5-8 persons, with about 38% having traded as their major occupation. The mean income of NAPEP participants increased from N106,556 before the intervention to N249, 675.00 after the intervention (134%). Income of the non-participants increased from N98, 351 before the intervention to N120, 127 after the intervention. The level of living of participant increased from N77, 523 before the intervention to N233, 268 (200%) after the intervention because of participation in the programme.

Furthermore, Bashir and Hussaini (2014) examined the activities of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) on poverty reduction in Bauchi State. The study assessed the performance of these activities along with their impact on the socio-economic lives of the beneficiaries in Bauchi Local Government Area of Bauchi State. Data for the study was collected through questionnaire and In-depth Interviews. The information required was gathered from 210 respondents consisting of 200 beneficiaries and 10 officials of NAPEP, Bauchi State office. The respondents were selected using systematic and availability sampling techniques. Data collected in the study were presented and analysed using simple frequency, percentages and cross tabulation. Chi-square was used to gauge the performance of NAPEP on poverty reduction in Bauchi State. The study revealed that the programme had impacted positively on the beneficiaries, especially in the areas of job creation, improvement in income, improvement in raising the respondents' level of education, improvement in social status, etc.

While, Ogbonna and Nwaobiala (2014) studied the effect of Fadama III project on rural women production in Gombe State, Nigeria. The study analyzed socio-economic characteristics of rural farm women, determined the effect of the project on the participating rural farm-women (in terms of farm size, selected variable inputs, income and output) in Gombe State and described the problems militating against the effective participation of rural farm-women in the project. A multistage random sampling technique was used in the selection of six Local Government Areas, Fadama Community Associations (FCAs), Fadama User Groups (FUGs), participating and non-participating rural farmers. A structured questionnaire was administered to 360 randomly selected rural women farmers (180 participating and 180 non-participating rural women farmers). Data were analyzed with descriptive statistics like frequencies, percentages, mean and paired t-test. The study revealed that participating rural women and non-participating rural farmers had mean ages of 35.5 years and 36.72 years respectively and acquired secondary education. In addition, Fadama women farmers had mean farm size of 11.91 while the non-Fadama farmers farmed on 9.52 hectares of land. Both farmers groups had a monthly income of N 75, 590.28 (Fadama Rural Women Farmers) and N27, 505.56. The paired t-test showed that farm income, fertiliser and labour use of Fadama women farmers were higher than the non-participating farm women at 1.00%, 5.00% and 10.00% levels of probability respectively. The study, therefore, recommends a timely supply of farm inputs by the project, prompt payment of counterpart funds by relevant agencies and replication of the project to reduce rural poverty in the State.

Equally, Onwe and Nwakamma (2015) in their assessment of the National Poverty Reduction Programmes in Nigeria studied the National Poverty Eradication Programme in Ebonyi State. Due to the high rate of poverty in Nigeria, the study became imperative for the negative effects of poverty often manifests into socio-economic problems. They put the national poverty level at 69%, and Ebonyi State had 73.6% rate, which is a clear indication of the high level of poverty in Nigeria. The study made an evaluation of NAPEP's performance in areas of human capital development, infrastructure facilities, access to safe drinking water, sanitation and access to basic education, which are some of the parameters for measuring poverty level. A descriptive survey design was adopted with a sample population of 400, which spread across the six local governments studied. The major instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, which was distributed to the respondents and a total number of 380 questionnaires were duly filled and returned representing 95% of the sample population. The data collected was analyzed with statistical tables, percentage calculations and chi-square. The major findings of the study show that NAPEP has not really affected the development of human capital, it equally revealed that the agency had not improved access to basic education and infrastructural facilities. Insincerity and corruption on the part of contractors; inadequate sensitization, poor coordination, narrow coverage, excessive politicization have been identified among others as the challenges facing the programme.

Ekong and Ekong (2016) in their study investigated how the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in Akwa Ibom state tackles unemployment problem through skills acquisition. Different measures have been adopted by the government to tackle the challenge with very little result. Using data obtained from both primary and secondary sources for the period 1987-2002, they found out that positive link exist between skills acquisition by the NDE and unemployment reduction in Akwa Ibom state even though not without daunting challenges. However, the results of the income contributions of skills acquisition by the NDE to the state's economy were mixed. While 48% asserted to a positive link, 40% accepted a minimal influence. Thus, they recommended that there should be more spread of NDE training centers to all local government areas of the state for more benefits to be realized, among others.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Data and Sources

This study used cross-sectional data, which were sourced through a survey study with the help of six research assistants. The study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique in order to ensure the spread of respondents across programmes and locations. The study area was structured into three strata based on senatorial districts, and a cross-sectional data set was sourced from each of the stratum (i.e. Gombe, Funakaye, Akko, Yamaltu-Deba, Billiri and Kaltungo Local Government Areas) using questionnaires. The population of the study comprised of the beneficiaries of NDE programmes in Gombe State whose records were obtained from officials at the NDE office. The total number of beneficiaries were nineteen thousand, five hundred and ninety-nine (19, 599) of all the programmes, which are Vocational Skills Development Programme (VSD), Small-Scale Enterprises Programme (SSE), Rural Enterprise Promotion Programme (REP) and the Special Public Works Programme (SPW). A sample size of 400 respondents was obtained through the "Yaro-Yamane formula" from the total number of the beneficiaries of the four NDE programmes.

3.2 Variable Measurement

Dependent variables captured in the model are;

- i. Poverty status: measured as dummy/categorical variable with 0 representing beneficiary is poor and 1 if non-poor. Benchmark used to measure poverty level was the poverty line index set at \$1.25 per day. Incomes below the index were regarded as poor and incomes above were regarded as non-poor as done by Kasali, Ahmad and Lim (2015).
- ii. Income: measured in Naira (N360 to \$1) as earnings. It is expected that the higher the respondent's income, the higher the level of living. An increase in incomes will be measured as 1 and 0 otherwise.
- iii. The standard of living: measured by ownership and access to basic needs. It was measured as 1 = has access, 0 = otherwise.

The independent variables captured in the model are the four programmes under the NDE;

- i. VSD (vocational skills development programme): measured in 5 categories representing 1=NOAS (national open apprenticeship scheme), 2=SOW (school on wheels), 3=VSPV (vocational skills for physically challenged and vulnerable persons), 4=RLS (resettlement loan scheme), 5=PIST (partnership in skills training).

- ii. SSE (small-scale enterprise programme): measured in 7 categories 1=ESDTS (enterprise start-up and development training scheme), 2=MBST (micro business skills training scheme), 3=EDP (entrepreneurship development programme), 4=ECF (enterprise creation fund), 5=WET (women employment training), 6=MEES (micro enterprise empowerment scheme), 7=SMEES (special micro enterprises empowerment scheme).
- iii. REP (rural employment promotion programme): measured in 4 categories 1=RADTS (rural agricultural development training scheme), 2=IFTS (integrated farming and training scheme), 3=RHTS (rural handicrafts training scheme), 4=POST-RADTS (post-rural handicrafts training scheme).
- iv. SPW (special public works programme): measured in 4 categories 1=GAP (graduate attachment programme), 2=EBTS (environmental beautification training scheme), 3=GCS (graduate coaching scheme), 4=SETS (solar energy training scheme).

The analysis of the socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries was done based on the first objective using descriptive statistics. For second and third objectives, the study is based on the Logit Regression Model (LRM). As the dependent variables are categorical, the ordinary least square (OLS) method can no longer be used as the best linear unbiased estimator for the analysis of the data.

3.3 Model Specification

The study adopted the model used by Obike, Ukoha and Nwajiuba (2007) where they used a logistic model to regress the role of NDE on poverty reduction and other control variables. The statistical model for logistic regression is:

$$\Pr(S_i = \frac{1}{0}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 VSD + \beta_2 SSE + \beta_3 REP + \beta_4 SPW + \mu_i \text{-----} \quad (1)$$

Where:

$P_r (S_i = 1/0)$ = Probability of Poverty status/Income/Standard of living.

β_0 = the constant parameter of the equation

β_n = the coefficient of the independent variables

VSD = Vocational skills development programme

SSE = Small scale enterprise programme

REP = Rural employment promotion programme

SPW = Special public works programme

μ_i = Error term

4.0 Results and Discussion

A total of 400 questionnaires were administered to NDE's beneficiaries that were located in the six LGAs of Gombe State based on the three senatorial districts of the NDE. Data were obtained from 374 valid questionnaires out of 400 administered, which is a good rate of return and sufficient for data analysis in the study.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents.

	Frequency	Percentages
Sex of Respondent;		
Female	228	61.0
Male	146	39.0
Total	374	100.0
Age of Respondent;		
Below 18	35	9.4
18-30	204	54.5
31-50	100	26.7
51-70	35	9.4
Total	374	100.0
Marital Status;		
Single	152	40.6
Married	180	48.1
Widow/Widower	17	4.5
Divorced	25	6.7
Total	374	100.0
Household Head;		
Mother	76	20.3
Father	217	58.0
Others	81	21.7
Total	374	100.0
Household Size;		
Less than 2	86	23.0
2-4	177	47.3
5-7	40	10.7
8-10	58	15.5
Above 10	13	3.5
Total	374	100.0
Educational Level;		
No Formal Education	81	21.7
Uncompleted Education	20	5.3
Primary Education	20	5.3
Secondary Education	155	41.4
Post Secondary Education	98	26.2
Total	374	100.0
Major Occupation;		
Farming	135	36.1
Trading	131	35.0
Civil Servant	42	11.2
Retired	25	6.7
Others	41	11.0
Total	374	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2018.

The results in Table 4.1 show that majority of the beneficiaries' 228 respondents representing 61% are female while 146 of them representing 39% are males. This indicates that women dominated in all the combined four programmes of the NDE given the fact that they are more vulnerable to poverty than their male counterparts are. Age of the respondents has a majority of 204, i.e. 54.3% youths consisting of those who fall under the age bracket of 18-30 years followed by the adult population of 31-50, constituting of 100 beneficiaries at 26.6%. Those below 18 years of age and that between 51-70 age records 35 beneficiaries each at 9.4%; this attests to the fact that many unemployed youths, who are

unable to get formal employment in both public and private agencies, engage in NDE programme as an alternative to getting a means of livelihood.

It is evident from the Table 4.1 that 180 respondents representing 48.1% of the beneficiaries are married, 152 respondents i.e. 40.6% are single, while the widow(er) and divorced consisted of only 17 (4.5%) and 25 (6.7%) respectively. Given that majority of the respondents are women within the youth population presumably married at that age, they are most at times unemployed or with little formal education, so they are usually restricted to getting any form of income or employment from informal sector activities which are the nature of most of the programmes undertaken by the NDE. The results for the analysis of household head shows that 217 (i.e. 58%) respondents have a male-headed household, 81 (i.e. 21.5%) respondents have households that are headed by others (which represents either a guardian, relative or an associate of the respondent) and 76 (i.e. 20.3%) have households headed by a mother. This feature exhibits the nature of the culture inherent in the study area where male-dominated households prevail. In addition, households headed by other non-family members may be due to the assistance given to household because of poverty or lack of a household head that they could depend on for a source of livelihood. Findings revealed that majority of the respondents have small households of less than two persons at 86 (23%), followed by households of 2-4 persons consisting of 177 (47.1%) of the population, then 40 (10.7%) respondents have households of 5-7 people.

About 58 (15.5%) and 13 (3.5%) of the respondents come from larger households of 8-10 and above ten people respectively. These findings indicate that most of the respondents from small households are either single living on their own or just starting a family given that already the majority of the respondents are of the young adult population. The level of education of respondents shows that 155 (41.4%) have secondary education, 98 (26.2%) have post-secondary education, and 81 (21.7%) have no formal education while the respondents with primary education and uncompleted education each consist of 20 (5.3%) of the population. This shows the desire of the respondents to have an early start in the labour market due to poverty which might have hindered their ability to pursue tertiary education or to overcome idleness and also, some of the elderly population that aspire to engage in entrepreneurial activities after retirement. This result shows that a large proportion of the beneficiaries are farmers at 135 (36.1%), 131 (35%) are traders, 42 (11.2%) are civil servants, 25 (6.7%) are retired, and 41 (11%) belong to the unemployed or vulnerable groups. This finding shows that most are farmers and traders who are the majority in the study area and thus, usually source for funds to further expand their activities through the various NDE programmes aimed at agriculture and trading.

4.2 Impact of NDE Programmes on Poverty

Table 4.2: Regression One - NDE Programme (Poverty Status)

	B-coefficient	Std. Error	Wald	Sig.	Odds Ratios
Constant	2.669	0.613	18.946	0.000	14.432
VSD	-0.111	0.099	1.260	0.262	0.895
SSE	0.053	0.084	0.402	0.526	1.055
REP	-0.066	0.175	0.141	0.707	0.936
SPW	-0.198	0.170	1.342	0.247	0.821
N	374				
X² value	3.687				
Pseudo R²	0.018				

Source: Authors' Computation, 2018.

Findings indicate that all the programmes are not statistically significant and do not have any impact on the poverty status of the respondents. This result is in agreement with most of the studies done on

intervention programmes aimed at poverty alleviation such as Abbas (2016) and Njoku (2010). The reasons could be that the general level of poverty in the study area is very high and the inputs provided by these programmes might not be sufficient to push them out of poverty. In addition, most of these programmes face the problem of lack of proper monitoring and evaluation by the government and keeping up with the progress of the beneficiaries after engaging in the programmes. Surprisingly, the Vocational Skills Development programme (VSD) that had the largest number of beneficiaries had no significant impact on all of the dependent variables. This could mean that many of the beneficiaries of the programme did not make use of the vocational skills acquired to improve their general wellbeing, given the nature of the study area, which is mainly rural and underdeveloped.

4.3 Impact of NDE Programmes on Income

Table 4.3: Regression Two - NDE Programmes (Income)

	B-coefficient	Std. Error	Wald	Sig.	Odds Ratio
Constant	1.143	0.542	4.448	0.035	3.135
VSD	-0.065	0.096	0.456	0.500	0.937
SSE	0.276**	0.089	9.628	0.002	1.317
REP	0.258	0.174	2.216	0.137	1.295
SPW	-0.269	0.156	2.981	0.084	0.764
N	374				
X² value	19.544***				
Pseudo R²	0.088				

Source: Authors' Computation, 2018.

Significant at 5% (**); 1% (***) critical level.

The empirical result shows that only the Small Scale Enterprises programme of the NDE in Gombe has a significant likelihood of having an impact on income. Beneficiaries of only the SSE programme have a positive likelihood of having an increase in their incomes by 1.32 times due to participating in the programme. This means that the SSE has increased the probability of having increased income by a participant and this, therefore, suggests that there is a significant relationship between SSE and income and that *beneficiaries of the SSE programme are more likely to have an increase in their incomes after participating in the programme*. The SPW, VSD and REP are statistically insignificant and do not have any impact on income. This is in line with the study done by Ekong and Ekong (2016) in which their findings suggested that there was an NDE-improved income linkage in Akwa-Ibom State although the effect was minimal.

4.4 Impact of NDE Programmes on Standard of Living

Table 4.4: Regression Three - NDE Programme (Standard of Living)

	B-coefficient	Std. Error	Wald	Sig.	Odds Ratio
Constant	2.501	0.513	23.781	0.000	12.193
VSD	0.124	0.084	2.189	0.139	1.132
SSE	-0.049	0.066	0.557	0.456	0.952
REP	-0.014	0.144	0.010	0.920	0.986
SPW	-0.551***	0.143	14.917	0.000	0.577
N	374				
X² value	18.121***				
Pseudo R²	0.073				

Source: Authors' Computation, 2018.

Significant at 5% (**); 1% (***) critical level.

In addition, only the SPW programme has shown to have a significant likelihood on the standard of living. Benefactors of this programme have a negative likelihood of having an improvement in their living standards by 0.58 times due to participating in the programme. This suggests that *benefactors of this programme are less likely to have an improvement in their living standards because of participating in the SPW programme*. The other three programmes (VSD, SSE and REP) however, are

not statistically significant and do not have an impact on standard of living. This is in conformity with the findings of Ebenehi (2012).

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The logistic regression results indicate that the Vocational Skill development (VSD), Small Scale Enterprise (SSE), Rural Enterprise Promotion (REP) and Special Public Work (SPW) programmes of the NDE did not have any significant impact on the poverty status of the beneficiaries. However, the SSE programme was found to significantly raise the incomes of the beneficiaries (likelihood of 1.32 times). There was no evidence that the VSD, REP and SPW had any impact on the income of the Beneficiaries. The SPW programme was, however, found to raise the standard of living, despite its failure to reduce the poverty status of its beneficiaries. This, we can argue is because of the temporary nature of this programme where beneficiaries are only engaged in activities such as street constructions, repairs, maintenance and others which only comes up occasionally. The VSD, SSE and REP were not statistically significant and did not have any impact on the standard of living of the beneficiaries.

The findings presented above suggests that the NDE programmes, as other intervention projects directed at poverty alleviation, did not significantly reduce the incidence of poverty of the poor in the State. Although the NDE is an agency charged with job creation, it was expected that the job created should generate income high enough, not only to raise the standards of living of its beneficiaries but also to lift them out of poverty. In selecting its targeted beneficiaries, the NDE appears to have done well, given the findings that most of the beneficiaries are poor and vulnerable. For instance, women, who constituted about 61% of the sample and are the most vulnerable to poverty, would have experienced a change in their poverty status through benefits received in the form of inputs and loans, which would have been sufficient for them to be self-employed.

The key conclusion from these findings is that while some of the employment generated by some of these programmes has succeeded in raising the incomes and standards of living of the beneficiaries, the rise in income was too small to lift them out of poverty (defined as US\$1.90 per day). One implication of this finding is that NDE should re-structure its programmes towards those that generate employment with significantly higher incomes if the directorate is to contribute to the on-going national effort at poverty reduction.

Therefore, it is recommended that NDE programmes should re-structure or streamline their activities and programmes primarily towards the agricultural and informal commercial sectors of the state. Given the nature of Gombe State being mostly rural, majority of the beneficiaries of NDE programmes were farmers 36.1% and traders (35%), indigenes and non-indigenes alike would, therefore, be motivated to seek the help of the agency actively and this would positively translate to increased employment levels and subsequently a reduction in poverty. In addition, more NDE training centers should be established to expand and create awareness of the activities of the NDE. Only three centers cater for the 11 local government areas of the state and many do not get the opportunity to benefit from the income-generating programmes of the NDE. This has attributed to the small number of just 19,599 beneficiaries since inception. To achieve this, the NDE can collaborate with private individuals and all the local authorities in the state to assist with funding and infrastructural facilities.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire No.....

Impact of the National Directorate of Employment Programmes on Poverty Alleviation in Gombe State.

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire will be used by a student of Department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Please, respond or tick where necessary. All information will be treated with confidentiality and will strictly be used for the purpose of research only.

Thank you for your cooperation.

SECTION A: Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondent

1. Sex:

(a) Male () (b) Female ()

2. Age of respondent:

(a) Below 18 () (b) 18 – 30 () (c) 31 – 50 () (d) 51 – 70 ().

3. Marital status:

(a) Single () (b) Married () (c) Widow/Widower () (d) Divorced ()

4. Household head:

(a) Mother () (b) Father () (c) Others (specify)

5. Household size:

(a) Less than 2 () (b) 2-4 () (c) 5-7 () (d) 8-10 () (e) Above 10

6. Educational Level:

(a) No formal education () (b) Uncompleted education () (c) Primary education ()
(d) Secondary education () (e) Post-secondary education ().

7. What is your major occupation?

(a) Farming () (b) Trading () (c) Civil servant () (d) Retired () (e) Others (Specify):

SECTION B: Impact of NDE Programmes on Poverty Alleviation.

8. What is your average monthly income?

(a) Less than N5000 () (b) N5000 – N10, 000 () (c) N11, 000 – N20, 000 ()
(d) N21, 000 – N30, 000 () (e) Above N30, 000 ()

9. What is your average consumption expenditure per day?

(a) Less than N500 () (b) N500 – N1, 000 () (c) N 1, 100 – N1, 500 ()
(d) N1, 1600 – N2, 000 () (e) Above N2, 000 ().

10. What type of assets do you have?

(a) Livestock/Animals () (b) Land () (c) Vehicle () () (d) House ()
(e) Others (specify)

11. Do you have adequate access to water supply, electricity and health care services?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
12. Are you engaged in any NDE programme/scheme?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
13. If yes, how have you benefitted from NDE?
(a) Loan () (b) Training () (c) Employment () (d) Input Supply () (e) Others (specify).....
14. What is the total amount of cash loan/credit that you have received from the NDE?
(a) 50,000 – 100,000 (b) 101,000 – 150,000 (c) 151,000 – 200,000 (d) Above 200,000.
15. Have you acquired more assets as a result of participating in NDE programmes?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
16. Has your income increased as a result of engaging in NDE programmes?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
17. By how much has your income increased?
(a) Less than N5000 () (b) N5000 – N10, 000 () (c) N11, 000 – N20, 000 ()
(d) N21, 000 – N30, 000 () (e) Above N30, 000 ()
18. Has your household consumption significantly improved as a result of engaging in NDE programmes?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
19. Has the NDE programmes enable you to set up a business or expand your existing business?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
20. Which of the following training programmes/schemes have you benefitted from the Vocational Skills Development Programme?
(i) National Open Apprenticeship scheme () (ii) School-on-wheels ()
(iii) Vocational skills for physically challenged and vulnerable persons () (iv) Partnership in skills training () (v) Resettlement loan scheme ()
21. Which of the following training programmes/schemes have you benefitted from the Small Scale Enterprises Programme?
(i) Entrepreneurship skills development training () (ii) Micro-business-start-up training ()
(iii) Entrepreneurship development programme () (iv) Enterprise creation fund ()
(v) Women employment training () (vi) Micro enterprise empowerment scheme ()
(vii) Special micro enterprises empowerment scheme ()
22. Which of the following training programmes/schemes have you benefitted from the Rural Employment Promotion Programme?
(i) Rural agricultural development training scheme () (ii) Integrated farming and training scheme ()
(iii) Rural handicrafts training scheme () (iv) Post-Rural agricultural development training scheme ()
23. Which of the following training programmes/schemes have you benefitted from the Special Public Works programme?
(i) Graduate attachment programme () (ii) Environmental beautification training scheme ()
(iii) Graduate coaching scheme () (iv) Solar energy training scheme ()

Thank you.