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Government Intervention in Small Scale Road Transport Business and Poverty Alleviation

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Abstract: This study examine the role of Government intervention in small scale road transport business and poverty alleviation with main focus on Keke NAPEP business on poverty alleviation. The study uses questionnaire to collect data. Descriptive and Chi-square techniques were used to analyse the data for the study. The result shows that there is a significant impact of Keke NAPEP business on poverty reduction in Gwagwalada area council. Also, it shows that Keke NAPEP business faces some challenges on poverty alleviation in Gwagwalada area council. The study recommends that States governments of the Federation should support the Federal Government Keke NAPEP program and ensure that they create an enabling environment for its citizens to achieved the desired result in poverty eradication or alleviation by creating more awareness and sensitization of the public for proper knowledge on the NAPEP program and how to key into the program.

Keywords: Government intervention, Road transport, Poverty alleviation, Small scale business, Chi-square.

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INTRODUCTION

The most extensively used poverty index is based solely on individual earnings. According to the World Bank (2017), the international poverty line defines a person as extremely poor if they live on less than 1.90 USD per day in 2015 purchasing parity power (PPP). The principal goal of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) until 2030 is to bring 736 million people out of extreme poverty, based on this poverty indicator (UN, 2019). Transport services have played a vital role in shaping the livelihood repertoires of rural people in sub-Saharan Africa over the last century but precise implications for poverty alleviation and growth have varied considerably over time and place and between different sectors of the population (Porter, 2013).

Most of the succeeding governments in Nigeria established poverty alleviation programs and job creation schemes. Some of the programs are National Poverty Eradication Pogramme (NAPEP) in 2001, Community Skills Development Programme (CSDP) in 2010, Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWIN) in 2011, Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Program known as (SURE-P) in 2012 and Social Investment Programme like N-power in 2016 (Nuhu, Shehu & Yusuf, 2017). It seems that these programmes have not significantly reduced mass poverty among Nigerians.

NAPEP is proven to be in economic empowerment of rural dwellers in Nigeria (Magaji & Tukur, 2010). One way to empower people is by creating employment that can give them income. Using Keke NAPEP for commercial transportation is one of the poverty alleviation strategies that the Federal Government employed through National Poverty Eradication Programme in creating employment for the unemployed (Raji, 2015). The problem of interest for this study however is to examine the impact of federal Governement intervention in Keke NAPEP transport business and poverty alleviation in Gwagwalada area council of Abuja, Nigeria.

Research Problem

Road transportation business is one of the growing businesses amongst the middle and low class citizen within Abuja and its environs. The road transport business ranging from motorcycle popularly known as (Okada), Tricycle Transportation popularly as (Keke-NAPEP), taxi, Uber and Bolt drivers. Despite the different poverty alleviation programmes put in place by government, poverty rate is still on the increase as reported by Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2019).

The seeming failure of policies and programs to reduce poverty highlights the need for significant social and economic policy changes. Unfortunately, fewer studies were carried out on the role of Government intervention on Keke NAPEP business on poverty alleviation. This constitutes the problem of interest for our study.

Research Questions

From the research problem, the study will provide answer to the research. What is the impact of Keke NAPEP business on poverty reduction in Gwagwalada area council?

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of Government intervention on Keke NAPEP transport business and poverty alleviation using Gwagwalada area council of Abuja, Nigeria, as a case study

Research Hypotheses

The hypothesis supporting the theoretical posture of this work is based on null hypothesis (Ho). HO₁ There is no significant impact of Government intervention Keke NAPEP business on poverty reduction.

Significance of the Study

Considering the importance of poverty alleviation policy in Nigeria in which Keke NAPEP is one of the major policies introduced and have direct effect on the masses. Research of this nature would contribute immensely in proving concrete evidence on the impact of the policy on Nigerians. To this effect, the findings of this research would contribute to policy makers, academics, professional bodies and other stakeholders that have concern on poverty alleviation programs in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Concept of Road Transport Business

Transport business comprises of road, air and water transport. For the purpose of this study, we shall focus on road transport business. According to Ononogbo & Okunlola (2020) Road transport business refers to that line of entrepreneurship that caters for the needs of commuters by moving passengers and goods from one location to another by road. Olawale (2017) asserts that transport business is one of the hot business ideas in Nigeria today because everyone needs transportation either for business or to travel for leisure.

A transportation business is basically any business that has a hand in transporting people or goods. Conceptually, it may not be difficult to acknowledge that the transport service can contribute to poverty reduction but there is a share concern about the limited knowledge base linking transport service to poverty reduction (Chambers, 1995).

The Concept of Poverty

Poverty, according to Nuhu *et al.* (2017), can be defined based on statistics or expert-derived criteria. The statistical definition of poverty referred to the definition of poverty based on figures, numbers, and percentages. For example, OPHI (2016) defines poverty in developing

nations as any income less than US \$1.90 per day. Definitions of poverty originating from experts are those that have been coined by development experts. Development scholars, economists, and social scientists could be among this expertise (Ndagi & Yusuf, 2015).

Similarly, Aluko (1975) defines poverty as a lack of control over fundamental requirements such as food, clothes, and shelter, but Nnamani (2005) defines poverty as a circumstance in which an individual is unable to afford specific services for themselves. Poverty is also defined as a lack of sufficient material resources to provide suitable living conditions (Raji, 2012). In this study, we used the (OPHI, 2016) definition of earning more than US\$1.90. While Opayemi (1995) defines the poor as persons whose economic circumstances prevent them from controlling basic essentials of existence such as food, clothing, and a good place to live. It is also means voicelessness and lack of empowerment (Shaba *et al.*, 2018).

Mohammed (2009) postulated that those who are unable to obtain three square meal per day are said to be poor. Poverty breeds child labour and guarantees intergenerational transmission of the child labour (Magaji, 2007). Poverty is seen as a constraint that leads to deterioration in peoples' purchasing power and living conditions resulting mainly from: a lack of economic growth; permanent structural imbalances; weak growth of GDP and high growth rate of population; underdevelopment of sectors and factors of production; degradation of natural resources; barriers to rural development as the engine of the economy; limited access of the majority of the population to basic social services; weak human institutions and governance capacity (Sheu *et al.*, 2012).

Poverty is a socioeconomic problem that affects a country's cultural, social, political, economic, and environmental conditions (Mustapha *et al.*, 2017). In other terms, it is an involuntary state of deprivation to which an individual, household, community, or nation may be subjected.

Concept of Poverty reduction

Poverty reduction, eradication, and alleviation are all terms that can be used interchangeably to signify the same thing, thus they will be used interchangeably in this study. Poverty reduction is a situation in which various manifestations of poverty are systematically reduced, resulting in a short- and long-term condition. Poverty reduction, according to Obadan (1985), entails not only short-term relief and basic requirements fulfillment, but also the development of strategies for enhancing long-term productive capacity and, as a result, the income of the poor in order to reach the long-term goal.

Empirical Review

Raji (2015) carries out a study on the use of Autorickshaw (three - wheeled cycle) as poverty alleviation scheme in metropolitan areas of Lagos state, Nigeria. The variables of the study are tricycle operators' socio-economic characteristics, housing situation, type of ownership, years of operations, daily average income and operating costs, pre and post financial situation and some of the challenges encountered. Data were obtained from secondary and primary sources. The study used 200 structured questionnaires. Questionnaires were randomly administered through the use of stratified sampling technique. Descriptive statistics techniques were used for the data analyses. Findings indicated that in Lagos 73.5% of the operators benefited from the scheme. Also, male operators (97.3%) dominated the scheme on an average daily income of N2000 and above.

Nuhu, Shehu & Yusuf (2017) examine the impact of tricycle transportation earning on Poverty reduction in Kaduna metropolis, Nigeria. The variables of the study are; poverty line, average income of respondents household, number of household below the poverty line and total number of household. The main source of data for the study is primary and was obtained through the use of structured questionnaires. A total of 370 questionnaires were administered to tricycle operators within Kaduna metropolis by the use of cluster sampling technique. Foster, Greer and Thorbecke model of mathematical poverty measurements were used for the data analysis in the study. The Findings shows that, 85 percent of the tricycle riders earned above poverty line. This implies that 15 percent of the tricycle riders earn below minimum wage level in Nigeria.

Akinlolu & Maina (2020) examine transportation and poverty reduction in Yobe State. The study analyse the following variables; poverty depth or intensity, annual income (daily net income multiplied by the number of working days in a year), Cost incurred on fuel and Size of household. The population of the study was 100 respondents (commercial bus operators) and were selected from the state capital, 70 respondents were chosen from Gashua local government and 50 from Potiskum local government respectively. The study employs primary data which was sourced through field survey using questionnaires and focused group discussions approaches and the data were analyzed using tobit model approach. The result shows that a unit increase in the amount spent on maintenance of the buses reduces income and consequently leads to increase in the poverty status of the respondents by 0.1270 units. The findings show that there is no significant reduction in the poverty level of the drivers and their entire household since when they are driving the mass transit bus compared to the poverty level they were before the distribution of mass transit.

Mustapha *et al.* (2017), in their study on the impact of poverty reduction program in Kwara state, Nigeria. The variables of the study are; poverty status of

the beneficiaries of KekeMaigida scheme in Kwara State, vector of poverty alleviation indicators in Kwara State, The study focuses on the "KekeMaigida" (commercial tricycle) poverty reduction program and obtained data from 112 beneficiaries, using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed randomly (probability sampling method) in major Kwara commercial tricycles terminals in Ilorin metropolis. The study uses descriptive analysis. It was found that the probability that KekeMaigida poverty reduction program of the Kwara State government has impacts on the beneficiaries with respect to household size (HZ) is 0.734 or about 7.34 percent. Also, the probability that KekeMaigida poverty reduction program of the Kwara State government has impacts on the beneficiaries with respect to wealth before the scheme (Wt-1) is 0.437 or about 4.37 percent.

Siyam *et al.* (2015) examine the Impact of Road Transportation Infrastructure on Economic Growth in Nigeria. The study uses both primary and secondary data. Probit model was used to analyze the primary data while multivariate model was used for analyzing the secondary data to determine the long run relationship between growth and road transportation in Nigeria. The result shows that Road transportation contribution to Gross Domestic Product has a positive impact on Economic Growth in Nigeria, given its coefficient (0.209677). This implies a unit change in Road transportation contribution will cause 0.21 percent change in Gross Domestic Product in Nigeria.

Otu & James (2015) examine transportation, investment and economic growth in Nigeria. The variables of the study are; Gross Domestic Product, road transport, rail transport, water transport and Air transport. The study uses secondary data and was collected from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Statistical Bulletin of various issues. Data collected was analysed using ordinary least square estimation technique. Result reveals that there is a positive relationship between air transport, road transport and water transport systems; and economic growth in Nigeria. However, contrary to expectation, rail transport was negatively related to economic growth in Nigeria. Also the statistical tests conducted on the model showed that air transport and road transport systems are statistically significant at 5% level of significance. On the other hand rail transport and water transport systems were not statistically significant in influencing economic growth in Nigeria.

Al-Hasan *et al.* (2015) examine urban poverty and informal motorcycle transport services in a Nigerian intermediate settlement. The variables of the study are; socio-economic characteristics, daily profit and remittance, health and accident, ownership of motorcycle, nature of operation and operating hours. The study examines operations motives and satisfaction in motorcycle taxi operators in Auchi. Primary data were

sourced using structured questionnaires. Of the 148 questionnaires administered, 135 were found analysable. SPSS software version 17.0 was used for data analysis. The frequency distribution result of the demographic information of the respondents revealed that males, aged 21–30 year (58%), are predominantly involved in the operation. The education level of the majority of operators was in the secondary cohort (62.2%). Among operators, 56% operate motorcycle taxis for self-employment, whilst 34.1% was for augmenting income. A test of hypothesis result suggested that operator satisfaction based on the motive behind operation is statistically significant at 1%.

Despite the available empirical literature on Government intervention on small scale owned transport business, no research is done on intervention in federal capital territory and Gwagwalada Area Council. This study intends to fill the gap.

Theoretical Framework

The study premised its framework on the Discriminative Theory of Poverty. According to structural theorists Abdullai & Shirmshiry (2014), poverty is the structure of the socio-economic system. Those who subscribe to this theory ascribe poverty to the economic, political, and social systems, which reduces people's possibilities and resources for achieving income and happiness (Bradshaw, 2006). Samati *et al.* (2012) hold the same viewpoint, believing that larger economic and social institutions are a source of poverty. They say that capitalism fosters poverty, regardless of individuals' efforts (hard labour, skills, and competencies) structure of some economies, such as the United States of America's economy, assures that millions of people are impoverished. In other words, a growing body of research suggests that the economic system is structured so that the poor, regardless of their competence, fall behind (Bradshaw, 2006). According to the hypothesis, in a market-based competitive economic system, unequal beginning endowments of talents, skills and capital define an individual's productivity and generate poverty Sanchez-Martinez and Davis (2014).

According to Davis and Moore (1945) and quoted by Sameti *et al.* (2012), certain positions in society necessitate specific and sometimes unique talents, skills, and knowledge. They further claim that converting one's talent into such specialized skills and knowledge requires a period of training during which participants must sacrifice time, money, and other resources. People should be appropriately motivated to make such sacrifices in exchange for rewards such as better wages and privileges, or society would suffer. According to Hurst (2004) as referenced by Sameti *et al.* (2012), labour-market theories focus on income and earnings inequality to explain the necessary drivers of poverty.

Richardson & London (2007) argued that the relationship between poverty and structural injustices is structural and causative, not accidental or incidental, with a focus on rural poverty. To remedy the problem, Richardson and London (2007) stated that the initial step should be to tear down these obstacles, followed by the development of rural economies. However, Abdulai & Shamshiry (2014) have stated that battling structural poverty aims to increase the poor's ability to provide for their own needs, not to turn individuals into passive and permanent recipients of assistance. According to Abdulai & Shamshiry (2014), the structural theory of poverty has its roots in Marxist philosophy, which claims that the presence of the low-income class is a result of the formation of the capitalist economic system, or bourgeoisie, as a dominating strategy. When considering this viewpoint from an Islamic perspective, it is important to note that private property ownership is permitted in Islam. Such properties, on the other hand, must be acquired legitimately. This necessitates government action, primarily to establish a level playing field for the equitable and legitimate acquisition and redistribution of wealth (Abdulai & Shamshiry, 2014).

METHODOLOGY

Sources of Data

The sources of data are primary and secondary. Primary sources embodied the study while secondary data encompasses. Thus, the source of data for this study is primary data. The methods employed include; field survey and questionnaire administration. The field survey is the actual and full data collection. Questionnaires are used to enable us to draw information from the respondents.

Population of the Study

The population of the study covers 540 operators/owners of Keke Napep business in Gwagwalada Area council, Abuja. The population was gotten from the chairman Keke Napep drivers association in Gwagwalada. Due to limited time and the need for follow up, the entire population cannot be covered hence the need to adopt a sampling method which can be used to select some of the Keke Napep business operators to represent the entire population of the study.

Sampling Technique

In order to ensure collection of accurate and relevant information from respondents, the researcher adopts simple random sampling for the collection of samples. The choice of these criteria is premised on the need to produce a sample that can be logically assumed to be representative of the population. Simple random sampling was adopted because it gives each possible combination an equal probability of being picked up and each item in the entire population to have an equal chance of being included in the sample.

Sampling Procedure

In this study, simple random sampling was used to select Keke-NAPEP drivers included in the study. A total of one hundred and fifteen (115) Keke NAPEP operators were selected randomly from Zuba and University of Abuja main campus. The choice of these criteria is premised on the need to produce a sample that can be logically assumed to be representative of the population.

Statistical Techniques

The researcher employed the most appropriate statistical method because of the nature of the data available. For the purpose of analyzing variables and testing hypotheses of the study, the researcher adopted the descriptive statistical method which include; frequencies, percentages and chi-square.

Data Analysis

As reflected in the introductory part, a total of 115 questionnaires were administered out of which 97 were returned and duly filled by the respondents, this amount is 84% of the total questionnaires. For the purpose of easy understanding, simple percentage/frequencies scores and Chi-square were used to analyze the data.

Test of Hypotheses

The aim of carrying out test is to ascertain the level of authenticity of hypothesis to the alternative proposed to be accepted. For the purpose of testing, the hypothesis will be tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One

H₀: There is no significant impact of Keke NAPEP business on poverty reduction in Gwagwalada area council.

Table 1. Showing the Contingency Table

Response	FO	FE	FO – FE	(FO – FE) ²	$\Sigma \frac{(FO - FE)^2}{FE}$
SA	54	52	2	4	0.0769
	33	21.5	11.5	132.25	6.1512
U	0	2.5	-2.5	6.25	2.5
D	4	7	-3	9	1.2857
SD	6	14	8	64	4.5714
SA	50	52	2	4	0.0769
A	10	21.5	-11.5	132.25	6.1512
U	5	2.5	2.5	6.25	2.5
D	10	7	3	9	1.2857
SD	22	14	8	64	4.5714
					$\Sigma = 29.1704$

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Tabulated value of chi-square (X²) = 9.888

We check for the value of 0.05 under degree freedom (df) of 4 = 9.888. Therefore, the calculated value of X² = 29.1704

According to our decision rule, we accept the Alternative Hypothesis (H₁), which states that there is a significant impact of Keke NAPEP business on poverty reduction in Gwagwalada area council and reject the Null Hypothesis (H₀), which states that there is no significant impact of Keke NAPEP business on poverty reduction in Gwagwalada area council.

CONCLUSION

During the research, it was discovered that not all Keke NAPEP operators are subject to government involvement, since some of the operators obtained their tricycles via hire purchase. The advent of the tricycle as a mode of transportation has provided a source of income for the masses. Based on the foregoing, the study finds that the Keke NAPEP business has a major impact on poverty reduction in the Gwagwalada area council.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study therefore recommends the following;

- All Federation State governments should support the Federal Government's Keke NAPEP program and ensure that they create an enabling environment for their citizens to achieve the desired result in poverty eradication or alleviation by increasing public awareness and sensitization about the NAPEP program and how to participate in it.
- The government should once again establish an enabling climate that will aid the Keke driving business in all of the Federation's states by reducing unnecessary taxes on Keke riders and offering incentives to help ease their obstacles in the Keke business.
- A soft loan should be given to Keke riders to enable them to purchase a tricycle without going through middlemen and purchasing tricycles on Hire Purchase, which eats into the income generated by the riders. This will help reduce the problem caused by Hire Purchase, as the price of a tricycle given on hire is very high compared to the actual price of the tricycle.

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