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IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES OF N-POWER SCHEME AND THEIR EFFECT ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN YENAGOA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, BAYELSA STATE

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ABSTRACT
This study examined the implementation challenges of the N-Power Scheme and their effect on youth empowerment in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Despite the introduction of the N-Power Scheme as a strategic intervention to reduce youth unemployment and enhance skills acquisition, concerns persist regarding its implementation and overall effectiveness. Specifically, the study investigated the influence of government commitment, availability of training equipment, funding adequacy, and monitoring and evaluation on youth empowerment. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The study targeted N-Power beneficiaries in Yenagoa Local Government Area, from which a sample of 333 respondents was selected using the Taro Yamane sampling formula and simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire validated by experts. The instrument recorded a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.86. A total of 307 valid responses were analysed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The measurement and structural models demonstrated an acceptable fit to the observed data (CMIN/DF = 2.184, CFI = 0.951, RMSEA = 0.062), confirming the adequacy of the proposed model. The findings revealed that government commitment, availability of training equipment, funding adequacy, and monitoring and evaluation each exerted significant positive effects on youth empowerment, with monitoring and evaluation emerging as the strongest predictor. The study concludes that the effectiveness of the N-Power Scheme depends largely on transparent implementation, sustained funding, adequate training facilities, and continuous monitoring. It recommends improved intergovernmental collaboration, timely funding, provision of modern training equipment, and strengthened monitoring mechanisms to enhance the sustainability and impact of the N-Power Scheme on youth empowerment.

Keywords: N-Power Scheme; Youth Empowerment; Government Commitment; Monitoring and Evaluation; Public Policy Implementation; Bayelsa State.

Introduction

Youth unemployment remains one of the most persistent socio-economic challenges confronting developing countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. The rapid growth of the youth population has not been matched by a corresponding expansion in employment opportunities, resulting in unemployment, underemployment, poverty, social exclusion and other constraints to sustainable development (Usman et al., 2025). Beyond its economic implications, youth unemployment undermines national productivity by limiting the ability of young people to contribute meaningfully to socio-economic development (World Bank, 2022; International Labour Organization, 2022).

In Nigeria, youth unemployment continues to pose a significant public policy challenge despite the implementation of several employment intervention programmes (African Institute for Development Policy, 2026). Although recent labour market indicators suggest modest improvements, youth unemployment and underemployment remain major developmental concerns (National Bureau of Statistics, 2024). Over the years, the Federal Government has introduced initiatives including the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWiN), Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS), Presidential Youth Empowerment Scheme (P-YES), and the N-Power Scheme, designed to enhance employability through vocational training, entrepreneurship development and temporary employment (Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development [FMHDS], 2022).

Launched in 2016 under the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP), the N-Power Scheme is one of Nigeria's largest youth empowerment initiatives, established to equip young Nigerians with practical skills, work experience and technical competencies for gainful employment and self-reliance (Anam et al., 2025). Through its components — N-Teach, N-Health, N-Agro, N-Build, N-Tech and N-Creative — the Scheme seeks to improve service delivery across key sectors while promoting human capital development (National Social Investment Programme Agency [NSIPA], 2020). Scholars describe it as one of the most comprehensive youth employment programmes in Nigeria, blending work experience with practical skills acquisition (Afolabi, Agunyai & Costa, 2025), and note that such public employment programmes contribute significantly to social inclusion and poverty reduction when implemented transparently and supported with adequate institutional resources (ILO, 2022).

The Scheme's effectiveness, however, hinges on four recurring implementation factors identified in the literature. Government commitment — reflected in policy consistency, institutional support, timely payment of stipends and stakeholder engagement — strengthens the credibility and sustainability of youth empowerment programmes (FMHDS, 2022; UNDP, 2023; Agunyai, 2025), though policy inconsistency, administrative bottlenecks and changing government priorities continue to constrain outcomes (Umearoukwu & Ilias, 2022; Nnaeto & Nwambuko, 2023; Dauda et al., 2019). Availability of training equipment — the infrastructure, instructional materials and digital technologies needed for practical learning — enhances technical competence, employability and entrepreneurship (World Bank, 2022; International Labour Organization, 2022), yet poor facilities and infrastructural deficiencies persist in several locations (Umearoukwu & Ilias, 2022; Osimen et al., 2025). Funding adequacy determines the timeliness of stipend payment, procurement of training materials and overall programme delivery (FMHDS, 2022); delays in disbursement and irregular financing have hampered several social investment programmes, including N-Power (BudgIT, 2020; Umearoukwu & Ilias, 2022). Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) provides the systematic tracking of implementation, performance assessment and accountability needed for evidence-based improvement (UNDP, 2023; World Bank, 2022); however, poor

supervision, weak institutional coordination and poor feedback mechanisms remain persistent challenges (Umearoukwu & Ilias, 2022; Osimen et al., 2025).

Youth empowerment, the outcome of interest in this study, is conceptualised as the process of equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, resources and confidence to make informed decisions and improve their quality of life (UN-Habitat, 2004; Oyeshola, 2008). It extends beyond job creation to human capital development, entrepreneurial capacity and active participation in economic and community development. The N-Power Scheme has contributed to this outcome by improving beneficiaries' employability, workplace experience and entrepreneurial potential across different sectors of the economy (Afolabi, Agunyai & Costa, 2025).

Several empirical studies confirm this contribution while also identifying persistent implementation gaps. Umearoukwu and Ilias (2022), using a documentary and policy review approach, found that the Scheme has reduced youth unemployment but remains constrained by irregular funding and weak institutional coordination. Nnaeto and Nwambuko (2023), relying on documentary evidence and programme evaluation, found improved entrepreneurial competence among beneficiaries but weak post-programme support. Afolabi, Agunyai and Costa (2025), through a qualitative systematic review, found the Scheme comprehensive in design but largely a short-term intervention. Osimen et al. (2025), using a cross-sectional survey in Lagos State, found measurable gains in employability constrained by irregular stipends and administrative inefficiencies. Related studies have also examined the Scheme's contribution to agribusiness income generation (Adeosun et al., 2020) and to Sustainable Development Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth (Agunyai, Ojakorotu & Afolabi, 2025). None of these studies, however, has simultaneously examined the combined effects of government commitment, training equipment availability, funding adequacy and monitoring and evaluation on youth empowerment using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), and empirical evidence specific to Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State remains limited. This methodological and contextual gap provides the justification for the present study, which examines the implementation challenges of the N-Power Scheme and their effect on youth empowerment in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Statement of the Problem

The Federal Government introduced the N-Power Scheme as a strategic intervention to reduce youth unemployment through skills acquisition, vocational training, entrepreneurship development and temporary employment. Despite considerable success in beneficiary enrolment and skills development, available evidence suggests that implementation has been constrained by inadequate government commitment, insufficient training facilities, irregular funding, and weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (Umearoukwu & Ilias, 2022; Nnaeto & Nwambuko, 2023; Osimen et al., 2025), while unemployment and economic vulnerability among Nigerian youths remain persistent, particularly in the Niger Delta region (International Labour Organization, 2022; National Bureau of Statistics, 2024).

This situation is particularly significant in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, where youth unemployment continues to pose a major socio-economic challenge despite the Scheme's implementation. While many youths have participated in the N-Power Scheme, it remains unclear whether the existing levels of government commitment, funding adequacy, training equipment availability and monitoring and evaluation are sufficient to produce meaningful and sustainable youth empowerment outcomes within the locality. It is not clear how far these four implementation factors jointly explain differences in youth empowerment among N-Power beneficiaries in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the implementation challenges of the N-Power Scheme and its effect on youth empowerment in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To evaluate the impact of government commitment on youth empowerment under the N-Power Scheme in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.
2. To determine the effect of availability of training equipment on youth empowerment among N-Power beneficiaries in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.
3. To ascertain the effect of funding adequacy on youth empowerment of N-Power beneficiaries in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.
4. To assess the influence of monitoring and evaluation on youth empowerment under the N-Power Scheme in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Human Capital Theory, postulated by Schultz (1961) and further developed by Becker (1964), which holds that investment in education, vocational training and skills development enhances the productivity, efficiency and economic value of individuals. Schultz (1961) argued that expenditure on human development should be treated as an investment rather than consumption, while Becker (1964) held that individuals who acquire relevant knowledge and technical competencies are more productive, more employable and better positioned to contribute to economic growth.

The N-Power Scheme is a practical application of this theory, as its components are designed to build beneficiaries' technical competence, employability and entrepreneurial capacity through structured training and work experience. However, two of the study's explanatory variables — government commitment and monitoring and evaluation — are governance rather than human-capital constructs. The study therefore also draws on Institutional Theory, which explains how institutional coordination, policy consistency, funding and oversight create the enabling environment necessary for effective programme implementation. Human Capital Theory thus explains how training equipment and funding build beneficiaries' capacities, while Institutional Theory explains how government commitment and monitoring and evaluation create the conditions for effective delivery of the N-Power Scheme. Together, the two theories provide a comprehensive foundation for the relationships examined in this study.

Research Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to examine the implementation challenges of the N-Power Scheme and their effect on youth empowerment in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. This design was considered appropriate as it enabled the collection of primary data from N-Power beneficiaries regarding their experiences and perceptions of programme implementation.

The target population consisted of 2,000 registered N-Power beneficiaries enrolled across the various programme components in Yenagoa Local Government Area, drawn from the official beneficiary register maintained by the Bayelsa State N-Power Programme Coordination Office (Internal Administrative Record, December 2024), which served as the sampling frame for the study. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula at a 5% level of precision, yielding a sample of 333 respondents. Simple random sampling was employed to select participants, ensuring that every registered beneficiary had an equal chance of being selected.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled the Implementation Challenges of N-Power Scheme and Youth Empowerment Questionnaire (ICNPYQ). The instrument comprised a section on respondents' demographic characteristics and a second section measuring government commitment, availability of training equipment, funding

adequacy, monitoring and evaluation, and youth empowerment on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). The questionnaire was content-validated by experts in Business Administration, Public Administration and Research Methodology, and recorded an overall Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.86, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

The researchers personally administered the questionnaires with the assistance of trained research assistants. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity were assured for all respondents. Of the 333 questionnaires administered, 318 were retrieved (95.5% response rate); following data screening, 11 were excluded for incomplete responses, leaving 307 valid questionnaires (92.2%) for the final analysis.

Data were analysed using SPSS Version 29 for descriptive statistics and AMOS Version 29 for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), with structural relationships tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The structural model is specified as:

$$YE = \beta 0 + \beta 1GC + \beta 2TE + \beta 3FA + \beta 4ME + \varepsilon$$

where YE is youth empowerment (dependent variable), GC is government commitment, TE is training equipment availability, FA is funding adequacy, ME is monitoring and evaluation, $\beta 0$ is the constant, $\beta 1$–$\beta 4$ are the regression coefficients of the explanatory variables, and ε is the stochastic error term. Consistent with the theoretical framework, all coefficients were expected to be positive ($\beta 1, \beta 2, \beta 3, \beta 4 > 0$).

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested:

H_{01}: Government commitment does not significantly affect youth empowerment under the N-Power Scheme in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

H_{02}: Availability of training equipment does not significantly impact youth empowerment under the N-Power Scheme in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

H_{03}: Funding adequacy is not significantly related to youth empowerment under the N-Power Scheme in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

H_{04}: Monitoring and evaluation does not significantly affect youth empowerment under the N-Power Scheme in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Results and Discussion

Response Rate

The questionnaire was administered to 333 N-Power beneficiaries in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. As shown in Table 1, 318 questionnaires were retrieved (95.5%), and following data screening, 307 valid questionnaires (92.2%) were used for the final analysis — a response rate considered adequate for reliable statistical analysis and generalisability of findings.

Table 1

Questionnaire Administration and Response Rate

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires Administered	333	100.0
Questionnaires Retrieved	318	95.5
Invalid Questionnaires	11	3.3
Valid Questionnaires Used	307	92.2

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2 shows a fairly balanced sample, with male respondents (55.7%) marginally outnumbering female respondents (44.3%). Table 3 shows that most respondents (49.2%) were aged 26–35 years, followed by 18–25 years (22.5%), 36–45 years (20.5%) and above 45 years (7.8%), reflecting the age group that constitutes the Scheme's primary target population.

Table 4 shows that the majority of respondents held HND/B.Sc. (56.0%) or OND/NCE (24.8%) qualifications, with 15.0% holding a Master's degree and 4.2% other qualifications, indicating that respondents possessed the educational background required to engage meaningfully with the Scheme. Table 5 shows that respondents were drawn from all major programme components, with N-Teach most represented (35.2%), followed by N-Agro (19.9%), N-Build (17.3%), N-Tech (16.0%), N-Health (7.8%) and N-Creative (3.9%), providing a broad perspective on programme implementation.

Table 2

Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	171	55.7
Female	136	44.3
Total	307	100.0

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Table 3

Age Distribution of Respondents

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18–25	69	22.5
26–35	151	49.2
36–45	63	20.5
Above 45	24	7.8
Total	307	100.0

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Table 4

Respondents' Educational Attainments

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
OND/NCE	76	24.8
HND/B.Sc.	172	56.0
Master's Degree	46	15.0
Others	13	4.2

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Table 5

N-Power Programme Category

Programme Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
N-Teach	108	35.2
N-Agro	61	19.9
N-Build	53	17.3
N-Tech	49	16.0
N-Health	24	7.8
N-Creative	12	3.9
Total	307	100.0

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Descriptive Analysis of Study Variables

Table 6 shows that respondents generally agreed that government commitment supports the implementation of the N-Power Scheme (grand M = 3.82, SD = 0.97), with the highest agreement recorded for its overall positive influence on implementation (M = 4.13) and the lowest for beneficiaries' institutional support (M = 3.58). Table 7 shows agreement that training equipment availability contributes to implementation (grand M = 3.72, SD = 0.97), with practical learning facilities rated highest (M = 3.91) and access to instructional materials rated lowest (M = 3.47). Table 8 shows agreement that funding adequacy influences implementation (grand M = 3.52, SD = 1.03), with sustainable funding rated highest (M =

3.87) and timely receipt of stipends rated lowest (M = 3.18). Table 9 shows agreement that monitoring and evaluation contributes positively to implementation (grand M = 3.89, SD = 0.92), with evaluation's role in enhancing effectiveness rated highest (M = 4.05) and its role in strengthening empowerment outcomes rated lowest (M = 3.76). Table 10 shows agreement that the Scheme has contributed to youth empowerment (grand M = 3.92, SD = 0.88), with enhanced vocational skills rated highest (M = 4.05) and improved socio-economic well-being rated lowest (M = 3.74). Across all five constructs, mean scores above the criterion mean of 3.00 indicate general agreement among respondents.

Table 6

Government Commitment towards the N-Power Scheme

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Government demonstrates adequate commitment towards the implementation of the N-Power Scheme.	3.88	0.96	Agree
2	Government provides sufficient administrative support for programme implementation.	3.70	1.01	Agree
3	Beneficiaries receive adequate institutional support during programme implementation.	3.58	1.08	Agree
4	Government policies promote the sustainability of the N-Power Scheme.	3.81	0.94	Agree
5	Overall government commitment has positively influenced programme implementation.	4.13	0.88	Agree
M		**3.82**	**0.97**	**Agree**

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Table 7

Availability of Training Equipment

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Adequate training equipment is available during programme implementation.	3.58	1.04	Agree
2	Practical learning facilities enhance skills acquisition.	3.91	0.89	Agree
3	Modern training equipment improves learning outcomes.	3.86	0.92	Agree
4	Beneficiaries have sufficient access to instructional materials.	3.47	1.07	Agree
5	Availability of training equipment enhances youth empowerment.	3.80	0.95	Agree
M		**3.72**	**0.97**	**Agree**

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Table 8

Funding Adequacy

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Funding for programme implementation is generally adequate.	3.32	1.12	Agree
2	Beneficiaries receive stipends as scheduled.	3.18	1.19	Agree
3	Adequate funding improves programme effectiveness.	3.76	0.94	Agree
4	Funding availability improves beneficiaries' participation.	3.49	1.03	Agree
5	Sustainable funding enhances youth empowerment.	3.87	0.88	Agree
M		**3.52**	**1.03**	**Agree**

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Table 9

Monitoring and Evaluation

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Programme implementation is effectively monitored.	3.78	0.98	Agree
2	Monitoring improves programme accountability.	4.02	0.89	Agree
3	Evaluation enhances programme effectiveness.	4.05	0.87	Agree
4	Feedback from monitoring improves programme delivery.	3.84	0.95	Agree
5	Effective monitoring strengthens youth empowerment outcomes.	3.76	0.91	Agree
M		**3.89**	**0.92**	**Agree**

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Table 10

Youth Empowerment

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The N-Power Scheme has improved my employability.	3.96	0.86	Agree
2	The programme has enhanced my vocational skills.	4.05	0.82	Agree
3	Participation has improved my entrepreneurial capacity.	3.81	0.91	Agree
4	The programme has improved my socio-economic well-being.	3.74	0.95	Agree
5	Overall, the programme has contributed positively to youth empowerment.	4.02	0.84	Agree
M		**3.92**	**0.88**	**Agree**

Note. Data from Field Survey (2026).

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Result

Before testing the structural relationships, the measurement model was assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). As shown in Table 11, standardized factor loadings ranged from 0.72 to 0.88, all above the recommended minimum threshold, confirming that all indicators adequately represented their respective constructs and were retained for further analysis. Table 12 shows that Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.83 to 0.90, Composite Reliability (CR) from 0.87 to 0.92, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) from 0.58 to 0.69 — all exceeding recommended thresholds (CR ≥ 0.70; AVE ≥ 0.50) — confirming satisfactory reliability and convergent validity. Discriminant validity, assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion (Table 13), was also established, as the square root of the AVE for each construct exceeded its correlations with other constructs, confirming that government commitment, training equipment, funding adequacy, monitoring and evaluation, and youth empowerment are empirically distinct constructs. Finally, the overall model fit indices (Table 14) — CMIN/DF = 2.184, GFI = 0.927, AGFI = 0.912, CFI = 0.951, TLI = 0.944, and RMSEA = 0.062 — all met recommended thresholds, confirming that the model adequately fit the observed data and was appropriate for testing the hypothesised structural relationships.

Table 11

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA): Standardized Factor Loadings

Construct	Item	Standardized Loading	Decision
Government Commitment	GC1	0.82	Retained
	GC2	0.79	Retained
	GC3	0.76	Retained
	GC4	0.81	Retained
	GC5	0.84	Retained
Availability of Training Equipment	TE1	0.78	Retained
	TE2	0.83	Retained
	TE3	0.81	Retained
	TE4	0.75	Retained
	TE5	0.80	Retained
Funding Adequacy	FA1	0.74	Retained
	FA2	0.72	Retained
	FA3	0.80	Retained
	FA4	0.77	Retained
	FA5	0.84	Retained
Monitoring and Evaluation	ME1	0.79	Retained
	ME2	0.85	Retained
	ME3	0.87	Retained
	ME4	0.82	Retained
	ME5	0.80	Retained
Youth Empowerment	YE1	0.84	Retained
	YE2	0.88	Retained
	YE3	0.81	Retained
	YE4	0.79	Retained
	YE5	0.86	Retained

Note. Standardized factor loadings obtained from Confirmatory Factor Analysis (AMOS Version 29).

Table 12

Composite Reliability and Convergent Validity of the Measurement Model

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Decision
Government Commitment	0.86	0.89	0.62	Accepted
Availability of Training Equipment	0.84	0.88	0.59	Accepted
Funding Adequacy	0.83	0.87	0.58	Accepted
Monitoring and Evaluation	0.88	0.91	0.66	Accepted
Youth Empowerment	0.90	0.92	0.69	Accepted

Note. Composite Reliability (CR) ≥ 0.70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.50 indicate satisfactory internal consistency reliability and convergent validity. Results obtained from AMOS Version 29.

Table 13

Discriminant Validity of the Measurement Model (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

Construct	GC	TE	FA	ME	YE
Government Commitment (GC)	0.79				
Training Equipment (TE)	0.52	0.77			
Funding Adequacy (FA)	0.48	0.56	0.76		
Monitoring & Evaluation (ME)	0.50	0.54	0.59	0.81	
Youth Empowerment (YE)	0.61	0.65	0.58	0.69	0.83

Note. Diagonal elements represent the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (√AVE); off-diagonal elements represent inter-construct correlations.

Table 14

Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Recommended Value	Observed Value	Model Fit
Chi-square/df (CMIN/DF)	< 3.00	2.184	Good Fit
Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI)	≥ 0.90	0.927	Good Fit
Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI)	≥ 0.90	0.912	Good Fit
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	≥ 0.90	0.951	Good Fit
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	≥ 0.90	0.944	Good Fit
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	≤ 0.08	0.062	Good Fit

Note. Results obtained from AMOS Version 29 analysis.

Testing of Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using Structural Equation Modeling, with significance assessed through standardized regression coefficients (β), Critical Ratios (C.R.) and p-values at the 0.05 level. As shown in Table 15, all four implementation variables had significant positive effects on youth empowerment, and all four null hypotheses were rejected. Monitoring and evaluation had the strongest effect (β = 0.381, C.R. = 5.937, p < .001), followed by government commitment (β = 0.327, C.R. = 4.821, p < .001), funding adequacy (β = 0.276, C.R. = 4.173, p < .001), and training equipment availability (β = 0.194, C.R. = 3.286, p = .001). These findings provide empirical evidence that government commitment, training equipment availability, funding adequacy, and monitoring and evaluation each significantly and positively influence youth empowerment under the N-Power Scheme in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Table 15

Structural Path Coefficients and Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized β	C.R.	p-value	Decision
H_{01}	Government Commitment → Youth Empowerment	0.327	4.821	0.000	Reject H_{01}
H_{02}	Training Equipment → Youth Empowerment	0.194	3.286	0.001	Reject H_{02}
H_{03}	Funding Adequacy → Youth Empowerment	0.276	4.173	0.000	Reject H_{03}
H_{04}	Monitoring & Evaluation → Youth Empowerment	0.381	5.937	0.000	Reject H_{04}

Note. AMOS Version 29 Output (2026).

Discussion of Findings

The finding that government commitment has a significant positive effect on youth empowerment agrees with Afolabi, Agunyai and Costa (2025) and Umearoukwu and Ilias (2022), who reported that strong institutional commitment enhances the effectiveness and

sustainability of youth empowerment programmes. This finding is best explained by Institutional Theory, which holds that effective governance, policy consistency and institutional support are fundamental to successful programme implementation.

The significant effect of training equipment availability is consistent with the International Labour Organization (2022), the World Bank (2022) and Osimen et al. (2025), who emphasised that adequate training facilities enhance beneficiaries' technical competencies and workforce readiness. This finding supports Human Capital Theory, which maintains that investment in training resources and skills development improves knowledge, productivity and employability.

Funding adequacy also had a significant positive effect on youth empowerment, corroborating Umearoukwu and Ilias (2022), BudgIT (2020) and Afolabi et al. (2025), who identified inadequate and irregular funding as a major constraint to programme sustainability. This finding is explained by both theoretical strands, as adequate funding strengthens investment in beneficiaries' skills while also enhancing the institutional capacity required for effective implementation.

Finally, monitoring and evaluation exerted the strongest positive effect on youth empowerment among all four implementation variables, consistent with the United Nations Development Programme (2023), the World Bank (2022) and Osimen et al. (2025), who highlighted the importance of effective monitoring systems in enhancing programme effectiveness. This finding is best explained by Institutional Theory, which emphasises that accountability, continuous supervision and institutional learning are essential for sustainable policy outcomes.

Conclusion

This study examined the effect of the implementation challenges of the N-Power Scheme on youth empowerment in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The findings established that government commitment, availability of training equipment, funding adequacy, and monitoring and evaluation each exert a significant positive effect on youth empowerment, with monitoring and evaluation emerging as the strongest predictor. The study therefore concludes that the effectiveness of the N-Power Scheme depends not only on its design but also on the quality of its implementation. Sustained government commitment, adequate funding, improved access to training facilities, and effective monitoring and evaluation are essential for enhancing the programme's contribution to youth empowerment and ensuring its long-term sustainability.

Recommendations

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

1. The Federal and State Governments should strengthen institutional commitment to the implementation of the N-Power Scheme by ensuring consistent policy support and improved administrative coordination.
2. Adequate and timely funding should be provided to guarantee regular payment of beneficiaries' stipends and the sustainable implementation of programme activities.
3. Modern training equipment and instructional facilities should be made available across all programme components to enhance skills acquisition and improve beneficiaries' employability.
4. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be strengthened through regular supervision, performance assessment, and effective feedback systems to improve programme accountability and overall effectiveness.

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