

CONTRIBUTION OF KEKE-NAPEP TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

KEKE-NAPEP Project/Commercial Tricycle is one of the NAPEP interventions in poverty alleviation in Nigeria. Therefore, the present study examines the contribution of KEKE-NAPEP to the economic poverty alleviation of people in Ilorin, Kwara State, by way of enhancing their living standard particularly among the operators and the poor in the State. Primary data for this study are collected by using questionnaire however the respondents are selected using simple random sampling technique among the beneficiaries of the Project in the State. The data generated are analysed via descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings show positive and significant contribution of the Project towards the economic poverty alleviation and standard of living of the respondents. Most of the respondents were equally satisfied with their involvement in the operation of keke-napep. Lastly, the study gives conclusion and recommendation towards the improvement of KEKE-NAPEP Project/operation in Kwara State.

Keywords: Living Standard, Kwara State, Keke-Napep, Economic Poverty Alleviation

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INTRODUCTION

KEKE-NAPEP or Commercial Tricycle is intra-city commuter transportation system in Nigeria. The purpose of its birth is to assist the government to achieve its goal of eradicating poverty in the Nigerian economy particularly, among Nigerian youth. It is argued that the project offers series of economic advantages to the operators, that is, it has powerful diesel engine and a fuel tank capacity of 10.5litres, capacity of four passengers, payload capacity of 320kg, adequate room for passenger luggage, with top speed up to 80km per hour, it is suitable for intra-city commuting and commercial passenger carriage, and it also has a low fuel consumption of 38km per litre (www.nigeriafirst.org/printer_263.shtml-cached 16th December 2013). The Project was introduced since 2001 as poverty alleviation strategy to engage the unemployed youth into gainful employment in the economy. It serves as economic opportunity to improve the small and medium scale entrepreneurs in which, the latter contributes positively to the economic development process of the country. The Governor of KwaraState (Abulfatah Ahmed, 2012) has claimed that this tricycle transportation would contribute to reduce transportation problem and equally procure job for the youth in the State.

Furthermore, KEKE-NAPEP Project has three phases since its inception. In phase one and two, 2,000 units each distributed to all the 36 states including FCT Abuja, of the federation in the years 2002 and 2004, respectively. 5,000 units are allocated to be distributed for phase three, out of which, 3,286 units had been completely distributed to the 36 states including FCT Abuja. Kwara State received 50 units out of 109 units allocated to the state for the phase three. However, it is claimed that the distribution of the units to the states is based on economic viability, equity and population (www.napepnigeria.org/programmes/THEKEKENAPEPProject.aspx 16th December 2013). Many challenges are facing the operators of Keke-Napep in different states in the country. Its operation is being banned and or restricted in some states, this restriction is either minor or majorit depends on the situation(www.nigeriaa2z.com/2011/09/11/keke-napep-poverty-alleviation-gone-sour 19th December 2013). These challenges are attributed to certain reasons such as road congestion, social ills and beautification of the city as the case of Lagos state, Port-Harcourt and FCT Abuja, respectively. Figure 1 shows an operator posting with Keke-Napep while figure 2 displays queue of Keke-Napep with their operators waiting for the passengers.

CONCEPTS OF POVERTY AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Poverty alleviation can be viewed as either a way, measure or scheme designed by any given developing country or society to reduce the level or incidence of poverty obstacle to the bearable minimum level for the economy. However, poverty eradication has been argued to be something or issue that is non-feasible to attain (Ahmed, 2010). It is alleviation rather than eradication that is difficult but possible to attain. The

concept of poverty alleviation is generally accepted as part of economic development process and similarly a primary development objective, meanwhile, the concept of poverty is viewed as multidimensional in nature (Ogunleye, 2010 cited in Abdussalam, 2013). According to Kwaghe (2006), poverty covers numerous spheres of lives of people ranging from economic, social, political, cultural, to psychological aspects. Poverty represents a specific minimum level of income needed to satisfy the basic physical needs of food, clothing and shelter in order to ensure continued survival (Todaro, 2000:170).

According to Animashaun (2010), poverty is viewed as lack of access to both visible and invisible items which can improve the level of welfare such as shelter, drinkable water, food, security, education, health care and other services. While Aku et-al., (1997) cited in Ijaya et al., (2011) sees poverty as deprivation of someone from certain aspects of life such as personal and physical, economic, social, cultural and political deprivation. Meanwhile, poverty has also been considered as a situation in which an individual finds it difficult to attain minimum living standard. Such situation or condition deprives or incapacitates a person of reasonable access to basic necessities such as food and non-food requirements which can give him/her meaningful life in a society (Arogundade et al., 2011).

More so, Odusola (1997) argues that the causes of poverty are majorly associated with the problems of endowment and accessibility to various economic resources in Nigeria. He sees these causes as multidimensional ones which contain both material and non-material denials in which retain poverty in the economy. The following are listed as the causes of poverty in Nigeria:

- a- Inaccessibility to job opportunity for the poor and less privileged
- b- Neglect of rural development in villages
- c- Lack of access to physical and natural resources
- d- Insufficient access to markets for those goods and services that are sellable for the poor
- e- Insufficient access to social services
- f- Destruction of valuable and economical natural resources which result in low production
- g- Insufficient assistance to temporary poverty victims of natural disasters that leads to underserved long-term suffering
- h- Exclusion of poor from design and execution of meaningful development programmes
- i- Corruption of public funds and assets.

Abdussalam (2013a) concludes that system/government is part of the causes of poverty in Kwara State/Nigeria, therefore, for government to make such move towards alleviating poverty in the State/Nigeria is a must appropriate action on its part. See also Abdussalam (2013c) for more on the causes of poverty in the state/country.

In this study, poverty is referred to as a situation where individual youth are living with low income, unemployed i.e. lack gainful employment and access to few or no socio-economic amenities such as power supply, safe drinking water, good road and communication networks due to his/her residence in either rural area or marginalized sub-urban area. Albeit, there are many projects and interventions under the NAPEP programme since its inception, this research work intends to examine the contribution of Keke-Napep project on the individual beneficiaries'/operators' standard of living or economic livelihood.

RESEACH QUESTION

Does involvement in keke-napep operation results in an increase in respondents' level of income? In other words, is there a significant difference in income level between before and after involvement in keke-napep operation?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis is postulated in this study:

Involvement in keke-napep operation does not result in an increase in respondents' level of income. In other words, there is no significant difference in income level between before and after involvement in keke-napepoperation.

RESEARCH METHOD

The area of study is Ilorin Metropolis in Kwara State, Nigeria. Kwara State was one of the oldest states created in Nigeria on 27 May 1967, as one of the first of twelve states to replace the nation's three regions and Ilorin is the state capital. The total land mass of Kwara State today is 32,500 square kilometers. The state is known as the State of Harmony on account of the peaceful co-existence among its multicultural, religious and diverse population of 2.4 million, according to the last population census in the country by National Population Commission (NPC), 2006 albeit the current population of the state is more than this figure. The state has 16 local government areas, LGAs. The main economic livelihood of the inhabitants in the state comprises of agriculture, civil service and trading.

For this present study both primary and secondary data were employed. Primary data were collected through questionnaire and discussion was equally used with the beneficiaries of the Keke-Napep project. One hundred and three (103) respondents were chosen using simple random sampling technique. This would necessitate the researcher to visit different stations/parking of keke-Napepoperation in Ilorin metropolis. Meanwhile, secondary data would be collected via journals, internet as well as government publications, the research work is much more towards quantitative in nature. The data collected from the respondents would be analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as means, frequency table and percentages for the respondents' demographic information while paired-samples t-test was employed to answer the research question and hypothesis of the study.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

The relevant demographic characteristics of the keke-napep operators are investigated and presented in table 1 below.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Socio-economic Characteristics

Variables	Frequency	Percentage of Total
Gender:		
Male	99	96.1
Female	4	3.9
Age:		
18-30	48	46.6
31-40	35	34.0
41-50	20	19.4
Marital Status:		
Married	72	69.9
Single	23	22.3
Divorce	7	6.8
Widow	1	1.0
Size of Household:		
Below 6	48	46.6
6-10	45	43.7
Above 10	10	9.7
Education:		
Primary	21	20.4
Secondary	55	53.4
NCE/OND	20	19.4
B.sc./HND	7	6.8
Sponsorship:		
Government	65	63.1
Bank	26	25.2
Individual	5	4.9
Self	7	6.8

Mode of Payment:

Full	34	33.0
Instalment	68	66.0
Other	1	1.0

Duration of Involvement (Years):

Less than 1 year	55	53.4
1-2 years	41	39.8
2-3 years	4	3.9
3 years above	3	2.9
Total	103	100.0

Source: Field Survey 2014 by the author.

In table 1, the investigation in the study revealed that males 99 (96.1%) are characterized gender involvement in the keke-napep operation as compared to the females 4 (3.9%) in the study area. This is not surprising as males usually many as transporters in the society than females. In the age range, the respondents that fall between the age range 18-30 years are 48 (46.6%), followed by age ranges of 31-40 and 41-50 years with 35 (34.0%) and 20 (19.4%) respondents, respectively. It indicates that the majority of the keke-napep operators are within the age range of 18-30 years which, is the normal period to complete education. More so, findings show that most respondents are married 72 (69.9%) and very rear to find widow 1 (1.0%) among the operators. This implies that most operators were married without secured or reasonable job to discharge their marital responsibilities. The size of household of the respondents indicates that 46.6% have small family size of less than six (6) members and 9.7% have large family size of more than ten (10) members. This distribution of demographic information revealed the magnitude of dependence on respondents/operators

In terms of education qualification, majority of the respondents are low certificate holders with 73.8% and minority of them are high certificate holders with 26.2%. This connotes that large number of the operators involved in keke-napep operation/project are less educated in Kwara state, Nigeria. The operation/project of keke-napep is therefore equally shown a positive sign or direction towards attaining its national goal of alleviating poverty among the less privileged and illiterates in Kwara state, Nigeria.

Furthermore, the study reveals that government (63.1%) is a major sponsor of keke-napep project, followed by bank (25.2%), self (6.8%) and individual (4.9%) hierarchically sponsored keke-napep project in Kwara state, Nigeria. This substantiates that government is the main creator of the project under the auspices of National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP). It is also revealed in the table 1 that majority of the respondents (66.0%) are paid for their keke-napep tricycle by instalment while the

remaining 33.0% respondents paid in full to acquire the tricycle. Most respondents (93.2%) have been involved in this tricycle project/operation in less than two years while the remaining respondents (6.8%) have been involved in more than two years. This implies that most respondents have not spent sufficient years in the operation to ensure meaningful change in their standard of living.

Table 2: Distribution based on Monthly Income Before and After Keke-napep Involvement

Income	Frequency		Percentage in Total	
	Before	After	Before	After
Below N6,000:00	31	8	30.1	7.8
N6,000:00-N10,000:00	37	22	55.9	21.4
N11,000:00-N15,000:00	25	38	24.3	36.9
N16,000:00-N20,000:00	4	16	3.9	15.5
Above N20,000:00	6	19	5.8	18.4
Total	103	103	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey 2014 by the author.

Table 2 shows improvement in the income earned by the respondents/operators before and after their involvement in the keke-napep operation. Many respondents are earning income per day more than one dollar (\$1) designed as dollar poverty line and food poverty line according to the National Bureau of Statistics, NBS in Nigeria Poverty Profile 2010. Although these poverty lines required adjustment as the general prices of goods and services are rising in the economy, causing the income earned from this keke-napep operation to be insufficient to survive on by the respondents particularly those that are married and/or have large family members.

Table 3: Distribution based on Respondents' Perception of the Contribution, Assessment and Problem Encountered of Keke-napep

Standard of Living	Frequency		Percentage in Total
Substantial Improvement	50		48.5
Moderate Improvement	43		41.7
No Improvement	10	9.7	

Project/Operation			
Satisfactory	87	84.5	
Not Satisfactory	11	10.7	
Don't Know	5	4.9	

Problem			
Lacking Access to Loan	15	14.6	

High Interest Rate on Loan	0	0.0
Mode of Payment	88	85.4
Total	103	100.0

Source: Field Survey 2014 by the author.

Table 3 above shows that living standard of the respondents (90.2%) improved while the living standard of the remaining respondents (9.7%) showed no sign of improvement. In other words, most respondents/operators believed that the tricycle operation make their lives better off. This implies that keke-napep project/operation contribute significantly to the livelihood of the respondents in the study area. This equally reflects their assessment on keke-napep as 84.5% respondents satisfied with the project against 15.5% respondents that are not satisfied with the project/operation. Similarly, mode of payment (85.4%) of purchasing/acquiring keke-napep posed major problem to the respondents/operators and the problem of lacking access to loan (14.6%) while the respondents don't see high rate of interest on loan as problem.

Table 4: Paired-Samples t-test Analysis of the Income before and after the Involvement in Keke-napep on Standard of Living of the Respondents

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 resp. monthly income earned before keke-napep involvement operation	2.1942	103	1.09418	.10781
resp. monthly income earned after keke-napep involvement operation	3.1553	103	1.18617	.11688

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 resp. monthly income earned before keke-napep involvement operation - resp. monthly income earned after keke-napep involvement operation	-.96117	1.23608	.12179	-1.20274	-.71959	-7.892	102	.000

Table 4 shows the result of the paired-samples t-test. The significance value of the test is 0.0001 which is less than 0.05 therefore we can conclude that there is a significant difference between the income earned

before and after the involvement of the respondents in the keke-napep operation. Similarly, the mean scores of the respondents' monthly incomes earned before keke-napep involvement operation is 2.19 while the mean scores of the respondents' monthly income earned after keke-napep involvement operation is 3.16. Based on this result, therefore we can conclude that there was a significant increase in income earned before and after the involvement in keke-napep operation.

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the contribution of the involvement in keke-napep on the respondents' scores on the income earned. There was a statistically significant increase in income earned from before ($M=2.19$, $SD=1.09$) to after ($M=3.16$, $SD=1.19$), $t(102)=7.89$, $p < .0005$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in income earned was 0.96 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.20 to 0.72. The eta squared statistic (0.38) indicated a large effect size.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Keke-napep project/operation is a proper instrument for poverty alleviation in the area of study. The study showed that most operators of keke-napep in Kwara state benefited significantly from their involvement coupled with evident improvement in their standard of living via increase in their income earned, although there are some constraints to this operation such as mode of payment as well as lacking access to loan by the operators. The followings are recommended to enhance the project/operation of keke-napep thus reducing poverty level in the state.

- Government ought to assist more in the area of mode of payment so that it can be ease for the operators to complete their payment for the tricycle, part of what that can be done is to provide sufficient loan/credit facility with relatively low rate of interest to the operators.
- Banks should also be encouraged more in the sponsorship of keke-napep project/operation in the study area likewise individuals should be encouraged to take part in the business of keke-napep tricycle intra-city transportation.
- Government should also establish proper training centres for the operators of keke-napep couple with accessible and motorable road network so that more passengers would have confidence and safe in using them as a mean of local transportation in the study area.

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Figure 1: Keke-Napepe / Tricycle Transport



Source: www.napepnigeria.org/Programmes/TheKEKENAPEPProject.aspx

Figure 2: Keke-Napepe / Tricycle Transports



Source: www.nigeriaa2z.com/2011/09/11/keke-napepe-poverty-alleviation-gone-sour