

# The Assessment of Implementation of N-Power as A Poverty Alleviation Strategy Among Unemployed Graduates in Damaturu Metropolitan Council

Yobe State

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## ABSTRACT

This paper assesses the implementation of N-power as a poverty alleviation strategy among unemployed graduates in Damaturu Metropolitan Council. The research design used for this study is survey method. The population of the study is the six hundred and fifty (650) as beneficiaries of N-Teach, N-Agro, and N-Health in Damaturu Metropolitan Council, Yobe State. The sample size was 321 derived out from the total population of 650 of such magnitude. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources for the study. The primary data was obtained from the respondents through instrument of structured questionnaires while the secondary data were obtained from annual reports and documents from state N-power programme office of Damaturu, Yobe State. Simple percentage was adopted as a method of data analysis for the study. The findings of this study reveals that, N-power programme helps to increase income levels of the beneficiaries. This attributes to the fact that, the income levels after the programme is significant. Meanwhile, the consumption of the nutritional status indicates positive result through increase in income level of the beneficiaries. It is also strongly indicated that most of the beneficiaries have become self-reliant. With regard to the investment levels, the programme has enhanced and improved significantly. In view of the findings, the study recommends that: Government should convert the N-power beneficiaries from temporary to the

permanent government workers (local, state and federal) to promote their basic income. This is because the income generated would help to improve investment level of the beneficiaries. If not possible for the government to permanent the beneficiaries, it should extend the duration from 3 years to more. Government should enroll the non-working graduates into the payment rolls. Effort should be made by the government to ensure the N-power programme be efficient and effective in reducing the level of poverty and the government of Nigeria should set up a special scheme meant for provision of loans to enable the beneficiaries to establish business themselves, after the end of the programme.

**Keywords:** N-Power, Poverty alleviation strategy, Beneficiary, Unemployed

## I. INTRODUCTION

Poverty has become global phenomena. There is no nation that has no effects of poverty but only its discontent may differ from other nation. Poverty affects many aspects of human conditions, such as the physical, moral and psychological. Thus, poor people are conceived as those individuals or households in a particular society which are incapable to achieve basic needs or services such as food, shelter, portable water to drink, health care services and access to productive resources like education, working skills and tools, political and civil right to participate in decision making concerning socio-economic condition.

Over the years, the Federal Government of Nigeria has undertaken some programmes with the aims of reducing, if not eradicating poverty in the country. Those programmes include; the Family Support Program (FSP), the Community Banks, Small Scale Industries Credit Scheme, People's Bank, the National Agricultural Land Development Agency, (NALDA), the Rural Employment Programme (REP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE). However, the desire for the implementation of those programmes is not achieved. The government did put up National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in place in 2000 which took off in 2001.

In 2013, the Yobe State Government through the Federal Government established scheme known as Subsidy Reinvestment Empowerment Programme (SURE-P), empowered youth in all 17 local governments by employing Diploma certificate holders to all Local Government administration and Local Government Education Authority sectors, paying them fifteen thousand Naira (₦15,000) monthly stipend, primarily with the aims of tackling the poverty in the state. This was done in line with the Federal Government poverty alleviation programme through the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity.

In spite the government's intervention in both financial and material resources to reduce poverty but it persists. The N-power came on board by the year 2016, with similar aims with the other programmes in reducing the level of poverty in Nigeria. The programme has provided an opportunity for skills and knowledge which are the driving forces of economic growth and social development. Despite the current high level of unemployment in the country, it has made some efforts to provide an opportunity to achieve productivity within the country especially skill development which is the main policy thrust of the N-Power Programme.

N-power is also linked to the Federal Government's policies in the economic, employment and social development areas. N-Power addresses the challenge of youth unemployment by providing a structure for large scale and relevant work skill acquisition and development while linking its core and outcomes to fixing inadequate public services and stimulating the larger economy. The modular programmes under N-Power will ensure that each participant will learn and practice most of what is necessary to find or create work. The N-Power Volunteer Corp involves a massive deployment of 500,000 trained graduates who will assist to improve the

inadequacies in our public services in education, health and civic education. Some of these graduates will also help in actualizing Nigeria's economic and strategic aspirations of achieving food security and self-sufficiency. In 2016, the Federal Government engaged 200,000 N-Power Volunteers and 300,000 more in 2017. The June 2017 Application was only open to the Graduate Category- the N-Power Volunteer Corps. Such volunteers are divided in to various States and local governments throughout the federation. The N-power candidates were also grouped into N-Teach, N-Health, N-Tax and N-Agro which professionally selected based on their disciplines from every local government area. This structure also reflected in Damaturu Metropolitan Council (DMC).

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

It is important to be noticing that most of the people in developing countries are poor especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In sub-Saharan African, people live below poverty border line. The National Bureau of Statistics (2012) reported that in Nigeria, about 60.9% of its populous living below poverty line of less than one dollar per day in 2010. In spite of the implications to the economy in the country, the federal government of Nigeria made several concerted efforts in order to reduce the level of poverty through various sectoral approaches among its citizens. The incidence of poverty in the country has been increasing, the effects of poverty reacted among different families, communities and the societies at large where its magnificent also affects the basic needs of life which many families cannot afford in their day to day struggles. Up to now, people are fighting for survivals in some areas of their basic needs; such as education, health, nutritional status which also persists due to the low income generation or unemployment especially among the younger generation, even the educated ones (graduates) throughout the federation. This led many families not to be able to afford one good meal in a day. Some parents withdraw or not even enroll their children in to the school system. Otherwise, some families are conservative and resistant to the herbal treatment when the needs arise. Similarly, in Yobe State, Damaturu Metropolitan Council, the situation is compounded with Boko Haram insurgency, massive unemployment among graduates, rural-urban migration and as well as low economic and commercial activities in the areas. Government introduced N-power with the aims of paving or reducing such nagging problems. However, this

study intends to assess the implementation of N-power as a poverty alleviation strategy among unemployed graduates in Damaturu Metropolitan Council.

### 1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to assess the implementation of N-power as a poverty alleviation strategy among unemployed graduates in Damaturu Metropolitan Council, while the specific objectives are to:

- examine the effects of N-power on consumption level among graduates in Damaturu Metropolitan Council;
- assess the effects of N-power on income generation among graduates in Damaturu Metropolitan Council; and
- examine how N-power enhances the investment among graduates in Damaturu Metropolitan Council

### 1.3 Research Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, the following null hypotheses were formulated

Ho<sub>1</sub>: N-power has not significantly enhanced the consumption level among the graduate in Damaturu.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no relationship between N-Power and income generation among the graduate in Damaturu.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no relationship between N-Power and investment among the graduate in Damaturu.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The Concept of N-Power

N-Power is defined as a Federal Government of Nigeria programme under the social investment programme for job creation and empowerment initiatives. According to Olawole (2018), the goals of the N-Power programme includes; reducing the rate of unemployment in the country, facilitate the transfer of entrepreneurial, technical skills and employability ability and to bring solution active public service and government diversification policy. Poverty according to Na'Allah (2004) and Kwaghe (2006), is multi-dimensional, because it affects many aspects of the human condition, including physical, moral and psychological. For many societies, poverty is a concrete phenomenon and can easily be identified. It is also relative because the population that may be classified as poor in a developed economy could be regarded as materially well off in least developed countries. Menyuko (2011) and Obadan (1997), identified some factors as the causes of poverty among which are; inadequate access to employment opportunities, inadequate physical

assets, inadequate access to markets, destruction of natural resources, lack of power to participate in design of development programmes and inadequate access to assistance for those living at the margin. On the consequences of poverty. Ravallion (2000), sees the term Poverty as chronic (Structural) or transient. The alleviation of poverty is universally accepted as a primary development objective. Poverty is a vicious circle which keeps the poor in a state of destitution. The concept of poverty which reflects its numerous visible attributes is multi-dimensional in nature.

### 2.2 Review of Empirical Studies

The study examined some basic concepts and reviewed literature that enriched understanding the assessment of the implementation of N-power as a poverty alleviation strategy. Literatures were also reviewed in line with specific objectives. Frank M. Attah, Thomas A. Omang, Mary U. Ojong-Ejohand Hussein Botchway (2021), examined the impact on National N-Power scheme on Employment creation. The ex post factor research designed was adopted in collecting data from 398 sample from a population of 632 beneficiaries of a scheme using a self-structured questionnaire. The convenience sampling technique was used in selecting the sample from the study area. The descriptive statistics include frequency distribution, chart, sample percentage, mean and standard deviation were used. It was discovered that nearly all the respondents (96.92%) were unemployed before becoming beneficiaries of the scheme. From the analysis carried out, it was discovered that there is a significant relationship between N-Power and Employment creation.

Adedeji P. Ademefun, Joseph Apeh Omede and James Nda Jacob (2020), examined the impact of National social investment scheme on poverty reduction among Nigerian youths (A succinct analysis of the N-power scheme). The study found that the implementation of the N-power scheme is to a large extent assuaging the unemployment challenges, building capacities of young graduates and stimulating economic value chain, thus, relatively impinging and subduing poverty in Nigeria. Despite the palliative role of the N-power scheme on employment and income generation as well as poverty reduction in Nigeria. The study recommends the need to adopt a more logistic approach, revitalizing revamping ailing industries and creating a more congenial environment for private investors to thrive towards addressing the issues of unemployment in Nigeria. Odey, Stephen Adi Sambe and Nguto (2019), examined the

assessment of the contribution of N-power programme to youth empowerment in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study adopted cross sectional survey design while cluster random sampling was used to select beneficiaries. Questionnaires were used to collect data as key informant. Interview was also used to complement questionnaires. The study found that the N-power contributed to empowerment of youth through poverty reduction. Proficiency skill in ICT, financial empowerment on the job experience and investment in small scale business. However, there were challenges faced by the programme on empowerment of youth which include delay in payment of allowances, unpaid allowances, distance to working places.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The research design used for this study is survey method. The population of the study is the

six hundred and fifty (650) as beneficiaries of N-Teach, N-Agro, and N-Health in Damaturu Metropolitan Council, Yobe State. The sample size is 321 derived out from the total population of 650 of such magnitude. In the sample size, simple percentages were used. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources for this study. The primary data were obtained from the respondents through instrument of structured questionnaires while the secondary data were obtained from annual reports and documents from state N-power programme office of Damaturu, Yobe State. Simple percentage was adopted as a method of data analysis for the study. This method was used because the researcher believes it has minimum error in data analysis. The method is easily understood by both average and above average persons and also enhances comparison of data.

#### Data Analysis and Discussion

**Table 4.1. Gender Distribution of the Respondents**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Male	202	62.93%
Female	119	37.07%
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sourced: Field Survey, 2021.

The data in the table above revealed that out of 321 respondents, 202 are male representing 62.93% while 119 representing 37.07% females. This shows that males are the majority of the respondents.

**Table 4.2. Age Distribution of the Respondents**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	170	52.96
26-35	151	47.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sourced: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 4.2 indicates that 170 respondents representing about 52.96% of the sample falls between the ages of 20 to 25 years. 151 respondents representing 47.04% fall between the

age brackets of 26 to 35. The table shows that 20 to 25 years are the majority out of the sample size chosen for the study.

**Table 4.3: Educational Background of the Respondents**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
MSc/Ph.D	3	0.93%
BSc/HND	56	17.44%
NCE	63	19.63%
OND/ND	107	33.33%
SSCE	92	28.66%
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sourced: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 4.3 above displays the academic qualification of the respondents. From the table, 3

respondents representing (0.93%) had obtained Doctorate Degree/Master's Degrees, 56

respondents representing 17.44% obtained First Degrees/HND, 63 respondents presenting 19.63% obtained NCE Higher National Diploma, 107 representing 33.33% respondents obtained Ordinary/National Diplomas and 92 representing

28.66% are SSCE holders respectively. This implies that virtually, majority of the students could not afford the cost of higher degrees such as Master's and Doctoral Degree.

**Table 4.4: Respondents' views on enjoyment of three square meals per day after earning the stipend**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	112	34.90%
Agreed	104	32.40%
Undecided	37	11.52%
Disagreed	47	14.64%
Strongly Disagreed	21	6.54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sourced: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 4.4 shows that 112 respondents strongly agreed that they enjoy five square meals every day after earning stipend, 104 agreed, 37 did not decide, 47 disagreed and 21 respondents

strongly disagreed respectively. The table indicated that there respondents that strongly agreed were the majority.

**Table 4.5: Respondents' views on access to balance diet.**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	123	38.32%
Agreed	98	30.53%
Undecided	29	9.03%
Disagreed	25	7.79%
Strongly Disagreed	46	14.33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sourced: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 4.5 above presents the opinions of the 123 respondents with 38.32% of the sample upheld the view and strongly agreed that they have access to balance diet. 98 respondents representing 30.53% of the sample agreed, 29 respondents

representing 9.03% undecided, 25 (7.79%) disagreed and 46 respondents representing (14.33%) strongly disagreed consecutively. The table indicated that the respondents who agreed with having balance diet are the majority.

**Table 4.6: Respondents' views on increase of their deposable income**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	192	59.81%
Agreed	17	5.30%
Undecided	39	12.45%
Disagreed	41	12.77%
Strongly Disagreed	32	9.67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 4.6 above presents the opinions of the 192 respondents with 59.81% strongly agreed that their income increased, 17 respondents representing 5.30% of the sample agreed, 39 respondents representing 12.45% undecided,

41 representing (12.77%) disagreed, 32 respondents representing 9.67% strongly disagreed. The table showed that the respondents who agreed with increasing income at their disposal, are the majority.



**Table 4.7: Respondents views on becoming self-reliance**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	152	47.35%
Agreed	73	22.74%
Undecided	21	6.54%
Disagreed	45	14.02%
Strongly Disagreed	30	9.35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 4.7 above presents the opinions of the 152 respondents with 47.35% strongly agreed that they became self-reliance, 73 respondents representing 22.74% agreed, 21 respondents representing 6.54% undecided, 45 representing

14.02% disagreed while 30 respondents representing 9.35% strongly disagreed respectively. The table showed that the respondents who became self-reliance were the majority.

**Table 4.8: Respondents views on sufficient income to meet their basic needs**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	158	49.22%
Agreed	77	23.99%
Undecided	28	8.72%
Disagreed	43	13.40%
Strongly Disagreed	15	4.67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 4.8 above presents the opinions of the 158 respondents with 49.22% strongly agreed that their income is sufficient to meet their needs, 77 respondents representing 23.99% of the sample agreed, 28 respondents representing 8.72%

undecided. 43 representing (13.40%) disagreed, 15 respondents representing (4.67%) strongly disagreed. The table showed that the respondents who agreed that their income is sufficient to meet their needs are the majority.

**Table 4.9: Respondents' views on their investment percentage**

Amount invested	Options	Percentage
0%	85	26.48%
25%	130	40.50%
50%	61	19.00%
75%	34	10.59%
100%	11	3.43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 4.9 shows that 85 respondents representing 26.48% have zero investment. 130 respondents representing 40.50% invest 25% of their total income at the end of every month. 61 respondents representing (19.00%) were able to invested 50% of their monthly income. 34

representing (10.59%) respondents invested 75% of their stipend. Only 11 representing (3.43%) respondents invested on 100% fully. The 130 (40.50%) respondents were the majority who invested 25% of their stipend at the end of every month.

**Table 4.10: Respondents' views on their monthly earnings beforeN-power stipend**

Items	Options	Percentage
N500-N1000	0	0%
N1500-N2000	21	6.54%
N2500-N3000	68	21.18%
N3500 and above	232	72.28%

<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>
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**Source:** Field survey, 2020

Table 4.10 shows that 232 respondents representing 72.28% have invested ₦3,500 and above, 68 respondents representing 21.18% who invested N2500-N3000, 21 respondents representing 6.54% who invested N1500-N2000 while 0 respondents representing 0% invested N500-N1000 of their total income at the end of every month. The 232 respondents are the majority who invested N3500 and above of their stipend at the end of every month.

#### 4.3 Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings is the views of data analysis and presentation made on this chapter; it holds that the majority of the respondents filling the questionnaires are males as indicated in table 1. Table 2 shows the majority of respondents as the members of the age group from 20-25 years with 52.96% as the active work age group. 107 representing 33.33% respondents obtained Ordinary/National Diplomas in table 3. Table 4 shows that 112 (34.90%) strongly agreed that they enjoy five square meals every day after earning stipend, 104 (32.40%) agreed. This indicates that the respondents that strongly agreed were the majority. Table 5 above presents the opinions of the 123 respondents with 38.32% of the sample upheld the view and strongly agreed that they have access to balance diet. In table 6, the opinions of 192 respondents with 59.81% strongly agreed that their income increased. Table 7 presents the opinions of the 152 respondents with 47.35% strongly agreed that they became self-reliance. The table 8 presents the opinions of the 158 respondents with 49.22% strongly agreed that their income is sufficient to meet their needs and 77 respondents representing 23.99% of the sample agreed. The 130 (40.50%) respondents were the majority who invested 25% of their stipend at the end of every month in table 9. The 232 respondents are the majority who invested N3500 and above of their stipend at the end of every month in table 10.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that N-power programme helps to increase income levels of the beneficiaries. This attributes to the fact that, the income levels after the programme is significant. Meanwhile, the consumption of the nutritional status indicates

positive result through increase in income level of the beneficiaries. It is also strongly indicated that most of the beneficiaries have become self-reliant. Lastly, as regard to the investment levels, the programme has enhanced and improved significantly. In view of the findings and conclusion reached at the end, the study recommends that: Government should convert the N-power beneficiaries from temporary to the permanent government workers (local, state and federal) to promote their basic income. This is because the income generated would increase help to improve investment level of the beneficiaries. If not possible for the government to permanent the beneficiaries, it should extend the duration from 3 years and above. Government should enroll the non-working graduates into the payment rolls. Effort should be made by the government to ensure the N-power programme be efficient and effective in reducing the level of poverty, and the government of Nigeria should set up a special scheme meant for provision of loans to enable the beneficiaries to establish their own business after the end of the programme.

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