
BUSINESS APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING CENTERS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE INDUSTRIES IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

BY

Sani Ibrahim

Department of Vocational and Technical Education

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

+2348033026077, +2348088699349

Email: sanibrsa@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The paper examined the relationship between Business Apprenticeship Business Centers (BATCs) and establishment of small and medium scale industries in Kaduna State. The study had two objectives. Two hypotheses were tested. Survey research design was used in the study. One hundred (100) graduates of Business Apprenticeship Business Centers who have established their own small scale businesses were used in the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient statistic was used to test the null hypotheses. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance. The two hypotheses were retained. It was concluded that establishment of small and medium scale industries anywhere in the world is a function of many variables including possession of some skill. However, variables such as finance, conducive economic environment and availability of markets are also vital. Four recommendations were made, among which was that Kaduna State government should establish a revolving fund from which loans will be extended to graduates of BATCs in the state to help them buy necessary working tools, rent workshops and have some start-off cash. The usage of the loans should be closely supervised to avoid abuse.

Keywords: Business Apprenticeship Training Centers, small and medium scale Industries, Kaduna State

INTRODUCTION

Growth in the economies of nations is measured by the amount of goods and services they produce, the rate of unemployment and the rate of inflation. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the real measuring tool of the performance of an economy. Ibrahim (2011) wrote that the size of a nation's economy is traditionally measured using the GDP, explaining that the GDP has many components; consumer spending, private investment, government spending, net exports (exports minus imports). All these components are dependent on amount of goods and services produced in a nation. On the other hand, the amount of goods and

services produced in a nation is dependent on percentage of a nation's workforce that is employed. China is the second biggest economy in the world due to the tremendous increase in the amount of goods and services it produces.

An economic system is the method used by society to produce and distribute goods and services. McConnell and Bruce (2008) explained that the economic system is composed of people and institutions, including their relationships to productive resources. In their contributions, Ju (2008) and Marcus (2009) stated that an economic system is the means by which problems of economics are addressed, such as the economic

problem of scarcity, through allocation of finite productive resources. Examples of contemporary economic systems include capitalist systems, socialist systems, and mixed economies.

In an effort to ensure growth of the nation's GDP, various governments in Nigeria introduced many programmes to boost employment in the country. Some of these programmes include the establishment of a National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), and financial assistance to individuals to establish small and medium scale industries.

In the 1970s, both the federal and state governments in Nigeria realized the danger inherent in a situation whereby majority of the citizenry depends entirely on the government for employment. In an effort to find a way out of the problem, the governments started establishing skills acquisition centers. In this line, the then Kaduna State government established many Business Apprenticeship Training Business Centers (BATCs). In the first instance, three were established and one each was located in Kaduna, Zaria and Kagoro in the early 1970s. Eventually, the state government established a BATC in each of the twenty three Local Government Areas of the state.

The main reason for establishing these BATCs was to train individuals who will become self-employed and eventually become employers of labour themselves. The BATCs are vocational in nature, and they provide training in electrical installation, carpentry and joinery (furniture), welding and fabrication, motor vehicle mechanic, plumbing and pipe fittings, radio and television repairs, tailoring and fashion design, and knitting design.

Despite the fact governments in Nigeria have put in place several programmes, including the establishment of BATCs by the Kaduna State Government, the number of unemployed youths in the state is alarming. According to the National Bureau of

Statistics (2013), 54% of youths in Nigeria were unemployed in 2012. It is clear that the current situation regarding youth employment in Kaduna State is not healthy. With all the programmes put in place by government, including the establishment of a BATC in every Local Government Area, it is expected that the problem of youth unemployment in the state should not be as bad as it presently is. Could it be that the programmes are not working? Could it be that the BATCs are not giving its graduates the right type of training? Could it be that the graduates of the BATCs are not finding it easy to establish their own businesses after graduation? Are the BATCs having issues that are preventing them from performing their duties? There is therefore the need to investigate and find out where the problem lies.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Investigate the influence of BATCs in Kaduna State on the establishment of small and medium scale industries in the state.
2. Find out the relationship between vocational skills acquired by graduates of BATCs in Kaduna State and the graduates' ability to establish small and medium scale industries in the state.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. BATCs in Kaduna State have no significant influence on the establishment of small and medium scale industries in the state.
2. There is no significant relationship between vocational skills acquired by graduates of BATCs in Kaduna State and the graduates' ability to establish small and medium scale industries in the state.

METHODOLOGY

The survey research design was used in this study. Powell (2009) reported that survey design enables a researcher to obtain data and subject the data to statistical analysis. The population of the study is 100 graduates of BATCs in Kaduna State who have established their own small scale businesses. Data was collected from respondents through the questionnaire.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient statistic was used to test the null hypotheses. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance. At this level of significance, for the two-tailed test, the critical r value is .195. If the calculated r

value is equal or less than the critical r value, the hypothesis has to be retained. If, however, the calculated r value is more than the critical r value, the null hypothesis cannot be retained.

FINDINGS

Hypothesis One: BATCs in Kaduna State have no significant influence on the establishment of small and medium scale industries in the state

The relationship between BATCs in Kaduna State and establishment of small and medium scale industries in the state was tested. The summary of the analysis is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Test of Relationship between BATCs and establishment of small and medium scale industries

Variables	N	Df	r-cal	r-crit	Sig. of r
BATCs	23	21	0.099	.195	0.000
establishment of small and medium scale industries	100	98			

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Analysis of data in table 1 showed a calculated r value of 0.099, which is less than the critical r value of 0.195. This indicated that no significant relationship existed between BATCs and establishment of small and medium scale industries in Kaduna State. The null hypothesis was therefore retained.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between vocational skills acquired by graduates of BATCs in Kaduna State and the

graduates' ability to establish small and medium scale industries in the state.

The relationship between vocational skills acquired by graduates of BATCs in Kaduna State and the graduates' ability to establish small and medium scale industries was tested. The summary of the analysis is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Test of Relationship between vocational skills acquired by graduates of BATCs and the graduates' ability to establish small and medium scale industries

Variables	N	Df	r-cal	r-crit	Sig. of r
vocational skills acquired by graduates of BATCs	100	98	0.180	.195	0.000
Establishment of small and medium scale industries	100	98			

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Analysis of data in table 2 showed a calculated r value of 0.180, against a critical r value of 0.195. This indicated that no significant relationship existed between vocational skills acquired by graduates of BATCs and the graduates' ability to establish small and medium scale industries in Kaduna State. The null hypothesis was thus retained.

CONCLUSION

The findings showed that there was no significant relationship between BATCs and establishment of small and medium scale industries in the state. The findings also revealed that the vocational skills acquired by graduates of BATCs did not significantly influence their establishment of small and medium scale industries in Kaduna State. These findings are not surprising. Establishment of small and medium scale industries anywhere in the world is a function of many variables, including, of course, possession of some skill. However, variables such as finance, conducive economic environment and availability of markets are also vital.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Kaduna State government should establish a revolving fund from which loans can be

extended to graduates of BATCs in the state to help them buy necessary working tools, rent workshops and have some start-off cash. The usage of the loans should be closely supervised to avoid abuse.

2. Federal Government, Kaduna State Government and all other stakeholders should ensure the provision of infrastructure such as stable electricity supply and good road network. These are necessary so as to ensure an enabling economic environment.
3. Security is paramount for any form of business activity to prosper. As such, governments, at all levels, and Kaduna State government in particular, should urgently handle the issue of insecurity.
4. Kaduna State government ministries, parastatals and agencies should patronise the industries set up by graduates of BATCs. For example, supply of school furniture in the state should be contracted to the graduates of the BATCs.

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