Journal of Community & Communication Research
ISSN: 2635-3318
Volume 6, Number 2, December 2021
Accessible at: https://jccr.sccdr.org.ng

EFFECT OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SCHEME ON BENEFICIARIES IN OSUN STATE

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ABSTRACT
The study examined the effect of Youth Empowerment Scheme on beneficiaries in Osun State. The specific objectives were to: ascertain the level of participation of beneficiaries in OYES activities and ascertain the livelihood outcomes of participation in OYES activities. Purposive and multi-stage random sampling techniques were employed to select 180 respondents from three senatorial zones for the study. Primary data were collected with the aid of structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and mean scores, while ordinary least square regression analysis was used to test the null hypothesis at 5% level of significance. The result revealed that re-orientation training ($\bar{x}$ = 3.93), OYES multimedia ($\bar{x}$ = 3.63), make up ($\bar{x}$ = 3.46) and O'Money ($\bar{x}$ = 3.25) were some of the OYES activities that recorded high level of participation. The result also revealed that increased income ($\bar{x}$ = 3.53), increased well-being ($\bar{x}$ = 3.47) and provision of employment ($\bar{x}$ = 3.43) were some of the livelihood outcomes of participation in the OYES activities. The analysis revealed that participation in OYES activities had significant positive effects on increased income (2.286), employment provision (2.685) and increased wellbeing (2.393). The study concluded that participation in OYES activities resulted into notable livelihood outcomes such as increased income, increased well-being, provision of employment, reduced vulnerability/risks, enhanced social status and food availability. The study therefore recommended that OYES be sustained and expanded for continued promotion of employable skills, value orientation and leadership training aimed specifically at empowering beneficiaries for sustainable livelihoods.
Keywords: Effect, participation, youth, scheme, beneficiaries

INTRODUCTION

Youth development and empowerment are vital stages in life for building the human capital that allows young people to avoid poverty and live a better, and possibly have a more fulfilling life. In Nigeria, the Federal and State governments have initiated several programmes and policies aimed at reducing the level of poverty among the masses including youths. Udensi, Daasi, Emah and Zukbee (2013) noted that youth represent a vast and untapped resource for immediate and long term development efforts. Kuti (2006) also posited that youth empowerment programmes were generally aimed at helping the youths realize their creative and productive energies to achieve sustainable growth and improvements in their socio-economic conditions. In view of these, the Osun State Youth Empowerment Scheme (OYES) was inaugurated in 2010 by the Osun State Government. The broad mandate of OYES is to empower youths by equipping them with positive work ethics and culture, thus making them employable or employers of labour, with respect for

the environment (Badejo, Agunyai and Adeyemi, 2015). OYES also has the following aims; to help channel the lateral potential young people into productive social and economic activity, whilst at the same time being mindful of their current livelihood conditions and capabilities, to restore sense of community, individual, self-esteem and worth to our youth who were selected impartially as pioneer members, to create a moral and ethical overhaul by remolding the value of our youths towards making them pursue honour and integrity/virtuousness and to give the candidates entrepreneurship opportunities through new skills training.

Furthermore, in all intent and purposes, OYES aims at creating a bridge to unemployment by equipping young men and women with positive work ethics and culture, self-sustenance, resourcefulness and respect for the environment. The design is to develop youth with character and competence infusing in them honour and integrity in life, civic responsibility, correct life attitudes, self-confidence, improved skills, handwork, probity, discipline, leadership and loyalty (Shiyanbade *et al.,* 2017). The effect of OYES on the target beneficiaries (youths) in the study area is still apparently unknown, hence the study. The specific objectives were to: ascertain the level of participation of beneficiaries in OYES activities and ascertain the livelihood outcomes of participation in OYES activities.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Osun State which is one of the States in Southwest Nigeria. It covers a total land mass of approximately 9, 251 square kilometers with a total population of 4,981, 243 million persons in 2018 projected from the 2006 census figures (Oladeji, Olaore and Fapojuwo, 2017). Multi-stage sampling procedure was employed in selecting respondents for the study. In the first stage, the three senatorial districts (Osun West, Osun East and Osun Central) were purposively selected because OYES activities were carried out in all the senatorial districts in the State. The second stage involved the random selection of three (3) LGAs in each of the selected senatorial districts which gave a total of nine (9) local government areas. In the final stage, the list of registered youths was obtained from the OYES secretariats in the selected local government areas from which there was a random selection of twenty (20) registered youths that were beneficiaries of OYES activities as respondents for the study. This gave a sub-total of twenty (20) respondents for each local government area and sixty (60) respondents for each senatorial district. This gave a grand total of one hundred and eighty (180) respondents for the study. Data collected through structured questionnaire were analyzed with descriptive statistics, while multiple regression was used to test the hypothesis.

Level of participation of beneficiaries in the activities of Osun Youth Empowerment Scheme in the study area was realized using mean scores. Data were generated by presenting the respondents with items rated on a four-point rating scale, which was based on the question options of: always = 4, occasionally = 3, rarely = 2 and never = 1. The options were quantified as 1, 2, 3 and 4. The mean of 1, 2, 3 and 4 equals 2.5 i.e. 1+2+3+4/4 = 2.5. For the purpose of decision making, an upper limit was established. The upper limit was thus 2.5 + 0.05 = 2.55. Hence, the cut-off point of 2.55 as the upper limit was used to determine a positive response. Livelihood outcomes of youths' participation in the activities of Osun Youth Empowerment Scheme was realized by presenting the respondents with items rated on a three-point rating scale, which was based on the question options of: 'high' = 3; 'moderate' = 2 and 'low' = 1. The options were quantified as 1, 2 and 3. The mean of 1, 2 and 3 equals 2.0 i.e. 1+2+3/3 = 2.0. For the purpose of decision making, an upper limit was established. The upper limit was thus 2.0 + 0.05 = 2.05. Items with mean scores above 2.05 were regarded as having high livelihood outcomes as a result of youth participation in OYES activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Participation of Beneficiaries in the Activities of Osun Youth Empowerment Scheme

The result in Table 1 shows that re-orientation training ($\bar{x}$ = 3.93), OYES multimedia ($\bar{x}$ = 3.63), make up ($\bar{x}$ = 3.46), O'Money ($\bar{x}$ = 3.25), OJENCO ($\bar{x}$ = 3.31), Ijinle tailoring ($\bar{x}$ = 3.08), barbing ($\bar{x}$ = 2.93), hair dressing ($\bar{x}$ = 2.88) and ICT ($\bar{x}$ = 2.72) were some of the mean responses of beneficiaries on their level of participation in the activities of OYES. These mean ratings were above the bench mark mean score of 2.55. This implied that had high level of beneficiaries' participation in the study area. This could be attributed to the interests of the beneficiaries in these activities. This finding is similar to those of Popoola and Ajayi (2016).

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on the level of participation of beneficiaries in the activities of Osun youth empowerment scheme

S/N	Participation items	Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Mean	Rmks
1	Re-orientation training	167(92.8)	13(7.2)	0(0)	0(0)	3.93	High
2	O'Money	67(37.2)	97(53.9)	10(5.6)	6(3.3)	3.25	High
3	OYES multimedia	124(68.9)	46(25.5)	10(5.6)	0(0)	3.63	High
4	Leventis foundation	35(19.4)	24(13.3)	25(14.0)	96(53.3)	1.99	Low
5	Palm oil processing	24(13.3)	26(14.4)	32(17.9)	98(54.4)	1.87	Low
6	Palm kernel oil processing	32(17.8)	28(15.6)	38(21.1)	82(45.5)	2.06	Low
7	OJENCO	84(46.7)	68(37.7)	28(15.6)	0(0)	3.31	High
8	Omoluabi care givers	44(24.4)	84(46.8)	26(14.4)	26(14.4)	2.81	High
9	Ijinle tailoring	66(36.6)	72(40.0)	32(17.8)	10(5.6)	3.08	High
10	Ijinle laundry	60(33.3)	104(57.8)	12(6.7)	4(2.2)	3.22	High
11	Barbing	50(27.8)	81(45.0)	35(19.4)	14(7.8)	2.93	High
12	Hair dressing	55(30.6)	76(42.2)	22(12.2)	27(15.0)	2.88	High
13	Make-up	96(53.3)	72(40.0)	10(5.6)	2(1.1)	3.46	High
14	Autocare	42(23.3)	50(27.8)	33(18.3)	55(30.6)	2.44	Low
15	ICT	57(31.6)	55(30.6)	28(15.6)	40(22.2)	2.72	High
	Grand mean score					**2.91**	**High**

Source: Field survey data, 2020. Key: ≥ 2.55 = high level of participation; < 2.55 = low level of participation; figures in parenthesis = percentages; figures outside parenthesis = frequency

Livelihood Outcomes of Beneficiaries' Participation in the Activities of Osun Youth Empowerment Scheme

The result in Table 2 reveals that increased income ($\bar{x}$ = 2.36), increased well-being ($\bar{x}$ = 2.47), provision of employment ($\bar{x}$ = 2.68), reduced vulnerability/risks ($\bar{x}$ = 2.27), enhanced social status ($\bar{x}$ = 2.53) and food availability ($\bar{x}$ = 2.34) were the mean responses of beneficiaries on the livelihood outcomes of participation in the activities of OYES. These mean ratings were above the bench mark mean score of 2.05. This implies that respondents agreed that participation in OYES activities resulted into notable livelihood outcomes such as increased income, increased well-being, provision of employment, reduced vulnerability/risks, enhanced social status and food availability. Abefe-Balogun (2015) notes that OYES is a voluntary and interventionist community services organization with the following aims; to help channel the lateral potential

young people into productive social and economic activity, whilst at the same time being mindful of their current livelihood conditions and capabilities, to restore sense of community, individual, self-esteem and worth to our youths, to create a moral and ethical overhaul by remoulding the value of our youths to make them pursue honour and integrity/virtuousness, and to give the candidates entrepreneurship opportunities through new skills training/acquisition. This finding is in tandem with that of Ndamu (2017) who reported that sampled youths in Adamawa State were better off in-terms of income (91.5%), engaged in more sustainable entrepreneurial ventures (84.0%) and owned businesses (81.1%) as a result of their participation in government empowerment programmes.

Table 2 Distribution of respondents based on livelihood outcomes of beneficiaries' participation in the activities of Osun Youth Empowerment Scheme

S/N	Items on livelihood outcomes	High	Moderate	Low	Mean	Remark
1	Increased income level	90(50.0)	65(36.1)	25(13.9)	2.36	High
2	Improved the household wellbeing	102(56.7)	61(33.9)	17(9.4)	2.47	High
3	Reduced vulnerability/risks	85(47.2)	59(32.8)	36(20.0)	2.27	High
4	Increased employment opportunities	132(73.3)	39(21.7)	9(5.0)	2.68	High
5	Enhanced my social status	113(62.8)	50(27.8)	17(9.4)	2.53	High
6	Improved food availability	82(45.6)	77(42.8)	21(11.6)	2.34	High
	Grand mean score				**2.44**	**High**

Source: Field survey data, 2020. Key: ≥ 2.05 = high livelihood outcome; < 2.05 = low livelihood outcome; figures in parenthesis = percentages; figures outside parenthesis = frequency

Hypothesis Testing

Effect of participation in OYES activities on selected livelihood outcomes

The result of the test on the hypothesis that there was no significant effect of participation in OYES activities on selected livelihood outcomes was presented in Table 3. Specifically, re-orientation training had significant positive effects on increased income (2.298)**, provision of employment (2.685)***, wellbeing (4.415)*** and enhanced social status (2.896)*** at 5% and 1% significance levels respectively. This implied that an increase in the level of youth participation in re-orientation training results in a corresponding increase in youths' capacities for income generation, enhanced social status, increased wellbeing and provision of employment. Similarly, youth participation in multimedia had significant positive effects on provision of employment (3.278)*** and increased income (2.929)*** at 1% significance level. Youth participation in ICT also had significant positive effects on provision of employment (2.256)** and increased income (2.286)** at 5% significance level. This implies that an increase in the level of youth participation in multimedia and ICT results in a corresponding increase in their capacities for gainful employment and income generation. Furthermore, youth participation in make-up had significant positive effects on provision of employment (4.315)***, increased wellbeing (2.113)**, food availability (2.157)** and income generation (2.393)** at 1 and 5% significance levels. This implies that an increase in the level of youth participation in make-up results in a corresponding increase in their capacities for provision of employment, enhanced food availability and general wellbeing. This finding is in tandem with those of Inyang and Asa (2020) who reported that enhanced food security status of participants was one of the benefits derived from the YES-O scheme in Oyo State. The result further reveals that youth participation in tailoring had significant positive effects on increased wellbeing (2.886)*** and increased income (2.725)*** at 1% significance level. Youth participation in O'Money also had significant positive effects on increased wellbeing (2.389)** and increased income (3.423)*** at 5% and 1% significance levels respectively. This implies that an increase in the level of youth participation in tailoring and O'Money results in a corresponding increase in their well-being and income generation. Umar

and Mohammed (2014) note that empowerment programmes have implicit potentials to improve the collective well-being of participants.

Table 3: Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression result of effect of participation in OYES activities on selected livelihood outcomes

Variables	Increased income (LN)	Wellbeing (EXP)	Employment provision (DL)	Enhanced social status (DL)	Food availability (SL)
(Constant)	2.469	2.191	1.216	4.615	1.709
	(2.721)***	(4.619)***	(2.434)**	(3.559)***	(3.728)***
Re-orientation	1.347	1.703	1.172	1.298	1.137
training	(2.298)**	(4.415)***	(2.685)***	(2.896)***	(2.832)***
O'Money	1.272	1.312	0.604	1.408	1.122
	(3.423)***	(2.389)**	(2.173)**	(2.931)***	(2.467)**
Multimedia	0.508	1.732	1.687	0.876	1.876
	(2.929)***	(2.874)***	(3.278)***	(2.311)**	(2.875)***
Leventis	0.542	-0.002	0.553	0.472	-0.040
	(1.433)	(-0.017)	(1.385)	(1.138)	(-0.443)
Palm oil	0.318	0.350	0.472	-0.991	0.635
processing	(1.257)	(0.574)	(1.126)	(-0.545)	(1.345)
Laundry	-1.445	0.419	1.185	1.634	0.298
	(-2.319)**	(1.365)	(1.866)*	(2.015)*	(2.726)***
Barbing	-0.606	0.240	0.674	-1.497	0.015
	(-1.240)	(1.602)	(1.308)	(-2.014)*	(0.147)
Make-up	0.543	0.223	2.317	0.835	1.874
	(2.393)**	(2.113)**	(4.315)***	(3.207)***	(2.157)**
Autocare	0.234	-0.203	1.486	0.835	0.206
	(1.393)	(-1.110)	(2.362)**	(1.610)	(1.942)*
ICT	0.342	1.774	1.873	0.638	1.735
	(2.286)**	(3.092)***	(2.256)**	(1.427)	(2.402)**
Tailoring	1.638	1.473	1.573	0.669	0.046
	(2.725)***	(2.886)***	(2.743)***	(2.043)**	(0.546)
R^2	0.725	0.706	0.737	0.695	0.741
Adj. R^2	0.712	0.683	0.705	0.674	0.728
F-statistic	5.411***	4.613	4.817	4.993***	5.334***

Source: Field survey data, 2020. NB: *, **, and *** is significant at 10%, 5% and 1% levels of probability respectively. Figures in brackets are t-values and + means lead equation. SL = Semi log model; DL = Double log model; EXP = Exponential model; L = Linear model.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that there was high level of youth participation in OYES activities such as re-orientation training, hair dressing, ICT, OYES multimedia, Ijinle tailoring, barbing, make up, O'Money and Omoluabi Au tocare. It further concluded that participation in OYES activities resulted into notable livelihood outcomes such as increased income, increased well-being, provision of employment, reduced vulnerability/risks, enhanced social status and food availability. The study thus recommended that the Osun Youth Empowerment Scheme should be sustained and expanded for continued promotion of employable skills, value orientation and leadership training aimed specifically at empowering beneficiaries for sustainable livelihoods

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