

**AN APPRAISAL OF THE NATIONAL SOCIAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA:
A CASE STUDY OF BAYELSA STATE, 2015-2022**

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Abstract

This study carried out an appraisal of the National Social Investment Programme and Economic Development in Nigeria: A Case Study of Bayelsa State, 2015-2022. The study adopted the correlational research design to enable the researcher to establish the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The target population for the study is estimated to be around two hundred and fifty thousand children, youths and women (250,000) in Bayelsa State. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of 399 drawn from the total population. An instrument titled; "Appraisal of National Social Investment Programme and Social Economic Development Questionnaire" (ANSIPSEDQ) was developed to elicit data from respondents which were validated and its consistency tested using Cronbach Alpha and the result yielded 0.86. Out of the 399 (100%) questionnaires distributed, 382 (95.7%) were returned valid, while 17 (4.3%) copies of the questionnaire were discarded due to filling errors. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 26.0. Findings from the study revealed that the National Social Investment Programme through the N-Power Programme, Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme, National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme and Conditional Cash Transfer enhanced economic development in Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was concluded that National Social Investment Programmes, enhance economic development in Nigeria: a case study of Bayelsa State, 2015-2022. The study recommended, among others, that the federal government of Nigeria should stop the delay in payment of the N-Power stipend to avoid its negative effect on human capital and economic development, combat high illiteracy, low education, lack of skills training, and scarce facilities and resources among children, youths and women in Nigeria for effective implementation and

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INTRODUCTION

Economic Development refers to programmes, policies or activities that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life of a nation. What economic development means to Nigerians depends on the situation of the country we live in. Nigeria as a state has its opportunities, challenges, and priorities so economic development planning must include the people who live and work in the country with various economic development strategies that often aim for common, positive results, such as: creating more jobs and more job variety, keeping businesses and getting new ones, a better quality of life, more people and businesses paying taxes, more productive use of property, promoting your community's assets, making and selling more local products and getting more skilled workers living in the country. Despite all these efforts and strategies put in place by various governments of Nigeria, it is forever bewildering when global statistics on poverty are brought up and a country such as Nigeria, the supposed giant of Africa sits amidst nations perishing in the loosed hands of poverty. It is more perplexing when the resources in the country are taken into consideration. Consisting of virtually all kinds of raw materials capable of changing the socio-economic phase of her people, it is distasteful that a large set of Nigerians live in abject poverty (Anyanwu & Duru, 2021).

In a bid to counter the problem at hand, some 'well-Meaning-Nigerians' have proffered that the wretched climate of the nation is attributed to the fact that the nation is barely young when compared to other civilizations and hence must not be viewed on a parallel basis. This statement, however, is not entirely true as it will spell folly on the nation if we wait to be over Three hundred (300) years before expecting significant change. We stand a better chance than any nation in the world today. They have the experiences of these nations to learn from, a bountiful land arguably the most blessed in terms of mineral and agricultural resources, and above all, a whooping youthful population capable of rejuvenating the socio-economic facade of the nation (Guha, 2014). For a country having all it takes to be a major world power, it is typical to wonder why her current status quo says otherwise. It is not with all the acumen in the world if the issues constraining her socioeconomic redundancy are attributed to direct negligence to the Nigerian youth. The youth remains the active set of individuals and is thereby responsible for nation-building.

Nigerian youths are considered fragile bombs. If handled carefully, they possess the prowess to deliver the nation to victory over her socio-economic hurdles. Likewise, neglect will spell catastrophe on the socio-economic development of the nation as they find solace in antisocial vices. No wonder, according to the United Nations (2010), Africa's 2011 population was estimated at 1.05 billion and is expected to double by 2050. Africa is the youngest continent in the world: About 70 per cent of its population is 30 years of age or younger. Undoubtedly, the challenges for youths that are central to Nigeria's economic development are numerous and varied they include employment, health and political participation. These issues differ among groups within the country (by gender, education level, ethnicity and health status), and regions. Conversely, the size, energy, enthusiasm, innovation and dynamism of youths are assets that can be harnessed for Africa's development with appropriate policies that deal adequately with the issues facing them (Odoh & Eme, 2014).

Unfortunately, the governments and policymakers in Nigeria were shocked at how to provide opportunities for the country's children, youth and women so that they can have decent lives and contribute to the economic development of their country. Many of the youths who are productive and energetic remain unemployed, continue to suffer from poor health, and lack sufficient support. Some of them have special needs that require attention. These include those living on the streets, commercial sex activities and those with disabilities. The responsibility

of ensuring that the aspirations and hopes of the youths are met lies with a multiplicity of stakeholders. In line with the economic reality of the Nigerian state, the government has no antithetical choice than to embark upon the introduction of social investment programmes for children, youths and women's productive purposes. The programme's significance cannot be exhaustively listed; nonetheless, it offers, at the periphery, the core/basic needs of individual economic livelihood as well as boosting the trends of development indices of the Nigerian State.

The Nigerian government has recognized that children, youths and women are a key resource that can be tapped for the benefit of the whole country, thus, (the government) endeavours to address issues affecting children, youths and women by introducing broad-based strategies that would provide them with meaningful opportunities to realize their potential and also contribute to the economic development of the country. Moreover, about 100 million Nigerians (62.6 per cent of the population) live below the international poverty line (PPP US\$1.25 per day). Unemployment also doubled from 6.4 per cent in 2014 to 41 per cent in 2023 (Onah & Olise, 2019; Umoh et al., 2023).

There was also a high rate of inequality (GINI Coefficient of 43 per cent) not just concerning income but also in terms of access to basic social services and opportunities. The high level of poverty in Nigeria has been orchestrated by low Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as revealed in part that there are expectations for GDP to continue to grow at a relatively slow pace of 3% in 2023 owing to the slowdown in economic activity that typically characterizes periods of political transition in Nigeria (Onyeonoro et al., 2023), poor performance of the social sector, high level of insecurity (Boko Haram insurgency, Herdsmen attack) and high rate of unemployment, among others. As a means of addressing the widespread poverty, in a society that is being ruled by a small group of individuals who share a common set of political and economic interests

It is based on the foregoing backdrop that the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of former President Muhammad Buhari 2016 established the National Social Investments Programmes (NSIP) to tackle poverty and hunger across the country (Umeifekwem et al., 2023). The suite of programmes under the NSIP focuses on ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources to vulnerable populations, including children, youth and women. Since 2016, these programmes combined have supported more than 4 million beneficiaries country-wide through a fair and transparent process supported by the Ministry of Budget and National Planning (MBNP) and other notable MDAs with aligned goals. More so, the programme was launched in a bid to ensure a stable and developed socio-economic, so Nigerian children, youths and women are properly equipped and empowered to sustain all aspects of programs and initiatives that target national development (Abubakar & Umar, 2018).

The NSIP is a platform for the empowerment of unemployed Nigerian youths in three categories: either young graduates, semi-skilled or semi-literates and unskilled labour with little or no level of education (Lamidi & Igbokwe, 2021). For the actualization of this NSIP, the programme content was compartmentalized into three dimensions; and in each of the dimensions, some sub-dimensions were enlisted. N-Power Teachers' Corps was one of the dimensional components of NSIP with subsidiaries on N-Power Agro, N-Power Health, N-Power Teach and N-Power Community Health. Another notable dimensional component of NSIP is the pack of N-Power Knowledge which is designed not necessarily for graduates from tertiary institutions but for individual youths with a requisite level of education in at least secondary school. Its subsidiaries include N-Power Creative, N-Power Tech Hardware and N-Power Tech Software (Imam, 2023). Also, the third component of the NSIP is N-Power Build with civil divisions in the area of building services, construction, environment services, utilities, automotive, as well as aluminium and gas.

Statement of the Problem

In the international system, regional organizations (such as the African Union) are increasingly using social protection as a policy tool to address development concerns. The main argument for social investment and citizen protection stems from the fact that social protection policy and programming can support a more equitable pro-poor growth model by supporting both economic and social development, particularly in Nigeria, where strong economic growth is not benefiting the poor. Rather than improving or decreasing youth unemployment, the degrees and dimensions of social malaise are increasing.

The lack of effective economic development in Nigeria has resulted in high levels of poverty and inequality, which have had negative consequences for the country's social, political, and economic stability. The National Social Investment Programme was established in 2016 to address these issues, but its effectiveness has been limited by some factors, including corruption, poor implementation, and a lack of coordination between the different government agencies involved.

The high crime rate, drug addiction, abduction, militancy, insurgency, banditry, and terrorism in our clime in recent times are seen to be consequences of Nigeria's deteriorating unemployment and poverty problems. As a means of curbing this malaise in the country, the National Social Investment Programme was birthed to address the issues of unemployment. Despite its commendable efforts to ensure the equitable distribution of resources to vulnerable populations in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, such as children, youth, and women, the NSIP has come under attack from some residents who believe the programme is failing to support the vulnerable population and thus failing to meet its objectives.

The existing literature on the National Social Investment Programme has several gaps that need to be addressed. First, there is a lack of empirical evidence on the program's effectiveness. Second, there is a lack of research on the challenges that have been faced during the implementation of the program. Finally, there is limited analysis of the political and social factors that affect the program's effectiveness. To fully understand the impact of the National Social Investment Programme, these gaps need to be addressed. It is against this background that this study is carrying out an appraisal of the national social investment programme and social economic development in Nigeria: a case study of Bayelsa State, 2015-2022.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study:

1. To what extent does the N-Power Programme enhance human capital development in Bayelsa State?
2. To what extent does the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme enhance trade in Bayelsa State?
3. To what extent does the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme enhance the standard of living in Bayelsa State?
4. To what extent does Conditional Cash Transfer enhance income in Bayelsa State?

Aims and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to carry out an appraisal of the national social investment programme and social economic development in Nigeria (2015-2023). The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the extent N-Power Programme enhances human capital development in Bayelsa State.
2. determine the extent Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme enhance trade in Bayelsa State.
3. investigate the extent National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme enhances the standard of living in Bayelsa State.

4. ascertain the extent Conditional Cash Transfer enhances income in Bayelsa State.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and statistically tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between the N-Power Programme and human capital development in Bayelsa State.
2. There is no significant relationship between Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programmes and trade in Bayelsa State.
3. There is no significant relationship between the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme and the standard of living in Bayelsa State.
4. There is no significant relationship between Conditional Cash Transfer and income in Bayelsa State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

National Social Investment Programme

The National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) was created in 2016 by President Muhammadu Buhari to address the socio-economic challenges that had bedevilled the country. The focus was to ensure the equitable distribution of resources to vulnerable populations, including children, youth, and women (Idoko & Udentia, 2023). The programme was created to alleviate poverty and act as a stimulant to further economic growth. Under President Muhammadu Buhari, the office has implemented four programs to address poverty and promote economic development.

The programmes under the NSIP include:

N-Power Programme: an initiative aimed at building the skills of youth and promoting entrepreneurship. The N-power programme is designed to address youth unemployment of Nigerians between the ages of 18 to 35 to acquire and develop life-long skills through job placement and skills training. It has categories for unemployed graduates (N-Teach, N-Health, N-Agro) and non-graduates (N-Build, N-Creative, N-Tech, N-Skills). **N-power Agro:** Volunteers will offer advice to farmers all around the country. They will help the federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development communicate information about extension services. **N-Power Health:** This programme is aimed at pregnant mothers, children, and other socially vulnerable people. As a result, volunteers will assist in the promotion of preventive healthcare among these target populations in their areas. **N-Power Teach:** In this programme, volunteers serve as teaching assistants in Nigerian elementary schools. This will aid in the delivery of basic education in the country.

Npower-Tax: In this sector, volunteers will act as community tax liaison officers with the state's tax authorities in their states. They will help with tax compliance awareness, answering online questions, and so forth. The N-Power Non-Graduate programme offers training and certification in two important areas: **N-Power Knowledge** is a non-profit organization dedicated to the incubation and acceleration of technology and creative businesses. Its primary goal is to ensure that people can participate in the marketplace as outsourcers, freelancers, or entrepreneurs. **NPower Build:** it engages and trains Nigerian youths who are unemployed to develop a generation of trained and competent professionals and specialists in a variety of fields. A monthly stipend of N30,000 is paid to graduates and N10,000 to non-graduates. Beneficiaries are trained to become change-makers in their communities and players in the domestic and global markets.

Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP): an intervention to address the challenges of access to credit facilities and to provide soft loans to Nigerians through the trader moni, market moni and farmer moni initiatives. Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP) is a micro-lending intervention that targets traders, artisans, enterprising youth, farmers and women in particular, by providing loans

between 10,000 and 100,000 at no monthly cost to beneficiaries. Its major goal is to ensure vulnerable youth, women, farmers, artisans, associations, and traders, who are at the bottom of the economic ladder/pyramid in Nigeria State, have access to credit without collateral.

National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP): an initiative to provide one nutritious meal a day to public primary school pupils to increase school enrolment, reducing the incidence of malnutrition. The NHGSFP was designed to improve the health and enrolment of Primary School children (in classes 1-3) through the delivery of meals every school day. It aims to deliver a government-led, cost-effective school feeding programme using food that is locally grown by smallholder farmers. Children benefit from a nutritionally balanced school meal which reduces hunger and improves education outcomes; farmers benefit from improved access to school feeding markets and communities benefit from new catering, processing, and food handling jobs. It brings a multiplier effect that will spur economic activities. For instance, there are a total of 3,444 Schools currently benefiting from the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme across the 23 Local Government Areas, 7,262 number women have been recruited as Cooks while a total of 735,280 pupils are currently enjoying the NHGSFP in Kaduna State. Meals are pegged at the cost of N100 per child per meal.

Objectives of school feeding.

Encourage: The program aims to improve the enrolment of primary school children in Nigeria and reduce the current dropout rates from primary school which is estimated at 30%.

Improve: The program aims to address the poor nutrition and health status of many children who have been affected as a result of poverty this has affected the learning outcomes of the children.

To Create, Improve Family and State: The program aims to create jobs along the value chain and provides a multiplier effect for economic growth and development.

Stimulate: Linking the programme to local agricultural production has direct economic benefits and can potentially benefit the entire community as well as the children. The program aims to stimulate local agricultural production and boost the income of farmers by creating a viable and ready market via the school feeding programme. Only Pupils in Primary 1 to 3 are eligible for the school feeding programme

Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Programme: an initiative to provide cash transfers to vulnerable households as grants. CCTs are beneficial from a targeting perspective because they direct money to the set of households who forgo a large amount of child income. We argue that this benefit mitigates the cost of excluding those households that are too poor to comply with the conditions. CCTs aim to both alleviate current poverty by directing transfers to poor households as well as reduce future poverty by tying access to transfers to investments in children's human capital.

These programmes are designed to serve as various forms of social safety nets specifically targeting those at the bottom of the social ladder or those who require some form of support to enable them to become productive members of society and finally prevent more people from falling below the poverty line. The submission is to create the National Social Investment Programme as an agency, in line with Mr President's agenda to lift 100 million Nigerians out of poverty by the year 2030 (Ajiboye, 2022). NSIP was implemented to fully partner with all the 36 State Governments and the FCT while Council also approved an acceptable source of funding for NSIP through a budgetary allocation and 5% of recovered and repatriated funds.

More and more people and businesses are taking up social and environmental initiatives that can make the world a better place for all. Social impact investing allows investors to invest in businesses that are crusading causes like climate control, workplace abuse, poverty, healthcare, energy conservation, etc. Social investment is an approach to addressing social issues where the focus of the investment activity (be it money, resources, or time)

is to create positive social outcomes. Investing can bring you many benefits, such as helping to give you more financial independence. As savings held in cash will tend to lose value because inflation reduces their buying power over time, investing can help to protect the value of your money as the cost of living rises.

Economic Development

Economic development can be described as a program, set of policies, or activities that seek to build capacity for self-sustaining, long-term economic growth (Amin, 2017). While state governments and local non-profit economic development agencies/organizations often take the lead in developing economic development programs, local governments in Nigeria can play a major role in planning for economic development that bolsters jobs, the local tax base, environmental sustainability, social equity, and good quality of life. Economic development is a term used to describe concerted actions taken for economic progress within a specific area (Weil, 2016). It is the process of generating and sustaining wealth in a community. Every community has unique assets that can be used to attract employers and investment. Building on these assets is one of the best ways communities can stimulate their economies.

The Nigerian government facilitates economic development because it provides a planning framework for communities to build upon existing plans and leverage local assets to improve the quality of life of residents (Azubuike et al., 2023). When the governments implement the NSIP programmes, they bring together many factors that combine to create places that are enjoyable to live, work, and play. Being located in an area that boasts a high quality of life allows businesses to attract and retain talented employees. One of the first steps towards implementing a successful economic development initiative is the launching of the NSIP programmes to reduce the rate of youth unemployment, eradicate malnutrition among children, improve school enrollment among children, and provide access to affordable credit for MSMEs (Nwaobi, 2019).

Indicators of Economic Development

In the context of this study, the following were considered indicators of economic development:

Human Capital Development: consists of the knowledge, skills, and health that people accumulate throughout their lives, enabling them to realize their potential as productive members of society. With the introduction of the N-Power Programme, Nigeria can end extreme poverty and create more inclusive societies by developing human capital.

Trade: involving the purchase and sale of goods and services, with compensation paid to a seller by a purchaser or the exchange of goods or services between parties. Trade can take place in a producer-consumer economy. Trade leads to faster productivity growth, especially for sectors and countries engaged in global value chains (GVCs). These links allow a country to specialize in making a single component, like shoes. So, the introduction of the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme would enhance trade by giving youths and women interest-free-loans (MARKETMONI) as well as give access to credit to poor and vulnerable people who are at the bottom of the economic pyramid including persons with disabilities.

Standard of Living: is the level of income, comforts and services available, generally applied to a society or location, rather than to an individual. The standard of living is relevant because it is considered to contribute to an individual's quality of life. The National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme(NHGSFP) was created to enhance school enrolment, improve nutrition, health and stimulate the growth of our local economies by sourcing food items from local farmers which strengthens the Local Agricultural Economies, Creates Employment Opportunities with jobs in catering for residents of the country, Nigeria. Benefits of school feeding programmes for children and adolescents include alleviating hunger, reducing micronutrient deficiency and anaemia, preventing overweight and obesity, improving school enrollment and attendance, increasing cognitive and academic performance, and contributing to gender equity in access to education

Income: is a flow of money going to factors of production: Wages and salaries paid to people from their jobs or the money paid to people receiving welfare benefits such as the state pension and tax credits. Nigeria's Conditional Cash Transfer program provides targeted cash transfers to the most vulnerable households with the long-term goal of lifting millions out

of poverty in the short term by helping to increase household income and consumption as a family. They have also worked effectively in increasing school enrollment and attendance, especially in middle school. The programme also targeted women with a stipend of up to N5,000 if they attend antenatal care (ANC), skilled delivery, and postnatal care just to promote life expectancy, and reduce infant mortality and other post-delivery complications.

NSIP and Economic Development

NSIP was a programme created to tackle socio-economic challenges facing the Nigerian State through various sets of programmes- N-Power, National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP), and Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP) to provide jobs, even distribution of income, public commitment, for those unable to avail themselves of the minimum provision for a good life and better the system. This assertion was supported by ActionAid Nigeria which conducted an assessment of the NSIP programme and their findings revealed that some beneficiaries of the programme had experienced an increase in income and businesses due to their participation in the CCT, GEEP, N-Power, and an improvement of their economic status was better off than before they were engaged in the programme. the NSIP program was able to positively affect many lives in the state.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Elite Model

The Elite Model, also known as the Elitist Theory, is a theoretical framework that can be applied to the topic of the National Social Investment Programme. The Elite Model was originally developed by C. Wright Mills in his book *The Power Elite*, which was published in 1956. This theory suggests that power in society is concentrated in the hands of a small group of elites, who control the institutions and resources that determine the distribution of wealth and power. This theory can be applied to the topic by examining how the elites in Nigeria, such as government officials and business leaders, have influenced the design and implementation of the National Social Investment Programme.

The core attributes of the theory are that power is concentrated in the hands of a small group of elites, that this group controls key institutions and resources, and that this concentration of power is a major source of inequality in society. According to this theory, the elites shape the policies and institutions that affect the distribution of wealth and power.

Applying the Elite Model to this Study

The Elite Model is a valuable framework for understanding the impact of the NSIP on social and economic development in Nigeria as well as understanding the political and economic context of the NSIP and analysing the potential challenges and opportunities for its success. However, applying the Elite Model to this study posited that the elites in society have the greatest influence on development and that policies and programmes are shaped by their interests and agendas. In the case of the NSIP, it is argued that the success of the programme depends on the support and cooperation of the elites in Nigerian society, such as politicians, business leaders, and civil society organizations. However, we have seen cases where the elite who are supposed to be the ones to transform the society with key policies and full implementation are the same persons killing the system through various means, such as looting of public funds meant to fund the programmes.

There are several ways that the elites in Nigeria can potentially "kill" the NSIP, or make it less effective. One way is through political influence and manipulation. The elites may try to use their political power to influence the policies and decisions of the NSIP, or even to subvert its goals.

Another way is through economic influence. The elites may control the resources that are needed to implement the NSIP, and they may use their economic power to steer the programme in a direction that benefits them.

Lastly, the elites may use their social and cultural power to shape public opinion and influence the way that the NSIP is perceived.

The Elite Model can be used to identify and address how the elites in Nigeria are influencing the NSIP. This can be done through several strategies, including:

- Promoting transparency and accountability in the implementation of the NSIP.
- Strengthening the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the NSIP.

- Increasing public participation and engagement in the NSIP.
- Fostering partnerships between the NSIP and other development actors, such as civil society organizations.
- Encouraging media scrutiny and investigative journalism on the NSIP.

The Elite Model is a great way to explore how the policies and decisions of the NSIP might be influenced by the elites in Nigeria. For example, you could look at how the NSIP has been funded and implemented, and how this has been influenced by the interests of the elites. You could also examine how the elites have benefited from the NSIP, and whether this has come at the expense of other groups in society. In summary, the Elite Model would suggest that the National Social Investment Programme in Nigeria is influenced by a small group of elites, who have a vested interest in the program and its outcomes. The elites may use their power and influence to shape the policies and implementation of the program in a way that benefits them. However, this may come at the expense of the broader population, who may not benefit as much from the program

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Dauda et al. (2019) examined the impact of the N-Power programme on youth enterprise in Minna Metropolis. The study examined the impact of N-Power programmes on youth empowerment in Minna Metropolis, Niger State. A cross-sectional survey design was used in this study to generate data. A sample of 225 respondent youths was obtained from 512 total N-Power beneficiaries in the metropolis for the study. The study used a structured questionnaire to obtain responses from the study sample. Descriptive statistics such as mean and percentages were used to measure the demographic data while inferential statistics such as Pearson product-moment correlation were used to analyse data in this study. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (r) was employed to test the hypotheses. The study focused on graduate unemployed related to the N-Power programme. This includes N-Power Agro, N-Power Health and N-Power Teach. The results of the study indicated that there is no significant relationship between the N-power scheme against the following variables, Employment generation, poverty alleviation and skill acquisition. The study also found that the major factors that are militating against the effectiveness of the N-Power programme include; Job insecurity, non-payment of stipends to participants as at when due, bribery and corruption, and poor monitoring. The study, therefore, recommends that the authorities concerned should expand the horizon of the programme to cover more unemployed graduates, turn the programme into tenure employment opportunities for the beneficiaries and provide grants to enterprising graduates to gainfully employ their latent skills.

Akenbor and Obeki (2022) conducted a study to examine the impact of the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme on the Standard of Living in Rivers State of Nigeria. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of government enterprise and empowerment programmes (GEEP) on the standard of living. In achieving this objective, a critical review of the extant literature was made with certain hypothetical statements. In this study government enterprise and empowerment programme (GEEP) was operationalized as market moni, trader moni, and farmer moni. The population of the study comprises ninety-six thousand four hundred and thirteen (96,413) with a sample size of three hundred and ninety-eight (398) beneficiaries. The primary source of data collection was employed in this study using the questionnaire designed on a five-point Likert scale. Before its administration, the questionnaire was assessed for validity and reliability and the result was within the threshold. The statistical method of data analysis used in this study is the Pearson Product Moment Co-efficient of Correlation (PPMCC). Based on the findings of this study, and the conclusion drawn there, it is recommended that the government should give serious attention to market moni, trader moni, and farmer moni as the various forms of government enterprise and empowerment schemes as means of improving the standard of living of the people. More so, the implementation of these schemes should be devoid of politics.

Asiegbu et al. (2022) conducted an empirical assessment of the national home-grown school feeding programme of the Muhammadu Buhari administration, 2016-2021. The study adopted systems theory as it is a framework of analysis and made use of secondary and primary data drawn mainly from journals, textbooks and other online materials. The survey research design and purposive sampling technique were adopted respectively in the study. The study administered 300 copies of research questionnaires to the three sampled Community Primary Schools across Nigeria out of which, 286 copies of questionnaires were retrieved and used for the analysis. Data were presented in tabular format and analyzed using a simple percentage method. Study findings, amongst others, prove that poor programme coverage, inadequate funding and high cost of food items are challenges facing the programme. Consequently, the study recommends, amongst others, that proper planning/management of the food vendors, improved standard and quality of food and coordinated food supply for each state can help the programme succeed.

Shadare (2020) examined Conditional Cash Transfers in Nigeria—in an exploratory study. The research study Employed the qualitative methodology, encompassing an in-depth interview (with key informants), semistructured interviews with respondents and focus group discussions with selected groups within certain communities, the study reflected the religious and demographic divide of Nigeria to capture the lived experiences of beneficiaries and their perspectives of the CCT programmes. The study affirmed the salience of politics and contextual variations in the implementation of CCTs. Findings also reveal the importance of contextual dynamics, the necessity of understanding the politics, and the political settlements of a country and how it is useful in explaining the national experiences of social policy development. The study is only the second such on Nigerian social protection, thus contributing to the academic discourse on social policy dynamics and redistributive programmes in development contexts by empirically connecting the nexus between political contexts, actors, institutions and the citizens to public attitudes and trust in government. The findings enrich our understanding of social protection in Nigeria and may act as a guide to future policy actions as well as future research into Nigerian social protection.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the correlational research design. This was because the researcher intended to establish the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The target population for the study is estimated to be around two hundred and fifty children, youths and women (250,000) in Bayelsa State. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of 399 was derived from the total population. An instrument titled; “Appraisal of National Social Investment Programme and Social Economic Development Questionnaire” (ANSIPSEDQ) was developed to elicit data from respondents which were validated and its consistency tested using Cronbach Alpha and the result yielded 0.86. on a four-point Likert rating scale with the numerical values assigned to them as follows: Very High Extent (VHE)=4 points, High Extent (HE)=3 points; points; Low Extent (LE)=2 points and Very Low Extent (VLE)=1 point. Out of the 399 (100%) questionnaires distributed, 382 (95.7%) were returned copies valid while 7(4.3%) copies of the questionnaire were discarded due to filling errors. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer the four research questions and also test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 26.0.

DATA ANALYSIS

Research Question One: To what extent does N-Power enhance Human Capital Development in Bayelsa State?

Table 1: Correlations between N-Power and Human Capital Development

		N-Power	Human Capital Development
N-Power	Pearson Correlation	1	.645**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	382	382
Human Capital Development	Pearson Correlation	.645**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	382	382

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) result in Table 1 is used to answer research question one. The correlation coefficients (r) indicate that there is a strong positive correlation between N-power and human capital development in Bayelsa State. The direction and strength of this relationship are depicted by the r-value of 0.645. Therefore, the relationship is strong and positive but there is also strong statistical evidence that this correlation is meaningful.

Hypothesis One was tested at a significant value of 0.05. However, the test of a significant value of $P 0.000 < 0.05$ was derived which shows that the relationship was significant so the hypothesis of no significance was rejected while the alternative was accepted. Thus there was a significant relationship between N-power and Human Capital Development in Bayelsa State.

Research Question Two: To what extent does the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme enhance trade in Bayelsa State?

Table 2: Correlations between Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme and Trade

		GEEP	Trade
GEEP	Pearson Correlation	1	.663**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	382	382
Trade	Pearson Correlation	.663**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	382	382

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) result in Table 2 is used to answer research question two. The correlation coefficients (r) indicate that there is a strong positive correlation between Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programmes and Trade in Bayelsa State. The direction and strength of this relationship are depicted by the r-value of 0.663. Therefore, the relationship is strong and positive but there is also strong statistical evidence that this correlation is meaningful.

While hypothesis two was tested at a significant value of 0.05. However, the test of a significant value of $P 0.000 < 0.05$ was derived which shows that the relationship was significant so the hypothesis of no significance was rejected while the alternative was accepted. Thus there was a significant relationship between Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programmes and Trade in Bayelsa State.

Research Question Three: To what extent does the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme enhance the standard of living in Bayelsa State?

Correlations between the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme enhance the Standard of Living

		NHSFP	Standard of Living
NHSFP	Pearson Correlation	1	.611**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	382	382
Standard of Living	Pearson Correlation	.611**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	382	382

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) result in Table 3 is used to answer research question two. The correlation coefficients (r) indicate that there is a strong positive correlation between the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme enhancing the standard of living in Bayelsa State? in Bayelsa State?. The direction and strength of this relationship are depicted by the r-value of 0.611. Therefore, the relationship is strong and positive but there is also strong statistical evidence that the correlation is meaningful.

While hypothesis three was tested at a significant value of 0.05. However, the test of a significant value of P 0.000 <0.05 was derived which shows that the relationship was significant so the hypothesis of no significance was rejected while the alternative was accepted. Thus there was a significant relationship between the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme enhancing the standard of living in Bayelsa State.

Research Question Four: How does Conditional Cash Transfer enhance Income in Bayelsa State?

Correlations between Conditional Cash Transfer enhance Income

		Conditional Cash Transfer	Income
Conditional Cash Transfer	Pearson Correlation	1	.641**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	382	382
Income	Pearson Correlation	.641**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	382	382

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) result in Table 4 is used to answer research question four. The correlation coefficients (r) indicate that there is a strong positive correlation between Conditional Cash Transfer enhanced income in Bayelsa State? in Bayelsa State? in Bayelsa State? The direction and strength of this relationship are depicted by the r-value of 0.641. Therefore, the relationship is strong and positive but there is also strong statistical evidence that the correlation is meaningful.

While hypothesis four was tested at a significant value of 0.05. However, the test of a significant value of P 0.000 <0.05 was derived which shows that the relationship was significant so the hypothesis of no significance was rejected while the alternative was accepted. Thus there was a significant relationship between Conditional Cash Transfer and enhanced Income in Bayelsa State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

N-Power Programme and Human Capital Development in Bayelsa State. The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between N-power and Human Capital Development in Bayelsa State. This, therefore, implies that the N-Power programme with the various N-Teach, N-Health, N-Agro, N-Build and N-Creative enhance Human Capital Development in Bayelsa State. However, Dauda et al. (2019) in their study findings did not agree as they revealed that there is no significant relationship between the N-power scheme against the

following variables, Employment generation, poverty alleviation and skill acquisition. The responses from the respondents surveyed indicated that most graduate beneficiaries are apprehensive because the two-year mandate has lapsed and the future is gloomy. Lack of access to loans is a dominating constraint to the paucity of jobs in the economy as proven by the findings of this study. While, findings from Osasona's (2023) study supported that the impact of the programme on secondary school education in Kogi State includes the provision of new relevant skills in teaching, improving academic performance, and fill-in for the shortage of school teachers.

Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme and Trade in Bayelsa State?

The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programmes and Trade in Bayelsa State. This implies that revealed that government enterprise and empowerment programmes of various forms (market moni, trader moni and farmer moni) and standard of living in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. This was supported by Akenbor and Obeki (2022), whose findings also revealed that government enterprise and empowerment programme of various forms (market moni, trader moni and farmer moni) enhances the standard of living in Rivers State of Nigeria. Olateju's (2021) findings further indicate that the loan programme increased the profit and expanded the business of the petty traders who participated in the loan programme over and above those petty traders who did not participate in the loan programme in the study area.

National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme and the standard of living in Bayelsa State.

The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme and the standard of living in Bayelsa State. This implies that the benefits of the Home-grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP) go beyond education and nutrition to tackle the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and local communities. They also strengthen the nexus between nutrition, agriculture and social protection. Asiegbu et al. ((2022), supported this study by revealing as well that poor programme coverage, inadequate funding and high cost of food items are challenges facing the programme.

Conditional Cash Transfer and Income in Bayelsa State.

The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between Conditional Cash Transfers and Income in Bayelsa State. This, therefore, implies that the program provides cash grants to targeted poor Nigerian families based on sustained, verified compliance with certain health and education conditions. Such conditions include sending children to school, ensuring they receive regular checkups, and participating in family planning and nutrition as well as their income level. However, Shadare (2020) opposed the findings by adding that Conditional Cash Transfer and the income or standard of living of the citizenry because the government failed to fulfil their constitutional obligation of implementing the social policies that would improve the living standard of the people.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the National Social Investment Programme was designed to help the Federal Government fulfil its social protection role to its citizens, reduce poverty and inequality in Nigeria, and jumpstart progress on human development which were based on the need for more sustainable and inclusive economic growth, lower poverty rates, and the need to decrease Nigeria's large inequality gap between rich and poor, as well as the gender gap. National Social Investment Programmes, therefore, enhance economic development in Nigeria: a case study of Bayelsa State, 2015-2022.

Recommendations

From the study findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. The federal government should stop the delay in payment of the N-Power stipend to avoid its negative effect on human capital and economic development,

2. The federal government should ensure how to combat high illiteracy, low education, lack of skills training, and scarce facilities and resources among children, youths and women in Nigeria for effective implementation and actualization of the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme goals,
3. The federal government should come up with a policy to solve the problems of large-scale corruption, irregularities, credibility issues, etc. for effective implementation and actualization of the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme goals, and
4. The federal government should increase the level of cash incentives that is currently too low in urban settings, as well as ensure inclusive, transparent, objective and communal consensus of what and who is poor in a community for effective implementation and actualization of the Conditional Cash Transfer objectives.

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