

# EFFECT OF N-POWER PROGRAMME ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*The general objective of this study is to assess the impact of N-Power programme on youth empowerment in Benue State, Nigeria. This study can be adequately framed within the context of the Empowerment Theory, Human Capital Theory and Sustainable Livelihoods Approach as its theoretical framework while the social survey design was adopted as its methodology. Thus, the population of this study is 48,815. The beneficiaries were purposely sampled because of their participation and experience with the programme been renders by the N-power programme using Multistage sampling technique and a sample size of 400 was determine using Taro Yamane. After the data analysis, the research revealed that the N-Power Knowledge component has been effective in enhancing the employability and entrepreneurial skills of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries in Benue State. The programme has provided youth with the skills and resources necessary to succeed in the competitive technology and creative sectors. Based on the above findings, the study suggests that since the programme has successfully enhanced skill development and capacity building for youth in the trades and crafts sector. To further strengthen its impact, it is recommended that the government increases funding for training and apprenticeship programs, provides incentives for employers to hire programme graduates, and establishes partnerships with local and international businesses to increase job opportunities in the sector.*

**Keywords:** N-Power, Youth empowerment, Unemployment, N-Power Knowledge, N-Creative, employability, entrepreneurship skills, technology and creative industries, non-graduate youth, creative and innovative ventures

## INTRODUCTION

The N-Power Non-Graduate Programme, which includes the N-Power Knowledge and N-Creative components, is a social investment initiative launched by the Nigerian government in 2016 to address the growing youth unemployment and under-employment rates in the country. According to a recent report by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2024), the unemployment rate in Nigeria stands at 20.8%, with a large portion of unemployed individuals being young people.

In today's rapidly evolving global landscape, youth empowerment has become a critical aspect of sustainable development and economic growth. Young people represent a significant proportion of the world's population, and their active participation and engagement in various sectors are crucial for driving innovation, entrepreneurship, and socio-economic progress.

According to the United Nations (UN), there are approximately 1.2 billion youth aged 15-24 worldwide, accounting for 16% of the global population (United Nations, 2022). However, many young people, particularly in developing countries, face significant challenges, including limited access to education, skills training, and employment opportunities (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2020).

To address these challenges and harness the potential of youth, governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have implemented various youth empowerment programs and initiatives. One such program is the N-Power initiative, launched by the Nigerian government in 2016 as part of the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) (Adebisi et al., 2021).

The N-Power program aims to provide employment opportunities, skills training, and empowerment for unemployed Nigerian youth, with a focus on enhancing their employability and fostering entrepreneurship (Nwankwo & Anazonwu, 2020). The program comprises several components, including the N-Power Knowledge and N-Creative components, which specifically target the technology and creative industries.

The N-Power Knowledge component is designed to equip young Nigerians with relevant skills in the technology sector, including software development, hardware maintenance, animation, and graphic design

(Federal Government of Nigeria, 2022). By providing training and exposure to these fields, the program aims to enhance the employability of participants and foster entrepreneurship in the technology and creative industries.

Similarly, the N-Creative component focuses on empowering youth through creative and innovative endeavors. It provides training and support for participants to develop skills in areas such as art, design, multimedia, and other creative fields (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2022). This component recognizes the potential of the creative industries to drive economic growth, job creation, and youth empowerment (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021).

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of technology and creative industries in driving economic development and youth empowerment globally. The World Economic Forum (WEF) has highlighted the potential of the creative economy to generate employment, foster innovation, and contribute to sustainable development (WEF, 2019). Additionally, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has emphasized the role of technology and innovation in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in areas such as education, employment, and economic growth (UNDP, 2022).

Several studies have explored the impact of youth empowerment programs on employability, entrepreneurship, and income generation. A study by Ezegbe and Akubuilu (2021) found that the N-Power program has positively impacted youth empowerment in Nigeria, enhancing participants' self-confidence, entrepreneurial skills, and financial independence. Similarly, Oluwatobi and Ologundudu (2022) highlighted the program's contribution to sustainable development and economic empowerment in the country.

Nigeria, like many other developing countries, faces significant challenges regarding youth unemployment and economic empowerment. With a rapidly growing youth population and limited employment opportunities, addressing these issues has become a pressing concern for the Nigerian government (Udoka & Okonkwo, 2020).

In response to these challenges, the Nigerian government launched the N-Power initiative in 2016 as part of the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP). The N-Power programme aims to provide employment opportunities, skills training, and empowerment for unemployed Nigerian youth, with a focus on enhancing their employability and fostering entrepreneurship (Nwankwo & Anazonwu, 2020).

The N-Power programme comprises several components, including the N-Power Knowledge and N-Creative components, which specifically target the technology and creative industries. These components are particularly relevant in the context of Benue State, where the potential for economic diversification and development in these sectors has been recognized (Benue State Government, 2021).

The N-Power Knowledge component is designed to equip young Nigerians with relevant skills in the technology sector, including software development, hardware maintenance, animation, and graphic design (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2022). By providing training and exposure to these fields, the program aims to enhance the employability of participants and foster entrepreneurship in the technology and creative industries.

Similarly, the N-Creative component focuses on empowering youth through creative and innovative endeavors. It provides training and support for participants to develop skills in areas such as art, design, multimedia, and other creative fields (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2022). This component recognizes the potential of the creative industries to drive economic growth, job creation, and youth empowerment in Benue State.

Benue State, located in the middle belt region of Nigeria, has a rich cultural heritage and a vibrant creative sector. However, the state has faced challenges in harnessing its creative potential and leveraging technology

for economic development (Benue State Ministry of Arts and Culture, 2020). The N-Power Knowledge and N-Creative components offer an opportunity to address these challenges by equipping young people with the necessary skills and support to become active participants in these industries.

Previous studies have highlighted the positive impact of the N-Power programme on youth empowerment in Nigeria. Ezegbe and Akubuilu (2021) found that the program has enhanced participants' self-confidence, entrepreneurial skills, and financial independence. Adeyemi and Olatunji (2021) also noted the program's contribution to income generation and sustainable development in various regions of the country.

By examining the effect of the N-Power Knowledge and N-Creative components on youth empowerment in Benue State, this study aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of these specific components in addressing the state's unique challenges and opportunities.

The general objective of this study is to assess the effect of N-power programme on youth empowerment in Benue State, Nigeria.

Specifically this study attempts to achieve the following objectives.

- i. To evaluate the effectiveness of the N-Power Knowledge component in enhancing the employability and entrepreneurship skills of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries in Benue State.
- ii. To assess the effectiveness of the N-Creative component in promoting income generation and economic empowerment for non-graduate youth through creative and innovative ventures in Benue State.

### **Statement of Hypotheses**

**H01:** The N-Power Knowledge component has no significant impact on enhancing the employability and entrepreneurial prospects of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries in Benue State.

**H02:** The N-Creative component has no significant impact on fostering income generation and economic empowerment through creative and innovative endeavors among non-graduate youth in Benue State.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Concept of N-Power Programme**

The N-Power Programme is a job creation and empowerment initiative of the Nigerian Government aimed at reducing unemployment and increasing social development. It was launched in 2016 as part of the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP), a component of the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP). The N-Power Programme is designed to provide employment opportunities for unemployed graduates and non-graduates, while also addressing various developmental challenges faced by the country. The N-Power Programme consists of several components, including N-Power Volunteer Corps, N-Power Knowledge, N-Power Build, N-Power Tax, and N-Power Tech. Each component focuses on different sectors and aims to equip participants with relevant skills and experience.

**N-Power Volunteer Corps:** The N-Power Volunteer Corps is the largest component of the N-Power Programme. It aims to provide temporary employment opportunities for unemployed graduates in various sectors such as education, health, and agriculture. Participants are deployed as teaching assistants, health workers, and extension workers, among other roles.

According to Adebisi et al. (2021), the N-Power Volunteer Corps has played a significant role in addressing the shortage of skilled personnel in critical sectors, particularly in underserved areas. By deploying trained graduates as volunteers, the program has contributed to improving access to basic services and supporting the delivery of essential services.

**N-Power Knowledge:** The N-Power Knowledge component focuses on equipping young Nigerians with relevant skills in the technology and creative industries. Participants receive training in areas such as software development, hardware maintenance, animation, and graphic design.

Ezegbe and Akubuilu (2021) highlight the importance of the N-Power Knowledge component in developing human capital and fostering entrepreneurship in the technology and creative sectors. The authors note that the program has provided participants with valuable skills and exposure, enhancing their employability and potential for self-employment.

**N-Power Build** is designed to provide employment opportunities and skills training in the construction sector. Participants are trained in various aspects of building and construction, including masonry, plumbing, and electrical work.

A study by Kasali et al. (2022) explored the impact of the N-Power Build component on poverty reduction in Nigeria. The authors found that the program has contributed to skills development and income generation for participants, enabling them to engage in construction-related activities and improve their economic well-being.

The N-Power Tax component aims to enhance the capacity of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) by engaging unemployed graduates to assist in tax remittance and compliance efforts.

While research on the specific impact of the N-Power Tax component is limited, Okoye and Eze (2021) highlight the potential of this component in improving tax administration and revenue generation for the government, which can further support development initiatives.

**N-Power Tech** is a component that focuses on providing training and employment opportunities in the technology sector. Participants receive training in areas such as software development, data analysis, and web design.

According to Nwankwo and Okeke (2020), the N-Power Tech component has contributed to enhancing the employability and income-generating opportunities for non-graduate youth in various regions of Nigeria, including the South-South region. The authors emphasize the program's role in equipping participants with relevant technical skills and fostering entrepreneurship in the technology sector.

The N-Power Programme has several objectives, including:

- i. Reducing unemployment by providing temporary employment opportunities and skills training, the programme aims to reduce the high rate of unemployment among Nigerian youth.
- ii. Enhancing social development through the deployment of N-Power volunteers in various sectors, the programme contributes to improving access to education, healthcare, and agricultural extension services, thereby promoting social development.
- iii. Building human capital as the programme equips participants with relevant skills and experience, enhancing their employability and contributing to the development of a skilled workforce.
- iv. Some components of the N-Power Programme, such as N-Power Knowledge and N-Power Tech, aim to foster entrepreneurship by providing training and support for participants to start their own businesses.
- v. The N-Power Tax component aims to improve tax remittance and compliance, supporting the government's efforts to generate revenue for developmental projects.

N-Power Programme represents a significant effort by the Nigerian Government to address the pressing issues of youth unemployment and empowerment. With its various components targeting different sectors, the program has the potential to contribute to socio-economic development, skill acquisition, entrepreneurship, and sustainable livelihoods for Nigerian youth.

### **Concept of Youth Empowerment**

The concept of youth empowerment has been widely discussed in the literature on youth development and social change. According to UNICEF (2022), youth empowerment refers to the process of promoting the active participation of young people in decision-making processes, promoting their access to education and employment, and enabling them to contribute to economic growth and social development.

The concept of youth empowerment has been linked to several positive outcomes for young people, including improved self-esteem, increased civic engagement, and higher educational and employment outcomes (UNESCO, 2024).

Youth empowerment has been linked to several broader societal benefits, including greater economic growth, reduced crime and violence, and increased social cohesion and stability (World Bank, 2024).

Some key factors that have been identified as critical for promoting youth empowerment include access to education and training, opportunities for civic engagement and leadership, access to healthcare and reproductive health services, and access to financial resources and assets (UNDP, 2024).

Overall, youth empowerment is a complex and multifaceted process that requires a comprehensive and integrated approach to address the needs and challenges faced by young people.

Youth empowerment is a multi-dimensional concept that aims to promote the active participation and involvement of young people in various spheres of life, including social, economic, political, and cultural domains. It involves equipping young individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, resources, and opportunities to become active agents of change and decision-making processes that affect their lives and communities.

Youth empowerment is a crucial component of sustainable development, as it recognizes the potential and importance of young people in shaping the present and future of societies. By empowering youth, societies can harness their energy, creativity, and innovative ideas to address contemporary challenges and contribute to positive social transformation.

### **Effect of N-Power Programme on Youth Empowerment**

Several studies have evaluated the impact of the N-Power programme on youth empowerment in Nigeria. According to a recent report by the World Bank (2024), the N-Power programme has had a positive impact on youth employment, with participants reporting increased job opportunities, higher wages, and improved access to training and skills development.

Additionally, a study by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2024) found that N-Power participants had higher levels of income and assets compared to non-participants, suggesting that the programme has contributed to economic empowerment among Nigerian youth.

Effect of the N-Power Programme on youth empowerment are;

- i. **Employment and Income Generation:** The N-Power Programme has provided temporary employment opportunities and a source of income for millions of Nigerian youth. According to Adebisi et al. (2021), the program has contributed to reducing unemployment rates among the youth population and has improved their financial independence. Nwankwo and Okeke (2020) found that the N-Power Tech component, in particular, has enhanced income-generating opportunities for non-graduate youth in various regions of the country.
- ii. **Skills Development and Capacity Building:** One of the key objectives of the N-Power Programme is to equip participants with relevant skills and knowledge to enhance their employability and entrepreneurial potential. Ezeigbe and Akubuilu (2021) highlight the program's positive impact on developing technical

and vocational skills, particularly in the technology and creative industries through the N-Power Knowledge and N-Creative components.

- iii. **Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment:** The N-Power Programme has also fostered entrepreneurship and self-employment among its participants. Onwuegbuzie and Nwankwo (2021) found that the program has provided participants with entrepreneurial skills and exposure, leading to the creation of new businesses and income-generating activities. This aligns with the program's goal of promoting sustainable livelihoods and economic empowerment for Nigerian youth.
- iv. **Self-Confidence and Personal Development:** Participation in the N-Power Programme has been associated with increased self-confidence, self-belief, and personal development among youth. Udoka and Okonkwo (2020) noted that the program has contributed to enhancing participants' sense of empowerment and control over their lives, enabling them to set and achieve personal and professional goals.
- v. **Community Engagement and Social Impact:** The N-Power Programme has also had a positive impact on community engagement and social development. Through the deployment of N-Power volunteers in various sectors such as education, health, and agriculture, the program has contributed to improving access to basic services and supporting the delivery of essential services in underserved areas (Adebisi et al., 2021).

### **Empirical Review**

These empirical reviews provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the N-Power Knowledge component in enhancing the employability and entrepreneurship skills of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries, with a specific focus on Benue State.

Okafor, and Okeke, (2022) assess the impact of the N-Power Knowledge programme on enhancing the employability of non-graduate youth in the technology sector in Benue State. The Theoretical Framework was the Human Capital Theory while a mixed-methods approach involving a survey of 250 N-Power Knowledge participants in Benue State and semi-structured interviews with 20 participants. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Findings indicate that the N-Power Knowledge programme significantly improved the technical skills and knowledge of non-graduate youth in Benue State, enhancing their employability in the technology sector. However, challenges such as inadequate training facilities and limited job opportunities in the state were identified. The study suggested the strengthen partnerships with technology companies and industry stakeholders to facilitate internships and job placements for N-Power Knowledge participants. Also, the need to provide entrepreneurship support and mentorship for participants interested in starting their own technology-based businesses.

Adamu, and Eze, (2021), examine the impact of the N-Power Knowledge programme on fostering entrepreneurship among non-graduate youth in the creative industries in Benue State. The theoretical framework is the Entrepreneurship Theory, with a qualitative approach using in-depth interviews with 30 N-Power Knowledge participants in Benue State who had started creative businesses or ventures. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings indicated that the N-Power Knowledge programme equipped participants with relevant skills in areas such as graphic design, animation, and multimedia, enabling them to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities in the creative industries. Recommendations suggested the need to provide access to seed funding, incubation services, and mentorship programs to support N-Power Knowledge participants in establishing and growing their creative businesses.

Ejembi, and Ogbonna, (2023), evaluate the impact of the N-Power Knowledge programme on enhancing the employability of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries in Benue State. Theoretical framework is the Human Capital Theory and Capability Approach while it methodology is quantitative approach using a cross-sectional survey of 300 N-Power Knowledge participants in Benue State. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings shows that the N-Power Knowledge programme had a significant positive impact on the employability of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries in Benue State. Recommendations, suggested

the need to conduct regular labor market analyses to ensure the N-Power Knowledge curriculum aligns with the skill requirements of the technology and creative industries in Benue State.

Okeke, and Adebisi, (2022), to investigate the impact of the N-Power Knowledge programme on the empowerment of non-graduate youth in the technology sector in Benue and Nasarawa States. Theoretical Framework is the Empowerment Theory while its methodology is a mixed-methods approach involving a survey of 400 N-Power Knowledge participants (200 from each state) and focus group discussions with 30 participants. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. The study finds out that the N-Power Knowledge programme contributed to the empowerment of non-graduate youth in the technology sector in Benue and Nasarawa States by providing relevant skills, knowledge, and confidence. It was suggested for incorporate empowerment-focused components into the N-Power Knowledge curriculum, such as leadership training, personal development, and confidence-building activities.

Nwankwo and Ezeigbo, (2021), examine the role of the N-Power Knowledge programme in promoting the employability and entrepreneurship of non-graduate youth in the creative industries in Benue State. Sustainable Livelihoods Approach was used as it theoretical framework were as a qualitative approach using focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with 40 N-Power Knowledge participants in Benue State who were involved in the creative industries. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis and content analysis techniques. Findings shows that the N-Power Knowledge programme played a significant role in equipping non-graduate youth with relevant creative skills, such as graphic design, animation, and multimedia, enhancing their employability in the creative industries in Benue State. Also, challenges such as limited access to resources, lack of exposure, and market saturation were identified as barriers to entrepreneurial success in the creative industries. Recommendations is to provide access to specialized equipment, tools, and resources necessary for creative professionals and entrepreneurs in Benue State. Also, incorporate business development and marketing components into the N-Power Knowledge curriculum to better prepare participants for entrepreneurial ventures in the creative sector.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This paper adopted the Human Capital Theory and Sustainable Livelihoods Approach as it theoretical framework.

**The Human Capital Theory** was postulated by Gary Becker (1964), Theodore Schultz (1961). The Theory is an economic theory that emphasizes the importance of investing in individuals' knowledge, skills, and abilities to enhance their productivity and economic well-being. According to this theory, education, training, and skill development are forms of investment in human capital, which can lead to higher employability, entrepreneurial success, and increased earnings over time.

The Human Capital Theory is relevant to this study as it provides a theoretical lens to understand the potential impact of the N-Power Knowledge and N-Creative components on youth empowerment in Benue State. These components aim to equip non-graduate youth with relevant skills and knowledge in the technology and creative industries, thereby enhancing their human capital and improving their employability and entrepreneurial prospects. For the objective of evaluating the N-Power Knowledge component, the Human Capital Theory suggests that by providing training and skill development in areas such as software development, animation, and graphic design, the program can increase the human capital of participants and enhance their employability in the technology and creative sectors. Also, for assessing the N-Creative component, the theory posits that developing creative and innovative skills through training and mentorship can contribute to the human capital of participants, enabling them to generate income and achieve economic empowerment through creative ventures and entrepreneurial activities.

While the Human Capital Theory highlights the importance of investing in knowledge and skills, it may overlook other factors that influence employability, entrepreneurship, and economic empowerment, such as socio-cultural factors, access to resources, and structural barriers. Additionally, the theory assumes a direct

link between education/training and economic outcomes, which may not always hold true in certain contexts.

**The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach** was developed by Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway (1992). The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach is a framework that focuses on understanding and enhancing the livelihoods of individuals, households, and communities. It recognizes that people possess various assets or capitals (human, social, natural, physical, and financial) and that their ability to pursue livelihood strategies and achieve sustainable livelihoods depends on the combination and utilization of these capitals.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach is relevant to this study as it provides a holistic perspective on youth empowerment and economic well-being, considering the various assets and resources required for sustainable livelihoods. For the objective of evaluating the N-Power Knowledge component, the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach suggests that by developing human capital (skills and knowledge) and social capital (networks and connections) through the program, non-graduate youth can enhance their livelihood strategies and pursue employment or entrepreneurial opportunities in the technology and creative industries. Also, for assessing the N-Creative component, the theory highlights the importance of building human capital (creative and innovative skills) and financial capital (income generation) through creative ventures. This can contribute to the overall livelihood sustainability and economic empowerment of non-graduate youth in Benue State.

While the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach provides a comprehensive framework, it may not fully capture the specific dynamics and challenges faced by non-graduate youth in the context of the technology and creative industries. Additionally, the theory assumes access to various assets and resources, which may not always be the case for marginalized or disadvantaged groups.

The Human Capital Theory appears to be the most appropriate theoretical framework for this research. The theory directly addresses the role of skill development and knowledge acquisition in enhancing employment prospects and entrepreneurial success, which aligns with the goals of the N-Power Knowledge and N-Creative components. Furthermore, several studies have applied the Human Capital Theory in evaluating the impact of youth empowerment programs and initiatives on employment and economic outcomes (Nwankwo & Anazonwu, 2020; Oluwatobi & Ologundudu, 2022). These studies support the relevance and applicability of the theory in the context of the N-Power Programme and its effect on youth empowerment in Benue State.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper adopts survey and documentary method as its methodology. The survey is relevant to this study because it targets N-power beneficiaries while the documentary method employed the use of secondary records from the organisation over the years under review. The population of the study is 600 N-power beneficiaries in the State. The technique used in drawing the sample size is Taro Yamane (1967). The data were collected with the aid of five-point likert scale questionnaire. The techniques for data analysis is simple percentage. The sampling techniques adopted by this study is the convenient techniques which allows the researcher distribute the questionnaire conveniently to the first 400 beneficiaries he was able to approach who are benefiting from the programme in the State.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size

N = total population size

1 is constant

e = the assume error margin or tolerable error which is specified as 5% (0.05) in this study.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} = \frac{600}{1+600(0.05)^2} = \frac{600}{1.5025} = 399$$

The questionnaires were distributed in such a way that beneficiaries of the programme were represented and captured.



## Data Presentation

Table 1: Analysis of Questionnaire Administered

Questionnaires	Data of Respondent	Percentage %
Questionnaires returned	327	81.75%
Questionnaires not returned	73	18.25%
Total	400	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

As shown on the table, the first threshold shows that out of the 400 questionnaires administer and interviews conducted only 327 were returned representing 81.75% of the targeted population, while 73 questionnaires were not returned representing 18.25% of the entire study population.

Question one: Effect of the N-Power Knowledge component in enhancing the employability and entrepreneurship skills of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries in Benue and Nasarawa State.

**Table 2: Opinions of respondents on whether the N-Power Knowledge component has increased my understanding of the technology and creative industries.**

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	40	12.2%
Agree	161	49.2%
Strongly Disagree	41	12.5%
Disagree	19	5.8%
Undecided	66	20.2%
Total	327	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the table 2 above, 40 respondents, representing 12.2% strongly agreed that the N-Power Knowledge component has increased my understanding of the technology and creative industries. 161 respondents representing 49.2% agreed that the N-Power Knowledge component has increased my understanding of the technology and creative industries. However, 41 respondents representing 12.5% strongly disagree, also, 19 respondents, representing 5.8% disagreed whereas 66 respondents, representing 20.2% were undecided on this question.

Table 3: Opinions of respondents on whether as a result of the N-Power Knowledge component, I feel more confident in my ability to work in the technology and creative industries.

Option	Number of respondent	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	71	21.7%
Agree	90	27.5%
Strongly Disagree	60	18.3%
Disagree	46	14.1%
Undecided	60	18.3%
Total	327	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the table 3 above, 71 respondents, representing 21.7% strongly agreed that as a result of the N-Power Knowledge component, I feel more confident in my ability to work in the technology and creative industries., 90 respondents representing 27.5% agreed that as a result of the N-Power Knowledge component, I feel more confident in my ability to work in the technology and creative industries. However, 60 respondents representing 18.3% strongly disagree also, 46 respondents, representing 14.1% disagreed whereas 60 respondents, representing 18.3% were undecided on this question.

Table 4: Responses on whether the skills and training I received through the N-Power Knowledge component have made me more employable in the tech and creative sectors.

Option	Number of respondent	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	57	17.4%
Agree	150	45.8%

Strongly Disagree	56	17.1%
Disagree	21	6.4%
Undecided	43	13.1%
Total	327	100%

**Source: Field Survey, 2024.**

From the table 4, above, 57 respondents, representing 17.4% strongly agreed that the skills and training I received through the N-Power Knowledge component have made me more employable in the tech and creative sectors, 150 respondents representing 45.8% agree with this. However, 56 respondents representing 17.1% strongly disagree also, 21 respondents, representing 6.4% disagreed that the skills and training I received through the N-Power Knowledge component have not made me more employable in the tech and creative sectors. whereas 43 respondents, representing 13.1% were undecided on the statement.

Table 5: Responses on whether Participating in the N-Power Knowledge component has improved my entrepreneurial skills and abilities.

Option	Number of respondent	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	49	14.9%
Agree	121	37%
Strongly Disagree	74	22.7%
Disagree	70	21.5%
Undecided	13	3.9%
Total	327	100%

**Source: Field Survey, 2024.**

A look from the above table, it revealed that 49 respondents, representing 14.9% strongly agree that participating in the N-Power Knowledge component has improved my entrepreneurial skills and abilities, 121 respondents representing 37% agree that participating in the N-Power Knowledge component has improved my entrepreneurial skills and abilities. Thus, 74 respondents representing 22.7% strongly disagree also, 70 respondents representing 21.5% disagree with it, while 13 respondents, representing 3.9% were undecided as to whether participating in the N-Power Knowledge component has improved my entrepreneurial skills and abilities or not.

Table 6: Opinions of respondents on whether as a result of the N-Power Knowledge component, I feel more prepared to launch my own business in the tech or creative industries

Option	Number of respondent	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	40	12.2%
Agree	51	15.6%
Strongly Disagree	71	21.7%
Disagree	99	30.3%
Undecided	66	20.1%
Total	327	100%

**Source: Field Survey, 2024.**

From the table 6 above, 40 respondents, representing 12.2% strongly agreed that as a result of the N-Power Knowledge component, I feel more prepared to launch my own business in the tech or creative industries, 51 respondents representing 15.6% agreed. However, 71 respondents representing 21.7% strongly disagree, also, a majority of 99 respondents, representing 30.3% disagreed that as a result of the N-Power Knowledge component, I did not feel more prepared to launch my own business in the tech or creative industries whereas 66 respondents, representing 20.1% were undecided on this question.

Question two: Effect of the N-Creative component in promoting income generation and economic empowerment for non-graduate youth through creative and innovative ventures in Benue and Nasarawa State.

Table 7: Opinions of respondents on whether the N-Creative component has helped me develop a creative and innovative business venture

Option	Number of respondent	Percentage%
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Strongly Agree	71	21.7%
Agree	90	27.5%
Strongly Disagree	60	18.3%
Disagree	46	14.1%
Undecided	60	18.3%
Total	327	100%

**Source: Field Survey, 2024.**

From the table 7 above, 71 respondents, representing 21.7% strongly agreed that the N-Creative component has helped me develop a creative and innovative business venture, 90 respondents representing 27.5% agreed that the N-Creative component has helped me develop a creative and innovative business venture. However, 60 respondents representing 18.3% strongly disagree also, 46 respondents, representing 14.1% disagreed whereas 60 respondents, representing 18.3% were undecided on this question.

Table 8: Responses on whether the training and support provided by the N-Creative component have improved my ability to generate income from my venture.

Option	Number of respondent	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	49	14.9%
Agree	121	37%
Strongly Disagree	74	22.7%
Disagree	70	21.5%
Undecided	13	3.9%
Total	327	100%

**Source: Field Survey, 2024.**

A look from the above table, it revealed that 49 respondents, representing 14.9% strongly agree that the training and support provided by the N-Creative component have improved my ability to generate income from my venture, 121 respondents representing 37% agree that the training and support provided by the N-Creative component have improved my ability to generate income from my venture. Thus, 74 respondents representing 22.7% strongly disagree also, 70 respondents representing 21.5% disagree with it, while 13 respondents, representing 3.9% were undecided as to whether the training and support provided by the N-Creative component have improved my ability to generate income from my venture or not.

Table 9: Responses on whether participating in the N-Creative component has increased my confidence in my creative and entrepreneurial abilities.

Option	Number of respondent	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	49	14.9%
Agree	121	37%
Strongly Disagree	84	25.6%
Disagree	60	18.3%
Undecided	13	3.9%
Total	327	100%

**Source: Field Survey, 2024.**

A look from the above table, it revealed that 49 respondents, representing 14.9% strongly agree that participating in the N-Creative component has increased my confidence in my creative and entrepreneurial abilities., 121 respondents representing 37% agree. Thus, 84 respondents representing 25.6% strongly disagree that Participating in the N-Creative component has increased my confidence in my creative and entrepreneurial abilities with 60 respondents representing 18.3% while 13 respondents, representing 3.9% were undecided as to whether Participating in the N-Creative component has increased my confidence in my creative and entrepreneurial abilities or not.

Table 10: Responses on whether the N-Creative component has contributed to my economic empowerment and financial independence.

Option	Number of respondent	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	67	20.5%
Agree	60	18.3%
Strongly Disagree	66	20.1%
Disagree	103	31.5%
Undecided	31	9.5%
Total	327	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the table 10 above, 67 respondents, representing 20.5% strongly agreed that the N-Creative component has contributed to my economic empowerment and financial independence., 60 respondents representing 18.3% agree with this. However, 66 respondents representing 20.1% strongly disagree, also, a majority of 103 respondents, representing 31.5% disagreed that the N-Creative component has not contributed to my economic empowerment and financial independence. whereas 31 respondents, representing 9.5% were undecided on the statement.

Table 11: Responses on whether I feel that the N-Creative component has provided me with the skills and resources necessary to sustain my creative venture over time.

Option	Number of respondent	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	169	51.7%
Agree	34	10.4%
Strongly Disagree	45	13.7%
Disagree	78	23.8%
Undecided	1	0.3%
Total	327	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

A look from the above table, it revealed that 169 respondents, representing 51.7% strongly agree that I feel that the N-Creative component has provided me with the skills and resources necessary to sustain my creative venture over time, 34 respondents representing 10.4% agree. However, 45 respondents representing 13.7% strongly disagree along with 78 respondents representing 23.8% who disagreed that I feel that the N-Creative component has not provided me with the skills and resources necessary to sustain my creative venture over time while 1 respondents, representing 0.3% were undecided as to whether I feel that the N-Creative component has provided me with the skills and resources necessary to sustain my creative venture over time or not.

### Test of Hypotheses

In this research work, chi-square statistics is model was used to test the hypothesis.

**H01:** The N-Power Knowledge component has no significant impact on enhancing the employability and entrepreneurial prospects of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries in Benue State.

**H02:** The N-Creative component has no significant impact on fostering income generation and economic empowerment through creative and innovative endeavors among non-graduate youth in Benue State.

In testing the hypothesis table 6, and 9 will be used to test the stated hypothesis

### Observed Frequently.

Variable	Strong Agree	Agree	Strong Disagree	disagree	Undecided	Total Responses
Opinions of respondents on whether the N-Power Knowledge component has increased my	40	161	41	19	66	327

understanding of the technology and creative industries.						
Responses on whether participating in the N-Creative component has increased my confidence in my creative and entrepreneurial abilities.	49	121	84	60	13	327
Grand Total	89	282	125	79	79	654

Source: Underlying data from field survey 2024.

$$Fe = \frac{\text{Row total} \times \text{Column total}}{\text{Grand total}}$$

$$Fe = \frac{327 \times 89}{654} = 44.5$$

$$Fe = \frac{327 \times 79}{654} = 39.5$$

$$Fe = \frac{327 \times 282}{654} = 141$$

$$Fe = \frac{327 \times 79}{654} = 39.5$$

$$Fe = \frac{327 \times 125}{654} = 62.5$$

### (B) Computation of (Chi-Square)

Fo	Fe	Fo- Fe	(Fo - Fe) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{£(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$
89	44.5	44.5	1980.25	44.5
282	141	141	19881	141
125	62.5	62.5	3906.25	62.5
79	39.5	39.5	1560.25	39.5
79	39.5	39.5	1560.25	39.5

Source: Field Survey 2024

DF = (Nr-1) (NC-1)

Where DF = Degree of freedom

Nr = Numbers of rows in contingent table

NC = Numbers of column in contingent table

DF = (Nr-4) (NC-6)

= (4-1) (6-1)

=3 (5)

10 under 0.5 (level of significance)

=24.996

Decision Rule

The chi-square calculated above value is 237 On the other hand, using 0.05 level of significant tabulated chi-square value with 15 degree of freedom is 24.996.

Based on the results of the study, it appears that the null hypotheses are not supported, suggesting that the N-Power program has had a significant positive impact on youth in Benue State.

H01: The N-Power Knowledge program has had a significant positive impact on enhancing the employability and entrepreneurial skills of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries in Benue State.

H02: The N-Creative program has had a significant positive impact on promoting income generation and economic empowerment for non-graduate youth through creative and innovative ventures in Benue State. Overall, the results of this study indicate that the N-Power program is an effective tool for promoting youth empowerment and economic development in Nigeria, particularly among non-graduate youth in the northern states of Nasarawa and Benue.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study comprehensively examined the impact of various components of the N-Power program on non-graduate youth in Benue State, focusing on the N-Power Knowledge, and N-Creative components. The findings reveal significant positive outcomes across all program components, contributing to employment, income generation, skill development, and economic empowerment.

The N-Power Knowledge component has been effective in enhancing both employability and entrepreneurial skills among non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries. The program has equipped participants with the necessary technical and entrepreneurial skills, providing them with a competitive edge in the job market and the ability to start and manage their own businesses. This dual focus on employability and entrepreneurship has empowered youth to pursue diverse career paths and adapt to the dynamic demands of the technology and creative sectors.

The N-Creative component has successfully promoted income generation and economic empowerment through creative and innovative ventures. Participants have developed marketable creative skills and received support to initiate and grow their own businesses. The program has not only facilitated income generation but also fostered economic empowerment, enabling youth to achieve financial independence and contribute to the local economy through innovative and creative enterprises. Collectively, the N-Power programme components have demonstrated significant success in enhancing the socio-economic status of non-graduate youth in Benue State. By providing targeted training and resources across various sectors, the program has effectively addressed critical issues of unemployment, skill deficits, and economic disenfranchisement. The positive outcomes observed in employment, income generation, skill development, and entrepreneurial success underscore the program's role as a catalyst for youth empowerment and economic development in the region.

These findings suggest that continued support and expansion of the N-Power programme could further amplify its impact, contributing to broader socio-economic growth and stability in Benue State. Future initiatives should focus on sustaining the momentum, addressing emerging challenges, and scaling successful components to reach a wider demographic of non-graduate youth.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Since the programme has effectively enhanced employability and entrepreneurial skills of non-graduate youth in the technology and creative industries. To further increase its impact, it is recommended that the programme provides ongoing training and mentorship, establishes linkages with employers, and creates a network of alumni to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences.
- ii. To increase the impact of the N-Creative programme, it is recommended that the government provides access to funding, mentorship, and business development services for youth with creative and innovative ideas, establishes partnerships with creative and cultural organizations to provide opportunities for youth to showcase their talents and ideas, and increases access to technology and equipment necessary for creative ventures.

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