

Skill Acquisition and Poverty Reduction among Youths: A Case of Zamfara State of Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study used Ex-post Facto research design to investigate the contributions of Zamfara state Skills Acquisition programme on reduction of poverty among youths in Zamfara West Senatorial District. Human capital theory was used as a theoretical framework, the population for the study was 1900 and sample size was 320 based on Kreycie and Morgan (1971) table of determining sample size. Youths Skills Acquisition Programme on Reduction of Poverty Questionnaire (YSAPPRO) for graduates, Youths Skills Acquisition Programme on Reduction of Poverty Questionnaire (YSAPPRO) for instructors and official documents were used for data collection. The data were analyzed using frequency and percentages. The study found out that there were different skills acquisition programme provided by the Zamfara State that are empowering economically in nature and that has the capacity for reduction of poverty. The programme also has the indicators of contributions on reduction of poverty such as financial strength, wealth creation, job creation, occupational skills and economic self-reliance. The study also found out that insufficient funding, inadequate government and community support, inadequate learning equipment, inadequate instructional materials; lack of qualified, skilled instructors and also absence of staff training development have negatively affected the skill acquisition programme. The study recommended among others that since the programme has potential for reduction of poverty it should be sustained by incorporating the beneficiary communities in its management and financial supports.*

Keywords: Youths, skills acquisition, self-reliance, Nigeria.

Introduction

Poverty is described as a condition which people needs for food, clothing and shelter are not being met, extreme poverty around the world calls for international concern. Statistics according to Thinkers Forum (2009:1), indicates that: 1.1 billion people have income level below \$ 1(one dollar) a day, more than 1 billion people do not have access to safe drinking water, 6 million children under five die every year as a result of hunger and that at the end of 2003 there were 143 million orphans under the age of 18 living in 193 developing countries. Nigeria has one of the world's highest economic growth rates, averaging 7.4 % according to the Nigerian Economic Report released in July 2014 by World Bank. Poverty remains significant at 33.1% in Nigeria, the Africa's biggest economy (World Bank, 2014). Statistics shows that 140.219 million Nigerians (69%) lived in poverty condition while Zamfara State with population over four million people has poverty rate as 70.8% and with the highest unemployment rate which is 42.6% (Bureau of Statistics, 2013).

According to Muhammad (2010:285) this depiction of poverty provides a glimpse at the deplorable condition of deprived people in the world. Perhaps, it is to show international apprehension about the plight of the world poor that the United Nations (UN) gave top priority to the reduction of global poverty in its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). By the year 2015, the MDGs number one target is to reduce the population of the people living in extreme poverty by half (Umoren, 2009:1). At about the same time that the international community announces its poverty reduction target, Nigeria too declared its own poverty reduction plan in the form of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). As a development plan, NEEDS was designed along with similar lines in MDGs (Ado-kurawa, 2008). Regarded as Nigeria's plan for prosperity, NEEDS has four distinct areas as follows: value reorientation, wealth creation, employment generation and poverty reduction. In the area of reduction of poverty, NEEDS acknowledges that poverty is a multi-faceted problem that requires a multi-dimensional approach in tackling it. Having realized that overcoming just one factor causing poverty may not be sufficient to free the poor from deprivation, NEEDS seeks to attack poverty from all angles at once. For this reason, the NEEDS plan earmarked various instruments and

interventions to protect vulnerable groups that includes the rural/urban poor, women, youths and children (NEEDS, 2005). In fighting against poverty, NEEDS is only one among various interventions designed by the Nigerian government. For two decades, 1982 to 2002 the government had about 37 poverty eradication programmes (Tomlison, 2002). Example of the programmes include: Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRR), People's Bank, Better Life Program (BLP), Family Support Programme (FSP) and the National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP) among others. These programmes achieved less as poverty remains high in the country.

The Zamfara State Government also made some contributions and effort to reduce poverty from the year 1996 to 2010. Examples of these efforts include: Zamfara Poverty Alleviation Program (ZAPA), Youths Agro-Business Scheme, among others. It appears, therefore, that Nigerian government and that of Zamfara State poverty reduction programmes are not making much impact in improving the quality of life of the country's poor. This is because at list 68% of the State citizens are living below poverty line (World Bank, 2013). A number of reasons for this include poor targeting, misplaced priorities, inadequate funding and employing a top-down non participation approach (Ajakaye, 2002). The introduction of the Zamfara State Skills Acquisition Programme (ZASSAP) has made people optimistic about reduction of poverty efforts of government in the State. The programme which is seen as vocational education was designed to prepare beneficiaries into vocation or upgrade others for employment. It is the education which is necessary for effective employment in a career. Vocational education is the education that can be given to persons of different ages. It is given to those who are in school and those out in the labour market. As a Vocational education, the programme is oriented toward the acquisition of practical skills; hence training should be on real jobs and not on pseudo. The Zamfara State Skills Acquisition Programme is specially designed for vocational training that can be valued as educational occupation preparation.

The genesis of Zamfara State Skills Acquisition Programme (ZASSAP) can be traced to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1991) activities in Zamfara State, especially the setting up of some community-based skills acquisition Centre's under the Fifth Country Programme Circle Year 2000. Eight different trades that include: tailoring, knitting, general computer appreciation, auto mechanics, brick laying and carpentry, furniture making, and welding were then selected, and training conducted. This was aimed at helping the teeming unemployed youths in the State to become self-reliant. However, the adoption and signing of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the United Nation Millennium Summit 2000 to which Nigeria was signatory, was an unprecedented challenge by Zamfara State Government. Consequently, in the effort to meet the Millennium Development Goals of reducing extreme poverty, hunger and the empowerment of women, the UNDP initiation was emulated, sustained and improved upon by the Zamfara state government. This study is based on the premises that for any nation to develop socially, economically, politically and in any other spheres of human endeavor, there is the need to liberate the youths from poverty and this perhaps can be done through skills acquisition.

Statement of the Problem

Poverty is the greatest enemy of human happiness; it certainly destroys liberty and makes some virtue impracticable and other extremely difficult. Most often, it deprives peoples of good spirit and virtue because it is hard for an empty bag to stand upright. The universality of poverty as a cancerous worm that effect many nations in the world today has become a major issue of concern and research. In Zamfara State for instance, the establishment of ZASSAP by the State Government is aimed at providing training opportunity to the teeming unemployed youths irrespective of their educational background, gender, class or disability that will facilitate transformation of the economy and consequently reduce the level of poverty in the State and make the citizens self-reliant. Additionally, the programme aimed at creating an industrial community that could compete side by side with other States by training able young men and women in various occupational skills. The end products of this programme would be able to fend for themselves and create employment opportunities for others, thus reducing the rate of poverty in the state. As laudable as the programme is in the area of poverty reduction, it is not out of place to examine the extent to which its objectives have been achieved. It is on this note, that the current study examined the contributions of the Zamfara State Skills Acquisition Programme on poverty reduction among youths in Zamfara West Senatorial District.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the contributions of Zamfara State Youths Skills Acquisition Programme (ZASSAP) as an instrument for poverty reduction among youths in Zamfara West Senatorial District.

Specifically, the study wanted to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To examine the nature of the Zamfara State Skills Acquisition Programme in Zamfara West Senatorial District.
- ii. To examine the contributions of the Zamfara State Youths Skills Acquisition Programme on the socio-economic development of its participants in Zamfara West Senatorial District.
- iii. To examine the challenges facing the Zamfara State Youths Skills Acquisition Programme in Zamfara West Senatorial District?

Research Question

The followings were the research questions that this study provided answers to:

- i. What is the nature of the Zamfara State Skills Acquisition Programme in Zamfara West Senatorial District?
- ii. What are the impacts of the Zamfara State Skills Acquisition programme (ZASSAP) on the socio-economic development of its participants in Zamfara West Senatorial Districts?
- iii. What are the challenges facing the Zamfara State Skills acquisition Programme (ZASSAP) in Zamfara West Senatorial Districts?

Methodology

The research adopted Ex-post Facto design to assess the contributions of Zamfara State Youth Skills Acquisition Programme on poverty reduction among youths in Zamfara West Senatorial District. The design was adopted since the research explored not only the contributions of Zamfara Youth Skills Acquisition Programme to the participants but also the level at which poverty is reduced in Zamfara West Senatorial District with the intervention of the skills acquisition programme. As also asserted by Ajakaiye et al. (1999), is an ex-post facto type of design in which the researcher attempts to determine the cause or reason for implied differences in the behavior or characteristics of individuals and groups, in this design both the effect and the alleged cause(s) have already taken place, but the researcher only decides to study it in retrospect.

Population and sample size.

The sample size of 320 respondents in Zamfara West Senatorial District from Bakura, Mafara, Anka, Bukkuyum, Gummi and Maradun Local Government Areas with population of 1,900 graduates and 28 instructors was used as sample size. This is based on the concern of adequate representation which is also as expressed by Kreycie and Morgan (1971) Table of Determine Sample Size. The research instruments used for the study were primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources were structured questionnaires while the relevant official documents and literature served as secondary sources. These documents were sourced from Directorate of Skills Acquisition and Youth Empowerment, Gusau, Zamfara State. The two sets of questionnaires were: Youths Skills Acquisition Programme on Poverty Reduction Questionnaire for Programme Beneficiaries (YSAPPRQPB) and Youths Skills Acquisition Programme on Poverty Reduction Questionnaire for Instructors (YSAPPRQI). (YSAPPRQPB) was designed for skills acquisition programme beneficiaries. The questionnaire consists of two sections, namely Section A and Section B. Section A seeks to obtain personal data of the respondents (Graduates) of the skills acquisition programme. Section B contains questions which were on Likert Scale, showing Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD) and Disagreed (D). Questions in this section seeks details on the indicators of the contributions of the skills acquisition programme on poverty reduction and contributions of the Skills Acquisition Programme on the socio-economic status of the beneficiaries in Zamfara West Senatorial District. Subsequently, (YSAPPRQI) was the second questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed for Skills Acquisition programme Instructors in Zamfara West Senatorial District. The questionnaire had two (2) sections called Section A and Section B. Section A obtained the demographic data of the respondents and Section B sought for information on essential questions on the challenges facing the programme in Zamfara West Senatorial District. There were 8 questions on two scales of Yes and No. For ethical issues involved in research, in Section As of the questionnaires used, personal details like name were avoided. This was with a view to establishing anonymity of the respondents in responding to the questionnaires. There was an introduction in each of the questionnaires where the respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their responses that the responses will never be revealed to anybody and they were only to be used solely for the purpose of the study. Documents on the skills acquisition programme nature, trades/courses and the programme durations were collected from Directorate of Skills Acquisition and Youth Empowerment, Gusau, Zamfara State. These documents contain the nature of the skills acquisition programme, number of trades/courses, duration of each course, location of each center in the state and the figures of those youths trained in the programme from phase (1) that started in April 2004 to March, 2005 to phase vi in April, 2009- March, 2011 with 15,000 trained youths in the entire State.

Results

Table 1 Nature of Zamfara State Skills Acquisition Programme (ZASSAP) in the State.

| S/N | Trade | Duration | Center offering trade |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Tailoring | 6 Months | All Centers |
| 2 | Knitting | 3 Months | All Centers Except TMA 1. |
| 3 | General Compt. Appreciation | 6 Months | ANK, TMA, GMM, BKA, MRD, BKM etc. |
| 4 | Architectural Drafting | 12 Months | Only in Gusau 1. |
| 5 | Air Condition/Refrigerator Repairs | 12 Months | All Centers |
| 6 | Auto Mechanic (Petrol Engine) | 12 Months | ANK, TMA, AND GMM. |
| 7 | Auto Mechanic (Diesel Engine) | 12 Months | ANK, TMA, AND GMM |
| 8 | Auto Electrical /Battery Charging | 12 Months | ANK, TMA, GMM, BKM, and BKR. |
| 9 | Driver Mechanic | 12 months | All centers |
| 10 | Block laying/ Masonry | 12 months | All centers |
| 11 | Borehole Maintenance | 6 months | All centers |
| 12 | Tube Well Construction | 6 months | All centers |
| 13 | PUMBING and Mechanical Installation | 6 months | All centers |
| 14 | Carpentry and Furniture Making | 12 months | All centers |
| 15 | Welding | 12 months | All centers |
| 16 | Vulcanizing and Motor Bike repairs | 3 months | All centers |
| 17 | Domestic electrical course | 6 months | All centers |
| 18 | Home economics | 3 months | All centers |
| 19 | Embroidery (Kaftans Tatamis) | 6 months | All centers |
| 20 | Cap weaving | 6 months | All centers |
| 21 | Printing and Decorations | 6 months | All centers |
| 22 | Leather and Milling | 12 months | TMA AND GMM. |
| 23 | Sign Writing and Art | 12 months | TMA 1. ONLY |
| 24 | Photography/Video &Audio Prod. | 6 months | All centers |
| 25 | Hand Pump Maintenance | 6 months | All centers |
| 26 | Panel Beating | 12 months | All centers |
| 27 | Spray and Painting | 12 months | All centers |
| 28 | Shoes/ Bags Production | 6 months | GMM and TMA |
| 29 | Aquaculture | 6 months | BKA and TMA. |
| 30 | Creaming / pottery | 6 months | TMA,GMM and ANK |
| 31 | Local Leather Tanning | 6 months | All centers |
| 32 | Barbing | 3 months | All centers |
| 33 | Hair Dressing | 6 months | TMA and GMM |
| 34 | Elementary Surveying | 12 months | Gusau center only |
| 35 | Computer Repairs/Maintenance | 6 months | MRR, GMM and TMA |
| 36 | Electronics Repairs | 6 months | Gusau 1 only |
| 37 | GSM Repairs | 6 months | Gusau 1 only |
| 38 | Tinkering & Alum Pot Making | 6 months | All centers |
| 39 | Plant Operation | 12 months | Gusau &TMA. |
| 40 | Photo Publishing | 6 months | Gusau &TMA. |
| 41 | Printing | 12 months | Gusau center |

Source: (ZASSAP, 2014)

Table 1. indicated the list of Trades, Centers and the Duration of each programme. There were 41 different trades as indicated in the table above almost all the centers in the state the minimum duration was 3 months while the maximum was 12 months accordingly. More so, it was indicated that all the centers offered all the trades except for few such as Architectural draft, elementary survey, GSM & Electronics Repairs and printing that was offered at Gusau (1) center. The Zamfara state skills acquisition programme was organized ministry of youth's development and skills acquisition programme Gusau, in Zamfara State. There was 41 different trades or courses conducted in all the centers of the 14 Local Government of the states, each center has the capacity rate of 250 trainees as minimum and 700 trainees maximum while durations range from 3 months to 12 months yearly depending on the kind of skills. The Zamfara West Senatorial District consisting 6 centers located in the 6 local

governments in the zone that includes Gummi, Bukkuyum, Anka, Maradun, Bakura and Mafara with total capacity of 2100 trainees per program yearly. This shows that the scheme has capacity to provide occupational skills for the beneficiaries which can make them self-reliant economically and helps in reducing poverty in the state

Table, 2 Socio-economic Contribution of skills Acquisition Programme in Zamfara West Senatorial District.

| Opinion | SA/A | % | SD/D | % | Total | % |
|--|------|------|------|------|-------|-----|
| 1. Skills Acquisition Programme enabled me to secure job. | 273 | 85.3 | 47 | 14.7 | 320 | 100 |
| 2. Skills Acquisition Programme enabled me to increase my income. | 286 | 89.4 | 34 | 10.6 | 320 | 100 |
| 3. Skills Acquisition Programme has improved my professional skills. | 317 | 99.1 | 3 | 0.9 | 320 | 100 |
| 4. Skills Acquisition Programme has improved my productivity. | 318 | 99.4 | 2 | 0.6 | 320 | 100 |
| 5. Skills Acquisition Programme has enabled me to accept that I have a say in my family. | 274 | 85.6 | 46 | 14.4 | 320 | 100 |
| 6. Skills Acquisition Programme has improved my standard of living | 311 | 97.2 | 9 | 2.8 | 320 | 100 |
| 7. Skills Acquisition Programme has improved my human relations. | 318 | 99.4 | 2 | 0.6 | 320 | 100 |
| 8. Skills Acquisition Programme has developed in me self-confidence | 319 | 99.7 | 1 | 0.3 | 320 | 100 |
| 9. Skills Acquisition Programme has enabled me to reject the idea of redundancy. | 320 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 320 | 100 |
| 10. Skills Acquisition Programme has Reduced the level of unemployment in the state. | 301 | 94.1 | 19 | 5.9 | 320 | 100 |

Source: Field work, 2014

Interpretation

Table 2 shows the socio-economic effect of Skills Acquisition Programme in development activities of the State. The table shows that 85.3 % (i.e 273) respondents accepted that skills acquisition programme enabled them secure jobs while 14.7% (i.e 45) disagreed, 89.4 % (i.e 286) respondent agreed that the programme enabled them to increase their income but 10.6 % (i.e 34) disagreed. More so, 99.1 % (i.e 317) of the respondent agreed that skills acquisition programme improved their professional skills, 0.9% (i.e 3) respondents disagreed, 99.4 % (i.e 318) respondent agreed that skills acquisition programme has improve their productivity only 0.6% (i.e 2) respondent disagreed with such view. In addition, 85.6% (ie274) respondent agreed that the skills acquisition programme has enabled to them to accept that they have a say in their respective families while 14.4% (i.e 46) respondent disagreed on that view. Furthermore, 97.2 % (i.e 311) respondent agreed that Skills Acquisition Programmed improve their living standard, 2.8% (i.e 9) respondentdisagreed.99.4 %(ie.318) respondent agreed that the programme improved their human relation but0.6 % (i.e.2) respondent disagreed on that. 100 % (i.e 320) respondent agreed that Skills Acquisition Programme has enabled their families to embrace their idea in decision making. 100% (i. e 320) respondent unanimously agreed that Skills Acquisition Programme enable them to reject the idea of redundancy in their communities. Additionally, 94.1 % (i.e 301) respondent agreed that Skills Acquisition Programme reduced the level of unemployment while 5.9% (ie.19) respondent disagreed on that view.

Research Question Three

What are the challenges facing the Zamfara Youths Skills Acquisition Programme on Poverty Reduction among youths in Zamfara West Senatorial District? This research question was answered using percentages and results are presented in table 5 below.

Table 3 Skills Acquisition Program Instructors' views on the challenges facing the Programme in Zamfara West Senatorial Districts.

| Opinion | Yes | % | No | % | Total |
|---|-----|------|----|-----|-------|
| 1. Lack of adequate funding is negatively affecting skills acquisition programme. | 28 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 28 |
| 2. Lack of adequate government support is negatively affecting | 27 | 96.4 | 1 | 4.6 | 28 |

| | | | | | |
|---|----|------|---|-----|----|
| skills acquisition programme. | | | | | |
| 3. Lack of adequate community support is negatively affecting skills acquisition programme. | 27 | 96.4 | 1 | 4.6 | 28 |
| 4. Lack of adequate relevant is negatively affecting to skills acquisition programme | 28 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 28 |
| 5. Lack of adequate qualified instructors is negatively affecting Skills Acquisition Programme | 21 | 75 | 7 | 25 | 28 |
| 6. Lack of adequate training facilities is negatively affecting Skills Acquisition programme. | 28 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 28 |
| 7. Lack of monitoring and supervision is negatively affecting Skills Acquisition Programme. | 21 | 75 | 7 | 25 | 28 |
| 8. Lack of adequate staff training and development program, is negatively affecting skills acquisition programme. | 28 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 28 |

Sources: Field work 2014.

Interpretation

Table 3. Indicated, the result that Skills Acquisition Programme instructors view on the challenges faced in the implementation of Skills Acquisition Programme in Zamfara West Senatorial District. The table shows that 100% (i.e 28) of the respondents confirmed that inadequate funding constitutes a problems of Skills Acquisition Programme. Also, 96.4% (i.e 27) of respondents confirmed that lack of adequate Government support is a problem of Skills Acquisition Programme while only 4.6% (i.e1) respondent disagreed. 100% (28) of the respondents collectively confirmed that lack of adequate relevant materials is problem to skills acquisition programme. Also, 75 % (21) respondent agreed that lack of qualified instructors constitutes a problem to the skill acquisition programme while, 25% (i.e. 7) disagreed on that view. 100% (i. e. 28) of the respondent unanimously agreed on the opinion that lack of training facilities was a problem to skill acquisition programme in Zamfara West Senatorial District. 75 % (i.e. 21) respondents agreed with opinion that lack of monitoring and supervision constitutes a problem to skills acquisition programme while 25% (i.e. 7) of the respondents disagreed with the view. In the similar development 100% (i.e 28) of the respondents unanimously agreed with the opinion that lack of adequate staff training and development programme constitutes a problem in the skills acquisition programme. Therefore, the table 4.9 indicated that inadequate funding materials, training facilities and staff training and development opinion with 100 % (i.e 28) instructors confirmed as the major problems in the Skills Acquisition Programme in Zamfara West Senatorial Districts.

Discussion of Findings

The findings on research question one showed that Zamfara State Youths Skills Acquisition programme (ZASSAP) has capacity to empower the beneficiaries economically as it nature provides opportunities for the beneficiaries to learn different occupational skills in Zamfara West Senatorial District. Normally, skill acquisition programme is usually provided to avail the target group opportunities to acquire employable skills either to work for others or for themselves. This finding is consistent with that of Solomon (2007) who acknowledged the potential of vocational skill programme in providing occupational skills and competence for the beneficiaries.

The findings on research question two showed that the Zamfara State Skills Acquisition Programme indicators of contributions on poverty reduction are: financial strength, wealth creation, job creation, occupational skills and economic self-reliance. There is a positive agreement as shown in the results on the indications that the programme has indicators for poverty reduction. This is consistent with the finding of Dickson et al (2008) that skills acquisition has been recognized as important opportunities for job and wealth creation, economic empowerment and poverty reduction, as it results in an immeasurable way towards creating new jobs, income generation and poverty reduction for both public and private sectors. Therefore, skills acquisition as part of Adult Education Programme should be given more considerations by the government and investors for it potentials on personal and national development. Additionally, Okeri and Ezeji (1988) in Dauda et al. (2011) emphasized that when young ones are equipped with requisite skills the following benefits are guaranteed: financial and psychological security, employers receive productive workers, society continuously receive supply of productive skilled labor and quality goods, there by alleviating poverty. For that, the programmes surely have demonstrated capacity for poverty reduction.

The result on research question three shows that the Skills Acquisition Programme has positively contributed to the socio-economic development of people in Zamfara West Senatorial District. The respondents indicated that the knowledge they acquired from the programme have affected on their personnel development, improved their standard of living as well as the economy specifically in terms of acquiring various occupational skills. This corroborated the Federal Government of Nigeria National Policy on Education (2004), that Vocational Adult Programmes are organized to bring about the acquisition of knowledge and improvement of

skills acquired to solve socio-cultural, economics, community and political problems among others. The broad philosophy of Adult Education is not only to bridge formal and non-formal education provision, but generally to inculcate relevant values, functional skills and literacy to adults in order to make them self-reliant and functional member of their society. Thus, Ojo-Ajibare (2002) argued that Vocational Adult Education Programme tends to create room for socio-economic development of the participants as they could embark on income generation activities. Uwaifo (2009) also acknowledged that Vocational Adult Education Programme develops not only the practical skills but also improve attitude and habit that make the recipient more creative, more innovative and more resourceful.

The findings on the research question four show that the challenges facing the skills acquisition programme in the state were lack of adequate funding, lack of government and community support, lack of adequate learning equipment, lack of instructional materials, lack of qualified skilled instructors and lack of adequate staff development. These problems have negatively affected the skill acquisition programme. This is consistent with the assertion made by Aderinoye (2005) where he stated that the preferential treatment of the formal education with the attendant large budgetary allocations and policy implementation has created dichotomy between formal and non-formal. This no doubt that the programme would have achieved better that it did if all the necessary supports were provided. According to Okorie (2001) that stated that Vocational Education and Training is necessary and indispensable for poverty reduction if frequently and perfectly implemented in fighting against poverty. Therefore, the state government should act urgently to overcome the problems of funding, material and professional skilled instructors specifically with knowledge on Adult Education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Zamfara Youth Skills Acquisition programme has potential for poverty reduction among youth in Zamfara West Senatorial District. The programme has positively contributed to poverty reduction efforts in the state as youths have become self-reliant economically, job and wealth creators in their respective communities and shunning political thuggery. It can be concluded that the Zamfara Youth Skills Acquisition programme can serve an important vehicle for poverty reduction.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Since the programme has potential for poverty reduction it should be sustained by incorporating the beneficiary communities in its management and financial supports. This will require the Government to involve the community from the beginning and seeking their supports at all levels. If this happens the programme can be sustained as people will carry it as theirs.
- ii. Since the programme has indicators of contributions on poverty reduction such as financial strength, wealth creation, job creation, occupational skills and economic self-reliance it should be extended to other parts of the state where it is not currently covered with the view to alleviating poverty in the state. And that government should improve the programme through finding positive way of converting the programme to a highly competitive programme with other state; create many ways of improving such knowledge acquired by the youths to higher level.
- iii. The findings in the research question three indicated the effect Zamfara State Skills Acquisition Programme have on socio-economic development activities in the Zamfara West Senatorial District by securing jobs, increasing income generation among youths, improving professional skills, improving productivity, improving standard of living, improving human relation among youths, development of confidence, becoming responsible and rejection of redundancy among youths. Since the programme improved the standard living of the participants, it was recommended that the programme should be used as way of unemployment control of the youths in the state. Special consideration and reinforcement should be given much attention to the skills acquisition programme.
- iv. The findings in research question four pointed out the major challenges facing the implementation of the Skills Acquisition Programme in the Zamfara West Senatorial District such as insufficient financial support from the State Government or stakeholders, lack of job security lack of family support, transportation problems, insufficient allowances for the trainees, attitudes of the instructors to trainees, lack of enough training equipment and first aids materials, lack of qualified skilled instructors constitutes major problems on the programme. Therefore it was recommended that various levels of Government such as Federal, State and Local Governments should provide a certain percentage in the yearly budgets for the support of the Skills Acquisition Centers for continuity of the programme and also State Government should provide jobs to each graduate, create public awareness through media so that citizens can be well informed on the importance of

the programme, provide sufficient allowances to the trainees for motivation, recruit more qualified professionals and constant induction training for the instructors to improve their attitude toward training programme.

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ADULT AND HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARS

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