

The Impact of Promoters' Contribution to Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Programmes on Job Creation and Poverty Alleviation in Ondo State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The study assesses how entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Programmes (ESAPs) contribute to job creation and poverty alleviation in Ondo State, Nigeria. Specifically, determined the difference in the contributions of specific ESAPs by the promoters to job creation; juxtaposed the effect of specific ESAPs by the promoters on poverty alleviation; and ascertained the effect of job creation through ESAPs on poverty alleviation. In achieving the objectives of the study, cross-sectional case study, comparative multiple cases and quantitative descriptive survey research design were adopted. Data were collected using structured questionnaire which were administered to 160 respondents selected from 10 active ESAPs in Ondo State out of the 20 programmes that have existed from the inception of the State to 2021 to source the primary data for the study. The responses from the questionnaire administered were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools which included frequency table; descriptive analysis statistical tables with mean and standard deviation, Analysis of Variance and Scheffe's Pair wise multiple comparisons, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and regression to analyze the research questions and objectives. Analysis of Variance and Scheffe's Pair wise multiple comparisons tests were used to analyze H₀₁, Pearson Product Moment Correlation used to analyze H₀₂ (promoter types contribution is insignificantly different to poverty alleviation) and regression coefficient was used to analyze H₀₃ (job creation have no significant effect on poverty alleviation). The result indicated difference between the promoters and job creation shows significant differences in job creation among the three groups promoters (F_{2, 157}) = 5.149, p < 0.05). The contributions between promoters of specific ESAPs and poverty alleviation shows there was significant differences in the contributions among the 3 promoter groups (F_{2, 157}) = 8.365, p < 0.05). The result of relationship between job creation through ESAPs and poverty alleviation shows that job creation has significant influence on poverty alleviation with (β = 0.34, t = 4.545, p < 0.0005). The study concluded that the efforts of the promoters of specific Entrepreneurial skills Acquisition Programmes (investment, vocational and agriculture) have positive impacts on job creation in Ondo State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the contribution of Non-Governmental Organizations is more prominent in job creation therefore, the policy makers, Federal and State Governments should encourage more presence of genuine NGOS to contribute their mandate to job creation. The Federal and State Governments should ensure that adequate budgetary provisions are made to promote ESAPs to create more jobs and alleviate poverty.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Programmes, Job Creation, Poverty Alleviation.

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Research Paper

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INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains a global social problem, with 685 million people living in extreme poverty worldwide [1]. According to [2], in Africa, Nigeria has a significant

share of the extreme poor, with 490 million people living under the poverty line in 2021 [3]. Policies and programmes such as National Poverty Eradication Programmes (NAPEP), Social Welfare Scheme (SWS),

Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS), Ondo State Women Empowerment Programme (OWEP), Micro Finance Coordinating Scheme (MFCS), Capacity Enhancement Scheme (CES), Community Economic Sensitization Scheme (CESS), National Resources Development and Conservation (NRDC), Ondo State Wealth Creation Agency (WECA), and Ondo State Skills Acquisition Programme (OSSAP) have not adequately addressed this issue. Poverty alleviation is a purposeful attempt at ameliorating poverty levels, but it seems to be not reducing due to scaring statistics. Qualitative education is not within the reach of the poor, making life more unbearable for those struggling to educate themselves. Nigeria ranks 41st out of 181 countries with the highest unemployment rate, attributed to skills deficits among job seekers [4, 5]. Education goes beyond literacy and should develop minds for ingenuity and creativity.

Ondo State's total unemployment rate stands at 17.09%, challenging attempts to reduce poverty through lofty schemes, technical schools, skills acquisition centers, and entrepreneurship education. Factors such as poor planning, implementation strategies, lack of political will, pandemic, corruption, and diversification of funds have marred these schemes' success [6-8].

According to [8, 9], entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes aim to address entrepreneurial skill shortages by providing training investment programmes, agricultural programmes, and vocational programmes. These programmes aim to enhance competencies for self-reliance, improved economy, youth empowerment, and poverty reduction. However, the effectiveness of these programmes is doubted due to years of running poverty and high unemployment rates.

It thus imperative to empirically study an issue that has received massive concerns and efforts with little gains like this to change the narrative of entrepreneurial skills deficits and unemployment rate to alleviate poverty in Ondo State. If appropriate attention is not given, situation will remain or even worsen. It is against this backdrop that this study set out to examine how entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes contribute to job creation and poverty alleviation in Ondo State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to assess the impact of promoters' contribution to entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes on job creation and poverty alleviation in Ondo State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. Determine the difference in the contributions of specific ESAPs (Investment, Agricultural and Vocational) by the promoters (FGN, ODSG and NGOs) to job creation in Ondo State;

- ii. Juxtapose the effect of specific ESAPs (Investment, Agricultural and Vocational) by the promoters (FGN, ODSG and NGOs) on poverty alleviation in Ondo State; and
- iii. Ascertain the effect of job creation through ESAPs has on poverty alleviation in the State.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the investigation

- i. What is the difference in the contributions of specific ESAPs (Investment, Agricultural and Vocational) by the promoters (FGN, ODSG and NGOs) to job creation in Ondo State?
- ii. How has specific ESAPs (Investment, Agricultural and Vocational) by the promoters (FGN, ODSG and NGOs) alleviated poverty in Ondo State?
- iii. What are the of effects of job creation through ESAPs on poverty alleviation in Ondo State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses to which prominent attention is directed in the study are stated as follows:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the contribution of the Promoters (FGN, ODSG and NGOs) and job creation in Ondo State.

H₀₂: The contribution of the Promoters (FGN, ODSG and NGOs) to the specific ESAPs is not significantly related to poverty alleviation.

H₀₃: Jobs creation through ESAPs have insignificant impact on poverty alleviation.

Conceptualization of Terms

Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition Programme

His is to mean a well-designed procedure or process of acquiring new ways and methods of carrying out specialized functions.

Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition Programme (Investment, Agricultural and Vocational):

These are the categories of entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes that are by nature to create jobs in the areas of investment, agricultural and vocational activities, where the promoters or providers of the programmes major in for contribution to job creation and poverty alleviation.

Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition Programme (Agricultural)

This nature of programme is provided by the promoters where the participants are trained majorly on agricultural activities, processes and methodologies and introduce them to viable types of agricultural activities and businesses they embark upon through the the skills gained. The promoters therefore, empowers the participants in various means for business startups and to reduce poverty and create employments.

Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition Programme (Investment)

This nature of programme is provided by the promoters where the participants are trained purposely on investment processes and methodologies which introduces them to viable types of investment activities they can venture into through the skills gained from the programmes. The promoters of the programmes therefore, empowers the participants for business startups for job creation and to alleviate poverty.

Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition Programme (Vocational)

This nature of programme is provided by the promoters where the participants are trained majorly on vocational programmes that will introduce them to viable nature of vocational activities and businesses they can venture into through the programmes with the aim of reducing unemployment through empowerment and to alleviate poverty.

Job Creation: This refers to deliberate efforts made by individuals, government or corporate bodies to reduce unemployment.

Poverty: This refers to a situation whereby one's is unable to afford the basic human needs for survival.

Poverty Alleviation: This refers to the strategies or control measure to reduce level of poverty or lift people out of poverty.

Promoters (Federal Government, Ondo State Government and Non-Governmental Organizations):

These are the drivers of entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes to create jobs and alleviate poverty in Nigeria.

Promoters (Federal Government)

This promoter is the central government of Nigeria that provides several skills acquisition programmes ranges from investment, agriculture and vocational programmes for national developments which increases economic activities in Nigeria.

Promoters (Ondo State Government)

This promoter is one of the State Governments in Nigeria, located in the South-western geo-political zone of the country, that provides several skills acquisition programmes ranges from investment, agricultural and vocational programmes in nature for economic development of the State and Nigeria at large which increases economic activities in Nigeria.

Promoters (Non-Governmental Organizations)

This promoter are non-profit, private organizations, group of people or individuals in Nigeria that operate outside of government control, that provides several skills acquisition programmes ranges from investment, agricultural and vocational programmes in

nature for economic development of Nigeria which increases economic activities in Nigeria. Some of these NGOs rely on volunteers while others support a paid staff. These organizations, play a critical part in developing society, improving communities, and promoting citizen participation. In the context of this definition, they provide entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes to reduce unemployment and alleviate poverty.

Unemployment: This is referring to individuals who are employable, either skilled or unskilled, and actively seeking for a job but is unable to find a job.

Theoretical Review

Programme Evaluation Theory

The development of Programme Evaluation Theory (PET) can be traced to the publication of [10]. His effort began to fashion out alternative approach to programme assessment or evaluation. [9], opines that assessment or evaluation is a study conducted and designed to assist some audience to assess objectives merit and worth of programmes [11], stressed that at various stages of programmes, assessment or evaluation could be carried out [11], suggested that programmes evaluators from time to time should have a regular consultation with the host community, stakeholders and with the people that would benefit from the programmes, before programme could be developed and implemented. This would enable likely barriers to a programme to be identified. The theory is of relevance to the study which is also to ascertain, whether its stated objectives have been achieved. Hence, programmes theory of evaluation in content is in conformity with the purpose of this study in terms of evaluating the achievability of the identified objectives of the programmes.

METHODOLOGY

The study focuses on the impact of Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Programmes (ESAPs) on job creation and poverty alleviation in Nigeria, specifically in Ondo State. The research adopted a cross-sectional case study, using a census sample for the target population. The study involved beneficiaries, training facilitators, and programme heads. A descriptive survey design was used to explore research questions. The study collected data through a structured questionnaire, "Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition, Job Creation and Poverty Alleviation Questionnaire." The questionnaire was validated by experts in Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition and Tests and Measurements at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo. The reliability of the research instrument was established through test-retest techniques. The study retrieved 160 questionnaires from 160 respondents across ten active Entrepreneurship Education Centres in Ondo State, resulting in a 100% response rate. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics. Research hypotheses generated were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Scheffe's pairwise multiple

comparison, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, Regression Analysis. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance to show whether they should be upheld or rejected.

RESULTS

Table 1: Respondents' Distribution according to Gender, Name and Location of Entrepreneurship Education Centre

Characteristics Variables		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	88	55.0
	Female	72	45.0
	Total	160	100.0
Name of Entrepreneurship Education Centre	Industrial Training Fund	16	10.0
	Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative	16	10.0
	National Poverty Alleviation Programme	16	10.0
	Ondo State Skills Acquisition Programme	16	10.0
	Abiola Makinde Youth Empowerment Programme	16	10.0
	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency	16	10.0
	National Fadama Development Project	16	10.0
	Bola Tinubu Skills Acquisition Centre	16	10.0
	Ondo State Wealth Creation Agency	16	10.0
	Dr Rhoda Makinde Initiative	16	10.0
Total	160	10.0	
Location of Entrepreneurship Education Centre	Urban	103	64.4
	Rural	57	35.6
	Total	160	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2024

The analysis of data in Table 1 showed that 88 respondents were males and 72 were females, representing 55 percent and 45 percent respectively. The distribution of respondents according to gender (*as can be seen in Table 1*) shows that majority of the respondents were male. The respondents of the Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Programmes from Industrial Training Fund has 16 (10.0%), Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative has 16 (10.0%), National Poverty Alleviation Programme has 16 (10.0%), Ondo State Skills Acquisition Programme has 16 (10.0%), Abiola Makinde Youth Empowerment Programme has 16 (10.0%), Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency has 16 (10.0%), National Fadama Development Project has 16 (10.0%), Bola Tinubu Skills Acquisition Centre has 16 (10.0%), Ondo State Wealth Creation Agency has 16 (10.0%) and

Dr Rhoda Makinde Initiative has 16 (10.0%) respectively as indicated in Table 1. Data in table 1 showed that a little bit above two-quarter, 103 (64.4 percent) of the Centres were in urban locations while 57 (35.6 percent) were located in the rural areas. This indicated that most of the respondents participated in Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Programmes in Urban Centres which was due to proximity, access to good facilities, incentives and availability of facilitators.

Results

Testing the Null Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant difference between the contribution of the Promoters (FGN, ODSG and NGOs) and job creation in Ondo State.

Promoters of Specific ESAPs and Job Creation

Table 2a: Descriptive Statistics of Promoters of Specific ESAPs and Job Creation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% C. I. for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
FGN	75	3.409	.463	.052	3.306	3.512	2.75	4.00
ODSG	53	3.380	.206	.030	3.320	3.440	3.00	3.75
NGO	32	3.625	.127	.022	3.579	3.671	3.50	3.75
Total	160	3.444	.361	.029	3.387	3.500	2.75	4.00

Note: FGN = Federal Government of Nigeria, ODSG = Ondo State Government, NGO = Non-Governmental Organization, C.I. = Confidence Interval.

Table 2b: ANOVA Showing the Effects of Promoters of Specific ESAPs on Job Creation.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1.340 ^a	2	.670	5.419	.005	.065
Intercept	1679.436	1	1679.436	13588.390	.000	.989
Promoters	1.340	2	.670	5.419	.005	.065

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Error	19.404	157	.124			
Total	1918.250	160				
Corrected Total	20.744	159				
a. R Squared = .065 (Adjusted R Squared = .053)						

Table 2c: Scheffe's Multiple Comparisons of Promoter of Specific ESAPS on Job Creation

Dependent Variable: Job creation						
(I) Promoters of the Programme		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
FD	ST	.0292	.06419	.902	-.1295	.1878
	NGO	-.2156*	.07353	.015	-.3973	-.0339
ST	FD	-.0292	.06419	.902	-.1878	.1295
	NGO	-.2448*	.08023	.011	-.4431	-.0465
NGO	FD	.2156*	.07353	.015	.0339	.3973
	ST	.2448*	.08023	.011	.0465	.4431
Based on observed means.						
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .124.						
*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.						

Where: FD = Federal Government of Nigeria, ST = Ondo State Government, NGO = Non-Governmental Organization

Table 2a provides the descriptive statistics for the promoters of specific ESAPs and job creation. The results show that the promoters perceived scores Federal Government ($M = 3.409, SD = 0.463$), State Government ($M = 3.380, SD = 0.206$) and Non-Governmental Organizations ($M = 3.625, SD = 0.127$). In summary, the table shows that the mean score for job creation among the Federal Government ESAPs is slightly lower compared to the state-owned institutions and non-governmental organizations groups. However, the difference is small and all the groups have a similar range of scores for job creation.

The results of ANOVA examining the effects of promoters of specific ESAPs on job creation show there are significant differences in job creation among the three groups of promoters ($F_{2,157} = 5.149, p < 0.05$). The Partial Eta Squared value for the model is 0.065, which means that 6.5% of the variation in job creation can be explained by the promoters of specific ESAPs. The adjusted R-squared value is 0.053, suggests that only 5.3% of the variation in job creation can be explained by the promoters of specific ESAPs while adjusting for the number of variables in the model. Overall, the results of the ANOVA suggest that there are significant differences in job creation among the three groups of promoters of specific ESAPs. The Federal Government, state-owned and non-governmental organizations ESAPs have different levels of job creation, with non-governmental organizations having the highest level of job creation.

The result of a pairwise multiple comparison examining the differences in job creation among the promoters of ESAPs is as presented (Table 2c). When

comparing Federal Government and state-owned ESAPs, the mean difference in job creation between these two ESAPs is 0.029, with a standard error of 0.064. This is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). This suggests that there is no significant difference in job creation between these two groups of ESAPs. The perceived mean score difference of participants in job creation between Federal Government and NGOs state-owned ESAPs is -0.216, with a standard error of 0.074. There was a statistically significant difference in mean scores ($p < 0.05$). The results also revealed a 95% confidence that the mean difference falls between confidence interval of -0.397 to -0.0339, suggesting there is a significant difference in job creation between these two groups, with the NGOs group having a higher level of job creation compared to the Federal Government ESAPs. On the comparison between the state-owned and NGOs, the mean difference in job creation is -0.245, with a standard error of 0.080. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in job creation between the two groups ($p < 0.05$). On the whole, the results of the multiple comparisons analysis suggest that there is a significant difference in job creation between the NGOs group and the other two groups of promoters (Federal Government and state owned ESAPs). The NGOs group has the highest level of job creation compared to the other two. Therefore, the null hypothesis that the contribution of the promoters to the specific ESAPs is insignificantly different to job creation was rejected.

H02: The contribution of the promoters (FGN, ODSG and NGOs) to the specific ESAPs is not significantly related to poverty alleviation.

Promoters of Specific ESAPs and Poverty Alleviation

Table 3a: Descriptive Statistics of Promoters of Specific ESAPs and Poverty Alleviation

Promoters	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% C.I.		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
FGN	75	3.214	.2585	.029	3.156	3.271	2.56	3.78
ODSG	53	3.107	.2468	.036	3.035	3.178	2.67	3.56
NGO	32	3.333	.199	.036	3.261	3.405	3.00	3.67
Total	160	3.206	.256	.020	3.166	3.245	2.56	3.78

Note: FGN = Federal Government of Nigeria, ODSG = Ondo State Government, NGO = Non-Governmental Organization.

Table 3b: ANOVA Showing the Effects of Promoters of Specific ESAPs on Poverty Alleviation

Dependent Variable: Poverty Alleviation							
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	
Corrected Model	.999 ^a	2	.500	8.365	.000	.096	
Intercept	1443.004	1	1443.004	24162.587	.000	.994	
Promoters	.999	2	.500	8.365	.000	.096	
Error	9.376	157	.060				
Total	1654.469	160					
Corrected Total	10.375	159					

a. R Squared = .096 (Adjusted R Squared = .085)

Table 3c: Scheffe's Multiple Comparisons of Promoter of Specific ESAPs on Poverty Alleviation

Dependent Variable: Poverty Alleviation						
(I) Promoters of the Programme		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
FGN	ODSG	.1074	.04462	.058	-.0029	.2177
	NGO	-.1194	.05112	.068	-.2458	.0069
ODSG	FGN	-.1074	.04462	.058	-.2177	.0029
	NGO	-.2269*	.05577	.000	-.3647	-.0890
NGO	FGN	.1194	.05112	.068	-.0069	.2458
	ODSG	.2269*	.05577	.000	.0890	.3647

Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .060.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Where: FGN = Federal Government of Nigeria, ODSG = Ondo State Government, NGO = Non-Governmental Organization

Table 3a presents the descriptive statistics of ESAPs promotion and job creation. The scores perceived by the promoters are: Federal Government ($M = 3.214$, $S.D. = 0.259$), Ondo State Government ($M = 3.107$, $S.D. = 0.247$) and Non-Governmental Organizations ($M = 3.333$, $S.D. = 0.199$). The minimum score for poverty alleviation for the total group is 2.56 and the maximum score is 3.78. Essentially, the result indicates that NGOs ESAPs have a slightly higher mean scores for poverty alleviation compared to Federal Government and Ondo State Government owned ESAPs. However, the difference is small and all the groups have a similar range of scores for poverty alleviation.

The ANOVA results (Table 3b) on the impact of ESAP promoters on poverty alleviation revealed that there are significant differences among the three promoter groups ($F(2, 157) = 8.365$, $p < 0.05$). The Partial Eta Squared value is 0.096, meaning that 9.6% of the

variation in poverty alleviation can be attributed to the ESAP promoters. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.085 shows that only 8.5% of the variation in poverty alleviation can be explained by the ESAP promoters after accounting for other variables in the model. This implies that the promoters contributed only 9.6 percent to alleviating poverty in the state. In conclusion, the ANOVA results indicated that the poverty alleviation levels among Federal Government, State Government, and Non-Governmental Organization ESAP promoters are significantly different, with the highest level being observed among Non-Governmental Organizations.

The results of Scheffe pairwise multiple comparison of poverty alleviation among ESAPs promoters are shown in Table 3c. The mean differences in poverty alleviation between the promoters are: FGN and ODSG ($M = 0.107$, $S.E. = 0.446$), FGN and NGOs ($M = -0.120$, $S.E. = 0.05$) and between ODSG and NGOs

ESAPs ($M = -0.227, S.E. = 0.056$). The results revealed that the mean difference between FGN and ODSG was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), so also was between FGN and NGOs ($p > 0.05$). However, the mean difference between ODSG and NGOs is statistically significance ($p < 0.05$). There is a 95% confidence that the true mean difference is likely to fall between -0.3647 and -0.089. Overall, the results of the multiple comparisons suggested that the non-governmental

organizations (NGO) group has a significantly lower mean score for poverty alleviation compared to the FGN and ODSG ESAPs.

H03: Job creation through ESAPs have insignificant impact on poverty alleviation

Relationship between Job Creation through ESAPs and Poverty Alleviation

Table 4a: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of Perceived Job Creation through ESAPs and Poverty Alleviation

Variables	M	SD	1	2
1. Job Creation	3.4438	0.361	1	0.34**
2. Poverty Alleviation	3.2056	0.255	0.34**	1

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N = 160.

Table 4b: Regression Coefficients for Predicting the Relationship between Job Creation through ESAPs and Poverty Alleviation among the Participants

Variable	B	S. E	95% CI	Beta	t	P
Constant	2.377	0.183			12.973	0.000
Job creation	0.06	0.013	0.192, 0.488	0.34	4.545	0.000

Note: $R^2_{adj} = 0.116, N = 160, p = 0.000, CI =$ Confidence interval for B

The results of a Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis examining the relationship between perceived job creation through specific ESAPs and poverty alleviation are as presented (Table 4a). The results reveal the perceived scores of job creation ($M = 3.445$ and $SD = 0.361$) and that of poverty alleviation ($M = 3.206$ and $SD = 0.255$). There was a significant moderate positive correlation between the two variables - job creation through specific ESAPs and poverty alleviation ($r = 0.340, N = 160, p < 0.0005$, one -tailed).

The dependent variable, poverty alleviation was regressed against the predicting variable of job creation (Table 4b). The independent variable significantly predicts poverty alleviation, ($F_{3, 156} = 15.362, p < 0.0005$), which indicates that job creation has a significant impact or influence on poverty alleviation. Moreover, the $R^2 = 0.116$ depicts that the model explains 11.6% of the variance in poverty alleviation. In addition, coefficients were further assessed to ascertain the influence of each of the factors on the criterion variable (poverty alleviation). The results revealed that job creation has a significantly positive effect on poverty alleviation, ($B = 0.340, t = 4.545, p = 0.0005$). This implies that a unit increase in perceived job creation score will result in 0.34 increase in perceived poverty alleviation score. This suggests that the more jobs are created the more poverty is alleviated or reduced in the populace.

Therefore, the null hypothesis that job creation through specific ESAPs does not have any significant effect on poverty alleviation was rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study investigates the impact of Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Programmes (ESAPs) on job creation in Ondo State, Nigeria. It found that ESAPs have positive impacts on job creation and the promoters' level of impacts. These programmes serve as a significant factor in building a worthwhile career for participants, engaging them usefully. The study also revealed differences in the contributions of ESAPs by the Federal Government, State Government, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which is in consonance with the work of [12].

The results showed significant differences in job creation among the three promoters (FGN, ODSG, and NGOs) of specific ESAPs. The Federal Government introduced central programmes, while the State Government introduced its own programs and spread across the country which is conjunction with [13]. Non-Governmental Organizations saw the deficiencies of both central and state governments' programmes and complemented them by reaching out to well-deserved individuals at the grassroot level for job creation and poverty alleviation.

The study also examined the effect of ESAPs on poverty alleviation in Ondo State. The results showed significant differences among the three groups of promoters, with the highest level of impact observed by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The study suggests that more promoters should provide ESAPs to empower people and not limit the promotion of the programs to government agencies alone, the outcome of the study is in consonance with the work of [14].

The study concluded that job creation through ESAPs has a significant impact on poverty alleviation, and a unit increase in perceived job creation score will increase the perceived poverty alleviation score. This suggests that more efforts should be made to job creation through ESAPs and to have more effects on poverty alleviation in Ondo State and Nigeria at large which is in tandem with [15-17].

CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that the efforts of the promoters of specific Entrepreneurial skills Acquisition Programmes (investment, vocational and agriculture) have positive impacts on job creation in Ondo State, Nigeria. More efforts are needed to create jobs in order to alleviate poverty the more. Also, promoters of ESAPs should endeavour to understand the areas of skills required by particular areas or regions and carry them along in the nature of programmes or schemes to introduce to them and the intentions should be well explained for beneficiaries of the programmes. Challenges facing the effective management of skills acquisition centres should be looked into and make the centres viable and attractive for beneficiaries in order to meet their needs and the essence of the programmes. The general perception of people was positive towards entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes, location played important roles in entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes, the root causes of unemployment and poverty were clearly discovered, the impacts of entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes were of tremendous on job creation and poverty alleviation, and; hinderances to effective implementation of Entrepreneurial Skills acquisition programmes in Ondo State were revealed. The contribution of NGOs ESAPs is significantly different from that of FGN and ODSG to poverty alleviation and finally reported that if more jobs are created, the more poverty is alleviated or reduced in the populace. Also, the theoretical views of the study which is on Programme Evaluation Theory that supports the explanation of the relationship, impacts or contributions of ESAPs with or to job creation and poverty alleviation is of deep insight to the study and the outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study highlights the importance of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in job creation and poverty alleviation. Policymakers and governments should encourage NGOS to contribute to job creation and explore rural dwellers' needs for ESAPs. Adequate budgetary provisions should be made to promote ESAPs, and avoid politicizing programs and beneficiaries. Governments should review policies, schemes, and implementation procedures to ensure effective impacts. Graduated students should be provided with start-up capital for agripreneurship ventures and establish agricultural incubation centers. Governments should address corruption and emulate NGOs' success in ESAPs. Beneficiaries' desires, aspirations, hopes, and

interests should be considered before introducing ESAPs. Entrepreneurship education centers should be well-equipped, provide access to information, and recruit qualified facilitators. Proper planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes should be introduced. Communities should create an enabling environment for promoting ESAPs.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to active ten (10) entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes in Ondo State, Nigeria and therefore provide a generalized view for other programmes in Ondo State, Nigeria based on their impacts. However, rigid protocol of some of the programme's operator's affected easy access to some agencies whereby the researchers visited some places severally before access could be gained and delayed the data collection process of this study leading to more costs on the part of the researchers in employing the services of research assistants. Some organizational policies with research led to the exclusion of some providers of the programmes from the study at the point of data collection. The location of some respondents was very difficult to get which led to more cost on the part of the researchers. The responsiveness of some leadership of the centres to the questionnaire survey was not encouraging but nevertheless, the research was a success. This led the researcher to examine a sizeable number in these programmes' promoters.

Suggestions for Further Studies

This study has been able to establish the relationship between specific ESAPs (investment, vocational and agriculture), job creation and poverty alleviation, where specific relationships and effects were established among the variables of the study. Modality of running the programmes vary from promoter to promoter and a comparative analysis of these programmes could be novel in further studies. Studies can further investigate the sources of financing entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes as it affects their performance.

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