

## DRIVING YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES: THE CASE OF SOUTH SOUTHERN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This study examined youth employability in multinational companies and whether Federal Government Apprenticeship Schemes drive employability in South –Southern Nigeria. The study adopted a quantitative research design. The capital cities of four South-Southern States were selected for the study due to their large economic activities and the centers of the Federal Government Apprenticeship Schemes in South-Southern Nigeria. A total of 360 owners of micro, small and medium enterprises trained in Federal Government Apprenticeship Schemes were used as the sample for the study. The study utilized a structured questionnaire to elicit information from 20 different but most desirable traders/craftsmen who have gone through Government's apprenticeship Scheme. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, multiple regression and analysis of variance. Results of the study indicate that federal government apprenticeship scheme has contributed significantly to job creation in South-Southern Nigeria through impartation of skills to unemployed youths, however, it has not contributed to youth employability in multinational corporations. On the basis of the above findings, the study concluded that federal government apprenticeship scheme in Nigeria has potentials to generate higher income and create jobs but should be multi-dimensional in approach with modern skills and implemented in local communities to trickle down the job creation capacity of the schemes.*

**Keywords:** Multinational companies, employability, apprenticeship scheme.

### 1. Introduction

It is well-known fact that there is a preponderance of foreign skilled workers at building sites and oil exploration companies in Nigeria. Adewale (2020) observed that out of the sixty one operating companies under the Nigeria Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in the South-Southern Nigeria, about three thousand, six hundred and sixty four workers representing 36% of the combined staff strength of eleven thousand and fifty seven staffs are foreign workers occupying the top echelon. Seven thousand, three hundred and ninety three are Nigerians representing about 64% of the workforce occupying the lower-tier jobs.

The top three companies with the highest expatriate staff are Chevron Nigeria with six hundred and thirty workers, Pacific International Treaty with five hundred and forty five, Sedaris Limited with five hundred and ninety expatriate workers (NOGICID, 2010). The argument often adduced by management of these companies is that Nigerian labourers do not possess the requisite skills to work as artisans.

The Federal Government over the years has established various apprenticeship schemes in South-Southern Nigeria aimed at providing training and employment opportunities for young Nigerians. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and Basic National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (B-NUAS) had established apprenticeship centers in the major cities in South-Southern Nigeria. The aim of these schemes is to equip youths with such skills that will enable them to be self-employed and employable in multinational corporations. In 2018, a total of nine thousand, three hundred and sixty trainees were recruited nationwide into the B-NUAS. By July 2022, the scheme had recruited and trained nineteen thousand, two hundred and nineteen youths. The breakdown of the trainees are 41,172 youths, Delta State - 35,746 youth, Edo State – 22,530, Bayelsa State – 31,784 youths, Cross River State and 27,694 youths in Rivers State. The total apprentices trained in South-Southern Region within the period under review stood at 178,145 (NDE, 2022). The skills available in the centers include furniture making, fashion designer, soap making, catering, boat making, panel beating mechanics and electrical works (NDE, 2022).

The Federal Government within the period under review budgeted over Fourteen Billion Naira for skills development for employability in South-Southern Nigeria. (CBN, 2022). Despite the huge sums budgeted for apprenticeship training for employability, the multinational companies continue to hire expatriates to do certain jobs. Within this period also, the South Southern Region of Nigeria witnessed high rate of unemployment among

the Youth. Rising unemployment rate in the region has constituted the bane of economic development with its attendant social problems.

As at July, 2022, the unemployment rate in South-Southern Nigeria was estimated to be 33% (NBS, 2022). The rise in unemployment rate in South-South Nigeria and the inability of youths to get certain jobs in multinational companies has cast doubt on the effectiveness of the Federal Government Apprenticeship Schemes to achieve its objective. The Nigerian Apprenticeship Schemes appear not to produce the same results compared to other jurisdiction in terms of mode of operations, regulation, and structure as well as skill development. Kruegar and Kumar, (2024) argued that present evidence does not uniformly favour the scheme as traditional apprenticeship schemes were designed not to prepare young people for required employable skills.

Previous studies focused mainly on liberal policies and incentives offered to encourage investment in apprenticeship skills for self –employment. Little scholarly attention appears to have been paid to the need to incorporate multinational skills need and programs into the Federal Government Apprenticeship Schemes. Lack of essential employable skills constitute a critical skills gap which inhibit employability of apprentices. Clearly, the nature of work is changing rapidly due to new technology and work innovations. This paper specifically investigates why Nigerians do not get certain jobs in multinational corporations, however, there are many other reasons why Nigerians do not get jobs in multinational corporations, which are beyond the scope of this study.

## 2. Literature Review

The study is anchored on Sen's Capability Theory which dates back to the 1980s when he analyzed concrete poverty phenomena and questioned whether gross domestic product or the measurement of Utility- both known as the most common indicators are reasonable. Capability theory is a framework for evaluating well-being that focuses on an individual's freedom to achieve a life they values. The theory assumes that the freedom to achieve well-being is of primary moral importance and second that wellbeing should be understood in terms of peoples capacities and functioning's. The capability approach has its origin in a number of articles in which Sen criticized the limited information basis of the traditional economic model and evaluated accounts. What is missing from these traditional model, Sen argues is a notion of what activities we are able to undertake (doings) and the kind of persons we are able to be (beings). Sen calls this notion capabilities. Capabilities are the real freedom that people have to achieve their potentials. Doings and beings. Real freedom in this sense means that one has all the required means necessary to achieve that doing or being if one wishes to. It is not merely the formal freedom to do or be something but the substantive opportunity to achieve it. Therefore, Capabilities are the combinations of functioning that a person can achieve, and the freedom to pursue those combination functioning's are state of being and doing, such as being well-nourished and of having shelter. Capabilities are the valubles functioning that a person has access to and the freedom to choose between them. Sen's theory argues that development should focus on advancing the freedoms that people enjoys rather than just metrics like GDP or income per capita.

Theoretically, policy and academic dialogue on apprenticeship largely has been framed through human capital theory and neoliberal economic development accounts. Through this lens, apprenticeship is considered central to the productivity of the informal economy, economic competitiveness, poverty reduction and employment. The capability approach is an evaluative and normative framework of thought for judging social arrangement to the extent to which they expand individual freedom to be and to do what they find valuable and have reason to value. As a normative framework of thought, the approach is underpinned by key concept such as functioning and capability. Functioning that a person manages to achieve provide information about his well-being and constitutes his achievement, whereas those that an individual has reason to value but not achieved are valued functioning. In the past decade, an account of apprenticeship for human development has emerged which draws on the normative concept of the capability approach. In relation to the dominant concept of the capability approach. In relation to the dominant orthodoxy, apprenticeship contribution lies in its human capital role that is "Human qualities that can be employed as capital in production. Consequently, poverty reduction role stem from the fact that skills development leads to the employability and an escape or reduction of poverty. Amartya Sen's capability theory has limitations which includes the difficulty of measuring capabilities and the need to consider a variety of factors like functioning's, choices, social solidarity as well as normative and ontological issues. Besides, due to capability approach disciplinary origin, it may be limited in application in certain areas.

### Review of Empirical Literature

Some related empirical studies are reviewed here. Hadija (2024) carried out a work on impact of apprenticeship on Human Capital Development. Focus in unemployment reduction, the focus of the research was to draw a relationship between apprenticeship system and human development in Nigeria. Using qualitative approach, the paper appraised the training & entrepreneur institution with a view to determine it as an antidote for development. The paper recommends that boosting infrastructure and institutional framework would harm the apprenticeship

potentials of citizens. Adeyemi *et al.*, (2023) studied transformation of apprenticeship through a competence based approach in the Benin crafts sector. The research examines the pedagogical transformation generated by dual apprenticeship training and its impact on the Benin crafts sector. The study adopted the qualitative research design. 39 workshops and 7 training centers were used as direct observatory. Using a life-history approach, they conducted formal and informal interview with craft people and semi-structured interview with graduates, and non-graduates, professional, training centre staff and farmers. The findings of the research showed favourable impact on skill development, competence transferred job performance. The study recommends that apprenticeship relationship should be passed down from one generation to another to sustain craftsmanship.

Farayibi (2021) carried out a study entitled, 'Innovative informal sector financing: Empirical evidence from the capital sharing model of Igbo apprenticeship system in Nigeria.' Using a household survey data collected from 400 informal sector businesses randomly selected from Onitsha (Anambra State) and Aba (Abia state) in South Eastern Nigeria, the study examined the effect of capital sharing model on small firm growth in Nigeria. The estimation technique was based on OLS method while the probit regression was used as a robust check on the OLS estimates. Findings revealed that those who went through Igbo apprenticeship system (IAS) grew significantly in any of the three measures of growth used. On the other hand, business owners who did not undergo apprentice training did not make significant progress as entrepreneurs. The study provided an empirical validation to the use of capital sharing model of the IAS as an innovative informal sector financing model in Nigeria. The study recommended that policy framework that supports this innovative informal sector financing in Nigeria should be established. The strength of this study is its recognition that apprenticeship schemes have potency to build successful entrepreneurs. The study has its weakness in its neglect of the important role of government in financing apprenticeship for job creation.

Smith (2021) investigated the theory and practice of "off-the-job" training and contribution to the development of apprenticeship. He carried out a qualitative study of Australian young people in their first year of full-time work. Study revealed that off-the-job training was a supplement for workplace learning and that face to face training was superior to off-the-job training. The results of the study find relevance in the present study which aims at determining the current status of apprenticeship in employment generation in Nigeria. Iwara *et al.*, (2019) studied the effect of Igbo-boi apprenticeship approach on the success of Igbo entrepreneurship in Nigeria. The study found out that the apprenticeship approach has enhanced business success in the South-eastern Nigeria. The study identified inadequate legal framework as the barrier limiting the potentiality of the scheme. They recommended that the approach should be institutionalized in order to spur apprenticeship spirit among youths in Nigeria.

Anigbogu *et al.* (2019) studied entrepreneurs' perception on apprenticeship and entrepreneurial development in South Eastern Nigeria with implication for economic growth. The study examined artisans' perspective of apprenticeship and found out that all three coefficients (entrepreneurs' motivation for apprenticeship, artisans' perspectives on factors influencing entrepreneurial development and challenges in the apprenticeship system) have a significant impact on entrepreneurial development in Nigeria. The study recommended that the Nigerian government, in particular, and governments of African countries, in general, should set up apprenticeship scheme on South-East model as a strategy for job creation and development. The weakness of this study is that it focused on South East which is only one of the six zones that constitute the Nigerian federation. However, the study has relevance in the sense that its results would be useful for integrating the present study into the existing economic literature.

Kuehn (2019) studied the role of registered apprenticeship and career advancement for low-wage workers. He explored the growth of registered apprenticeship in services occupations over the past decade. The study aimed at identifying factors associated with successful completion of apprenticeship programme and exit-wage growth. Data were collected from a sample of registered apprentices. Results indicate that: (1) Starter apprenticeship programme operated by single employer working jointly with a union tended to be consistently associated with higher completion rate. (2) Partnership with community colleges failed to generate higher completion rates. (3) Partnership with community colleges in apprenticeship was associated with higher exit wages for many service-occupations. Policy implication of findings is the need for federal government to provide adequate fund for effective management of apprenticeship scheme in the country.

Hardye *et al.* (2019) carried out a study titled, 'the apprenticeship-to-work transition: Experimental evidence from Ghana.' The study used randomized control trial to evaluate the effectiveness of the national apprenticeship programme in Ghana. Over 78 programmes from 32 districts were used for evaluation, using population weighted random sampling. A randomized field experiment was conducted to examine how apprenticeship for youth affects their labour market participation, earnings and other life outcomes. The findings indicate that: (1) Access to the

programme led to modest increase in the profitability of apprentices' business.(2) Apprentices who registered and were successfully trained in the programme were more successful than those who could not complete the programme. A major weakness of this study is that only five trades were included in the analysis. Notwithstanding, the study is relevant to the present study as it provides insight into government involvement in apprenticeship for job creation in Ghana.

Robert (2019) examined apprenticeship as cost-effective training program that combines substantial work-based training and classroom instruction at a low cost to the government. The study identified apprentices as employees. Therefore they earned money while learning under the supervision of mentors. According to the study when young people who have been trained gets jobs, they help businesses meet their demand for skill and increase their productivity. This study has relevance in the present study as it revealed the importance of apprenticeship in job creation.

Hunter (2018), in his study titled, 'A strong apprenticeship from Ontario,' examined the role of apprenticeship in the changing economic order where new technologies, globalization and shifting demographics imply the mix of available jobs and skills required for success on the jobs. His analysis was essentially qualitative. In his conclusion, he emphasized the need to promote apprenticeship by making the young people, their families educated in Ontario's elementary and secondary schools more aware of the result of the study. Policy implication to government is the need to integrate apprenticeship in the primary and secondary curricula. The strength of the study derives from its consideration of apprenticeship in a changing economic order. This study is relevant to the present study which seeks to examine the role of apprenticeship in fostering employment generation through skill acquisition in Nigeria's fast-changing economic environment.

Ekpe (2016) studied the effect of apprenticeship on enterprise creation by Malaysian youth. The study was conducted among Malaysian university graduates. The objective of the study was to ascertain whether or not moderating factors such as self-motivation and social influence could hinder apprenticeship from creating wealth for the Malaysian graduates. A sample of 240 respondents was constituted, a survey design was adopted and copies of the structured questionnaire were given to apprenticeship graduate who have received training in business. Data analysis was done using description Statistic and simple regression. The study found that apprenticeship had a positive effect on wealth creation among Malaysian youth. The study emphasized the social capital frame work by positing that apprenticeship had significant effect on business idea generation, idea modification, business location service and access to information.

Cedafop (2016), in the study of governance and apprenticeship financing, investigated the conditions of development of apprenticeship in five countries including Spain, Italy, Latvia, Portugal and Sweden. The study focused on identifying 'favourable' governance structures and financing arrangement that would support the expansion of apprenticeship in the above-mentioned countries. Action-research approach was adopted in which different groups of stakeholders namely representative of government, employers, employees, training providers and independent experts were actively engaged in collaborative process of assessing the current governance structure and financing arrangement in their respective countries. There were over 120 representatives of the above mentioned stakeholders'. Not only do Spain, Italy, Latvia, Portugal and Sweden differ in the extent to which apprenticeship in the strict sense exists, they also differ on the systemic and institution prerequisite of the types of training. Study revealed that apprenticeship would be feasible in principle. However, one short coming of the research is that the vision and strategies discussed in these countries focused on promoting work-based programme instead of apprenticeship. Notwithstanding, based on the system of formal education, the result of the study would be helpful in re-considering governance and financing arrangement in countries concerned.

Cunningham & Villasenar, (2016) carried out a research on employer voices, employer demands and implication for public skill development policy connecting the labour and education sectors. The study undermines the different understanding of skills valued in the labour market. It reviewed quantitatively employer measure of skill demand in an organization. Using 27 students as samples, the study reveals that there is greater demand for social-emotional skills and higher order cognitive skills than basic technical skills

Schweri & Mueller (2010) studied the Swiss data for the period, 1995 to 2010. They presented a graphical analysis of the correlation between the rate of gross domestic product and the share of individual income who are involved in apprenticeship. The percentage share was seen to be pro-cyclical in line with the other results in Europe especially in Norway where similar study took place within the same period. The weakness of the study was in the choice of technique.

Okadi *et al.* (2007) carried out a study titled 'promoting apprenticeship, a panacea for sustainable skill acquisition and industries in Nigeria.' The work considered the rationale for apprenticeship training vis-à-vis the challenges

facing apprenticeship training in Nigeria. Adopting a descriptive survey, study found out that apprenticeship training in Nigeria has no policy framework guiding its operations. So it was uncoordinated and unregulated. Study recommended among others that policy should be formulated to guide the apprenticeship operation system in Nigeria. This study was limited in scope as its main focus was bridging the gap between education/training institutions and the labour market dichotomy between skills acquired in school and those required at workplace. The findings of the study were relevant to this study because the study identified a skill gap in labour market which the present study attempt to fill by studying the effectiveness of apprenticeship for job creation. However, the result was useful for validating the findings of the present study.

Felstead and Green (1996) examined the impact of apprenticeship during recession in Germany. They used data from the labour force survey. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. They reported a finding which indicates that the total number of apprentices declined from 367,000 in the spring of 1989 to 312000 in the spring of 1992, constituting a 15 per cent decline in the number of apprentices in permanent jobs. This study has yielded results which are considered useful for validating the findings of the present study. Although the work accessed apprenticeship during recession, the findings of the work is relevant and would boost the present study.

Westward *et al.* (1999) studied apprenticeship in Denmark. The study covered the period, 1980-1995. Data were collected from 720 apprentices. They reported that the probability of having new apprentices is positively associated with the rate of new hires, and correlated to the rate of job which points to the pro-cycled behavior of work-place training. The findings of this study are relevant to the present study as they would be useful for comparison and validation.

Valenchik (1995) carried out a study to determine the role of apprenticeship in the manufacturing sector in the Ghanaian economy. She used data from the 1992 study of the manufacturing enterprise in Ghana. A sample of 542 workers and 212 apprentices was constituted from four manufacturing sectors. Probit analysis of data was undertaken in the study. Findings indicate that Training of apprenticeship is a widespread activity 'there are two types of apprenticeship contract - one in which the apprentices pay fee and the other in which they do not pay fee. and apprentices' choice of contract-type is strongly correlated with other characteristic of the firm. Policy implication of the finding is that government should integrate apprenticeship training into formal training programs of the country's technical institutions.

### 3. Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative research design which is a process of testing theories objectively by investigating the link among and between variable (Creswel, 2014). The study area is the South-Southern Nigeria. The zone is situated in the Southern end of the Country, occupying 84.587km<sup>2</sup> which is approximately 9.2% of Nigeria's total land area of 923,768km<sup>2</sup>. The region is Delta in nature and characterized by mangrove forest from the Atlantic Ocean and equatorial rain forest as you move Northward. The area host tributaries of the great River Niger and notable rivers including Cross River among others. The South-Southern zone observes the largest period of rainfall in Nigeria. It consist of Six States Including Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Delta with a total of 125 Local Government Area. Population Census of 2006 enumerates the zone at 21.04 Million people. The area is densely populated by approximately 253 persons per square kilometer (NPC, 2006). All Federal Government Apprenticeship Centers in the State Capital and major cities constitute the population of the study. About 4000 apprenticeship in these centres within the period of the study were studied. The selected cities used for the study were Port-Harcourt, Benin City, Asaba and Yenogooa. The study adopted the Taro Yamane Technique which is used to determine sample size. The sample size is given at 5% margin of error. Instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire developed for the research. The Apprenticeship Appraisal Questionnaire (AAQ) comprised three sections and 26 items. Section A seeks to elicit information from respondent's personal records including duration and cost of training. Section B is structured to obtain information on the effectiveness of apprenticeship for enhancing job creation potentials. While Section contains items which are structured to elicits response on personal income from a 4 point ticket -type scale. Apprenticeship Appraisal Questionnaire (AAQ) was administered to apprentice in Asaba, Benin, Yenogoa and Port -Harcourt with the help of four Research Assistants. Out of the 400 copies of the questionnaire administered, 360 copies were returned duly completed, representing a return rate of 90 percent.

The first draft of the questionnaire was sent to two experts in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka from the Department of Economics and the other from Department of Education Foundation. The two experts were requested to rate item of the questionnaire on the basis of language, clarity, face and content validation of the instrument. They rated the items on 4-point scale of 4,3,2,1. The mean rating of each item was determined and only items which had mean rating > 2.50 were included in the final draft. Out of the initial pool of 40 items, 26 items had mean rating > 2.50 and were therefore included in the final draft.

The final draft of the Apprentice Appraisal Questionnaire (AAQ) was subjected to a process of trial testing to determine the reliability of the instrument. Apprentice Appraisal Questionnaire was administered to 10 Artisans in Warri who were not involved in the study. The test was repeated on the same subjects after three weeks of the initial test so as to neutralize the effect of the test familiarity. The scores obtained from the test re-test method were correlated using Pearson' R. The resulting coefficient of correlation  $r = 0.91$  clearly indicates that the questionnaire is highly reliable.

### Model Specification

The main objective of this paper was to investigate the impact of Federal Government Apprenticeship Schemes on youth employability including employability in multinational corporations in South-Southern Nigeria. The study employed the transformation theory of Bunkerhof and Montesino (1995) modified by Montesino, (2002). The Theory holds that training is necessitated by the desire for knowledge and skills acquisition aimed at achieving particular goals / objective. The a priori justification of the theory as suitable for the study is that apprentice performance in chosen crafts is rooted in efficient skills and transformational theory that transfer knowledge and skill from master craft to apprenticeship in workplace resulting in employment. In line with the theoretical framework, the model is specified to investigate employability of skilled workers through the service of apprenticeship schemes.

Model: This is specified to appraise employability capacity of skilled worker in multinational corporations through the services of apprenticeship.

$$Y_{\text{emp}} = a_0 + a_1 \text{FGS} + a_2 \text{INCA} + a_3 \text{TC} + a_4 \text{SK} + a_5 \text{DT} + U_t$$

$Y_{\text{emp}}$  = Youth Employability, INCA – Income of Apprenticeship after training, FGS = Federal Government Apprenticeship Schemes. TC = Training Cost of Apprenticeship, SK = Skill Development, DT = Duration of Training,  $U_t$  = Stochastic Error Term

The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The co-efficient of regression results were interpreted on the basic of statistical, economic and econometric criteria.

### 4. Estimation and discussion of results

This chapter deals with the results of data analysis. The results have been presented in tables for describing the characteristics of the data and verifying the hypotheses.

#### 4.1 Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 4.1: Age of the Respondents

Age Range (Years)	Frequency	Percent (%)
15-20	55	15.3
21-25	140	38.9
26-30	75	20.8
31-35	65	18.1
36-40	10	2.8
40 years and above	15	4.2
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2024)

The data of the survey on age distribution of the respondents presented in Table 4.1 show that 55 out of the 360 respondents are within the ages of 15 and 20 years constituting 15.3 percent of the respondents. 140 respondents are between the ages of 21 and 25 years old representing 38.9 percent of the respondents while 75 respondents fall within the age bracket of 26 and 30 years. 65 respondents are between the ages of 31 and 35 years old accounting for 18.1 percent of the respondents. 10 respondents are between the ages of 36 and 40 years old while 15 of the respondents are aged 40 years and above comprising 2.8 and 4.2 percent of the respondents respectively (see Figure 1).

Table 4.2: Sex of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percent (%)
Female	130	36.1
Male	230	63.9
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2024)

The sex distribution of respondents as reported in Table 4.2 shows that 230 are male while 130 respondents are female. This indicates that 63.9 percent of the respondents are female and the other 36.1 percent are male.

**Table 4.3: Marital Status of the Respondents**

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent (%)
Divorced/Separated	15	4.2
Married	135	37.5
Single	190	52.8
Widowed	20	5.6
Total	360	100.0

*Source: Field Survey (2024)*

From Table 4.3, 15 out of 360 of the respondents are divorced or separated from their spouses representing 4.2 percent of the total respondents. 135 of the respondents are married while 190 are not yet married. Out of the 360 respondents, 20 are widowed accounting for 5.6 percent of the total respondents.

**Table 4.4: Educational Level of the Respondents**

Educational Qualifications	Frequency	Percent (%)
No formal education	20	5.6
Primary	30	8.3
Secondary	115	31.9
Tertiary	180	50.0
Vocational/Technical	15	4.2
Total	360	100.0

*Source: Field Survey (2024)*

Table 4.4 indicates that 20 out of the 360 respondents do not have any formal education comprising 5.6 percent of the entire respondents. 30 respondents have primary education representing 8.3 percent of the total respondents. 115 out of the 360 respondents have secondary educational qualification. 180 of the respondents have higher educational qualification. Just 15 of the respondents have vocational or technical educational qualification. Therefore, majority of the respondents have tertiary educational qualification.

**Table 4.5: Ethnic Groups of the Respondents**

Ethnic Group	Frequency	Percent (%)
Annang	10	2.8
Edo	65	18.1
Efik	16	4.4
Ibibio	20	5.6
Igbo	10	2.8
Ijaw	84	23.3
Itsekiri	20	5.6
Ukwuani	25	6.9
Urhobo	82	22.8
Yoruba	28	7.8
Total	360	100.0

*Source: Field Survey (2024)*

Table 4.5 indicates that 10 out of the 360 respondents speak Annang. 65 respondents have their ethnic background from Edo. 16 out of the 360 respondents are Efik. 20 of the respondents are Ibibio while 10 are Igbo. 84 are Ijaw while 20 are Itsekiri people. 25 are from Ukwuani background. 82 are Urhobo and 28 are Yoruba.

**Table 4.6: Household Size of the Respondents**

Household Size	Frequency	Percent (%)
1-4	235	65.3
5-8	105	29.2
9-12	15	4.2
13 and above	5	1.4
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2024)

The data of the survey on household size distribution of the respondents presented in Table 4.6 show that 235 out of the 360 respondents have a household size ranging from 1 to 4 members. 105 respondents have a household size from 5 to 8 members. 15 respondents have a household size with 9 to 12 members. Just 5 of the respondents have a family size of 13 members and above.

**Table 4.7: Sponsors of Apprenticeship Training of the Respondents**

Sponsors of Apprenticeship Training	Frequency	Percent (%)
Government	315	87.5
Non-government/Private	10	2.8
Parents/Guardians	15	4.2
Self	20	5.6
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 4.7 indicates that the government sponsored 315 out of the 360 respondents on their apprentice training representing 87.5 percent of the total respondents. 10 respondents had their apprentice training sponsored by non-governmental or private organizations constituting 2.8 percent of the total respondents. 15 out of the 360 respondents had their apprenticeship training sponsored by their parents or guardians while 20 sponsored themselves in their apprenticeship training.

**Table 4.8: Duration of Apprenticeship Training of the Respondents**

Sponsors of Apprenticeship Training	Frequency	Percent (%)
1 year and below	145	40.3
1-2 years	120	33.3
2-3 years	80	22.2
3 years and above	15	4.2
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 4.8 indicates that 145 out of the 360 respondents had their apprenticeship training within 1 year and below representing 40.3 percent of the total respondents. 120 respondents had their apprenticeship training between 1 and 2 years constituting 33.3 percent of the total respondents. 80 out of the 360 respondents had their apprenticeship training between 2 and 3 years while 15 had theirs for 3 years and beyond.

**Table 4.9 Apprentice Recruitment by Multinational Corporation**

Number of times skilled Apprentice attended recruitment process	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 – 5	20	5.5
6 – 10	60	16.6
11 – 15	100	27.7
15 times and above	180	50
Total	360	100.0

*Source: Field Survey (2024)*

Table 4.9 shows that 20 out of the 360 apprentices that responded have attended recruitment exercise by multinational corporations in South-South, Nigeria. This represents 5.5 percent of the total respondents. 60 respondents have attended recruitment exercise by Multinational Corporation for up to 15 times. This represents 50 percent of respondents. The implication of the result is that most skilled youth that passed through Federal Government Apprenticeship Scheme in South-South, desire to be employed by the multinational corporation.

**Table 4.10: Recruitment Process by Multinational Corporations**

Number of Apprentice who passed recruitment process	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Skills assessment	205	56.9
Screening	110	30.5
Test/Interview	45	12.6
Recruitment	0	0
Total	360	100.0

*Source: Field Survey (2024)*

Table 4.10: Survey Data indicates that 205 skilled apprentice representing 56.9 percent passed the skill assessment stage in the recruitment process of multination corporations in South-South Nigeria. 10 respondents passed through the screening stage representing 29.2 percent while 45 respondents passed the test/interview stage. This represents 12.6 percent of the respondents. No skilled apprentices were recruited by Multinational Corporation. The implication is that despite the training by apprentices in government apprenticeship schemes in South-South, Nigeria, none of them was able to secure a job at the multinational corporations.

#### Main Characteristics of Apprenticeship Programme

To gain insight into the main characteristics of apprenticeship programme in Nigeria, descriptive statistics have been presented below.

**Table 4.11: Mean, Median, Maximum, Minimum, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis**

Variable	Mean	Median	Maximum	Minimum	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
FGS	1.268072	0.000000	30.000000	0.00000	2.980876	6.0770996	51.20813
INC	22931.33	10000.00	240000.00	0.00000	39048.59	14.60356	2446.892
TC	54442.77	30000.00	385000.00	0.00000	62776.11	2.645140	10.76953
SK	78.91867	19.00000	20000.00	8.00000	1096.619	18.13821	329.9974
Obs	332	332	332	332	332	332	332

*Source: Researchers' Compilation*

Table 4.11 shows that Federal government apprenticeship schemes, income gain, training cost and Skill development had mean of 1.27, 22931.33, 54442.77 and 78.92 respectively and median of 0.00, 10000.00, 30000.00 and 19.00 respectively. It also shows that apprenticeship schemes, Income, Training cost and Skill development had Skewness of 6.08, 14.60, 2.65 and 18.14 respectively and kurtosis of 51.21, 2446.89, 10.77 and 330.00 respectively. Now, since mean ≠ median, skewness ≠ 0 and kurtosis ≠ 0.263, the results suggest that apprenticeship schemes, Income, Training cost, and Skill development are not normally distributed. Skewness values greater than zero are an indication that larger number of artisans who pass through apprenticeship were empowered to create jobs, generate income, fund their training and acquire skills. This is corroborated further by the kurtosis values which are greater than 0.263 depicting plain kurtic curves that follow a similar trend. Despite the fact that apprenticeship schemes, Income gain, Training cost and Skill development are not normally

distributed, parametric statistics of correlation, multiple regression, analysis of variance and chi-square were applied for the analysis of data. Best and Khan (1992) had stated that many of the parametric statistics are still appropriate even when the assumption of normality is violated. Moreover, the table shows that apprenticeship schemes, Income, training cost and skill development had standard deviations of 2.98, 39048.59, 62776.11 and 1096.62 respectively; maximum values of 30.00, 240000.00, 385000.00 and 20000.00 respectively; minimum values of 0.00, 0.00, 0.00 and 8.00 respectively. These results suggest that there is a wide variation across trades on the basis of apprenticeship schemes, Income gain, Training cost and Skill development. Thus, it has become necessary to embark on logarithmic transformation of variables in order to eliminate chances of heteroskedasticity.

### Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

The results of the correlation analysis have been presented in table 4.12.

**Table 4.12:Correlation Matrix**

Variable	JC	ING	SK	DT	TC
FGS	X				
ING	0.291(.000)	X			
SK	0.033(.275)	-0.031(.287)	X		
DT	0.231(.000)	-0.045(.207)	-0.017(.376)	X	
TC	0.195(.000)	0.331(.000)	-0.042(.221)	-0.089(.053)	X

Source: Researchers' compilation

Table 4.12 shows the inter-correlations among apprenticeship schemes, income gain, skill development, duration of training and training cost. The table reveals zero-order correlations among the variables. Results indicate the following: (1) There is positive and significant relationship between youth employability and federal government apprenticeship schemes, (2) there is positive and significant relationship between Duration of training and youth employability, (3) There is positive and significant relationship between Training cost and youth employability (4) There is positive and significant relationship between Training cost and youth employability. These results suggest that: (1) As more employment are created through apprenticeship, the incomes of the skilled workers also increase; (2) the longer the period of the apprenticeship training, the higher the capacity of the skilled worker to create job; (3) the higher the cost of training of the apprentices, the higher their potentials to create job; (4) the higher the cost of training of apprentices, the higher is their earning capacity.

**Table 4.13      Federal government apprenticeship schemes, income, training cost, skills and duration of training**

S/N	Variable	B-Coefficient	STD. Error	T-Statistic	Probability
1	ING	0.260	0.000	4.852	0.000
2	SK	0.051	0.000	1.007	0.315
3	DT	0.255	0.010	5.020	0.000
4	TC	0.133	0.000	2.478	0.014
5	Constant		0.306	2.011	0.045
R Square = 0.54441					
Adjusted R Square = 0.51107					

Source: Researcher's compilation

Table 4.13 shows that income and duration of training had significant B coefficients of 0.260 ( $P \leq 0.000$ ) and 0.255 ( $P \leq 0.000$ ) respectively, implying that one per cent increase in Income would lead to 0.26 per cent increase in youth employment while a one per cent increase in Duration of training would lead to 0.255 increase in youth employment. Also, Table 4.3 shows that the B coefficient for skill development ( $B=0.051, p\leq 0.315$ ) was non-significant, while B coefficient for Training cost ( $B=0.133, p\leq 0.014$ ) was significant. The R Square= 0.54441 indicating that 54.44 per cent of variance in youth employability was accounted for by the explanatory variables. In other words, apprenticeship schemes, Income, Skill development, Duration of training and training cost conjointly contributed 54.44 per cent to the variance in job creation. The adjusted R Square of 0.51107

suggests that the model had sufficient predictive power to yield reliable prediction on the effects of Income, Duration of training, Skill development and Training cost on job creation.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Federal government apprenticeship schemes have contributed significantly to youth employment but not employability of youths in multinationals in South-Southern Nigeria. There is no other way to reduce the growing number of unemployed school-leavers except through impartation of skills which will ultimately render them employable. While the apprenticeship schemes provided by the Federal government are low cost initiatives, this study has shown that the skills required by multinational corporations typically demand higher investment and longer duration to acquire. This makes it difficult to acquire employability skills in the Federal Government Apprenticeship Centres. Another finding of the study is that apprenticeship contributed significantly to the income of skilled workers in south-southern Nigeria. This has also come as expected considering that the development of skills among youth apprentices would naturally enhance their potentials and increase their earning capacity.

There is also the finding that job creating capacity of the skilled workers depends on the duration of their training. This has not come as a surprise. A plausible explanation can be sought in the fact that higher skill acquisition with higher propensity for job creation comes naturally with longer period of training. Moreover, the cost of training contributes significantly to job creation by skilled workers who passed through apprenticeship schemes. A possible explanation of this is that high-paying skills require high cost of training and vice-versa. In other words, the higher the level of skills acquisition, the higher the cost of training and subsequently the higher the capacity for job creation.

### **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study investigated the contribution of federal government Apprenticeship schemes to youth employability in south – southern Nigeria. Findings of this study reveal that federal government apprenticeship schemes have contributed to youth employment but not to employability in multinational corporations in South southern Nigeria. This is not strange because the result indicates that longer the period of apprenticeship training, the higher cost of training are factors that determine employability, which the schemes do not offer. This results bring to the fore the need that for government to improve the skills and invest more in apprenticeship schemes. The importance of apprenticeship cannot be over-emphasized because beyond enhancing youth employment for young job-seekers, apprenticeship has an added advantage of matching the supply of skills with the demand for labour much more efficiently than highly structured formal school curricula.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends the following.

- a. With the significant contribution of Federal Government Apprenticeship Scheme to youth employability in south- southern Nigeria, The government should expand apprenticeship schemes to accommodate modern skills to reflects changing career needs of society. Also, with the advancement in technology, there is need to integrate modern learning methods, digitizing curriculum and provide certificate upon completion of the training. When this is done, apprenticeship would gain acceptability are employability in both local and multinational corporations.
- b. That federal government apprenticeship schemes contributed significantly to income generation necessitates that government expand the scope of the existing apprenticeship scheme to include both non-graduates are graduates in order to reduce the high poverty rate in the county. The apprenticeship schemes should be multi-dimensioned in approach and could be crafted around the International Labour Organization (ILO work Agenda). Furthermore, local programs that increase youth employability should be encouraged in rural communities in the South-South region of Nigeria.

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