

Economic Empowerment Needs of Persons with Disability in Yobe State Due to Changing World COVID-19

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Abstract

COVID-19 changing world emphasis on economic empowerment in developing countries has been on sustainable economic empowerment is largely planned along effective harnessing of human and natural resources. In the quest for sustainable paths of Yobe State economic empowerment, unfortunately the role and place of persons with disability have for long not been recognized in a richly endowed state like Yobe State. The consequences of COVID-19 economic empowerment program exclusive of persons with disability unfortunately has complicated/ compounded the sore of national life in terms of large segments of the population who have been dehumanized, destituted and cultured into perpetual dependence. This research was set out to investigate economic empowerment needs of persons with disability in Yobe State due to changing world COVID-19. To what extent does COVID-19 affect economic life of persons with disability in Yobe State? However, there is significant relationship between COVID-19 economic empowerment program exclusive of persons with disability and their destitution; survey design was used, a total of 350 respondents consists of different types of persons with disability. The finding revealed that, majority of persons with disability are been excluded from COVID-19 economic empowerment program in Yobe State also suggestions were made:

Keywords: *Economic Empowerment, Persons with disability, Changing world COVID-19*

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Background to the Study

The COVID-19 crisis, which first hit the developed world is spreading into developing countries, experts from the United Nations (UN), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and World Health Organizations (WHO) have stressed deep concern about the long-term impact the pandemic could have on individuals, communities and Nations. There is a concerted effort worldwide to come together, to break down boundaries or demarcations and to harness common resources for greater benefit of people in the network, example of such coming together include European Union, African Union etc.

In economic empowerment program due to changing world COVID-19, inclusive of persons with disability should now be pursued with vaguer than ever before. Not satisfied with the pace of integration of persons with disability within the fabric of the society. Current emphasis across the global for economic empowerment development is through the equalization of opportunities for all, irrespective of gender and abilities. For persons with disability equalization in order to enhance social, economic and political integration (Salamonca declaration 1994). Unfortunately, in most parts of developing countries like Nigeria-Yobe State in particularly not only the needs of persons with disability utterly neglected by both communities and governments, there are in addition varying instance of denial of persons with disability basic rights (economic empowerment-work).

The right rate of destitution, beggary and idleness among persons with disability in urban and rural communities is first an indication of community neglected (Kolo and Isa 1995) before it is the issue of government's lack of concern. The impact of COVID-19 has also exacerbated destitution, beggary and idleness among persons with disability.

And as much as the economic empowerment program must share in this blame the fact still remains that under conditions of masse destitution and dependence, persons with disability caught in this trap remains completely excluded from national and community line. On the other hand, lack of concern by economic empowerment program for persons with disability entirely locks them out of economic life and full participation in national development efforts. The realizations that government cannot provide employment for all Nigerians had also made government to explore and pursue private sectors partnership and the empowerment of the individuals in the task of poverty eradication and fostering economic development. Thus, the term "empowerment" has become fashionable objectives/ goals from the above, it can be seen that empowerment is a multi-dimensional concept involving political, educational and economic areas. However, paper tends to focus on economic empowerment due to changing/challenging world COVID-19.

Research Question

1. To what extent does COVID-19 changing world affect economic life of persons with disability in Yobe State State?
2. To what extent economic empowerment program of COVID-19 involves person with disability in Yobe State State?

Research Hypothesis

- H₁ "There is a significant relationship between impact of COVID-19 and destitution, beggary and dependence among persons with disability in Yobe State.
- H₂ "COVID-19 economic empowerment program exclusive of persons with disability in Yobe State share in the blame of high rate of destitution, beggary and idleness among them."

Review of Literature

Sometimes people fail to understand why government should spend scarce public funds on economic empowerment of persons with disability, considering it a waste of such resource. There are justification bases for economic empowerment for these persons.

Equal opportunity: - the Nigeria constitution sec. 18 (1) state that "government should direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational and or training opportunities of all levels". However, disability promotes or causes poverty, destitution, beggary and dependence, as well marriage breakdown, and psychological upset to the affected persons, family members or the community at large. Disabilities place affected to difficult circumstances of helplessness, put more burden on parents and family members and drains on the economics or resources of community where affected persons live (Ademokoye, 2012).

The COVID-19 crisis, which first hit the developed world is spreading into developing countries, experts from the United Nations (UN), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and World Health Organization (WHO) have stressed deep concern about the long-term impact the pandemic could have on individuals, communities and nations. From the above, persons with disability as a result of impact of COVID-19, deserve economic empowerment. Economic empowerment is purposely geared towards equipping individual with necessary training and facilities to enable him to be self-reliant and prepare him for a successful life-long career. Also, the term poverty eradication as a synonym for economic empowerment, and that communities, Governments, no-governmental organizations have role to play Runserve (2005).

A great segment of people in the developing world do expect persons with disability to be beggars. The success of the disabled persons is therefore judged as to whether they are successful beggars. The sighted our society do not generally show surprise when they see a disabled person begging, because it is expected of him, rather they are surprised to see a disabled person engaged in gainful employment. Exclusion of persons with disability from economic empowerment program due to world changing COVID-19 contributes to high rate to their destitution, beggary and dependence, and for this reason, they are looked down as second-class citizens. They are refused many rights either directly or indirectly.

Methodology

The research is of survey in nature which tends to find out Economic Empowerment Needs of Persons with Disability in Yobe State due to changing/challenging world

COVID-19. In this design, variables, involved in this problem have being appropriately considered and structured interview has been conducted to take care such variable. Sample of 350 different categories of persons with disability from both urban and rural areas of the state were used, as details of this shown on the tables of appendix. Structure interview was use for data collection, items in the interview were gotten based on content validity and reliability, which was critically proofed read by experts to ascertain its validity. The interview was conducted by the researcher and assisted by interpreters who speak language of the respondents, who could not speak and understand English or Hausa Language. Respondents responded promptly, therefore, there was 100% response. Simple percentage statistic procedure been used in the analysis of data, which is expressing respondents' views or opinion to the interview (structure interview).

Results and Discussion

The result of the analysis shown from appendix that, 100% of the respondents have heard of economic empowerment program due to COVID-19 impact/effect, All of respondents, that is 100% of them had experience lock-down due to COVID-19, while this affected their economic, social and psychological life. 99% respondents are of the opinion that, "they have not been benefiting from economic empowerment program due to world changing world COVID-19, this has contributed their high rate of destitution, beggary and dependence life. However, above 70% of respondents felt that they are lock down as second-class citizens. They are refused many rights, either directly or indirectly.

Conclusion

Current emphasis across the globe for sustainable economic empowerment is through the equalization of opportunities for all, irrespective of gender and abilities. For persons with disability equalization of opportunities and access to economic, social life and political life integration was an effort since 'Salamanca Declaration '1994. Unfortunately, in most part of developing countries like Nigeria, and Yobe State in particular, economic empowerment program due to changing would COVID-19 exclude persons with disability, government, community and non-governmental organization except persons with disability to be destitute, beggars and dependents.

Recommendations

Most persons with disability fall victims of world changes and challenges due to COVID-19, therefore, the following are ways out: -

1. The governments-federal, state and local must be ready to abide by the policies made as regard right, equalization of opportunities for all.
2. Persons with disability are full pledge human beings, citizens, worthy of respect and regard. They too have vocational skills and ought to benefit from COVID-19 economic empowerment program. Parent and person with disability must know their right and should fight for it at all cost. Parent and persons with disability often time keep quietly waiting for their right to be extended to them rather than struggle for their own right by themselves. Also define schemes and programmes deliberately aimed at economic empowerment of persons with disability are equally most needed in Nigeria-Yobe State State-through people Bank, UNDP, political parties and so on.

3. The general public should be made aware that there is ability in disability. Let successful persons living with disabilities be advertised in advocacy programmes. They should take part actively in advocacy activities; this will make the ignorant public with negative attitude realize that handicapping conditions no barrier to benefit from economic empowerment program due to changing world COVID-19.
4. Economic empowerment plan/program-application and objectives in developing countries, Yobe State in particular due to COVID-19 need to be dynamic, progressive and balance to meet the challenges and current demands of life and changing conditions of every individual and society.

Appendix

Table 1: Respondents by gender

Sex	Number	%
Male	300	86
Female	50	14
Total	350	100

Source: Field work 2020

Table 2: Respondents by age

Age	Number	%
0-25	53	15
26-50	250	72
50+	47	13
Total	350	100

Source: Field work 2020

Table 3: Respondents by location found

Location	Number	%
Motor Park	50	14
Filling station	52	15
Check point	44	13
Market side	52	15
Mosque side	51	14
Church side	40	11
Roaming street	43	12
Road side	18	5
Total	350	100

Sources: field work 2020

Table 4: Respondents by type of disability

Disability	Number	%
Blind	120	34
Deaf	100	29
Cripple	121	34
Multi disable	09	3
Total	350	100

Sources: field work 2020

Table 5: Respondents: - To what extent economic empowerment program of COVID-19 involve/exclude persons with disability.

S/N	ITEM	YES	NO	NOT SURE %	TOTAL %
1.	Have you heard of COVID-19 in your community?	350 100%	00 00%	00 00%	350 100%
2.	Did you experience lock down as a result of COVID-19?	350 100%	00 00%	00 00%	350 100%
3.	Have you heard of economic empowerment program due to COVID-19 impact?	300 100%	42 12%	08 02%	350 100%
4.	Did the lock down period affect your economic program?	350 100%	60 00%	00 00%	350 100%
5.	Economic empowerment program of COVID-19 considers persons with disability?	02 05%	346 99%	02 05%	350 100%
6.	Have you heard of any persons with disability who benefited from economic empowerment program of COVID-19?	00 00%	342 98%	08 02%	350 100%
7.	Are you beneficiary of economic empowerment program of COVID-19?	01 05%	348 99%	01 05%	350 100%
8.	Do you feel economic empowerment program of COVID-19 exclude persons with disability in your area?	343 28%	04 01%	03 01%	350 100%
9.	Many plans/program for citizens could not include persons with disability due to negative attitude people hold about disability persons?	341 97%	02 01%	07 02%	350 100%
10.	I belief begging is last option/alternative I have	350 100%	00 00%	00 00%	350 100%

Sources: Field work 2020

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