

Impact of Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (Sure-P) on Poverty Alleviation among Youth in Gombe State, Nigeria

Solomon Timothy, Danladi Hamis, Rejoice Joshua

Department of Public Administration, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.802099>

Received: 30 January 2024; Accepted: 06 February 2024; Published: 15 March 2024

ABSTRACT

Youths are said to be strong and ardent thereby forming the productive age of the society and as such, they are likely to cause social vices when in poverty or when not employed. Gombe state have had an increasing number of people living with poverty according to the World Poverty Clock, 2021, this has made the Federal and Gombe State government to introduce different programmes in order to reduce the level of poverty. This study assesses the impact of Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment programme in poverty alleviation among youth in Gombe state. Data were obtained from secondary and primary sources. The research utilizes both structured questionnaire and interview as instruments for data collection. The population of the study includes 596 beneficiaries of Sure-P under the Graduate Internship Scheme and Technical Vocational Education and Training in Akko, Billiri and Dukku Local Government areas of Gombe state. The sample size of the study is 239 obtained using Yamane formula. Data were analyzed descriptively and inferentially. The descriptive statistics include percentage, frequency and tables. The inferential tool is multiple regression which was used to test the hypotheses. This test was carried out at 5% level of significance. The study revealed that Sure-p has a positive impact on income generation there by leading to poverty alleviation among youth in Gombe state. The study therefore concludes that sure-p has positive impact on the youth and has led to poverty alleviation among them.

Keywords— Subsidy; Income; Youth; Empowerment; Poverty

INTRODUCTION

The best way to understand youth is as a transitional stage between childhood's reliance and adulthood's independence. Youth is therefore a more fluid category than other established age groupings. However, age is the most straightforward method to categorise this group, especially when it comes to employment and education, as "youth" is frequently used to refer to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory school and landing their first job^{1,2}. Without regard to different definitions by Member States, the United Nations defines 'youth' for statistics purposes as people between the ages of 15 and 24. However, the definition that uses the 15–24 age cohort as youth fairly serves its statistical purposes for assessing the needs of the young people and providing guidelines for youth development. This definition of youth may change with circumstances, especially with changes in demographic, financial, economic, and socio-cultural settings.^{1,2}. Youth is described by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as "a period of transition from dependence of childhood to independence of adulthood." Youth is defined as a socially constructed category defined by societal expectations and responsibilities,^{1,2}. As a foundation for the definition of youth, this term leans heavily on social conceptions of responsibility. Some of these definitions lean heavily towards using age as the defining characteristic. However, nations are free to categorise youth according to their own characteristics. There are many age groups that various multilateral organizations and nations define as youth. While the African Youth Charter classifies persons between the ages of 15 and 35 as youth, the UNFPA, WHO, and UNICEF classified a youth as someone between the ages of 15 and 24. Gombe state.

had 35% more youth than its overall population in 2010 according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2012)⁴. According to reports, the majority of these young people are living in poverty. For instance, from 2004 to 2010, unemployment was a significant issue affecting the state's youth, leading to an upsurge in militancy, violent crimes, kidnappings, restlessness, and socially inappropriate behaviours. Few youth in Gombe State who received formal education were idle due to a lack of employment opportunities, a lack of job skills, and a lack of entrepreneurial skills. In order to survive and as a way of protesting what they perceive to be the neglect of their own life, desperation can lead many people to live beyond the law.^{3,5}

Low levels of individual income are one of the ongoing causes of poverty among youngsters in Gombe State, which is rising despite initiatives to eradicate it. Low income has the knock-on effects of low investment, low demand, and poor supply. Gombe State's youth are not only business-minded, but also extensive farmers, particularly of beans, maize, rice, sorghum, bambara nuts, groundnuts, and sesame seeds which are basic raw materials that are in high demand by industries both inside and outside the state, but for which they receive little to no government support.⁵

According to the World Bank's 2014 report on the Nigerian economy, there are still plenty of barriers to entrepreneurship. As a result, the Nigerian government continues to find it difficult to create jobs, and Gombe state is no exception. Active entrepreneurial operations will lower poverty, raise the standard of life, and lower the rate of youth poverty, which would minimise social vices' ability to spread throughout the Gombe state.^{5,6.}

Youths are thought to be powerful and ardent, making them the creative age of society. As a result, when they are poor or unemployed, they are more prone to commit social vices, which has prompted the Gombe State government to implement several schemes such as Empowerment Programme for Women and Youth (EPWY), Gombe Goes Green (3G) among others to lower the degree of poverty. Similarly, enormous efforts have been made over the years to combat the threat of youth poverty through programmes that reduce poverty, such as the rehabilitation of violent youths known as "Yan Kalare" and training them to become marshals to support security personnel in the state. The threat of rising youth poverty rates in Gombe State must be seriously addressed, as must other issues that are connected to poverty or poverty indicators. The provision of high-quality education, entrepreneurship training, and a reliable healthcare delivery system should be the focus of efforts. The Gombe State Government must borrow from comparable poverty-eradication programmes available in other developing nations. In Nigeria, the government is using projects to reduce poverty as a means of reviving and rebuilding the economy. Due to the high percentage of poverty in the nation, poverty alleviation policies have become crucial policy options over the years, with varied degrees of success. The National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), The Seven-Point Agenda, SURE-P, and most recently the N-power are all examples of poverty alleviation programmes that have been implemented by several governments in the nation to combat the problem of poverty. The question of how much these activities have helped the poor or how much they have actually succeeded in doing to lower Nigeria's poverty rate has not yet been addressed.⁹

SURE-P is one of the many initiatives carried out in Nigeria to reduce youth poverty. In order to justify the usage of the partially removed subsidy on Petroleum Motor Spirit (PMS), the federal government created the Subsidy Reinvestments and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) in 2012. The Federal Government created it with the intention of investing the subsidy funds on projects divided into various components.

The programme includes: Social Safety Net, Niger Delta Development Project, Road Infrastructure Projects, Rail Transport Projects, Water and Agricultural Projects, Selected Power Projects, Petroleum NNPC Projects, and ICT Projects Components. The campaign was designed to assist Nigerians in adjusting to the impact of the increase in fuel prices on their daily lives. Maternal and child health care, community services, employment for women and young people, urban mass transportation, vocational development,

and graduate internship programmes are some of the areas that were given priority in the Social Safety Net (SSN) component of the strategy.^{7, 8, 11, 12}

In light of this, this study examines the impact of Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) on poverty alleviation among youth.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study adopted survey method and data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The researcher made use of the beneficiaries' checklist which include their phone numbers as obtained from Gombe state ministry of Youth empowerment upon presentation of letter of introduction from the school as well as approval letter obtained from the ministry. The primary data was obtained through the distribution of structured questionnaire to the 239 beneficiaries from the three selected local government areas for the study. The questionnaire was designed based on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) where respondents were asked to identify their level of agreement to the questions asked. The questions were divided into sections that covered the research objectives and research questions. The questionnaire was divided into sections "A", "B", and "C". Section A, B, and C of the questionnaire addressed questions relating to the research objectives.

A total of 260 questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the selected local government. However, 243 were returned while 239 were used for the study. The administration of the questionnaire was conducted with the help of six research assistants, two from each of the selected local government areas for the study who were trained toward achieving the desired objectives of the research.

The state desk officer from Gombe state Ministry of Youth Empowerment and the local government officers of Akko, Dukku and Billiri local government areas who implemented the programme were interviewed. The interview was conducted upon presentation of letter of introduction to the officers and approval of convenient time by the officers. The researcher strictly observed Covid 19 protocols through the use of face mask, hand sanitizer and maintaining social distance.

Study Design: Survey research design

Study Location: This study was carried out in three selected local government areas, one each from the three senatorial district of Gombe state namely: Akko, Billiri and Dukku.

Study Duration: 2020 to 2023.

Sample size: 300 patients.

Sample size calculation: The study used the sample field formula for sampling provided by Yamane (1967) to identify the appropriate total respondent. The formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(0.05)^2}$$

Where

n = the sample size

N = the total population

e = the level of precision

Given the population for this study will be 596.

$$n = \frac{596}{1 + 596(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{596}{1 + 596(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{596}{1 + 1.49}$$

$$= \frac{596}{2.49}$$

$$n = 239$$

The sample for the study comprise of 239 beneficiaries of the Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS) and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) which was drawn from the three local government areas selected from the three senatorial districts of the State. The stratified sampling was adopted and simple random sampling was used to select 84 respondents from Akko, 74 from Dukku and 81 from Billiri local Government area making a total of 239 respondents while the state desk officer and the three local government officers who implemented the programme were interviewed.

Subjects & selection method: The target population of this study is the beneficiaries of Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme in Akko, Dukku and Billiri Local Government areas under the Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS) and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET). According to Gombe State Ministry of Youths Empowerment record, there were 596 beneficiaries under Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS) and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Akko, Dukku and Billiri Local Government Areas. Therefore, the target population of the study is 596.

PROCEDURE METHODOLOGY

The data was analyzed using descriptive of mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics of multiple regression analysis. The data was presented based on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), Undecided (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5). The descriptive of mean and standard deviation analysis was used in answering the research questions. A mean score of 3.00 serve as a cut-off point for decision making. A mean score of 3.0 and above was agreed, while a mean score below was disagreed. The hypothesis was tested using simple regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data was analyzed using SPSS version 20. The hypothesis was tested using simple regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance Simple Regression Analysis Model is shown as follows:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1$$

Where,

Y = Dependent variable (i.e., Skill orientation, Income generation and Entrepreneurial ability)

a = Intercept

B₁ = Coefficient

X_1 = Independent variable (Sure P)

Therefore,

$$R = \frac{\sum xy - n \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{\sum x^2 - nx^2}}$$

RESULT

Table 1: Impact of SURE-P on Income Generation among youth in Gombe State.

STATEMENT	SD	DA	UD	A	SA	MEAN	SD	R
SURE-P helped me to be self-reliant	1	12	21	95	106	4.24	0.845	Agreed
	-0.40%	-5.00%	-8.80%	-41.40%	-44.40%			
SURE-P helped me to collect monthly stipend	2	13	28	118	78	4.08	0.857	Agreed
	-0.80%	-5.40%	-11.70%	-49.40%	-32.60%			
SURE-P helped me to meet my basic needs	7	14	25	118	75	4	0.959	Agreed
	-2.90%	-5.90%	-10.50%	-49.40%	-31.40%			
SURE-P helped me to improve on my income	2	18	20	108	91	4.12	0.911	Agreed
	-0.80%	-7.50%	-8.40%	-45.20%	-38.10%			
SURE-P helped me to pay my bills	3	19	19	121	77	4.05	0.913	Agreed
	-1.30%	-7.90%	-7.90%	-50.60%	-32.20%			

Source: Field survey, 2021.

Table 1 indicates that 44.4% strongly agreed that SURE-P helped them to be self-reliant, likewise 41.4% agreed with that, 5.0% on the contrary disagreed and 0.4% strongly disagreed that SURE-P has helped them to be self-reliant while 8.8% were undecided as to whether SURE-P has helped them to be self-reliant. 32.6% and 49.4% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that SURE-P helped them to collect monthly stipend, 0.8% and 5.4% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively that SURE-P made them to collect monthly stipend while 11.7% were undecided. Similarly, the table also reveal that 31.4% and 49.4% strongly agree and agreed respectively that SURE-P helped them to meet their basic needs, while 2.9% and 5.9% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively that SURE-P helped them to meet their basic needs, in the same way 10.5% were also undecided. The table further indicate that, 38.1% and 45.2% strongly agreed and agreed that SURE-P helped them to improve on their income, 0.8% strongly disagreed, and 7.5% disagreed with the claim that SURE-P helped them to improve on their income while 8.4 remain undecided.

Correspondingly, the table shows that 32.2% and 50.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that SURE-P helped them to pay their bills, 1.3% strongly disagreed and 7.9% disagreed that SURE-P helped them to pay their bills but 7.9% remained undecided.

Table 1 revealed the mean and standard deviation of responses on the impact of SURE-P on income generation among Youth in Gombe State. The table revealed that the items have a mean score of 4.36, 4.14,

4.18, 4.19 and 4.15 with a corresponding standard deviation as shown on the table. The result implied that SURE-P has helped the youths to be self-reliant, collect monthly stipend, meet their basic needs, improve on their income and also pay their bills.

In an interview with the state desk officer on the effect of sure-p on income generation among youth in Gombe state, the officer emphasized on the laudable contribution of sure-p in income generation among youth. The officer further attest that the programme has helped many youths get monthly stipend thereby giving them the opportunity to establish their enterprise. More so, the officer affirms that after the internship programme over 300 interns were given permanent appointment with different ministries. In the words of the state desk officer.

Sure-p has helped beneficiaries by engaging them as professionals in various organizations which has helped to reduce their poverty. The programme has improved beneficiaries' income because not less than 300 interns were retained by various ministries and organization, we can say that the programme has achieved its objectives in poverty reduction because many of the beneficiaries were either retained or they have established their enterprise.

Furthermore, Akko local government Sure-p officer said that:

Yes, Sure-p has improved beneficiaries' income. The only problem is the length or period of the programme though the little stipend earned at the end of the month helped some of the beneficiaries to develop other sources of income by investing.

In the words of Billiri local government Sure-p officer.

Yes, Sure-p was a good programme and has relatively improve beneficiaries income in such a way that during the programme, the beneficiaries were given stipend but I am not so sure if the beneficiaries were able to sustain that after the programme has been scrapped.

Likewise, Dukku local government Sure-p officer was of the view that sure-p has improved beneficiaries' income. According to the officer.

The programme temporarily contributed to income generation among youth this is because the little stipend they earned was not enough for them to invest and as such only but a few that have utilize the opportunity to improve their income.

The words of the state desk officer and the local government officers further portray the significance and effect of sure-p in income generation among youth in Gombe state. The findings shows that the respondents view agree with the words of the sure-p officer.

Table 2: Employed Sure-P Beneficiaries in different Ministries in Gombe State

S/No	Cadre	Number	MDA
1	Information officer II	7	– Ministry of information
			– SEMA
			– House of Assembly
2	Technical officer	7	– Ministry of information
	– Electrical		– Ministry of water resources
	– Water resources		
	– Mechanical		

3	Cameraman	2	Ministry of information
4	Data processing	37	– Ministry of Economic Planning
			– SEMA
			– Ministry of information
5	Computer Analyst	10	Accountant General office
6	Art production Officer	2	Ministry of information
7	Statistician	42	– Ministry of information
			– Ministry of economic planning
			– House of Assembly
8	Planning officer II	37	– ministry of environment
			– Ministry of information
			– House of Assembly
			– Ministry of economic planning
9	Art Production Officer	2	Ministry of Information
10	Audio Visual Officer	2	Ministry of Information

Source: Gombe State Ministry of Youth Development, 2021

From table 2 above, some of the beneficiaries of subsidy reinvestment and empowerment programme were employed after their internship based on available vacancies in Gombe state ministries. As indicated in the table seven (7) beneficiaries were given opportunity as information officer II in the Ministry of Information, SEMA and House of Assembly, seven (7) as technical Officer, two (2) as Cameraman, 37 Data processing officer, 10 as computer analyst, 2 as art production officer, 42 as statistician, 37 as planning officer II, 2 as are production officer and audio Visual Officer. This can be said to have translated into improved income of the beneficiaries. The secondary data agree with the respondents’ view on the impact of sure-p in income generation among youth in Gombe State. Similarly, the data agree with the views of the Sure-p key informant interviewed.

Simple Regression Results of Hypothesis two

Table 3: Contingency table on SURE-P and Income Generation in Gombe State

STATEMENT	SD	DA	UD	A	SA	MEAN	SD	R
SURE-P helped me to be self-reliant	1	12	21	95	106	4.24	0.845	Agreed
	-0.40%	-5.00%	-8.80%	-41.40%	-44.40%			
SURE-P helped me to collect monthly stipend	2	13	28	118	78	4.08	0.857	Agreed
	-0.80%	-5.40%	-11.70%	-49.40%	-32.60%			
SURE-P helped me to meet my basic needs	7	14	25	118	75	4	0.959	Agreed
	-2.90%	-5.90%	-10.50%	-49.40%	-31.40%			
SURE-P helped me to improve on my income	2	18	20	108	91	4.12	0.911	Agreed
	-0.80%	-7.50%	-8.40%	-45.20%	-38.10%			

SURE-P helped me to pay my bills	3	19	19	121	77	4.05	0.913	Agreed
	-1.30%	-7.90%	-7.90%	-50.60%	-32.20%			

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4: Computation table on SURE-P and Income Generation in Gombe State

S/N	X	Y	X ²	Y ²	XY
1	201	13	40,401	169	2,613
2	196	15	38,416	225	2,940
3	193	21	37,249	441	4,053
4	199	20	39,601	400	3,980
5	198	22	39,204	484	4,356
Total	987 =197.4	91 =18.2	194,871	1,719	17,942

Source: Field Survey, 2021

$$r = \frac{\sum xy - n \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2 - nx^2)(\sum y^2 - ny^2)}}$$

$$r = \frac{17942 - 5 \times 197.4 \times 18.2}{\sqrt{194871 - 5 \times 197.4^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{17942 - 17963.4}{\sqrt{194871 - 194833.8}}$$

$$r = \frac{-21.4}{37.2}$$

$$r = -0.58$$

Decision: The result of Hypothesis two indicates that the direction of relationship between Sure-p and income generation among youth in Gombe State is inversely related. Thus, the null Hypothesis is rejected. We therefore conclude that Sure-p has contributed to income generation among youth in Gombe State which translates into poverty alleviation.

DISCUSSION

Evidence from the review findings suggests that Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) has significant impact on skill orientation among youths in Gombe State, it was revealed that most of the respondents agreed that SURE-P has helped the youths with relevant skill for job market, professional skills, and make them to be self-reliant as well as improved their income and as such contributed to poverty alleviation among youth in Gombe state. The findings of this study were in agreement with those of Namadi and Aliyu (2017), who concluded that the Subsidy Reinvestment Programme (SURE-P) was successful in offering resources, training, and support for developing vocational skills. In response to the cries of Nigerians, the President on 13 February, 2012, inaugurated the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) to reinvest the Federal Government’s share of the savings arising from the reduction of subsidies on petroleum products into programmes and initiatives that would go a long way to ease the pain of subsidy removal and create a better life for Nigerians, such as

creating employment for the youths. The results of this study also support the findings of Saibi (2016), which found a connection between the beneficiaries' poverty level and the Community Services Scheme, Graduate Internship Scheme, Vocational Skills Training Scheme, and SURE-P at 95% level of significance.

The findings also concurred in the area of increase in income generation. The study revealed that SURE-P has helped the youths to be self-reliant, collect monthly stipend, meet their basic needs, improve on their income and also pay their bills. It furthermore agreed with Namadi and Aliyu (2017) on the importance of Sure-p in providing beneficiaries with entrepreneurial aptitude through vocational skills and by being attached to diverse organisations. The plan increased their socioeconomic activity and helped them become self-reliant. The results, however, conflicted with Okeke and Anthony's (2017) assertion that the program's recipients have not developed a sense of independence. The results also contradicted Ukeame (2015), who claimed that Nigeria's subsidy reinvestment and empowerment initiative had little effect on the country's ability to create jobs. However, the beneficiaries of the programme concur that it has led to increase in the acquisition of skills necessary for the labour market; this suggests that SURE-P makes a significant short-term contribution to reducing poverty. It has been found that re-structuring and continual improvement of programmes aimed at reducing poverty through increased capital spending on community, social, and economic services as well as superior governance would reduce poverty in Gombe State and throughout Nigeria. The study differed with Okonkwo (2015)'s study, which found that government measures to reduce poverty in the south-east region had little to no effect.

The results of the study concurred with those of Fayemi (2012), whose conclusion indicated that government involvement in the design and execution of youth empowerment initiatives would significantly lessen the suffering of young people. The results are in line with those of Saibi (2016), who looked at the effectiveness of the SURE-P Programme with the primary goal of figuring out how it becomes a successful programme for empowerment leading to the reduction of poverty in Taraba State. It demonstrates that the beneficiaries' poverty level and the Community Services Scheme, Vocational Skills Training Scheme, and Graduate Internship Scheme of SURE-P have a beneficial association. The results, however, do not correspond with the findings of the study by Martha, Sophia, and Wenibowei (2019), which claim that SURE-P deployment did not significantly reduce unemployment. Although it has the potential to lower youth unemployment, it has not been executed well. As a result, it has failed to achieve the objectives for which it was started.

CONCLUSION

Base on the discussion above, this study concludes that Subsidy reinvestment and empowerment programme has significantly contributed to income generation among the youth in Gombe state thereby leading to poverty alleviation.

REFERENCES

1. UN (2013). Economic Development in Africa Report 2013: Intra-African Trade: Unlocking Private Sector Dynamism. United Nations: New York and Geneva
2. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2013).
3. Saibi, H.D (2016) Subsidy Re-Investment and Empowerment Programme (Sure-P) As a Strategy for Poverty Reduction in Selected Local Government Areas of Taraba State (2012-2014) unpublished Dissertation submitted to the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Master of Science Degree in Policy and Development Studies
4. National Bureau of Statistics, (2012). National Baseline Youth Survey. Abuja: NBS Publishers
5. Usman S. & Sule B. (2020) Poverty in Gombe State: Causes, Manifestations and Strategies of Alleviation. Britain International of Humanities and social science Journal.

6. World Bank (2014). End extreme poverty, promote shared prosperity: Main Report. World bank annual report Vol 1
7. Namadi, M. M & Aliyu, M. A. (2017). An Appraisal of the Impact of Subsidy Reinvestment Program (SURE-P) on Women Empowerment in Kaduna State. *International Journal of Social & Management Sciences*, Madonna University (IJSMS) Vol.1 No.1, March 2017; pg.14 – 21
8. Ukeame, A. C. (2015). Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) and Employment Generation in Nigeria, 2012–2014. Unpublished project report submitted to the Department of Political Science, faculty of social sciences, university of Nigeria, Nsukka in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Science (M.Sc.) in political science (Political economy).
9. Okonkwo, O. N (2015). Critical Review of Poverty Reduction Programme in Nigeria: Evidence from South-East Zone. *IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance (IOSR-JEF)* Volume 6, Issue 6. Ver. I (Nov. – Dec. 2015), PP 32-43.
10. Fayemi, J. A. (2012). Youth Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation: The Experience in Nigeria's Ogun State *JORIND* 10 (2), June, 2012. Pp.131-135.
11. Martha, Sophia and Wenibowei (2019) Implementation Challenges of the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) on Youth unemployment in Nigeria. *Academy of Social Science Journals* ISSN: 2456-2394. Vol 4 issue 11
12. Nwosu, O.C (2014). Challenges of Subsidy and Reinvestment Programme (SURE-P) Towards Youth Employment in Nigeria 2012-2014. *Journal of Public Policy*, 1 , 2