Socio-Economic Intervention and Youth Empowerment in Nigeria; an Assessment of Youth Enterprise with Innovation (YOUWIN) In Ekiti State

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Abstract

The study examined the emergence and mandate of youth empowerment programme of youth Enterprise with innovation (Youwin) of President Goodluck Jonathan's administration in Nigeria with reference to Ekiti State. It also assessed the effects of the policies on youth unemployment through Job and Wealth creation in the State. The study further identified the challenges confronting the effective operation and implementation of the policy. These were with a view to assessing the performance of Youwin empowerment programmes in fulfilling their mandate to the Nigerian youth under President Goodluck Jonathan administration. The study made use of primary and secondary data. Primary data were sourced through questionnaire and in-depth interview (IDI). The questionnaire survey involved a sample size of 200 respondents from each of the three senatorial districts of Ekiti State, totaling 600 samples for the study. Also, the IDI involved 10 respondents each, purposively selected among two categories, namely: government officials in-charge of Youwin and the expected beneficiaries of the socio-economic interventions. Secondly data were sourced from books, journals articles,

government publications, magazines, newspapers, Internet materials and official publications on Youwin. Descriptive statistics comprising frequency and percentages, inferential statistics involving chi-square analysis were used for data analysis. The study established that Youwin socio-economic intervention programmes of the Federal Government came on board following the desire of President Jonathan's administration to vigorously tackle the growing unemployment rate among the youth population in Nigeria. The study also found that Youwin programme made a little impact on the area of job and wealth creation across the state. However, the study discovered that the challenges confronting the implementation YouWin programmes as socio-economic intervention was that, the input, activities and outputs as decided by the technical aspect of YouWin designs, flagrantly neglected the participation of the beneficiaries. These had largely created the targeting problem and threatened the sustainability of the programmes. Other challenges identified include insufficient publicity and inadequate information about the operations of the policy and administrative corruption. The study concluded that YouWin empowerment policies have not had noticeable effects on youth employment in Ekiti State, considering the huge investment on the programme and the number of unemployed youth in the state.

Key Words: Public Policy, YouWin, Youth Empowerment and Youth Development.

Introduction

Nigeria is endowed enormously with abundant resources which can empower the youths for positive contributions towards sustainable socio-economic development. Also, the greatness of any nation is measured by the quality of her people, her system of governance and the empowerment of her youth. The place and importance of the youth in the existence of any country need not be over-stressed.

One fundamental issue challenging the Nigerian state today is the issue of youth unemployment. It should, however, be noted that youth unemployment or underemployment generally is not peculiar to Nigeria alone. It is a global societal problem which has periodically drawn the attention of governments and non-governmental organizations across the globe. It is found even in the developed countries .However, the rate, whether viewed in percentage or degree, varies from continent to continent and from county to country. In recent times, the phenomenon of youth unemployment has further increased globally as a result of the global financial crisis in the world (2016 CBN Report). Adebisi (2010) asserts that youth unemployment across the world has reached a great height and is likely to climb further. The International Labour Organization (ILO) puts the global rate of youth unemployment at 12.9 percent in 2012(ILO, 2012). On 25th of August, 2016, Geneva (ILO News) estimates that the global youth unemployment rate is expected to reach 13.1 percent by the end of 2016. Okafor (2016) documents that in Sub-Sahara Africa; youth population was estimated at 138 million people with 28.9 million, i.e, and 21 percent of them unemployed. Nigeria shares a great proportion of this figure. Over 40 million Nigerian youths are unemployed (The Nation 10th May, 2015).The youth unemployment rate in Nigeria has risen from 21 percent to 25 percent, and in the south west Nigeria stands at 21.56 percent as at September, 2016(ILO News, 2016).

Challenges in society such as conflicts of differing dimensions, lack of infrastructure, issues of unemployment, health care, housing problems as well as other social vices are being addressed by the government through

the formulation and implementation of appropriate policies (Ikelegbe, 2006). Therefore, public policy is said to be an instrument to promote and attain political and socio-economic growth and development in contemporary societies. Public policies are the main instruments with which government or state elite seeks to respond to the demands of their members of the public. It is an output of a political system. In recognition of the growing unemployment rate and the associated dangers inherent in it, every nation and multinational institutions have a youth agenda as well as youth action plan targeted at the reduction of unemployment problem. This is because joblessness among the youths, who are largely educated, trained and has potential for the labour market, represents a waste of human resources. However, the rising incidence of unemployment among the youths, especially before the civilian administration was not because of the absence of empowerment programmes, but the failure of the policy makers to develop an acceptable strategy to engage the wider Nigeria society in the process. Few among the programmes include: the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Better Life Programme (BLP), Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) and Family Support Programme (FSP). Unfortunately, they were severally adjudged to have failed (Ogwumike; 2001, Olurode, 2002; Makinde, 2005).

In the task of meeting these challenges, successive civilian administrations, including the Jonathan lead regime have tried to focus on unemployment programmes by discontinuing many of the old programmes, restructuring some of them and creating new ones. The prominent programme of the administration in tackling youth unemployment includes Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWIN), among others.

YOUWIN was introduced on 10th October, 2011 by President Good luck Ebele Jonathan. At the inauguration, he asserts that:

> Unemployment among our youth is one of our biggest challenges. The time has come to create jobs and lay a

> new foundation for Nigeria's economic growth. (Daily Trust, 2011:10)

YouWin was, therefore, established to improve on the previous youth empowerment programmes in the country, with the mandate to create jobs by encouraging and supporting aspiring entrepreneurial youth in Nigeria to develop and execute business ideas that will lead to job creation. It was designed to create job opportunities, specifically, for graduates of tertiary institutions that elect to go into business as entrepreneurs, that is, the participants are required to develop and execute their own business ideas that will provide jobs for themselves and other unemployed youths who may or not be a graduate (Jeffery, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

The rising incidence of unemployment among the youths has been a major concern in the contemporary world, owing particularly to the fact that it continually poses a threat to global peace and security. However, within the second quarter of the implementation of YouWin programme, there have been diverse reports and comments both in prints and from government officials that the socio-economic intervention had created five million jobs, thereby reduced the level of unemployment by fourty percent. Between the claims and the counter claims, this study having identified the bane of the poor performance of the previous policies to fix the problem of unemployment among the Nigerian youth, hence this study.

Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study is to assess the impact of the National Youth Empowerment Policies of Goodluck Jonathan's administration in Nigeria with specific reference to Youth Enterprise with Innovation (YouWin) programmes. However, the specific objectives are to:

(i) assess the level of awareness and participation of the youths and the general public in the activities of YouWin as empowerment intervention policies.

(ii) investigate the extent to which YouWin have solved the problems of youth unemployment and wealth creation in Nigeria; and
(iii) examine the factors militating against the implementation of YouWin policies in Nigeria.

Hypothesis

This study shall work within the framework of the following hypotheses;

i. There is positive impact of YouUWin on youth empowerment in Nigeria.
ii. There is no significant impact of YouWin on youth empowerment in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

There is an avalanche of theories within which public policy on youth empowerment could be discussed and appraised. However, for the purpose of this study, the liberal political economy would be used. The adoption of the theory is predicated on the fact that political economy generally analyses how public policy is created and implemented. Also, it deals with the study and use of how economic theory and methods influence political ideology. Thus, it expresses the interplay between economics and policy.

Development of the Theory

The contribution of scholars to the study of theories in economics and politics in recent times cannot be overlooked. According to Johari (2005: 129) "those who take an economic approach are likely to seek to relate economic interests to all major public policies and events". This study adopts the theories of liberal political economy and empowerment theory. The term political economy is derived from the Greek words "polis", meaning "city" or "state" and "oikonomos". This means one who manages a "household" or "estate" (Keohame, 1995). It can, thus, be understood as

the study of how a country, that is, the public's household-is managed or governed, taking into consideration both political and economic factors. Generally, political economy analyses how public policy is created and implemented. It is the study and use of how economic theory and methods influence political ideology. Thus, it exposes the interplay between economics and policy. Similarly, it focuses attention on the understanding of how production, distribution and consumption processes are influenced by political and economic actors and how they shape institutions and policies (Sayer and Hahnel 2004; Ebner, 2005; Gibbon, 2005; and Keizer, 2005).

Specifically, liberal political economy points to the growth of the state as an essential institutional device for resource allocation along with the market and the firm. As a political philosophy or worldview, Schell (2004) submits that it is founded on ideas of liberty and equality that is primarily concerned with the scope of governmental activity. In centrally planned economies like Nigeria, the state has, in fact, been the primary source of such device, and its core is the focus on the natural goodness of human beings, favouring the civil and political liberties, through government by law with the consent of the governed and protection from arbitrary authority (Ike and Eze, 2013). The relevance of this theory is in the context of reciprocal interaction of wealth and power which takes place within the institutional framework of very important forms of social organization; the state, resources, and wealth allocation as well as the people. Corroborating the above is the submission of Gilpin (2003) and Mimiko (2010) that the relationship between economics and politics at least in the modern world is a reciprocal one.

On the one hand, politics largely determines the framework of economic activities and channels it in the direction intended to serve the interest of dominant groups. On the other hand, the economic process itself tends to redistribute power and wealth. In the same vein, it transforms the power relationship among groups, institutions as well as organizations. The insight this theory creates is capable of exposing the nature, character

and role of economics as well as politics/policies of poverty reduction among the citizenry. According to Ravenhill (2005), the theory is at best individual-concentrated as its emphasis is on individual enterprise, virtues of market competition, and on restricting the role of the state to what is required to ensure that markets can operate successfully. In the end, individuals strive to improve their own lot but the logic of competition in the market place ensures that the selfish motivations underlying their enterprise benefit society as a whole.

The theoretical challenges of classical liberalism as a branch of political economy, however, are elaborated in the work of Pennington (2011). He defines the challenges in three categories: market failure arguments, challenge of egalitarianism and communitarianism. Obviously, in a world with imperfect knowledge and imperfect rationality, the production and distribution process is not evenly distributed. This perspective is relevant to this study because, if these approaches are fully adopted, youths would be able to gain economic, political and educational empowerment with innovations that will enable them participate significantly in developmental policies. .

Emergence and Mandate of the Programme,

The Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWin) program is a business plan competition for young entrepreneurs in Nigeria. It is collaboration between the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Communication and Technology, and the Ministry of Youth Development with support from DFID and the World Bank. It has the stated objective of encouraging innovation and job creation through the creation of new businesses and expansion of existing businesses amongst the youths. It was formally launched on October 11, 2011 by President Goodluck Jonathan in a ceremony aired live over the National Television network. The program was advertised throughout the country over different television and radio stations. Adverts were also published in the newspapers with the widest coverage. Road shows were organized by the Ministry of Youth

Development and private vendors in major cities of each geopolitical area of the country targeting areas with large numbers of youth eligible for the competition.

The Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWin) Programme is a collaboration of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Communication Technology (CT), the Ministry of Youth Development and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development that will launch an annual Business Plan Competition (BPC) for aspiring young entrepreneurs in Nigeria, in line with the Federal Government's drive to create more jobs for Nigerian youths.

The main objective of the Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWin) Programme is to generate jobs by encouraging and supporting aspiring entrepreneurial youth in Nigeria to develop and execute business ideas that will lead to job creation. The programme will provide aspiring youth with a platform to showcase their business acumen, skills and aspirations to business leaders, investors and mentors in Nigeria. Other objectives are to;

- attract ideas and innovations from young entrepreneurial aspirants from Universities, Polytechnics, Technical colleges, and other post-Secondary institutions in Nigeria;
- provide a onetime Equity grant for 1,200 selected aspiring entrepreneurs to start or expand their business concepts and mitigate start up risks;
- generate 80,000 to 110,000 new jobs for currently unemployed Nigerian youth over the three years during which the three cycles will be implemented;
- provide business training for up to 6,000 aspiring youth entrepreneurs spread across all geo-political zones in Nigeria;
- encourage expansion, specialization and spin-offs of existing businesses in Nigeria; and,
- enable young entrepreneurs to access a wide business professional network and improve their visibility (www.youwin.org.ng)

Methodology

The study employs both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data were collected through questionnaire, in- depth interview (IDI), while secondary data were sourced from relevant journals, handbooks bulletins, official publications on YouWin, relevant websites and gazette that address the subject matters

The study area for the work consists of three senatorial districts of Ekiti States of Nigeria. The research area consists of residents of each state capital. Since the whole area cannot be contacted, it is expedient to effectively manage survey spread by selecting a representative sample. Hence, the purposively selected locations for the study includes: Ado-Ekiti, Ijero-Ekiti and Ikere –Ekiti.

200 questionnaires were purposively administered on each senatorial district and the general public who are expected beneficiaries of the programmes within the selected towns. Snowballing sampling technique (that is, beneficiaries directing the researcher to another beneficiary) was used to select the beneficiaries of the policies. However, the purposive selection considered knowledge, expertise and involvement in the programmes under investigation. The study employs the mixed method of quantitative and qualitative techniques. Quantitative data from questionnaire survey were analysed with appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics including frequencies, simple percentage (%) and chi-square analysis.

Results and Discussion

Level of Awareness of the activities of YouWin empowerment by the youths and general public

Variables	Response	Ikole Ekiti	%	Ikere Ekiti	%	Ado Ekiti	%
Are you aware of Youwin as an empowerment programme of government	YES	50	30.0	145	72.5	108	54.0
	UND.	22	1.0	23	11.5	02	1.0
	NO	138	69.0	32	16.0	90	45.0
Are you aware of the target and mandates of Youwin programme	YES	40	20.0	100	50.0	91	45.5
	UND.	-	-	25	12.5	20	10.0
	NO	160	80.0	75	37.5	89	440
Youwin programme was introduced to reduce the level of unemployment in Nigeria	YES	100	50	130	65.0	101	50.5
	UND.	10	0.5	20	10.0	-	-
	NO	90	4.5	50	25.0	99	49.5
The failure of the previous government policies to deliver on their mandate initiated the implementation of Youwin.	YES	135	67.5	139	69.5	121	60.5
	UND	5	2.5	38	19.0	9	4.5
	NO	60	30.0	23	11.5	70	350
I know of a beneficiary of Youwin programme	YES	15	7.5	80	40.0	117	58.5
	UND	-	-	20	10.0	-	-
	NO	185	92.5	100	50.0	83	41.5

In addressing the second objective, test on the awareness level of both youths and the general public on the activities of YouWin were analyzed using frequency count and percentage distributions. This was summarized in cross tabulation format on the bases of the sampled Towns

for detailed understanding of the awareness level across the States. The table explained the awareness level of the activities of YouWin.

Table. 1. Quantitative Data Analysis showing the level of youth and public awareness on YouWin activities

Table 1; shows the test on items relating to the awareness level of respondents on YOUWIN activities. It was noted that 48.3% affirmed the statement that they were aware of YOUWIN as a socio-economic policy of government, 8.3% were undecided in response, while 43.5% said they were not aware. This result was justified across three of the sampled states. In Ekiti, Ondo and Ogun States, majority (69%, 57% and 54% respectively) said they were not aware of YOUWIN as a socio-economic policy of government.

It was also observed in the above table above that 48.5% of the sampled respondents generally were of the opinion that they were not aware of the target or mandates of the YOUWIN programme, 9.8% were undecided, while 41.8% said otherwise. This observation was similar across three States, except in Osun, Oyo and Lagos States where majority (55%, 50%, and 45.5% respectively) opined that they were aware of the target or mandates of the YOUWIN programme.

On a different view, majority of the respondents (56.1%) negated the view that YOUWIN was set up with the intention of engaging people or encourage youth participatory in its modalities to create empowerment scheme, 9.3% were indifferent in their response, while 34.6% supported the view. The observed distribution could be attributed to most of the sampled States except for Ogun and Lagos State where majority (50% and 49.5% respectively) supported the view that YouWin was setup with intentions of engaging people or encourages youth participation in the modalities to create employment scheme.

It was also observed in the above table that majority (59.3%) of the respondents were of the opinion that YouWin programme was introduced to reduce the level of unemployment in Nigeria, 4.8% were undecided in

their response, while 35.9% were not in support of the view. This finding was confirmed across the six States such that majority across supported the view.

In a similar trend, majority of the respondents generally (66.3%) also supported the view that the government established the programme with the purpose of reducing poverty or unemployment in Nigeria, 8.3% were undecided, while 25.3% negated the view. Just like the latter, the finding was in line with what was observed across the six States.

Most of the sampled respondents (67.6%) affirmed the view that the failure of previous government policies targeted towards improving the standard of living of the masses initiated the implementation of YonWin, 7.3% were undecided on the view, while 25.1% negated the view. This majority opinion was replicated across all the sampled States, thus confirming the findings across the States.

Analysis of Qualitative Data on Awareness of Youwin empowerment programme in Ekiti State

Contrary to the response of some respondents to the questionnaire, participants of the In-depth Interview (IDI) had a different opinion in some locations. The majority of the participant at the IDI sections in some locations such as Ikole and Ikere claimed low awareness about Youwin empowerment programme. While in some states such as Ado-Ekiti, with few participants claimed to be fully or partially aware of the empowerment activities in the State.

In the IDI conducted in Ikole- Ekiti and its environs of Ekiti State, majority claimed that they had no awareness of the programme. A participant summed it all, when he stated that:

> We don't know anything about Youwin or Youwin may not be for all. I know about Sure-P as a palliative measure for the removal of fuel subsidy to care for the citizen, but Youwin is not a popular programme. It

> becomes a difficult task for me to know whether it is a successful programme or not (Oral Interview).

The opinion of the participant reveals that, he claimed awareness, of was just ordinary hear-say. He did not have a deeper knowledge of its operation.

In another opinion, Adedipe who claimed to be a youth leader in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti- State informed that:

> I am aware of Youwin as an empowerment programme in Nigeria. There is no enough publicity on the programme. Quite a large number of youths are not aware of the programme not to talk of their involvement in the initiation of the policy (Oral Interview).

Considering the above submission, it can be said that citizens were well educated about Sure-P and Youwin initiatives as youth empowerment programmes. This was borne out of government's commitment to the reduction of the scourge of youth unemployment in Nigeria.

Table 2: Responses on the impact of Youwin policy on youth unemployment in Ekiti State

Variables	Response	Ikole Ekiti	%	Ikere Ekiti	%	Ado Ekiti	%
The beneficiaries of Youwin were empowered with the needed facilities to start their business.	YES	20	10.0	110	55.0	109	545
	UND.	-	-	22	11.0	-	-
	NO.	180	90.0	68	34.0	91	45.5
Beneficiaries were financially empowered by government to initiate production	YES	30	15.0	90	45.0	99	19.5
	UND.	150	75.0	28	14.0	-	-
	NO.	20	10.0	82	41.0	101	50.5

Jobs were created for beneficiaries	YES.	18	4.0	90	45.0	139	69.5
through Youwin programme are	UND.	70	35.0	10	5.0	2	1.0
now self employed	NO.	122	61.0	100	50.0	59	29.5
Youwin programme has	YES	20	10.0	101	50.5	187	93.5
increased vocational	UND	62	31.0	41	20.5	-	-
professionals and trainers in Ekiti State	NO	118	59.0	58	29.0	13	6.5
The intervention of Youwin	YES	18	9.0	98	49.0	103	51.5
programme has reduced	UND	50	25.0	12	6.0	7	3.5
unemployment among youths in Ekiti State	NO	132	66.0	90	45.0	90	45.5

The analysis of items related to the extent to which YouWin policy has solved the problems associated with youth unemployment in Ekiti-State were presented in Table 2 above.

It was revealed that 55.8% of the respondents affirmed that beneficiaries of the YouWin get access to the benefits attached to it, 11.8% were undecided in their response, while 32.5% negated the statement. This was synonymous with findings across the sampled States.

Majority of the respondents generally (51.2%) did not affirmed the statement that people chosen in their area as beneficiaries of YouWin were empowered with the needed facilities for sustenance, 5.9% were undecided in their response, while 42.9% supported the statement. This finding was confirmed by just two of the sampled locations. In Ikole and Ado-Ekiti (90%

and 62.5% respectively) majority negated the statement that people chosen in their area as beneficiaries of YouWin were empowered with the needed facilities.

It was noted that 46.6% of the respondents affirmed the statement that beneficiaries were financially empowered by government to initiate production and employment opportunities, 18% were undecided, while 35.4% negated it. Across sampled States, the observed distributions were replicated such that majority agreed with the statement, but in Ikole-Ekiti majorities (75%) were undecided in their response.

In another item, it was observed that 45.5% of the respondents affirmed the statement that jobs were created for beneficiaries through YouWin, 14.9% were undecided, while 39.6% had a contrary view. This means that most of the respondents supported the view. Four States out of the six States sampled justified the observed distributions. In Ekiti and Oyo States, majority (72.5% and 49.5%) were not in support of the statement.

It was observed that 46.7% of the respondents agreed with the statement that the intervention of YOUWIN programme has reduced unemployment among youths in Ekiti State, 8.8% were undecided, while 44.6% did not agree with the statement. In similarity with earlier results, respondents from Ikere-Ekiti negated this view such that most of them (66%) felt the programme has not reduced unemployment among youths in Ekiti -State.

Table 3:
Responses on the factors militating against the implementation of Youwin

Variables	Response	Ikole Ekiti	%	Ikere Ekiti	%	Ado Ekiti	%
The general public was adequately informed about the Youwin empowerment programme	YES	64	32.0	68	34.0	134	67.0
	UND.	35	17.5	22	11.0	6	3.0
	NO.	101	50.5	110	55.0	60	30.0
Deserving and qualified participants applied for the scheme were enlisted based on merit	YES	20	10.0	75	37.5	112	58.5
	UND.	10	5.0	25	12.5	3	1.5
	NO.	170	85.0	100	50.0	80	40.0
There was prompt and timely release of fund (tranches) by the government to the beneficiaries	YES.	22	11.0	120	60.0	128	64.0
	UND.	98	49.0	12	6.0	4	2.0
	NO.	80	40.0	68	34.0	68	34.0
The monitoring of participants by government officials was helpful in achieving the target mandate of the programme	YES	20	10.0	60	30.0	145	22.5
	UND	0	0.0	28	14.0	0	0.0
	NO	180	90.0	112	56.0	55	27.5

The belief that socio-economic programme (Youwin) was an avenue to share political spoil among politicians was true	YES	100	50.0	151	75.5	128	64.0
	UND	20	10.0	16	37.5	4	58.5
	NO	80	40.0	33	16.5	68	34.0

The test on items relating to the factors militating against the implementation of YouWin policies in Nigeria were analyzed in the table above. Thus, the table explains the trend of responses on factors militating against the implementation of YouWin policies in Nigeria. It was observed that 46.3% of the respondents generally affirmed the statement that the general public was adequately informed about the YouWin scheme of the federal government of Nigeria, 8.8% gave undecided response, while 45.0% negated the view. Across sampled States, it was noticed that Osun (67.5%) and Lagos (67%) had majority supporting the view, while others negated it.

The table shows that 56.5% of the respondents affirmed the statement that deserving and qualified participants applied to be beneficiaries of the YouWin scheme, 6.7% were undecided, while 36.8% negated the view. This distribution was confirmed by all sampled States such that majority affirmed that deserving and qualified participants applied to be beneficiaries of the YouWin scheme.

The findings on the direct beneficiary of YouWin programme indicated that 49.3% said it was not on merit, 42.4% said it was, while 8.3% were not précised. Across sampled States, majority in Osun, Ogun and Lagos States (54.5%, 58.5% and 58.5%) affirmed that it was based on merit, while the remaining 3 States were in line with the overall findings.

In a different but relevant view, majority of the sampled respondents (59.2%) confirmed the statement that people perceived YouWin programme as an avenue to share political spoil among politicians, 6.8% were undecided in their response, while 34% negated it. All the results

across the state confirmed the findings, therefore it was affirmed that the finance in YouWin was wrongly implemented based on political interference in some instances.

It was observed that 48.2% of the respondents supported the statement that there was prompt and timely release of funds (tranches) by government for the beneficiaries of the scheme, 14.6% were not sure, while 37.3% negated it. This finding was affirmed based on the outcome in most of the sampled States except in Ekiti State where majority were undecided (49%), 40% disagreed with the statement, while just 11% supported it. This means that in most situations, there was prompt and timely release of funds (tranches) by government for the beneficiaries of the scheme.

The table also shows that 46.5% affirmed the view that monitoring of participants by government officials was helpful in achieving the target of the intervention, 5.1% were undecided, while 48.4% felt otherwise. This opinion differs across the sampled States such that majority in Ekiti, Ondo and Oyo States (90%, 55.5% and 56% respectively) did not support the statement, while most of the respondents from Osun, Ogun and Lagos States (59%, 72% and 72.5% respectively) supported the view that monitoring of participants by government officials was helpful in achieving the target of the intervention.

In another perspective, majority (55.8%) were of the opinion that there was evidence of manipulation in the release of funds by the monitors of the scheme, 9.8% were undecided in their response, while 34.5% negated it. This was confirmed across all States, except in Oyo State where majority (59%) were of the opinion that there was no evidence of manipulation in the release of funds by the monitors of the scheme.

On the success of YouWin scheme, it was observed that 47.7%% said it was successful, 41.2% said it was not, while 11.2% were not conclusive with their response. This was confirmed across the States that the scheme was successful, except for Oyo and Ondo States (55% and 70.5% respectively, where majority said the scheme was not successful.

In addition, it was affirmed by majority (50.3%) that the funds allocated to finance YouWin interventions was mismanaged by officials in charge, 6.1%% were undecided, while 43.6% negated it. Across the sampled States, this result was confirmed, excluding Oyo State, where 70% negated it, 10% were undecided, while just 20% supported the view.

Conclusion

The desire by President Goodluck Jonathan's led administration to create more jobs, eschew unemployment, reduce poverty and enhance youth capacity building in Nigeria, led to the initiation of Youwin empowerment programme. The study contends that socio-economic interventions in Nigeria have suffered from corruption and inadequate feasibility analysis. This is not to talk of the culture of policy discontinuation which characterizes every change of governmental baton in the country. Nigerian leaders and followers should have a change of attitude regarding the above if the nation is to move forward. Also, an inclusive mechanism which would involve other tiers of government for efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability is essential.

Moreover, the existence of an initiative such as Youwin empowerment programme is expected to be well known to the public, especially the youths residing in the grassroots who are apparently the targeting group of the initiative. The study has been able to establish that a lot of resources were invested in the Youwin intervention, while the number of youths the policy proudly aimed to cover within its short and long run projections is minimal when compared with the total population of the unemployed youths in the country which keeps on skyrocketing on daily bases. However, for government to achieve service delivery with integrity capacity to perform is essential and efforts must be beyond drafting of policies on paper but must also contain an achievable and independent delivery mechanisms with pro-active bureaucratic elements.

Recommendations

In considering the state of the Nigerian economy, the need for development cannot be neglected and since it has been established that youths play a vital role in national development, the role of youths in the Nigerian economy cannot be ignored. On this note, our recommendations are raised to take care of the major challenges identify through the findings of the study they are as follows:

It is an established fact that the fight against youth unemployment and poverty in Nigeria cannot go far unless the policy makers ensure the participation of the concerned group. This study, therefore, recommends the adoption of participatory model in the conception and execution of future interventions. This will guarantee the full involvement of the people and go a long way in ensuring the sustainability of the programmes.

Also, to make way for effectiveness of socio-economic policy in it operations, more efforts should be put on awareness and public orientation, particularly at the grassroots level. This would change the public perception about government policy especially the Nigerian youths who felt that only those close to politicians benefit from youth employment and empowerment interventions.

In addition, it also stated that YouWin interventions was also undermined by limited monitoring and coordination among the numerous ministries, departments and agencies involved. Based on the above, future policies should be subjected to regular monitoring in order to evaluate and prescribe necessary adjustments.

Equally noticed as central to the incidence of unemployment is infrastructural decadence or problems. Base on the above, it is suggested that government should purse an outward-oriented economy. In the pursuance of outward-oriented economy, top among policy options available to government is the revamping of the country's productive base through massive rehabilitation of the nation's infrastructure. Electricity supply has to be improved to boost industrial operations as well as productivity among small businesses.

Lastly, any policy intervention to address youth unemployment and poverty calls for serious and clear policy action by the appropriate body. Nigeria's success on the global level will largely depend on how well it is able to leverage the energy and potential of its young and vibrant population towards economic growth and development.

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