

MOBILIZATION STRATEGIES AND PARTICIPATION OF YOUTHS IN DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN IKOT EKPENE AND ETIM-EKPO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS, AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated mobilization strategies and participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes in Ikot Ekpene and Etim-Ekpo local government areas of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Ex-post facto research design was employed for the study. A sample of two hundred (200) subjects was randomly drawn from twenty (20) communities in the study area and used for the study. a questionnaire titled: mobilization strategies and participation of youths in deviant behaviour questionnaire (MSPYDBQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated and the reliability estimates ranged from 0.71 to 0.91, using Cronbach Alpha coefficient method. The reliability coefficient was considered high enough to justify the use of the instrument for the study. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that town crying and radio/television had a positive significant influence on participation of youths in deviant behaviour programmes in the study area. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made among others, that there should be public enlightenment campaign to education the youths about involvement in any deviant behaviour

Keywords: Mobilization strategies, participation of youths deviant behaviour programmes.

Introduction

The mobilization strategy for participation of youths in development programmes is faced with numerous constraints. Among these are ignorance and illiteracy. Illiteracy incapacitates the individual, blurs his/her consciousness and awareness of his social capacity to change his situations. The factor of illiteracy according to Akpama (2002) fuels conservatism, superstition and apathy to full participation in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. Therefore, efforts must be intensified to reduce the high rate of illiteracy in order to ensure effective mobilization of the youths for maximum participation in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. Besides, non-participation of the youths in the initial development decision making plans impedes their participation in the implementation of such programmes.

Apparently, the mobilization of people for effective participation in any development programme is a critical factor which if any development plan must be achieved (Nwagbara, 2003). The success or failure of any development programme among other things depends on effective mobilization of human resources towards participation in such programmes (Akpama, 2002). Therefore, effective mobilization must be employed to ensure participation of youths in any development programmes that will alleviate their living conditions.

Akpama (2000) sees mobilization as a process by which latent energy from the view of the acting unit is made available for collective action. This implies that a more mobilized unit could get more achievement than a less mobilized one.

Ereku (2004) sees mobilization as something consisting primarily of movement or drives or campaigns specifically designed to activate the masses into an accelerated process of change. Mobilization approach for community development entails the pooling of human and material resources together for the betterment of people in the community (Anyanwu, 1992). This promotes a holistic and enthusiastic participation in the programmes. This implies that mobilization must seek the involvement of the people themselves in the planning and execution of any developmental programmes. Anyanwu, 1992 asserts that the active participation or involvement of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes will enable the people to learn to help themselves and grow in the process. It makes it possible for them to determine their own objectives. It enables them to identify their needs and work towards satisfying them.

Nevertheless, most development programmes initiatives by various governments of Nigeria at different times have produced very minimal results despite the huge amount of material and financial resources committed into each of the programmes. Ereku (2004) argued that our efforts at developing the rural people have not been effective because we adopt inadequate, inappropriate and unsustainable strategies in participation of youths in deviant

behaviour prevention programmes. The failure of these strategies can be attributed to lack of mobilization of people to participate in such programmes (Ntui, 2008).

Ntui (2008), reported that the participation of youths in the rural poverty programmes is low because policies cannot just be evolved for people concerned without offering them the opportunity to partake in decision making as well as in the execution process. Community mobilization towards participation in developmental programmes has implications on the completion of such programmes. Also, the active involvement of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes (Akpama, 2000). Nwagbara (2003) asserts that poor communication system also impairs the effective mobilization of youths in any deviant behaviour prevention programme. Edem (2001) stated that the failure of development programmes in most communities is attributed to poor planning, poor communication and imposition of the programmes on the community members. Since mid-20th century, youths participation in deviant behaviour prevention programmes in Ikot Ekpene and Etim-Ekpo local government areas has become widespread in all the ten political wards of this local government area of Akwa Ibom state. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to investigate the extent to which effective mobilization strategies influence participation of youth in deviant behaviour prevention programmes in Ikot Ekpene and Etim-Ekpo local government area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Mobilization strategies for youths participation in deviant behaviour prevention programmes have not been effective in Ikot Ekpene and Etim-Ekpo local government area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. This is due to the fact that the federal, state, and local government have done a lot to alleviate the suffering and hardship of the people in our community today. They did this by establishing youth programmes such as People's Empowerment Programme Initiative (PEPI), Youth Empowerment Programmes (YEP) Community-Based Alleviation

Programmes (CBAP). All these programmes were meant to scale up activities that will bring about economic, social, cultural and political development, but the gesture is at one end of the balance with involvement of youths in deviant behaviour. This implies that most of these programmes do not see the light of the day due to poor mobilization of youths or community members to participate in such prevention programmes.

Participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes in Ikot Ekpene and Etim-Ekpo local government areas of Akwa-Ibom State are characterized by lack of communication between the different stakeholders. In most cases, development agencies arbitrarily package development programmes for the youths and implement them without prior consultation with the people. A situation in which development agents speaks only to the leaders, wealthy people or groups and politicians and abandon the people who are the most critical tools in the programmes, and does not give room for sustainable participation in the programmes.

Mobilization strategies for participation of youths in development programmes is faced with numerous constraints, among these are ignorance and illiteracy. Illiteracy incapacitates the youths, individuals, blurs his consciousness and awareness of his social capacity to change his situations. Therefore, must be intensified to reduce the high rate of illiteracy in order to ensure effective mobilization of the citizenry for maximum participation in development programmes. It is in response to these prevailing situations that this study sought to examine the extent to which mobilization strategies influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes in Ikot Ekpene and Etim-Ekpo local government areas of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examined the extent to which mobilization strategies influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes in Ikot Ekpene

and Etim-Ekpo local government area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain the extent to which town crying influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes.
2. determine the extent to which radio/television influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes.

1.5 Research questions

1. To what extent does town crying influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes.
2. To what extent does radio/television influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes.

1.6 Statement of hypotheses

1. Town crying does not significantly influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes.
2. Radio/television does not significantly influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was ex-post facto design. The area of the study is Ikot Ekpene and Etim-Ekpo local government areas of Akwa Ibom State. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were adopted to classified the two local government areas for the study. The study area is made up of 20 political wards, in each of the local government areas, 5 political ward were selected for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used in the selection of 200 youths as sample for the study. The instrument used for data

collection was questionnaire titled mobilization strategies and participation of youths in deviant behaviour questionnaire (MSPYDBQ) designed by the researchers. The instrument has two sections A and B. Section A had respondents demographic information while section B had 30 questionnaire items in the form of modified four point Likert type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was designed to elicit response from the respondents. The instrument was duly validated and its reliability estimate established at 0.71 to 0.91 using cronbach alpha reliability method. This reliability coefficient was considered high enough to justified the use of the instrument for the study.

The copies of the questionnaire were administered personally by the researcher with two research assistants trained for the purposed. At the end of the exercise, all the copies of the questionnaire were collected back by the researchers and the research assistants. For ease of data preparation, code were designed to each item and a coding schedule was prepared by developing a key for each of the constructs of the instrument.

Results

Hypothesis one

Town crying does not significantly influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. The independent variable is town crying while the dependent variable is participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. Independent t-test was utilized to analyze the data collected on the variable at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Summary of independent t-test analysis of influence of town crying on participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value
Town crying	109	19.14	2.33	8.06
Participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes	91	16.56	2.09	

*Significant at .05, critical t = 1.96, df = 198

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 1 revealed that the calculated t-value of 8.06 is greater than the critical values of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. The result of the analysis is significant since the calculated t-value is greater than the critical value. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that town crying significantly influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes.

Hypothesis two

Radio/television does not significantly influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. The independent variable is radio/television while the dependent variable is participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. Independent t-test statistical technique was employed in testing the hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Summary of independent t-test analysis of the influence of radio/television on participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes

Variable	N	X	SD	t-value
Radio/television	90	19.56	2.31	
Participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes	110	17.38	2.03	6.93

*significant at .05, critical t = 1.96, df = 198

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 2 shows that the calculated t-value of 6.93 is greater than the critical value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. The result of the analysis is significant since the calculated t-value is greater than the critical t-value. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that radio/television significantly influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes.

Discussion of findings

Town crying and participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes

The result of the first hypothesis revealed that there is a significant influence of town crying as mobilization strategy on participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. The findings of this hypothesis is in line with the view of Akpama (2002) stated that as a mobilization strategy, the town crying is the most effective. He further stated that some communities may lack television or radio, the town crier may become the next alternative. The town crier does the job of information dissemination and mobilization of the youths to participate in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. This result is also in line with the assertion of Ntui (2008) who stated in his findings that the effectiveness of participation of

youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes depends on the ability of the town criers to send information to the community members.

Radio/television and participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes

The result obtained from the hypothesis two, revealed that there is a significant influence of radio/television as a mobilization strategy on participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. The findings of this hypothesis is in agreement with the view of Edem (2001) who reported that mobilization through radio and television is the most effective strategy towards youths participation in deviant behaviour prevention programmes. He further stated that deviant behaviour prevention programmes among youths can only be successful by relying on the radio and television for effective grass root mobilization through radio and television. The result is also in consonant with the view of Okpala (2004) stated that community and social mobilization through radio and television has been successful in reducing involvement of youths in deviant behaviour problems associated with the rural communities.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that town crying and radio/television do significantly influence participation of youths in deviant behaviour prevention programmes in the study area.

Recommendations

From the results of the study, it is recommended that:

1. There should be public enlightenment campaign to educate the youths about involvement in any deviant behaviour programmes. These should include workshops, seminars, posters handbills, radio and television, jingles health talks, etc.

2. There should be regular meetings with traditional rulers and opinion leaders such as youths leaders, town criers, women leaders and community based organizations.

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