

ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA: PERSPECTIVES ON SELECTED ENTREPRENEURSHIP SCHEMES

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ABSTRACT: *The study examined the relationship between entrepreneurship development and youth employment in Nigeria. It focused on two empowerment schemes: Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme (YEDP) and Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA). The nation's unemployment record, especially among youth, is alarming. A National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) report in 2018 shows that, out of the 85million labour force in Nigeria, 34million are unemployed and underemployed youths, with 25million largely uneducated. The YEDP and YISA schemes were designed to train and make youths entrepreneurs that would be self-employed and also employ others. Therefore, the main objective of this paper is to show that in spite of the conscious and frantic efforts by government and non-governmental organizations through the framework of YEDP and YISA to address the unemployment challenge in the country not so much has been achieved. The study revealed that the programmes have created a number of entrepreneurs and employment for young people across the country. Nonetheless, these efforts have not significantly yielded the desired outcomes of massive job creation for the youths and ensuring national food security. To achieve desired results, using the agricultural value chain, there is need to adopt scientific knowledge based agricultural production. Hence the paper concluded that for Nigeria to address the twin challenges of massive unemployment and national food insecurity agricultural activities should be scientific and greatly modernized. The study recommended, among other things, that integrated farming approach, involving large variety of activities per hectare should be adopted and there should be substantial investment in R&D to generate new ideas and high yielding seeds for the new entrepreneur-farmers.*

KEYWORDS: entrepreneurship, value chain, food security, unemployment, youths, uneducated.

INTRODUCTION

The desire to diversify and grow the Nigerian economy as well as create substantial number of jobs for the teeming youth population has been expressed by successive administrations for the past three decade. Yet unemployment has continued to be a major challenge of the Nigerian state. Indeed, Nigeria has been grappling with high rate of unemployment in the last 30 years. Available records show that the unemployment challenge was most devastating or at its pick in the past five years (Harry, 2016). This was further exacerbated in the wake of the country slipping into recession in 2016 and the attendant sack of personnel by organizations in the different sectors of the economy. Hence, making desire for gainful employment in both the public and private sectors a

mirage for increasing number of youths graduating from various institutions of learning. Efforts by successive administrations to address the unemployment challenge through the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Graduate Internship scheme, N-Power, etc have yielded little or no remarkable outcomes. Hence, the encouragement of entrepreneurship development among youths, especially in the agricultural sector.

Essentially, the drive towards youth entrepreneurship is anchored the belief that it will make good number of the youths create jobs for themselves and also employ others. Isiaka et al (2017) conceived of entrepreneurship as the process of giving birth to a new enterprise. The entrepreneur move to create a new enterprise(s) rather than seek for employment in an already established enterprise(s). Collins et al (as cited in Isiaka et al 2017), described the entrepreneur as a “risk taker” – a person who braves uncertainty, strikes out on his own through native wit, devotion to duty and singleness of purpose delve into challenging areas to create industry. Such risk takers are needed in Nigeria today to help create robust economic opportunities.

Nigeria has vast arable land yet the country has continued spend huge sums of money importing food to meet the food needs of the citizenry. This necessitated the government and non-governmental organizations to encourage youths entrepreneurship development schemes, especially in the agricultural value-chain, so as to address the twin challenges of massive youth unemployment and national food insecurity. Consequently, the Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme (YEDP) and the Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA) were launched. While the YEDP scheme focuses mainly on graduates undergoing youth service and post-NYSC youths, who are interested in the agricultural value chain (Amaefule, 2016). The YISA scheme is generic in nature capturing all youths and even women whether graduates or not, who are interested in agricultural activities. Thus, the main objective of the paper is to show that inspite of the determined efforts by the government and non-governmental organizations through the framework of YEDP and YISA to address the unemployment problem in the country through agriculture not so much has been achieved. Thus, the research questions this study would provide answers to is: How has YEDP/YISA’s entrepreneurship development efforts created employment for youths and enhanced food sufficiency in Nigeria? The paper contends that for Nigeria to solve the double problems of unemployment (through agriculture) and national food insecurity agricultural activities should be scientific and greatly modernized. Consequently, the paper seeks to examine to extent to which the YEDP and YISA schemes have enhanced entrepreneurship development, employment generation and food production in the country as well as suggests ways of achieving job creation through agro allied industries.

Entrepreneurship Development

Entrepreneurship development is critical to economic growth, employment generation and national well-being. Successive regimes in Nigeria have made frantic efforts towards entrepreneurship development to enhance the socio-economic well-being of the people. How successful has these efforts been would be looked at in course of the discussion. But who is the entrepreneur and what is entrepreneurship development?

According to Weje (2012), an entrepreneur is one who bears the non-insurable risks of his/her business and also directs all resources (human and materials) towards profit maximization for him/her to earn a living. In other words, an entrepreneur is an individual who conceives and develops business idea, organizes, manages and assumes the risks of the undertaking/venture for profit making and progress. Similarly, Enyekit and Obara (2009) describe an entrepreneur as one who creates a new business in the face of risk and uncertainty for the purpose of making profit and growth by identifying significant opportunities and assembling the necessary resources to actualise the desired goals. What is clear is that an entrepreneur is a person with a vision, original idea, in relation to a business venture, takes the decision and dares to invest in it. It is for this reason, Baadom (2009), asserts that, an entrepreneur is an investor who brings in new ideas, new commodities, new processes and encourages his team in the new activities. Entrepreneurship, on the other hand, entails the process of planning and organizing a small business venture, the marshalling of people and resources to create, develop and implement solutions to problems to meet peoples' needs (Kanu and Onwukwe, 2008). Steinhart and Burgess (1993) cited in Gosmos (2001), posit that "entrepreneurship occurs when an individual develops a new venture or a new approach to an old business or idea or a unique way of giving the market place a product or service by using resources in a new form under condition or risk." To Nwachukwu (2009), entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value by devoting necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic, and social risks, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence.

For effectiveness and efficiency the entrepreneur needs some skills and knowledge, hence training or capacity development is required. Entrepreneurship development entails activities geared towards creating entrepreneurial abilities and capacities among the people. Put differently, it means the inculcation development and polishing of entrepreneurial skills into a person needed to establish and successfully run his/her business undertaking (Yourarticle.com). Essentially, entrepreneurship development programmes are designed to equip a person with the much needed skills and knowledge for setting up and running a business. The principal purpose of entrepreneurship development programme is to broaden the knowledge base of significant portion of the less privileged sections of the society by acquainting them with necessary functional and utilitarian skills. Singh (1985) defines entrepreneurship development programme as a planned effort to identify, inculcate, develop and polish the capacities and skills as the prerequisites of a person to become and behave as an entrepreneur. What distinguish a successful entrepreneur from unsuccessful one is the competencies and traits they possess. To attain the required entrepreneurial abilities and capabilities training is an imperative. The objectives of such entrepreneurship development programme or training, among others are to:

- (i) analyze environmental set up relating to small industry and small business;
- (ii) understand the process and procedure involved in setting up a small business or enterprise;
- (iii) know the sources of help and support available for starting a small-scale industry;
- (iv) acquire the necessary managerial skills required to run a small-scale industry, and,
- (v) know the pros and cons in becoming an entrepreneur (Yourarticle.com).

State of Unemployment in Nigeria

The unemployment situation in Nigeria has worsened over the years. Available statistics show that unemployment rate as a percentage of total labour force in Nigeria grew from 13.10 percent in 2000 to 21.10 percent and 23.90 percent in 2010 and 2011 respectively (Econstats, 2012). Commenting on the grievous nature of unemployment in relation to the teeming youth population in the country, a one-time Minister for Youth Development, Mallam Bolaji Abdullahi divulged that 67 million youths were unemployed as at 2012, when the total national population was about 140 million people (Osakwe, 2013). The youth population has increase to about 80 million in 2016 and over 70 percent of this youth population is unemployed (Gonyok, 2016).

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) data show that total unemployment and underemployment increased from 37.2 percent in the second quarter of 2017 to 40 percent in the third quarter of 2017. The NBS report also shows that 67.3 percent of young people, particularly those between the age of 15-24 years were either underemployed or unemployed, while those between the age of 25 – 34 years slight increased from 22.2 percent to 22.3 percent in the third quarter of 2017. Those in these age brackets are the most active and adventurous in the economy, therefore, it would be most beneficial to engage them in productive ventures. As Gonyok (2016) has argued, “when the youths are empowered with entrepreneurial skills and are able to set up functional businesses and create jobs, the rate of poverty in the country would be reduced likewise the level of criminality”.

Available data show that agriculture has been the highest employer of labour in Nigeria, employing over 48.2 percent of the total labour force in the third quarter of 2017. Yet, agriculture has the potential of absorbing the massive unemployed and underemployed youth population to make them contribute meaningfully to economic growth and national development. There is the challenge of food insecurity resulting in significant importation to augment local food production and the need to supply food processing industries. These circumstances create huge opportunities for agribusinesses that potential entrepreneurs could delve into and create the much needed jobs for young people. It is not surprising, therefore, to witness government and non-governmental agencies championing entrepreneurship development in the agricultural value chain.

METHODOLOGY

The research design for this study is the library research method; therefore, it was essentially qualitative in nature. This mainly involves the use of secondary data drawn from bulletins, journal articles, newspaper cuttings, magazines, textbooks and facsimile. The works were selected based on their validity and reliability in relation to the topic of study. Furthermore, the secondary data were analyzed using the content analysis method of data analysis. As Hsieh and Shannon (2005) noted, qualitative content analysis is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. Content analysis is basically inductive in application. It involves establishing relationships between or among words, concepts, variables, or phenomena being studied and analyzed. Hence, secondary data addressing the objective of the study and the research question were examined to establish the extent of YEDP/YISA entrepreneurship development, employment generation and contribution to national food security in Nigeria.

FINDINGS

Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme (YEPP) and Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA) in Focus

The challenge of unemployment, poverty and food insecurity have for a long time been a cause for worry and concern for successive governments and non-governmental organizations in Nigeria. Various efforts have been made to address these challenges. For instance, there have been different intervention programmes such as the Youth Employment in Agriculture Programme (YEAP), National Agricultural and Land Development Authority (NALDA), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Agricultural Development Programme (ADP), etc all aimed at creating employment, reducing poverty and vulnerability of the youths as well as ensure food sufficiency for the country (Ndem, 2008 and Ajani, Mgbenka and Onah, 2015). The Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme (YEDP) and Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA) were part of such effort at empowering the youth to living a meaningful life.

The Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme was launched on 15th of March 2016 by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). The objective of the YEDP scheme is to inspire and harvest the entrepreneurial abilities of Nigerian youths towards creating over one million direct jobs by 2020 (Amaefule, 2016). According to the CBN Governor, Mr. Godwin Emefiele, “the programme was to ensure that the creative energies of the over 64 million Nigerian youths were harnessed to stimulate growth, address restiveness and promote economic development”. The programme guidelines stated that the targeted beneficiary groups are National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members and those with not more than 3-5 years post – NYSC experience (CBN, 2016).

The Bank disclosed that the aim was to address the triple-barreled problems of insufficiency, high cost and inadequate terms of capital usually faced by youth’s entrepreneurs and start-ups. Thus, the scheme offers credit of up to ₦3 million naira for an individual or ₦10 million naira for a group of 3-5 youths at an interest rate of 9 percent per annum. Youths between the ages of 18 – 35 years, who are serving corps members, graduates or artisans are eligible to apply for the loan and would be pre-qualified for training on entrepreneurship before they can access the loan. Eligible activities for financing include start-ups and expansion projects in agricultural value chain (Fish farming, poultry, snail farming, etc), cottage industries, creative industries (tourism, arts, and crafts) and information and communication technology.

On the other hand, the Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA) is a non-governmental organization established by Comrade Ogirinye Innocent Adoga to train rural young men and women in entrepreneurship using the Colombia Business School Module: Rural Entrepreneurial Venture Creation and Experimental Learning (REVCEL). The YISA scheme is under the Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth (CORY) project, an International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) funded project covering four African countries, including Nigeria (YISA, 2017). YISA is an agro-knowledge based organization of young graduates of agricultural discipline and other youths interested in agriculture and agro-allied businesses. The

aim of the organization is to re-direct young people towards agriculture, so as to address the twin problems of youth unemployment and national food insecurity.

YISA set up Rural Farm School Projects, through the Agripreneurship Incubation and Mentorship (AIM) programme, in collaboration with Association of Deans of Agriculture in Nigerian universities (ADAN) for the training of young people, especially unemployed graduates who have the erroneous believe that agriculture was the job of mainly ageing peasant farmers. YISA through the schools provides skills for the people, and provides start-up capital for rural dwellers (youths and women). The scheme also has the Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP). Some areas of agricultural activities YISA focus on include: Local production of high yield wheat, rice project value chain, cassava project value chain, oil palm value chain, sorghum project value chain, poultry project value chain, etc. In doing this, YISA collaborates with various agricultural research institutes, such as Lake Chad Research Institute (LCRI) (YISA, 2016).

YEDP/YISA, Entrepreneurship Development, and Youth Employment in Nigeria

The YEDP and YISA schemes were established to empower young people to own their businesses and create wealth for themselves, other citizens and the nation at large. To achieve entrepreneurship trainings and start up capitals are provide in various forms to youths who are mainly interested in agro-business. For instance, Idowu and Sallah (2018), quoting CBN source, disclose that CBN intervention funds to entrepreneurs in the country hit ₦1.18 trillion naira in 2018. According to them, under the YEDP scheme the Bank disbursed ₦85.75 million naira to 32 entrepreneurs, while the managers of the YEDP scheme returned ₦691.02 million naira they were unable to disburse due to what was described as “operational issue relation to disbursement.” Similarly, Nwachukwu (2016) posits that, in 2016, the CBN flagged-off the YEDP with ₦210 billion naira for 1,350 youths, as pioneers for its small and medium Enterprises Development Fund Programme. The successful applicants were given a maximum of ₦3 million naira each, having undergone an entrepreneur training. Speaking at a 3 day entrepreneurship capacity building programme of YEDP in the south-west zone, Dr. Mudashiru Olaitan, a Director in CBN, opines that beneficiaries of YEDP loan will also enjoy “a robust post-disbursement support that includes, peer networking, business development support, mentoring and attachment programmes where applicable” (Business News, 2016).

The other organization in focus in this study is YISA. YISA has also been active in entrepreneurship development across the country. The National Coordinator and Initiator of YISA, Comrade Ogirinye Innocent Adoga reveals that, as part of its entrepreneurship development scheme youths and women are organized into cooperatives for effectiveness in their agricultural value chain businesses. To him organizing youths into cooperatives in the agricultural value chain is critical because it will help reduce poverty among producers/farmers.

Thus he wrote:

“Why are farmers still among the poorest set of people, that is why in spite of the fact that 80 percent of the locally produced food products comes from the small holders, the small holders are still poor because almost everybody is a food producer while the players at the remaining side of the chain are very few and as a result the produce are taken very cheap from them and rewards the middlemen more than the producers”.

This in mind, YISA in 2015 trained 150 Nigerian Youths on the Rural Entrepreneurial Venture Creation and Experimental Learning (REVCEL) module (YISA, 2016). The training, which was geared towards acquainting rural young men and women agro- entrepreneurial skills for on the farm and off the farm activities, was carried out in collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), in its Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP) under the Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth (CORY) project (YISA, 2016). Furthermore, YISA through its Agripreneurship Incubation and Mentorship (AIM) programme has set up rural farm school with functional centres located in Benue State (aquaculture and plants nursery beds), Kano (wheat), Zamfara (wheat) and Abia (apiculture); all of which had built capacity of youths and women in different areas of agriculture in the country.

Commenting on YISA's interest in wheat production, Adoga argues that, "Nigeria spent over N365 billion naira importing about 3.5 million metric tons of wheat annually, yet the country has over 600,000 hectares of arable land that can support wheat production in 13 states of the country, but has only utilized less than 10 percent of this endowment to produce barely 250,000 metric tons of wheat" (YISA, 2017). Consequently, YISA has encouraged the set up wheat production farms in 13 states. Following from this the CBN has delisted wheat from the forex platform and had gone ahead to launch the Anchor Borrowers Fund for wheat and rice farmers. Interestingly, the 13 wheat producing states under the YISA scheme are supported with mechanized equipment, among other states, in the CBN's Anchor Borrowers arrangement (YISA, 2017).

Having identified wheat production as one of the veritable tools for massive job creation for the unemployed youths, in advancing their efforts in this course, YISA has received breeder seeds of the high-yield Norman Bourlag wheat variety, which has the capacity of producing 5 - 6 tons per hectare from the Lake Chad Research Institute (LCRI) for enhanced harvest in the 2015/2016 Dry Season production scheme in Kaduna and Kano States, and Bakilori Irrigation Facility in Talata Mafara, Zamfara State.

YISA in its entrepreneurship development and job creation bid also set up the Youth Collaborative Community Agriculture Programme (YOCCAP). According to Ajani, Mgbenka and Onah (2015), the YOCCAP, which has nine (9) components, was given a boost by the United States Government, when the U.S. Ambassador's Self Help Project for community empowerment scheme gave a grant to the programme in Umuoda-oju community in Benue State. Adoga explained that, the grant was a major boost to YISA's commitment towards ensuring that unemployed youths and women in the community are given life inherent in socio-economic self-subsistence. The grant was used in setting up fish farm in which 35 youths and 15 rural women were trained in fish production, smoking and packaging and were empowered to establish their own fish farms. Ajani, Mgbenka and Onah (2015) further observe that the trainees were constituted into YISA Youth fish farmers cooperative to enhance their functionality and productivity. In addition, they disclose that 5 youths were trained on poultry farming using small-scale poultry farm (Magpaty Farms) located in Benue State.

Indeed, Adoga asserts that lack of incentive for emerging entrepreneur has been the reason for the seeming lack of interest by youths in agriculture; hence YISA provides as much incentive as possible at its disposal to motivate youths to take to farming as a career. This is done through provision of mechanized equipment, trainings, seedlings, and other farm inputs (YISA, 2017).

YEDP, YISA and Food Security in Nigeria

To have food security implies a country produces the bulk of the food, if not all, consumed in the country within its borders. This is necessary for obvious security reasons. Nigeria has been a food import dependent nation for many decades spending humongous sum of money importing food, especially rice and wheat, which are in high demand in the country. The question is, with the activities of YEDP, YISA and other such agricultural programmes, has Nigeria's fortune change for the better? Put different, does Nigeria depend on local production to meet her food needs in the country? To ascertain whether or not Nigeria has made substantial progress in food self-sufficiency the two commodities, that is rice and wheat, which are highly consumed and also highly imported, would be the focus of the examination here.

For instance, a report of Global Agricultural Information Network puts the rice consumption in 2017/2018 at 4.8 million tons, which was a drop of about 5 percent from the 5.0 million tons in 2016/2017 (Nzeka and Taylor, 2017). However, local production was put at about 2.8 million tons, increasing by 4 percent compared to 2.7 million tons in the previous year. According to Nzeka and Talyor (2017), the reason for the low production is that the sector is dominated by small holder farmers who mostly plant traditional low-yielding and adulterated rice seeds, hence about 50 percent of rice consumed in the country are imported. The report added that during the last quarter of 2016 the government supported major integrated rice mills under its Anchor Borrowers programme to pursue its backward integration agenda; yet 80 percent of the rice mills operate at less than 25 percent installed capacity mainly due to paddy scarcity. The Anchor borrowers programme is expected to provide funds, for the large-scale operators in local rice sector. In spite of these efforts by government, Nigeria's rice sector is still dominated by small/cottage mills operating outdated mills and using mostly traditional methods. Rather than plant, harvest and mill locally, many investors in integrated rice farming/processing are the major importers of rice into the country (Nzeka and Taylor, 2017). They reveal that the major reason Nigerians, especially urban dwellers, preferring the imported rice despite the fact that it far more expensive, is the high quality of imported rice when compared with the locally produced ones, which are poor in quality.

On wheat consumption in Nigeria, the Global Agricultural Information Network report reveals that it dropped from 4.1 million tons in 2016/2017 to 4 million tons in 2017/2018 (Nzeka and Taylor, 2017). The annual production of wheat was put at 60,000 tons, which is far less than the consumption rate in the country. Wheat is in high demand in the country because of its many uses in bread, semolina, pasta, etc (Nzeka and Taylor, 2017). Nzeka and Taylor, (2017) observe that Nigeria's local wheat quality is not desirable for bread making; nonetheless, it is a popular staple for traditional meal powder prepared for consumption with soup. Obviously, there is high demand for wheat in Nigeria for flour mills and associated firms. Nzeka and Taylor, (2017) put wheat imports into Nigeria in 2017/218 at 4.4 million tons. To discourage importation of wheat the

government is vigorously pursuing the cassava inclusion policy in wheat flour as well as increase in import tariff on wheat, and wheat related products such as wheat flour, pasta, noodles, and spaghetti remain banned in the country. Indeed, many stakeholders have noted that it would take several years of effective policy implementation, funding in seed development and infrastructure investments to achieve self-sufficiency in rice and wheat, among other foods, in the country.

DISCUSSION

The study was designed to investigate the extent of youth employment through entrepreneurship development efforts focusing on two youth empowerment schemes, the Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme (YEDP) and Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA). It was discovered that the schemes have created a number of youth entrepreneurs mainly in the agricultural sector but their efforts have not been substantial enough to address the youth unemployment challenge in the country. For instance, the YEDP arrangement has provided entrepreneurial training/skills and funds for over 1382 youths and have made them self-employed with the potentials of employing others. However, in one of its disbursement endeavours only ₦85.75 million naira was disbursed to 32 entrepreneurs out of ₦776.74 million naira earmarked for disbursement in a country that seriously needs entrepreneurs to create jobs. This is far below expected performance. Obviously, if the entire amount (₦776.74 million naira) was disbursed at the rate of ₦3 million naira per beneficiary benchmark established by the CBN about 259 entrepreneurs would have been made. The present performance or disbursement rate of 11 percent is grossly below expectation. On the other hand, YISA had also encouraged entrepreneurship development across the country, providing training organizing rural people into cooperatives and helping in the setting up of farms. YISA had supported farmers in 13 states to set up wheat production farms, distributed high-yield variety of seeds, supported farmers with mechanized equipment on their farms and had also established fish farms and poultry farms in the country. Nonetheless these efforts have not impacted the nation's economy significantly.

On employment generation through YEDP and YISA entrepreneurship development scheme specific data were available, however, it is safe to assumption from the trainings provided, funds disbursed and support to farms in various states, that over 3,000 jobs were created. By the level of youth unemployment in the country this is "a drop in the ocean". The purpose of establishing YEDP and YISA was to encourage youth to take to agriculture, which has been described as an "untapped goldmine" for wealth creation in the nation. With all the motivation and promises in the agro-business many young people have refused to take to agriculture, but rather prefer to roam the streets in search of white-collar jobs. Indeed, the unemployment rate is unabating but rather it is on the rise and steps must be taken to check the rate of unemployment.

With respect to food security in the country, focusing on the two highly demanded and consumed commodities, wheat and rice; it was revealed that Nigeria is far from attaining national food security or self-sufficiency. The efforts made by the government and non-governmental organizations have made minimal impact in this regard. Obviously, the shortfall in wheat and rice production in the country was augmented with importation of up to 98.5 percent and 50 percent respectively. In addition, it was established that the preference for imported wheat and rice was

because of the poor qualities of these commodities produced in Nigeria. Also, there was the issue of low local production capacity in the country of these commodities. To achieve food self-sufficiency in the country there is need to embark on concerted policy articulation, formulation and implementation, funding, in seed development through research and development efforts and huge investments in infrastructure across the country.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing it is clear that YEDP and YISA had made numerous efforts at entrepreneurship development. However, these endeavours have not produced the desired outcomes in the areas of entrepreneurship development and youth employment creation. Also, the efforts at food self-sufficiency have not yielded the desired result due to low local production capacity; hence, Nigeria is still import dependent country for wheat and rice as indicated in the study. To address the problems of massive youth unemployment and food insecurity in Nigeria deliberate and targeted policies must be made and vigorously pursued to overcome these challenges. Thus, the conclusion of this paper is that for Nigeria to address the twin challenges of huge/heavy youth unemployment and food insecurity in the country, agricultural activities should be based on scientific knowledge anchored on sustained research and development efforts as well as adoption greatly modernized farming techniques in all intents and purposes.

Recommendations

Sequel to the above findings the following recommendations are made:

- (i) There should be large investment in critical infrastructure across the country to facilitate productive activities;
- (ii) There should be substantial investments in research and development to generate new ideas and high yielding seeds for the new entrepreneurs in agriculture;
- (iii) More support services by way of mechanized equipment and extension services should be vigorously pursued; and,
- (iv) Integrated farming approach, involving large variety of activities per hectare should be adopted.

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