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08030500622

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LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

SN	NAMES	DEPARTMENT/UNIVERSITY
1.	Alamutu, S. A	Department of Management Technology, Lagos State University, Lagos
2.	Olabode, S. O.	Department of Management Technology, Lagos State University, Lagos
3.	Arewa, Ajibola	Department of Banking and Finance, Lagos State University, Lagos
4.	Nwene, B. F	Department of Banking and Finance, University of Port Harcourt, River State
5.	Jegede, C. A.	Department of Banking and Finance, Lagos State University, Lagos
6.	Adeoti, O. O.	Olabisi Onabanjo University Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State
7.	Soyebo, Y. A	Department of Banking and Finance, Lagos State University, Lagos
8.	Isiaka, S. B.	Department of Business Administration, University of Ilorin
9.	Aremu, Mukaila. Ayanda	Department of Marketing, University of Ilorin
10.	Aransiola, Solomon. Y.	Department of Accounting and Finance, Crawford University, Igbesa
11.	Ogunlusi Gbenga	Department of Administration and Management Crawford University, Igbesa, Ogun State
12.	Oladimeji, M. S.	Department of Business Administration, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State
13.	Giwa, O. M.	School of Transport, Lagos State University, Lagos
14.	Asaju, J.A.	School of Transport, Lagos State University, Lagos
15.	Shehu, S.A.	Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin
16.	Olowokulejo, F.	Department of Actuarial Science, University of Lagos
17.	Ajemunigbohun, S. S.	Department of Insurance, Lagos State University
18.	Olateju, O. A.	Department of Management Technology, Lagos State University, Lagos
19.	Oguh, F.	Department of Business Administration, Lagos State University
20.	Abiodun, J.A	Department of Business Administration, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta
21.	Adeyemi, S.K	Department of Accounting and Finance, Kwara State

Assessment of E-recruitment in Kwara State Bridge Empowerment Scheme Ilorin, Nigeria

Dr. A. Salman
Department of Business Administration,
Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.
salrasaq@yahoo.com

Dr. S. B. Isiaka
Department of Business Administration,
Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.
sibvaka@yahoo.com

Abstract

Decades ago, Nigeria was known to be one of the richest countries in Africa because of her great petroleum reserves and large population. Ironically, Nigerian economy is now characterized by unemployment and poverty which more often result in social vices, such as community crisis/clashes, societal conflicts, and kidnapping. This called for action plans to combat these vices. Such action plans adopted in Kwara State Nigeria, is Kwara State Bridge Empowerment Scheme (KWABES). This study therefore assesses e-recruitment in KWABES. The study population includes selected beneficiaries of the scheme. Both primary and secondary data were used to achieve the study objectives. The primary data were generated through administration of structured questionnaire and secondary data were sourced from KWABES records, electronic source and media. Histogram and Z-test statistical technique at +1.960 and -1.960 for acceptance or rejection of the study hypotheses were used to achieve the objectives of the study. Research findings show that there is positive effect of e-recruitment in KWABES on employment generation for the youth in the state. Also, the use of e-recruitment in KWABES has contributed significantly to the reduction of poverty in the state as a result of employment opportunities for the youth in the state. The study concluded based on findings that progress was made in terms of youth employment generation within the periods under study. The study therefore recommended that; KWABES should expand the scope of vacancies through e-recruitment by creating more jobs for youths in the state and to adequately specify the manpower requirements on the job advert portal.

Keywords: E-recruitment, Employment, KWABES, Poverty-reduction.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is often described as a rich country in terms of natural resources endowment. Nonetheless, unemployment has been a problem in Nigeria since 1980 when the nation's economy took a turn for the worse as world petroleum prices tumbled, the Nigerian

currency became devalued, corruption became rampant, and the population of Nigeria at a breathtaking pace. The resultant poverty has posed questions about the wisdom of conventional strategies for national development.

However, the most dominant feature of the Nigerian economy is unemployment and poverty. Therefore, there is a need for a development plan that will revitalize the economy of Nigeria, and provide relevant strategies for combating unemployment and poverty in Nigeria. Provision of employment opportunities to the masses is a means of ensuring participation of all citizens in the national development process. This is because, lack of employment opportunities for many Nigerians has resulted in social vices, such as community crisis/clashes, societal conflicts, kidnapping, robbery, militancy/insurgency and also a large number of Nigerians living in poverty which in turns leads to alienation of poor people (who are often rural residents) from political-economic functioning of their society. Fasoranti, (2010).

According to Marcellus, (2009) the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) is every country's poverty reduction and employment generation strategy. However, in Kwara State, several poverty reduction programmes have been used by successive governments over the years. For instance in 2005, the Government of the state introduced Voluntary Teaching Scheme (VTS) to reduce insufficient number of teachers in the state and as well improved employment rate. This programme faced continuity problem as a result of change in government administration and policies. Thus, in 2008, agricultural programme was initiated at Shonga in order to create employment opportunities for farmers. This programme is limited in scope as it is restricted to agriculture. Thus, the present government introduced another employment programme known as Kwara Bridge Empowerment Scheme (KWABES) which provides opportunities for varieties of applicants through e-recruitment regardless of their disciplines. The KWABES e-recruitment strategy however, intends to reduce poverty, unemployment as well as improve the standard of living of the people in the state. It is against this background that this study examines the extent to which KWABES generate employment opportunities through e-recruitment for the youth in the state and to determine the contribution of KWABES e-recruitment strategy on poverty reduction in the state.

Statement of the Problem

Unemployment problem in Nigeria is a hydra headed phenomena going by its multi-facet nature. This is because it is possible that diverse economic, social and political problems might have adverse effect on the sustainable development of the country's high unemployment rate. Williams and Michael (2012).

According to Hassan (2013), the unemployment rate in Nigeria has impacted on the rate of social vices like robbery, kidnapping, prostitution, human trafficking, child abuse and

unfair labour practices experienced mostly by the unemployed youths, which are other noticeable dimensions to the complexities of contemporary Nigerian employment dynamics.

The National Manpower Board, (2009) the Nigeria labour market could barely absorb 10% of the over 3.8 million persons turned out by the Nigeria educational system on a yearly basis. In brief, the employment trends in Nigeria indicate that, without a concerted effort to tackle the problems of unemployment and underemployment the situation could get worse.

Many scholars such as Schnurr and Newing (1997), have written widely on several government empowerment programme, entrepreneurship and its potency to generate employment. In order to highlight its significance in relation to the growth and development of a given economy, entrepreneurship has been variously referred to as a "source of employment generation". This is because entrepreneurial activities have been found to be capable of making positive impacts on the economy of a nation and the quality of life of the people.

Studies conducted by some authors have established relationship between entrepreneurship with stimulation of economic growth; employment generation; and empowerment of the disadvantaged segment of the population, which include women and the poor. (Oluremi and Gbenga, 2011; Mueller and Thomas, 2000; Reynolds, 1987). The questions are; what is the level of employment generation programme by the government? What are the respective influences of the employment scheme on the poverty level and employment generations for the youth? It is in the wake of these questions that this study aimed at assessing e-recruitment in KWABES.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of E-recruitment

Recruitment includes those practices and activities carried out by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees. It is an important part of human resource management as it performs the essential function of drawing human assets into the organization. According to Barber (1998), recruitment is a process of searching candidates to fill staff vacancies in any organization. The recruitment process attracts and secures the services of capable personnel with effective and optimum utilization of human resources. Recruitment is the activity that links the employers and the job seekers.

The e-recruitment process however, begins when new recruits are sought and ends when their applications are submitted online recruitment offers recruiters one of the most powerful and cost-effective ways to recruit staff for an organization. Online recruitment, e-recruitment, or web-based recruitment is the use of online technology to attract and source candidates and aid the recruitment process. What this usually means is the use of a

company's own website, a third-party job site or job board, a CV database, search engine marketing or social media platforms to fill vacancies.

One of the main advantages of electronic recruiting methods is the accessibility. Anyone from anywhere can apply for an advertised job. It does not matter if the applicant is located in Nigeria and the employer is in Sydney. The system is available for both parties 24/7, which in turn is another advantage. Gone are the days when you had to send your CV to an advertiser and had to wait for the reply for days or even weeks. More than a decade ago already Hogler, Henle & Bemus, (1998), referred to this system in that the advertiser having received the application could screen it and the applicant would then receive feedback immediately regarding their possible success for the job.

Du Plessis (2012), and Rudman (2010), support the fact that technology is an invaluable tool for most HRM processes to execute its tasks in an organisation. It not only streamlines the processing of employee data, but it is also useful in the recruiting process. It is also very effective and quick, therefore it is in vogue in all countries and by more and more recruiters.

Concept of Unemployment

Unemployment is defined as a situation where someone of working age is not able to get a job but would like to be in full time employment. According to Balami (2006), unemployment is conceptualised as a situation where in a worker or workers are involuntarily out of work. This means that workers are willing and able to work but could not find any work. Unemployment is often defined by the classical economists as the excess supply of labour over the demand for labour which is caused by adjustment in real wage. The Classical or real-wage unemployment occurs when real wages for job are set above the market-clearing level, causing number of job-seekers to exceed the number of vacancies.

Unemployment as defined by International Labour Organization (2009) is a state of joblessness which occurs when people are without jobs and they have actively sought work within the past four weeks. The unemployment is a measure of the prevalence of unemployment and it is calculated as a percentage by dividing the number of unemployed individuals by individuals currently in the labour force.

Causes of Unemployment

Poor education: This is the major cause of unemployment in most countries that do not take serious care of their education sector. Nations who do not backup what the students are taught in their individual institutions of higher learning with practical background are likely to 'vomit' graduates yearly who cannot make good impact to the society. When the graduates that are given out every year cannot defend what they studied, the only thing they do is to add to the unemployment level of the country.

Lack of Skills: It is hard to see any person who is full of skills and still suffer from unemployment. A skilful person can adapt in many environments and feed appropriately to the fullness. One of the principal causes of unemployment among adults of different locations of the world is because good skills which can give them good self-employment are lacking in them.

Poor government planning: A government that fails in her duty to help minimize unemployment in any country is as bad as a shepherd that does not care for his flock. Some top government officials are after their selfish interest without considering the importance of making provisions for her citizens. Due to the government's weakness, unemployment becomes the major problem in the country.

Corruption: Corruption is a cause of unemployment because when those in government who are to use public money for building more manufacturing industries are busy embezzling the funds for their selfish use, the next is massive increase in unemployment rate. Nigeria is the 8th most corrupt country in the world and this country also have high unemployment rate. The corruption in Nigeria government makes government of the country to spend less on the welfare of the citizens of the country.

Poor Mechanization: Mechanization can be defined as introduction of machines or automations to facilitate production processes. In most developing countries, lack of mechanization is one of the principal causes of unemployment among the citizens of the countries. Some people in developing parts of the world are still making use of crude equipments for cultivation of crops. This is why many quit or find it difficult to become engage in agriculture as their source of employment. (Balami, 2006).

Consequences of Unemployment

Migration: this is movement from one particular area where one is located to another in search of 'greener pasture'. Unemployment have made many citizens of specific country to move to other countries, work in the new locations, earn their money from that new location, and even die there at their old ages because they take the new place they migrate to as their new homes.

Conflict: There is a popular saying: an angry man is a hungry man. What is that that make the man angry which subsequently leads to hunger? The answer is that unemployment can make a man angry which results to hunger. When large numbers of citizens are unemployed, conflicts can come in because they are angry and hungry at the same time.

Crime: What business does an employed worker have with criminal act going on in his or her country? Most people start thinking of one crime or the other that they will indulge in to make money when there is no source of income for them.

Low national industrial output: It is clear that any nation which faces unemployment will have decline in industrial production. This is because those who are to be employed into various manufacturing companies are not given opportunities to boost the output of the country. Employing graduates and learned persons will increase products which are yearly produced in many nations

Poverty: Mathematically, unemployment is directly proportional to poverty. In the 2013 release of top countries that face high unemployment rate by International Labour Organization, Africa faces the highest unemployment rate. When this is compared with poverty level of African Continent, it is not farfetched that Africa continent is the poorest continent in the world.

Robbery: this is another social criminal activity which can to be as a result of unemployment. One whose conscience is dead and wants to make money either by hook or crook can force himself into robbery to make money. Robbers have caused a lot of injuries to innocent persons and have shaded lots and lots of blood. Many do this because they want to meet up with the demand of life, which they think that the only option available to them is by armed robbery attacks. (Andrew, 2013).

Employment/Empowerment Programmes in Nigeria

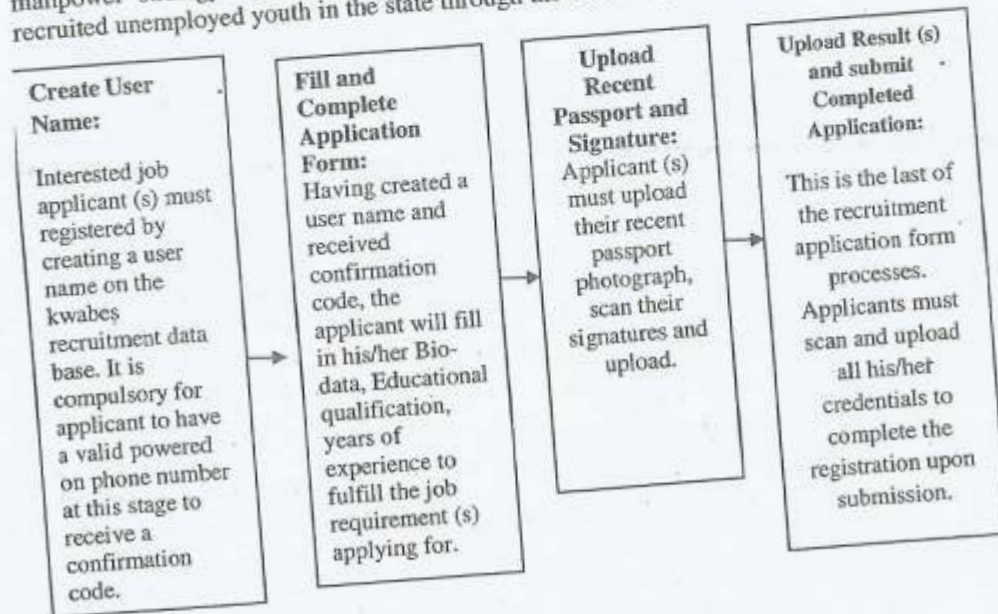
Empowerment programme is an attitudinal, structural, and cultural process whereby young people gain the ability, authority, and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of other people, including youth and adults. However, employment/empowerment programmes in Nigeria national development planning has stressed the importance of manpower development, utilization, promotion and creation of job opportunities. According to Andrew (2013), the following policies/programmes that were put in place in some of the previous plans to address areas of employment/manpower development.

The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) Decree No.47 of 1971 made it mandatory for all employers with 25 employees and above to pay a raining level of 1% of their annual payrolls to the ITF while employers were to be reimbursed up to 60% of the cost of training programmes arranged for their employees on annual basis. The purpose of this was to promote the employment of indigenous manpower through enhanced training programmes. The fund is also a major contributor to the training programmes of the Centre for Management (CMD) which was established by an enabling decree in 1976.

National Directorate of Employment (NDE) was established on November 22nd 1986, an enabling decree -Decree No. 24 of 1989 -gave it legal backing and made it the national agency for tackling unemployment in the country. The overriding objectives of NDE were to give training opportunities to the unemployed, specially the youth, by providing guidance, finance and other support services, to help them create jobs for themselves and for others.

alami, (2013) also mentioned Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agencies (SMEDAN), the poverty alleviation programme, the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P), and the Youth Enterprise With Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWIN), National Agency for Poverty Eradication Programme, (NAPEP), the National open apprenticeship scheme, the graduate job creation loan Guarantee Scheme, and Agricultural sector Employment program. Despite these policies and programmes, youth unemployment/empowerment remains a major challenge to the developmental process of the Nigeria economy.

In Kwara State, Voluntary Teaching Services (VTS), Shonga farm, Quickwin, KWABES were established to reduce poverty by creating employment and as such necessitate involvement of the state in these various programmes. KWABES is a manpower strategy recently adopted by the Kwara State government. The scheme recruited unemployed youth in the state through the following e-recruitment processes.



Source: www.kwarastate.gov.ng/kwabes

Challenges of Empowerment Programmes in Nigeria
Nigeria as developing country is seriously challenged by poverty. According to Amobi (2008), out of every 10 Nigerians 7 live on less than \$1 a day and the picture is getting bad by the day. On account of poverty in Nigeria, poor parents beget poor children, thereby creating a kind of dynasty of the poor. Also, only about half the population of

Nigerian had access to safe drinking water (40% in rural areas, 60% in urban areas). Unemployment and underdevelopment rate is put at 15%

However, it is frightening that Nigeria with such a dismal outlook as presented above may not qualify immensely to embrace the imperative of the empowerment policies embedded in the million development goals (MDGS) (that is, the number one main policy thrust of poverty reduction). There is no gain saying that effort made by the successive regimes and administration in Nigeria to stamp out poverty failed due to poor implementation and incompatibility of policy goals. (Eze 2007).

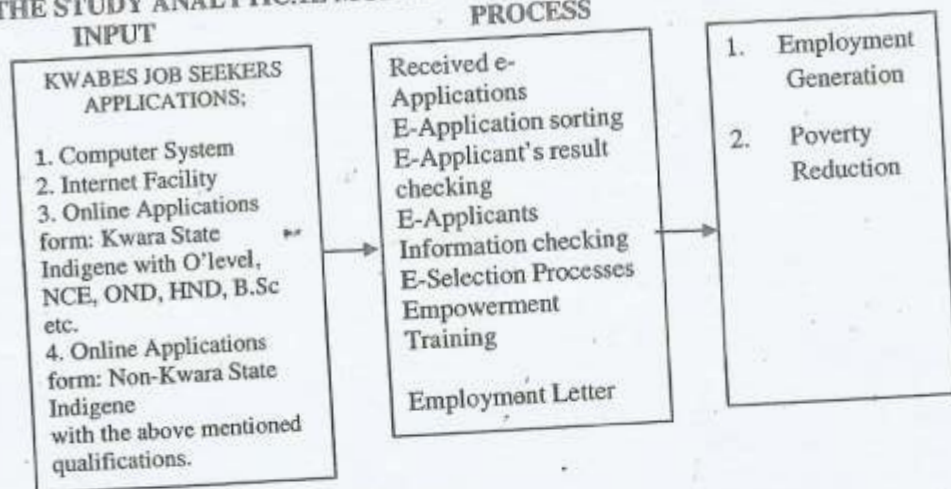
Another problem that impedes the actualization of empowerment programmes in Nigeria is the practices of policies formulators. Chukwuemeka (2008), said that policy makers in Nigeria formulate policies and programmes with some inbuilt flexibilities to allow loopholes to make inordinate gains. For instance, most empowerment programmes do not get to the people at the grassroots where most of the poor people reside.

According to Balami (2006), Great spurt theory states that for a less developed country to move from the traditional levels of economic backwardness to a modern industrial economy it requires a sharp break with the past, or a great spurt of industrialization. The Great Spurt theory established that the process of industrialization differs from country depending on the level of backwardness. According to the theory, all nations were backward once. The theory classified nations into three –advanced, moderate backward and very backward and that the factory, banks and government will start the development in the nations respectively. The theory also contended the application of capital intensive technique in the production process in order to ensure the great spurt. This theory is inimical to a country that is endowed with labour, for it will end up increasing the army of unemployment, which in turn may likely increase the living standard of the people.

As stated in the study of Olujide (2008), a review on the studies of Fenley (1986), Odusanya (1972) and Olujide (1999), have revealed that the youths constitute the highest percentage of the Nigerian population, and therefore are seen as "vital sources of manpower for development. They are rightly seen as leaders of tomorrow. Hence, the kind of education (formal or informal) that youth are exposed to or have access to will determine the nation's overall development.

These problems therefore demand that the youths be empowered with creative problem-solving skills. The training of educated individuals who can function effectively in the society for the betterment of self and the society will require special attention as the system will be deliberately set to concern itself with the development of sound human capital required for national development.

THE STUDY ANALYTICAL MODEL OF KWABES E-RECRUITMENT PROCESS



Source: Author's Conceptualization, 2015.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design and study data were generated through structured questionnaire administration. The procedure appeared best suitable for the study because it shows frequency which occurs or the relationship between two variables. Responses therefore can be systematically classified, such that quantitative and qualitative comparisons of the outcome can be made.

The study population comprises of the beneficiaries of employment opportunities through e-recruitment of KWABES in the whole sixteen local government areas in the state. However, because of large number of industries, institutions, ministries and local government areas where the beneficiaries were posted are in the state capital, the study sample population was drawn from Ilorin metropolis. Thus, 712 beneficiaries were in the state capital. Stratified random sampling was further used and a sample population of 375 was obtained. Structured questionnaires were administered to this sample population and a total of 336 were filled and returned. Secondary data was also gathered from the KWABES record, media reports and electronic sources.

Data collected were analysed using simple descriptive statistics, histogram frequency, percentages and 2-tailed z-test statistical technique was used in testing the hypotheses at 5% level of significance or 95% confidence interval. Thus, the hypotheses were either accepted or rejected base on 5% level of significance to show the effect of KWABES on poverty reduction and employment generation for the youth in the state. Also, five points likert scale technique was used and average distribution of values or weights assigned to

the scales as 5,4,3,2 and 1 which represent strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), undecided (UD), Disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) respectively.

However, the acceptance region ranges between -1.96 to $+1.96$. As shown in the diagram below, any score, which falls within this range, is accepted which then makes the relative hypotheses valid and where it is outside this range, that is, the relative hypotheses is rejected, then making the hypotheses invalid.

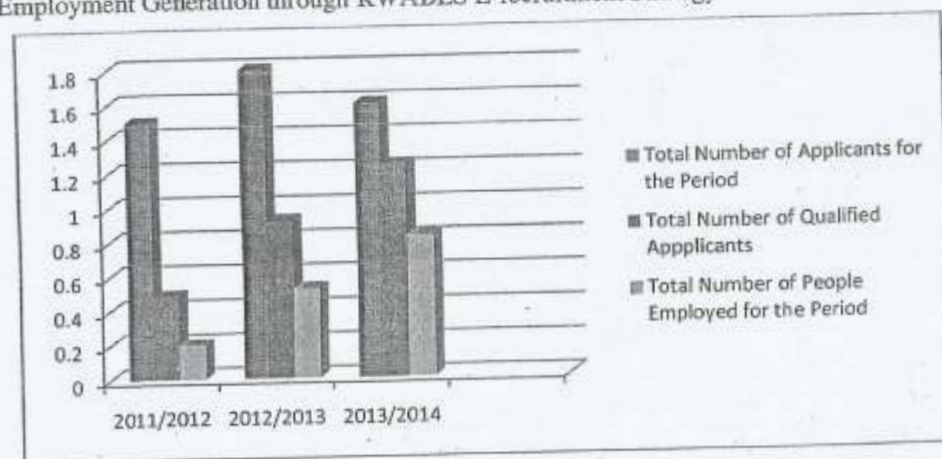
OBTAINED DATA AND TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

Table 1. Total Number of applicants and those employed through KWABES

Year	Total Number of Applicants	Total Number of Qualified Applicants	Total Number of People Employed	Percentage of People Employed from the Total Number of Qualified Applicants
2011/2012	15,037	4,875	2,000	41.02%
2012/2013	18,087	9,207	5,213	56.61%
2013/2014	16,512	12,387	8,224	66.39%

Source: KWABES, Governor's Office, Ilorin.

Fig. 1: Showing Relationship in Total between Registered Unemployed Applicants and Employment Generation through KWABES E-recruitment Strategy



Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2015.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

Ho 1: KWABES e-recruitment has no significant effect on level of youth employment generation in the state.

Table 2.

X	F	Fx	x-x	(x-x) ²	F(x-x) ²
5	182	910	0.717	0.5141	93.566
4	98	392	-0.283	0.0800	7.840
3	34	102	-1.283	1.6461	55.967
2	13	26	-2.283	5.2121	67.757
1	09	09	-3.283	10.778	97.002
Σ	336	1439			322.132

Source: Researcher's computation, 2015

$$X = \frac{\sum fx}{\sum f} = \frac{1439}{336} = 4.283 \quad \delta = \sqrt{\frac{322.132}{336}} = \sqrt{0.9587} = 0.9791$$

$$N = x \pm Z(\delta/\sqrt{n}) = 4.283 \pm 1.96 (0.9791/\sqrt{336})$$

$$= 4.283 \pm 1.96 (0.05342)$$

$$= 4.283 \pm 0.1047$$

$$= 4.388 \text{ or } 4.178$$

Going by the formulae $Z = \frac{x - N}{\delta/\sqrt{n}}$

$$\frac{4.283 - 4.388}{0.05342} \quad \text{OR} \quad \frac{4.283 - 4.178}{0.05342}$$

$$= -1.965 \quad = 1.965$$

From the result obtained above, the z - calculated was 1.965 and Z - tabulated at 95% confidence interval is 1.96. Since z - calculated is greater than z - tabulated, it is concluded that e-recruitment in KWABES has significant effect on level of youth employment generation in the state.

Table 3. KWABES e-recruitment strategy has not significantly contributed to poverty reduction in the state.

X	F	Fx	x-x	(x-x) ²	F(x-x) ²
5	142	710	1.040	1.0816	153.5872
4	109	436	0.040	0.0016	0.1744
3	27	81	-0.096	0.0092	0.2484
2	44	88	-1.960	3.8416	169.0304
1	14	14	-2.960	8.7616	122.6624
Σ	336	1329			445.7028

Source: Researcher's computation, 2015

$$X = \frac{\sum fx}{\sum f} = \frac{1329}{336} = 3.960 \quad \delta = \sqrt{\frac{445.7028}{336}} = \sqrt{1.3265} = 1.1517$$

$$N = x \pm Z(\delta/\sqrt{n}) = 3.960 \pm 1.96 (1.1517/\sqrt{336})$$

$$= 3.960 \pm 1.96 (0.06283)$$

$$= 3.960 \pm 0.1231$$

$$= 4.0831 \text{ or } 3.8369$$

Going by the formulae $Z = \frac{x - N}{\delta/\sqrt{n}}$

$$\frac{3.960 - 4.083}{0.06283} \quad \text{OR} \quad \frac{3.960 - 3.837}{0.06283}$$

$$= -1.960 \quad = 1.960$$

The above results shows that the z - calculated was 1.960 and Z - tabulated at 95% confidence interval is 1.96. Since z - calculated is greater than z - tabulated. It is concluded that e-recruitment in KWABES has significantly contributed to poverty reduction in the state.

Summary of Findings

Table 1 above indicated that 41.02 percent, 56.61 percent, and 66.39 percent of the total applicants qualified for the job applied and were employed in the periods 2011/2012, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 respectively. Also, the Z-test statistical results (i.e -1.960 or 1.960) show that there is effect of KWABES on poverty reduction and on employment generation in the state. This indicated that the state labour force has gradually improved due to the KWABES activities and perhaps the awareness of the scheme by job applicants. However, there is growth on KWABES employment generation exercise for the unemployed youth in the state as shown in figure 1 above. Thus, this implies not only an increase on the state labour force but as well reducing poverty in the society.

However, a cursory look at the various employment promotion schemes data during the KWABES era quickly reveal from Table 1 above shown that a total of 49,636 applicants have applied for jobs through KWABES, a total of 26, 469 applicants were qualified for jobs and 15, 437 applicants were employed from the period of 2011 to 2014. This shows that 58.32% of the total qualified applicants were provided with jobs opportunities which are an indication that the scheme (KWABES) has contributed to employment generation as well as reducing poverty level in the state.

Conclusion

Unemployment problem like corruption in Nigeria is a hydra-headed phenomenon and cannot be effectively tackled through a mono-methodology. The study examined the way the unemployment problems in Kwara State can be solved through KWABES. Findings revealed that though unemployment problem in the state is still high as shown in figure 1 above and through effective employment generation strategy, the state government

efforts aimed at reducing the unemployment and poverty menace in the state. Also, a critical examination of the different time of KWABES plans revealed that much progress was made in terms of employment generation. This can be seen from the little gap between the total of qualified applicants and employment generation within the periods.

Above all, discussion on this study is the effect of KWABES on youth employment generation. Causes of unemployment were identified such as poor education, lack of Skills, poor moral, poor government planning, corruption, war, and fraud. Also, as discussed above, the consequences of unemployment include migration, conflict, crime, low national industrial output, poverty, kidnapping and robbery, and Lawlessness among others.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following;

KWABES should adequately specify the manpower requirements details during job advert as this will reduce unnecessary applications on their recruitment portal. Figure 1 above shown a wide gap differences between applicants applications and the actual qualified applicants for jobs. The specific manpower requirement detail statement reduces time wastage and facilitates instant selection process for creating employment.

KWABES should try to expand the scope of vacancies by creating more jobs for youths in the state. It is expected that those qualified for jobs be treated adequately. The finding of this study as shown in the above analysis indicated that not all qualified applicants for jobs were considered. Government therefore, should increase the quota for absorbing more qualified applicants for employments even though it is possible to absorb all.

Empowerment opportunities registration through KWABES application portal must be extended to artisans. This category of labour contributes to the development of state economic development and to the nation as a whole. As such, it will bring collective efforts of both the public and private enterprises to mitigate the unemployment problem in the state. Adequate provision of opportunities to this category of people however, will also reduce road accident by so-called okada riders. This is because majority of commercial bike riders are artisans but lack of supports or empowerment forced them out of their primary occupation.

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Effect of Cash Management on Performance of Some Selected Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Lagos and Ogun States of Nigeria.

BY

¹AREMU, Mukaila Ayanda (Ph.D), ²ARANSIOLA, Solomon Yinka, and ³Ogunlusi, Gbenga

Department of Marketing, faculty of Management Sciences, University of Ilorin, Pmb 1515 Ilorin, State, Nigeria.¹

Department of Accounting and Finance, Crawford University, Faith City, Igbesa, Ogun State²

Department of Administration and Management, Crawford University, Faith City, Igbesa, Ogun State³

Corresponding author: E- mail: aransiola.solomon@yahoo.com

Mobile: +234-8032485605

ABSTRACT.

Policy makers and scholars in the world documented the acceptance of the potentials of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in promoting economic growth in both the developed and developing countries. This potential has been greatly hindered by the inadequate and lack of management skills for effective management of SMEs most especially in the developing countries. The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of cash management on the performance of SMEs in Lagos and Ogun state of Nigeria. The study is descriptive in nature and therefore primary data source through the use of questionnaire was employed in order to achieve the objective. Correlation analysis method was used to determine the relationship between cash management and performance of the SMEs. The findings revealed that there is a significant correlation of 0.625 between cash management and the performance of the selected SMEs. Cash as an important current asset that needs to be critically planned for optimal balance to enable business activities take place smoothly.

Keywords: SMEs, Cash Management, Performance and Economic growth.

INTRODUCTION

The important of small and medium enterprise has attracted a lot of attention internationally in past few years due to their significant contribution to the economics of both the developed and developing countries (Asiedu, 2006). Small and Medium Enterprises are viewed as the engine for growth as they contribute to reduction of poverty through job creation, paying taxes for national progress and a basis for developing new ideas, contribute to economic growth and sustainable development. Small and Medium Enterprises are vital drivers of growth, innovation and a sources of government revenues that target poverty reduction.