



Performance Evaluation of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in Nigeria (2012 – 2021)

¹OBILOR, Ezezi Isaac & ²ASINYE-IGONI, Rhoda

^{1,2}Department of Educational Foundations

Faculty of Education, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

¹E-mail: Isaac.obilor@ust.edu.ng; ²E-mail: Rhoda_asinye@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The study evaluated National Directorate of Employment (NDE) on employment status in Nigeria from 2012 to 2021. The evaluation research design was employed. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. An accessible population of 1200 NDE staff and applicants was taken from the six Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria, out of which two States were sampled from each Zone, hence 291 was used as the sample size with the help of Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table. The multi-stage sampling technique was used in choosing the respondents. Both NDE staff and applicants were interviewed and coded using a 4-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). The results revealed that, National Directorate of employment has not done enough in combating mass unemployment in 2012 to 2021; NDE has not established enough work programme policy in Nigeria; and finally revealed NDE does not have what it takes to maintain data bank on employment and vacancies as a clearing house for linking job seekers in Nigeria. It was recommended that; in order to combat mass unemployment, NDE should embark on more entrepreneurial sensitization campaign across the nation; their work policies should be such that will be accessed by every individual within the environs of these States; and to be proactive in their assigned duties.

Keywords: Directorate, employment, evaluation, performance, sensitisation.

INTRODUCTION

The worldwide economic depression of the early 80's caused a rapid detonation in the Nigeria economy. Industrial output shrank to an all-time low and commercial activities were consequently reduced, leading to less employment opportunity for millions of Nigerians. By the end of 1985 the unemployment situation in Nigeria, had reached desperate alarming proportions. In the urban areas where the educated tends to concentrate the unemployment rate was very high. The youth and graduates were the hardest hit of all in employed Nigerians, ranging upwards to over 3 million as at that time, three, quarters were less than 25 years of age with growing joblessness, there was growing despondency among youths and their parents (Calderon & Severn, 2010).

The various tiers of government, Federal, State and Local government were left with no option but to proffer solution through the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and Volunteer Service Scheme (VSS) by the Federal Government of Nigeria aimed at backward integration maintenance culture and self-reliance in food production and certain basic manufactured goods. But, the effort of these agencies was not good enough as to what it was created for. The National Directorate of Employment is a Nigerian government agency established over 34 years ago with a mission statement to design and implement job creation programmes that will promote attitudinal change, employment generation, reduce poverty, and enhance wealth generation.

According to Fashoyim (1988), the scheme is expected to make people employable and self-employed as means of tackling the problem of manpower under-utilization (youth and graduate employment as well as rural under-employment). Supporting the above view Aderinto (1989) revealed that the National Directorate of Employment provides training opportunities, guidance, and finance to the unemployed for the creation of jobs through its Vocational Skills Development Programmes (VSDP) and other special employment programmes. The programme was designed to provide opportunity for the acquisition of marketable skills by jobless school leavers and other youths. But, over the past three decades, the employment situation has deteriorated in most parts of Nigeria; especially Rivers State has suffered a high and persistent unemployment coupled with the growing concern of low pay, unimplemented civil servant steps, and reduced employment prospects of skilled workers. Economics undergoing a transition from central, planning to a market economy have been overwhelmed by the rapid emergence of mass unemployment.

The International Labour Organization (ILO, 1995) pointed out that the number of jobs seekers continues to mount or increase especially during the covid-19 era. This has led to growing unemployment and deteriorating employment conditions for a significant proportion of the labour force in many of these countries, which Nigeria is not an exception. Ojo (1997) revealed that the National Directorate of Employment's micro business enterprise programme (MBEQ) is aimed at inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship, creativity and self-reliance into the mind of Nigerian graduates of universities and polytechnics and retired people. The scheme is executed through loans provided by banks or from fund provided by the Federal Government Nigeria.

Unemployment and poverty have been addressed as a global phenomenon, especially in Africa and continents such as Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean (Ilori, 2014). In Nigeria, there is a continual increase in poverty and unemployment rate which is alarming and resulted to socio, political and economic crisis. According to Subair (2013), unemployment rate in Nigeria is at 22%, while youth unemployment rate is 38% and about four million people enter into the labour market every year after graduation from institutions of higher learning. Unemployment, according to International Labour Organisation (ILO), is among the biggest threats to social stability in many countries (including Nigeria) putting the global rate at 12.6% (ILO, 2012).

The mass unemployment of qualified and able-bodied men and women has generated much concern all over the world. International Labour Organization (2012) noted that despite the rapid recovery in the global economy that took place in 2010, following two years of severely adverse labour market conditions, global unemployment remained elevated in 2010. According to ILO (2011), the number of unemployed stood at 205 million (6.2%) in 2010. The above scenario propels Nigerian government like other nations' governments around the world to take some practical steps towards alleviating unemployment.

However, in spite of the frantic efforts towards the eradication of this phenomenon, it is sad to know that the Nigerian economy continues to experience increase in unemployment rate. Lack of employment opportunities in Nigeria has resulted in poverty, in turn poverty leads to alienation of poor people from political-economic functioning of the society. Lack of employable skills is no doubt, a major contributing factor to the problem of unemployment world over, and especially in Nigeria. This is so because, the educational system operated at post-independence era in the country placed emphasis on liberal education rather than acquisition of vocational skills, which prepare the individual for better employment opportunities. In other words, the then system focused on and produced school leavers and graduates without vocational skills that could enable them to be self-reliant (Adebisi & Oni, 2012). The subsequent increase in population, as Adebayo (2006) observed, necessitates establishment of more schools and higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. This in turn produces school leavers and graduates, whose numbers are always on the rise year after year without commensurate provision of employment opportunities both in the public and private sectors. Adebayo (2006) further said that the primary and secondary schools in Nigeria had been rapidly expanded and student's enrolment in higher institutions had almost tripled in the last two decades, the question there is that, what is their fate after graduation?

The philosophy of NDE is self-enterprise, which emphasizes self-employment and self-reliance in preference to wage employment. This philosophy is pursued through policy planning and well-articulated programmes of Rural Employment Promotion (REP), Vocational Skills Development Programme (VSD), Special Public Work Programme (SPW) and Small Scale Enterprise (SSCE) Programme. These programmes are set up across the nation in an effort to alleviate unemployment crises in the nation.

The National Directorate of Employment policy is based on the new National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) complemented by State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) at the State level and Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy LEEDS at the Local Government level. This policy envisions Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMSE) subsector that can deliver maximum benefits of employment generation, wealth creation, poverty reduction and growth of the Nigerian economy (Ilori, 2014). Its mission was to enhance the contribution of SMEs to national output, employment and poverty reduction and build the SME sub sector as a solid foundation for the competitiveness, growth and sustainability of the Nigerian economy. The National Directorate of Employment has, since its establishment, ensured the sustainability of its programme towards the policy which included small scale enterprise programmes, entrepreneurial development programmes, and vocational education through skills acquisition development programme, through partnership with other government agencies on apprenticeship (Ezeanya, 2011).

The establishment of NDE zonal offices across the nation and offices in each State of Nigeria has ensured sustainability of the various programmes. However, much is still expected in order for the programme to be successful because recognizing that the success of SME policy depends on the activities and interactions of many relevant actors like NDE and other stakeholders. The SME policy is to provide an overall framework of action as a guide for well-focused, harmonious and coordinated programming by the NDE.

According to Adepegba (2010), the NDE has registered a good number of unemployed youths who applied for its skill acquisition and job training scheme. It was proposed that the beneficiaries will be attached to master craftsmen in various vocations for the duration of their training. This training was geared toward empowering the beneficiaries to become self-reliant, and employed. Training is very germane to the acquisition of technical/vocational skills. Dike (2009) observed that vocational education and job training programmes have been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of its impact on human resource development, productivity and economic growth. Training, according to Coombs (2003), is a scheme designed to generate expertise or skills needed to perform a particular job or series of jobs. Vocational education is designed to offer training to improve individuals' general proficiency, especially in relation to their present or future occupations (Dike, 2009). Training is to educate, teach, change the behaviour and make people acquire new knowledge and new skills. Training also teaches people to change their attitudes, and inspire thinking, creating and learning to learn. Training is generally through practical exposure, either informally by practical exposure to job, or in formal institutions established for the purpose of providing exposure to required skills (Ogbimi, 2006). Training imparts an individual with skill required to function profitably in a particular job. A skill could be said to be an action required in order to perform a task that involves coordination of body movements. Armstrong (2003) believed that training and capacity building for both men and women are key priorities for poverty reduction in order to address lack of appropriate skills and capacity both within the private and public sectors. The bane of unemployment has been lack of technical/vocational skills that are relevant to the modern and technologically advanced world by most Nigerian graduates and school leavers. Dike (2009) lamented that Nigeria is lagging behind in preparing her workforce for the challenges of the rapidly changing global economy. To curb this menace, vocational/technical education must be reprioritized in the country's educational system. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004) defined technical education as the aspect of education, which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. Technical education is a planned programme of courses and learning experiences that begin with exploration of career options, support basic academic and life skills and enable achievement of high academic standards, leadership, preparation for industry, defined work, and continuing education (Dike, 2009). Okoro (1991) defined vocational education as any

form of education whose primary purpose is to prepare persons for employment in recognized occupations. He further stated that vocational education provides the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for effective employment in specific occupations.

Hence, the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) was established in November 1986 with the following objectives:

1. To combat mass unemployment through skills acquisition, self-employment and labour-intensive work schemes.
2. To establish policies aimed at developing work programmes with labour intensive potentials.
3. To obtain and maintain data bank on employment and vacancies in the country with a view to act as a clearing house to link job seekers with vacancies in collaboration with other government agencies.
4. To implement other policies as may be laid down from time by the established board under sections of the enabling Act.

Since unemployment is dynamic in these forms and patterns, regular innovative strategies are required to tackle it effectively. To this end, any other innovation can be effectively situated within the frame work of any of the four major areas of intervention. All the various employment creation programmes of the NDE are designed to provide training in critical skills required to make an employed person either employable or to become self-employed (Clempton, 2012). Emphasis is placed on self-employment as against paid employment in order to stimulate entrepreneurship and wealth creation. To support this concept, the Directorate provides demonstrative soft loans to outstanding beneficiaries of its various programmes. This study is being undertaken with the above issues in mind, especially as it relates to the role of National Directorate of Employment and unemployment rate in Nigeria.

In evaluating NDE in Nigeria from 2012 to 2021, it was necessary to conceptualized evaluation and its models. Evaluation is a process that critically examines a programme. Evaluation according to Oguniyi (1999) is a quantitative measure of the prevailing situation which calls for effective evidence, suitability, or goodness of the programme. Evaluation models either describe what evaluators do or prescribe what they should do. There are many evaluation models such as: Kirkpatrick's four-levels model of evaluation, Robert Stake (1967), Provus' model, CIPP model, Tyler's model and so on. But, this study anchored on Tyler (1949) evaluation model. According to Dike (2016), Tyler is the originator of the "objective-based model" with well specified objectives which serve as programme standard. He further stressed that during evaluation, all that an evaluator need or should do, is to determine the extent to which these strategies are being used. Though, the bottom purpose of evaluation is to determine the extent to which objectives are being achieved (Dike, 2016). Tyler's ideas for programme evaluation are summarized in the following ways:

- i. The first step is to evaluate programme objectives, this connote with the extent to which NDE has combated mass unemployment in Nigeria.
- ii. Secondly, these objectives have to be classified based on the domains of knowledge such as cognitive (intellect), affective (emotion), and psychomotor (skill), and showcase how much the programme has impacted her participants.
- iii. The ability can best be achieved through the use of formal inquiry technique (research instrument, written or oral interview).
- iv. Finally, the evaluator gives the outcome of the study through recommendation.

Therefore, Tyler's "objective based model" was found most appropriate for this study.

Statement of the Problem

The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) was established in 1987 as a manpower development agency to combat mass unemployment through the establishment of work programme policies with labour intensive potentials, as well as employment related objective such as creating employment opportunities for self-employment, and enhancing employability by means of appropriate training in Nigeria. The scheme is expected to make people employable and self-employed as means of tackling the problem of manpower under youth and graduate employment as well as rural under-employment. Further, the National Directorate of Employment is to provide training opportunities, guidance, and finance to the

unemployed for the creation of jobs through its vocational skills development programmes (VSDP) and other special employment programmes. But, the reverse is the case in the six geo-political zones of the country, since democracy in 1999 till date. The results are very high level of insecurity; many industries winding up while others are relocating to places outside the country; decrease in productive management; and one out of every 10 people of working age not able to find a decent paying job.

Since the economic down turn, the signs of poverty have grown stronger, wages have failed to keep pace with inflation, with the result that very few Nigerians are well-off today as against the position in time past. The few income earners have become increasingly squeezed, while others are targets to kidnappers. Many unemployed school leavers, graduates and retired but not tired people who could have started off with micro business enterprise cannot easily source fund to start a business on their own due to lack of collateral. Also lack of proper skills by the school leavers and graduates for self-reliance compounded their inability to start a business without undergoing further basic skill acquisition training programmes. It is against this backdrop that the researcher intends to evaluate the performance of National Directorate of Employment in Nigeria, using Tyler's evaluation model.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the performance of the National Directorate of Employment in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the extent to which NDE has combated mass unemployment in Nigeria between 2012 and 2021.
2. Find out the extent to which NDE has established work programme policy in Nigeria between 2012 and 2021.
3. Verify the extent to which NDE has maintained data bank of employment and vacancies as a clearing house of linking job seekers in Nigeria between 2012 and 2021.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study

1. To what extent has NDE combated mass unemployment in Nigeria between 2012 and 2021?
2. To what extent has NDE established work programme policy in Nigeria between 2012 and 2021?
3. To what extent has NDE maintained data bank of employment and vacancies as a clearing house of linking job seekers in Nigeria between 2012 and 2021?

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation research design was employed for the study. This is common research design that entails carrying out a structured assessment of the value of resources committed to a project or specific goal. The study was carried out in Nigeria with a total population of 1200, out of which 291 was fixed as sample size with the help of Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Table. The multi-stage sampling technique was used in choosing the respondents. Information was elicited from NDE staff through a structured interview schedule with 4-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). The research questions were answered using simple percentages.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Question 1: *To what extent has NDE combated mass unemployment in Nigeria?*

Table 1: Percentage Response on the Extent to which NDE has Combated Mass Unemployment in Nigeria.

S/No.	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total
1.	National Directorate of Employment is directly in charge of employment in Nigeria.	0	25 (8.6%)	100 (34.4%)	166 (57%)	291 100%
2.	NDE organizes skill acquisition scheme on yearly basis in Nigeria.	0	0	135 (46.4%)	156 (53.6%)	291 100%
3.	The NDE skills acquisition scheme is capable of eradicating poverty.	90 (31%)	90 (31%)	60 (20%)	51 (18%)	291 100%
4.	NDE skill acquisition programme is open to all job seekers in Nigeria.	70 (24%)	46 (16%)	88 (30%)	87 (30%)	291 100%
5.	Nigeria has very low percentage of unemployed youth in Nigeria.	0	0	100 (34%)	191 (66%)	291 100%
Aggregate Percentage scores		11%	11%	33%	45%	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From Table 1, item 1 revealed that National Directorate of Employment is not directly in charge of employment in Nigeria, with 8.6% high extent, 34.4% low extent and 57% very low extent. Item 2 showed that NDE does not organized skill acquisition scheme on yearly basis in Nigeria with percentage response of 46.4% low extent and 53.6% very low extent. Item 3 revealed that NDE skill acquisition scheme is capable of eradicating poverty with percentage response of 31% very high extent, 31% high extent, 20% low extent and 18% very low extent. Item 4 demonstrated that NDE skill acquisition programme is not open to all job seekers in Nigeria with the following percentage responses; 24% very high extent, 16% high extent, 30% low extent, and 30% very low extent. In item 5 respondents disagreed with the fact that Nigeria has very low percentage of unemployed citizens in with percentage response of 34% low extent and 66% very low extent. In other words, Nigeria has high rate of unemployment with an aggregate percentage scores of 11% very high extent, 11% high extent, 33% low extent and 45% very low extent, it can be reasonably concluded that the National Directorate of Employment has not done enough in combating mass unemployment in Nigeria from 2012 to 2021.

Research Question 2: *To what extent has NDE established work programme policy in Nigeria?*

Table 2: Percentage Response on the Extent to which NDE has Established Work Programme Policy in Nigeria.

S/No.	Item	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total
6.	NDE has succeeded in replacing retirees with new staff on yearly basis in Nigeria.	0	0	50 (17%)	241 (83%)	291 100%
7.	I am a beneficiary of NDE policy in Nigeria.	10 (3%)	20 (7%)	130 (45%)	131 (45%)	291 100%
8.	I have people who are now self-reliant as a result of the NDE policy.	20 (7%)	20 (7%)	150 (51%)	101 (35%)	291 100%
9.	Looking at the NDE policies, I believe it's on right direction to tackle unemployment and poverty	150 (52%)	51 (18%)	45 (15%)	45 (15%)	291 100%
10.	NDE has the power to recommend a job seeker to any company in Nigeria.	15 (5%)	45 (15%)	180 (62%)	51 (18%)	291 100%
Grand Percentage scores		13%	9%	38%	39%	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In Table 2, item 6 indicated that NDE has not done much in terms of replacing retirees with new staff on yearly basis in Nigeria, with percentage responses of 17% low extent and 83% very low extent. Item 7 showed the percentages of NDE beneficiaries from 2012 to 2021 in Nigeria as 3% very high extent, 7% high extent, 45% low extent, and 45% very low extent. Item 8 revealed the actual number of persons that are now self-reliant based on NDE policies with percentage responses of 7% very high extent, 7% high extent, 51% low extent and 35% very low extent. Item 9 showed the actual number of respondents that believed the fact that NDE policy is on the right direction to tackle unemployment and poverty in Nigeria with the following percentage responses; 52% very high extent, 18% high extent, 15% low extent, and 15% very low extent. Item 10 showed the actual position of NDE in recommending job seeker to any company in Nigeria with percentage responses of 5% very high extent, 15% high extent, 62% low extent and 18% very low extent. Therefore, with aggregate percentage scores of 13% very high extent, 9% high extent, 38% low extent and 39% very low extent, it is obvious that NDE has not established enough work programme policy in Nigeria between 2012 to 2022.

Research Question 3: *To what extent has NDE maintained data bank of employment and vacancies as a clearing house for linking job seekers in Nigeria?*

Table 3: Percentage Response on the Extent to which NDE has Maintained Data Bank of Employment and Vacancies as a Clearing House for Linking Job Seekers in Nigeria.

S/No.	Item	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total
11.	NDE has the exact percentage of employed and unemployed rate in Nigeria.	20 (7%)	31 (11%)	200 (68%)	40 (14%)	291 100%
12.	NDE work based on the vacancies in Nigeria.	10 (3.4%)	10 (3.4%)	120 (41.2%)	151 (52%)	291 100%
13.	Companies and State parastatals always consult NDE before recruitment.	0	0	200 (68%)	91 (32%)	291 100%
14.	One cannot be recruited without being cleared by NDE.	0	0	75 (25%)	216 (75%)	291 100%
15.	NDE has linked a good number of job seekers to multinational firms.	95 (33%)	51 (18%)	75 (25%)	70 (24%)	291 100%
Grand Percentage scores		9%	7%	45%	39%	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 3 showed in item 11 that NDE did not have the exact percentage of employed and unemployed rate in Nigeria with the following percentage responses of 7% very high extent, 11% high extent, 68% low extent and 14% very low extent. Item 12 revealed that NDE does not actually carry out their research based on available vacancies in the country with percentage responses of 3.4% very high extent, 3.4% high extent, 41.2% low extent, and 52% very low extent. Item 13 indicated that Companies and State Parastatals do not consult NDE before recruitment with the following percentage responses: 68% low extent and 32% very low extent. Item 14 disagreed with the fact that one must be cleared by NDE before securing a job in Nigeria with the following percentage responses: 25% low extent and 75% very high extent. Item 15 has shown the extent to which NDE has linked a good number of job seekers to multinational firms in Nigeria with the following percentage responses: 33% very high extent, 18% high extent, 25% low extent and 39% very low extent. Hence, with an aggregate percentage response of 9% very high extent, 7% high extent, 45% low extent and 39% very low extent, it is clear that NDE did not maintain data bank of employment and vacancies as a clearing house for linking job seekers in Nigeria between 2012 and 2022.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research question 1 has shown that National Directorate of Employment has not done enough in combating mass unemployment in Nigeria for the 2012 to 2021. This is as a result of high unemployment rate in Nigeria which is alleged to be one the highest in the world. According to Fashoyim (1988), the scheme is expected to make people employable and self-employed as means of tackling the problem of manpower underutilization (youth and graduate unemployment, as well as rural under-employment), but the reverse is the case in Nigeria.

Research question 2 made it clear that that NDE has not established enough work programme policy in Nigeria, and which is why there is high level of kidnapping, oil theft, among others as a means to make earnings meet. Ilori (2014) stressed that unemployment and poverty have been addressed as global phenomena, especially in Africa and other areas such as Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean. In Nigeria, there is a continual increase in poverty and unemployment rate which is alarming and resulted to socio, political and economic crisis. While, Subair (2013) opined that unemployment rate in Nigeria is at 22%, youth unemployment rate is 38% and about four million people enter the labour market every year after graduation from institutions of higher learning.

Research question 3 revealed clearly that NDE did not have what it took to maintain data bank on employment and vacancies as a clearing house for linking job seekers in Nigeria for the period of 2012 to 2021, which is why there is no known percentage of applicants in the country. International Labour Organization (2011) noted that despite the rapid recovery in the recession that took place in 2010, following two years of severe adverse labour market conditions, unemployment in Nigeria has remained elevated. According to ILO (2011) the number of unemployed stood at 205 million (6.2%) as at 2010 in Africa. The above scenario propelled Nigerian government and other nations around the world to take some practical steps towards alleviating unemployment which ended up as a failure.

CONCLUSION

The outcome of the study has clearly shown the weakness of National Directorate of Employment as a mediating agency. The type of job training programme they offered to people and the criterion for their beneficiaries are chosen. Also, the study revealed that lack of detailed data bank on employment status is another confronting factor that the NDE is facing from inception till now. There is no doubt, that the NDE needs a complete overhauling of its personnel for a quick remedy in programme and process of operation for the betterment of the Nigerian Nation.

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. In order to combat mass unemployment, NDE should embark on more entrepreneurial awareness campaign across the States.
2. Their work policies should be such that will be accessed by every individual within the environs of Nigeria.
3. For NDE to be proactive in their assigned duties, they must maintain an accurate data bank on employed and unemployed applicants in the country.

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