

EFFECT OF CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME OF DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES ON WELL BEING OF BENEFICIARIES IN NIGER DELTA, NIGERIA

URANTA, D

Department of Sociology

University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The study focused on effect of capacity building programme of development agencies on well being of beneficiaries in Niger Delta Nigeria. Data was collected with the aid of structured questionnaire from 271 randomly selected participants involved in capacity building programmes in Niger Delta area of Nigeria. Data were analysed using mean scores and Z test statistics. Findings revealed that before the programme, most of the participants were applicants and unemployed and those worked received a mean income of ₦11,140.23. However, after their training and some of those who were employed could now earn a maximum of ₦84,000 in and above. The monthly income earned by graduate participants after participating in the training programme of SPDC and NDDC with study area increased above the income they received before participating in the training programme. Also, The graduates perception of the respondents in the two programmes of SPDC and NDDC were rated satisfactory under the multidimensional criteria. This underscores the fact the skill acquisition programme was useful to the youths. Based on these finding it was recommended that the donors of the programme should ensure that the programmes are sustained by equipping more centres and making them available for training. Adequate supervision will also go a long way to ensuring sustainability of the programmes.

Key words: capacity building programme, development agencies, well being, beneficiaries

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment has been a problem and is still a problem in Nigeria. This is one of the reasons why social vices are high among youths. International Labour Organization observed that among the causes of unemployment, Nigeria's educational system has also contributed to the unemployment problem in the country, since the emphasis of their education had been on reading and writing without any vocational training or special skills. The young school leaver or dropout were ill-equipped for wage employment. Unemployment demoralizes the individual and makes him/her feel unwanted by the society. Youth employment is a crucial issue in Nigeria because the youth constitute a major part of the labour force and they have innovative ideas, which among other factors are important in the development process of the country. A large proportion of the youth however is unemployed. The negative consequences include psychological problems of frustration, depression, hostility, and gradual drift of some visible unemployed youths into all manner of criminal behaviour (Adebayo, 1999).

The problem of youth unemployment is not peculiar to Nigeria. Several reasons have been advanced for the difficulty in surmounting the challenge of unemployment. Among the factors suggested were those of corruption, poor managerial capacity at the public service level, Nigerian's worsening debt situation, low productivity and absence of skills training programmes. The government in attempting to solve this problem of unemployment devised some strategies among which are self-employment schemes so that additional job seekers can be absorbed.

UNDP (2002) observed that young people make up more than 50% of the population of the countries of Africa. It further hinted that these young people are a potential resource for growth and social development if gainfully and productively engaged and that they could be a source of devastating social tension and conflict if not engaged. In Nigeria, the degree to which youth can contribute to the possibilities of their counties is constrained by circumscribed life changes, job opportunities being of the major circumscriptions. The counties number of jobless young people on the streets of major Nigerian cities bears ample witness to the limited job and other opportunities that the youth of the country have. Yet the development of the continent rests squarely on them. The problem of youth unemployment is not peculiar to Akwa Ibom State (Ekpo, 2000) observed that the main drivers of youth unemployment in the state are (a) the generalized lack of employment opportunities due to the underdevelopment of the economy; the employment prospects of Nigeria's youth are diminished by the already high rate of unemployment and underemployment (b) high rates of population growth; (c) sluggish or stagnant economics; (d) small formal private sector; (e) low literacy rates; (f) poor quality education and an education sector that increasingly equips young people with limited skills. There is no generalized definition of the term "youth". In Mozambique for example, youth is defined as the 14-35 age group. In Uganda it is the 13-34 age groups and in Nigeria, youths are defined as the 0-35 age group.

Employment has a lot to do with one's standard of living as unemployment is usually associated with poverty. UNDP (2002) observed that poverty in Nigeria is associated with high unemployment. Employment has far reaching effects on the quality of life. The unskilled as well as leavers and dropouts need to acquire necessary skills in trades of their choice to enable them earn a living. To Olomola (1988) "the livelihood of a person depends on the type of employment opportunity at his control", while Alimi (1988) did state that 'employment gives income to the employed person.

The need to build the capacity of young men and women in the Niger Delta area cannot be overemphasized. With the increasing unemployment issues in Nigeria, many youth have felt discouraged in life generally. This is one of the reasons why social vices are on the rise. Development agencies therefore included human capacity development as part of their corporate social responsibility in the Niger Delta. The study therefore examined effect of capacity building programme of development agencies on well being of beneficiaries in Niger delta Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The sample population thus included all oil producing communities in Bayelsa and Rivers State and this was further subdivided into Local Government Areas and narrowed down to workshops or train centres. The total level of participation in the youths skills acquisition programme indicated a higher enrollment in Rivers than Bayelsa State. The study adopted a combination of purposive-cluster and random sampling techniques. The centres in Rivers state and Bayelsa States were purposively selected. This sampling technique was chosen because there were different centres with various trades (Eboh, 1999). Cluster sampling was employed to select the skill acquisition centers in the areas. A total of 271 respondents constitute the sample size for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Effects of the Skill Acquisition Programme of SPDC and NDDC on the Well-Being of the Trained Youths in Rivers and Bayelsa State

Income change of participants of the training programmes after participating in the programme was used here as a proxy for well-being of the participants.

Having derived this, the study determined whether there was a significant change in the income of those who benefited from the programme after the training or not using Z-test. From Table 1, it was observed that the participants had a mean income of twelve thousand seven hundred and fourty five naira sixty Kobo only (₦12,745.60K) as their usual income before participating in the programme. The distribution had a Standard Deviation of 14,495.48. On the other hand the mean income of youths who participated in the programme after they had been exposed to the programme was twenty three thousand three hundred and thirty five naira seventy Kobo only (₦23,335.70K). This distribution had a standard deviation of 18378.07. The two distributions exhibited a correlation of 0.40 was significant at 1% alpha level. This implied that change in proportion of income after exposure to the programme and initial levels of incomes of youths who participated in the programme were moving in the same direction and the changes were correlated positively. Looking at the difference in the income of participants before and after participation, a nominal positive change of income in favour of the participating youths exposed to the programme was observed to the tune of ten thousand five hundred and ninety naria ten Kobo (₦10,590.1k). We need to know whether this difference in income was by chance or it was statistically valid at ninety five percent confidence levels (5% level of significance). In summary we wanted to know whether the income change was statistically different from zero. This was the same as testing the null hypothesis that there was no significant difference in the two mean (i.e. the mean of income change after participating in the training programme minus the mean of income before participating in the programme was not equal to zero). The calculated t-statistics, for a two-tailed test, had an estimated z statistic of -9.572, while the critical value of the z-distribution at 5% significance level for 270 degrees of freedom was 1.968. Since the calculated z-ratio (-9.572), was greater than the critical value (1.968) at 270 degrees of freedom and the chosen alpha level (5%) therefore the null hypothesis stipulated above was rejected. Therefore income change was statistically significant at a 95% confidence factor. This implied that the monthly income differential experienced by participants after participating in the training programme of SPDC and NDDC in the study area was not by chance. It was a major variation.

Table 1: Statistics of Youth participants' income before and after participation

Variables	Mean amount (N)	Stdev	Df	Z-calc	Z-tab
Income before prog	12745.60	14495.48	270	-9.572*	1.96
Income after prog	23335.70	18378.07			

The results reinforce the assertion that skill acquisition programmes were capable of providing employment for the youths thus reducing their levels of dependencies on crime, militancy and other vices that could emanate from idleness and poverty. Giving credence to this, Hartl (2009) had noted that education, skills development and technical training are central to rural employment. They prepare young people for work in eth formal and informal sector and thus

play an important role in poverty reduction. The better the training and the more refined the skills are in terms of human capital, the higher the income and returns and the better the livelihoods.

Participants’ perception about the effects of the training programme

Table 2 elicited responses on participants’ perception about the effects of the training programme on them using a multidimensional criteria which included questions relating to their well-being in terms of serving their educational, health, shelter, skill acquisition and general standard of living needs. Each questionnaire item that recorded a mean score below 1.50 (equivalent to 50% and below) was considered rejected by the respondents as “No” while the items that recorded a mean score of 1.50 and above (i.e. equivalent to an index of 50% and above) was considered agreed to (meaning “YES). “Yes” had a score of 2 while “No” had a score of 1.

Table 3: Respondents’ Scores on Multidimensional Indicators of Well-being of Beneficiaries

<i>Code of Item</i>	<i>Questionnaire Item</i>	Mean NDDC	Remark	Mean SPDC	Remark
A1	I can pay for my younger ones in school	1.16	No	1.56	Yes
A2	Be able to further my schooling	1.50	Yes	1.84	Yes
A3	Be able to acquire books and uniforms for my wards in school	1.35	No	1.38	No
B1	I can seek medical care at far places	1.42	No	1.41	No
B2	I can also offset my medical bills without help from friends and love ones.	1.18	No	1.01	No
B3	I am no longer afraid to attend hospital	1.19	No	1.26	No
B4	I can now buy and process my health insurance forms for the family	1.53	Yes	1.45	No
C1	I can now secure one bedroom flat for my family	1.48	No	1.44	No
C2	I now have a functional television set	1.40	No	1.35	No
C3	I can now afford a GSM handset	1.14	No	1.35	No
C4	I now own a radio set	1.25	No	1.38	No
C5	I can now afford a small functional generator	1.41	No	1.48	No

C6	I can now buy a standing fan	1.17	No	1.27	No
C7	I can now buy furniture for my house	1.32	No	1.79	Yes
D1	I can afford 3 square meal a day for my family	1.35	No	1.29	No
D2	I am able to buy food stuff in bulk	1.51	Yes	1.42	No
D3	I am able to afford beverages and fruits	1.28	No	1.38	No
D4	I can now take balance diet	1.23	No	1.30	No
E1	I can provide job for myself	1.18	No	1.29	No
E2	I can train others to acquire skill	1.16	No	1.29	No
E3	I can now join cooperative traders	1.32	No	1.34	No
E4	I am now self reliant	1.53	Yes	1.79	Yes
E5	I can now create jobs for others	1.36	No	1.69	Yes
	Overall mean	1.32		1.42	

Source: Field Survey, 2009

In response to the first item, while NDDC programme participants disagreed to the suggestion that the programme could enable them pay for their siblings at school (mean = 1.16) the SPDC counterparts affirmed that they were able to pay for their siblings school fees after passing through the programme (mean = 1.56). With regards to the second item (A2), both the NDDC and SPDC participants agreed that they should be able to further their education after the training programmes. Both NDDC and SPDC youth participants equally agreed unanimously that they were able acquire books and uniforms for their wards in school (item A3); seek medical care at far places (item B1); offset their medical bills without help from friends and loved ones (item B2); and were no longer afraid of attending hospital (B3). With regards to item B4, while NDDC participants agreed that they could buy and process health insurance forms for the family after attending the programme (mean = 1.53), the participants of SPDC disagreed (mean=1.45).

The beneficiaries of the SPDC and NDDC training programmes were unanimous too in saying “no” to questionnaire items C1 to C6 which meant that they could not secure one bedroom flat for their families, nor obtain a functional home electrical appliances such as television set for themselves, a GSM handset, radio set, a power generator nor even a standing fan for themselves. However while NDDC participants admitted they could not afford home furnitures using the skills obtained the SPDC counterparts concurred that they could own home furnitures with their skills. (1) The respondents response were influenced by level of education acquired before the programme; and this affected their reaction to the questionnaire. It also implied that the respondents were either not properly trained or had never secure job yet. Both groups disagreed to not being able to afford 3 squares meal a day for their families. However

NDDC participants claimed they could buy food stuff in bulk unlike their SPDC counterparts who disagreed to the item. From the results in the table 3, it was found that most items raised in the questionnaire concerning the effect of the programme on the well-being of the participants were positively received or agreed to. This affirmed the earlier test using t-test which corroborated the positive effects of the programme on the well-being of the participating trainees in terms of income change. We therefore concluded that the training programme, viewed from a multi-dimensional concept of “well-being” i.e. socio-economic well being, is deemed effective. Some items on the well being question were however rejected by the respondents. Some items rejected by SPDC and NDDC included buying GSM handset, offsetting hospital bills, buying a functional generator set, taking balance diet and buying radio set. Some welfare indicators were deemed unsatisfactorily met by both NDDC and SPDC trainees. The deficiency of the programme to properly address these well being challenges calls for policy action or more relevance of the programme to be able to brace up to some of these teething challenges beyond the ordinary ones agreed to by the respondents.

The two groups being studied disagreed to the response that they could afford beverages and fruits; take balanced diets; provide jobs for themselves; train others to acquire skills and be able to join cooperative traders. Both admitted they had become self reliant. As for ability to create job for others, only the SPDC group answered in the affirmative. There were some variations in the respondent’s sense of judgment perhaps these may be based on the individual experience. Again their experience implied that NDDC could not meet up to the standard when compared to SPDC. Therefore efforts should be made to ensure that NDDC measured up to the respondents expectations.

On the whole it appeared that the SPDC group gave more overall affirmative answers to the questionnaire items (more of “yes”) with (overall mean of 1.42) than the NDDC group (with overall mean of 1.32). Going from the result obtained, it was glaring that SPDC skill acquisition group had a mean of 1.42 while NDDC 1.32. This could suggest for certain mechanism put forward by SPDC to ensure that their programme addressed the need of their oil producing villages. These certain investment could be the following, prompt payment of stipends, provision of starter pack, use of NGO’s and non disruption of training periods. Perhaps job might be given after qualification; on micro-credit facilities may be available for their graduates.

All these may be possible because SPDC operated as a private firm compared to NDDC which was government instrument that sought to favour their members in recruitment. It is also believed that NDDC even though is autonomous it could not operate freely without government intervention in some cases like skills acquisition programme.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The monthly income earned by graduate participants after participating in the training programme of SPDC and NDDC with study area increased above the income they received before participating in the training programme. Also, The graduates perception of the respondents in the two programmes of SPDC and NDDC were rated satisfactory under the multidimensional criteria. Based on these finding it was recommended that the donors of the programme should ensure that the programmes are sustained by equipping more centres and making them available for training. Adequate supervision will also go a long way to ensuring sustainability of the programmes.

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