

## **Impact of Marketing Strategy and State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy on Poverty Reduction in Kogi State, Nigeria**

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### ***Abstract***

*An Appraisal of the application of marketing strategy by state Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDs) in reducing poverty and unemployment in Kogi State within the period 2004 – 2008, was carried of SEEDs programme in Kogi State. This research was conducted to determine whether SEEDs has actually reduced the level of poverty and unemployment in Kogi State. Specifically, the objectives include: to determine if there is significant relationship between marketing strategies and poverty reduction in Kogi State, to examine if there is significant relationship between adoption of SEEDs and poverty reduction in Kogi State and to determine if there is significant relationship between government enlightenment programme and poverty reduction in Kogi State. A survey research design was carried out and a sample size of 500 respondents was studied from the five local government areas. Questionnaire was the major research instrument used in collecting data for this research. The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings revealed that there is no significant relationship between marketing strategies and poverty reduction in Kogi State, there is no significant relationship between adoption of SEEDs and poverty reduction in Kogi State and there is no significant relationship between government enlightenment programme and poverty reduction in Kogi State. Premised on the findings, the research concludes that the failure on the part of the government of Kogi State to improve on the implementation of SEEDs programme will not help reduce the level of poverty and unemployment in the state but will rather increase the rate tremendously on the good citizens of Kogi State. The research recommends that SEEDs should incorporate more modern communication tools such as social media platforms, mobile messaging, and online town halls to reach younger and tech-savvy populations. This will improve awareness and engagement across a wider audience. Government agencies should increase collaboration with community leaders, civil society groups, and youth organizations to build trust and encourage community ownership of SEEDs programmes.*

**Keywords:** *Marketing strategy, SEEDs programme, Economic empowerment, Development strategy, Poverty reduction.*

### **Introduction**

Over the last four decades, the federal government has made effort to address the recurring challenges of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria. Many not these efforts have not been very successful due to none implementation and poverty are two socio-economic problems that have continued to pose challenges to government throughout the globe “these two problems have become epidemic in the Nigeria economy” (Adebayo, 2019). The incidence of poverty has been high and on general increase since the 1980’s poverty rose from 28:1% to 46.3% in 1985 fell to 42.7% in 1997 but increased rapidly to 65.6% in 1996 but by 2003, it stood at 54.4% NBS, (2006). The federal and state governments have continued to imitate, promote and complement effort aimed at reducing the intensity of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria. In fact, in recent time the federal government has redoubled its effort and is stopping at nothing to take fight to the nooks and

crannies of the 36 states of the federation including the federal capital territory Abuja. In the light of the above, the federal government announced a national policy on March 2004, with an effective marketing strategy in the implementation. This programme has been known as the National/Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). In the forward to NEEDS document the former president Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in 2003 stated the strategic points of NEEDS which are wealth creation, empowerment generation, poverty reduction and national value re-orientation within a time frame of 2003-2007. However, this work will concentrate on SEEDS which is the state counter of NEEDS. This marketing strategy has been developed form a participatory process involving state and local government, national and state legislators, civil society organization, traditional institutions, business entities, donor agencies, ministry of finance, national planning commission etc. It is against this background that this study is etc. to examine this policy with a view to determining its marketing strategic implication for the state development. Up to 1.5 hours a day on (the) average are spent by rural house hold to collect water and fire wood, with household member walking an average of one kilometer a day to collect water and firewood (central bank of Nigeria annual bulletin 2003 (Aluko,2019; Ahmed, Aliyu, 2020 & Bello, 2022). Also, qualitative indicators of poverty that have suffered vulnerable group in both rural and urban communities in Nigeria between 1980-2005 is unemployment on the other hand, unemployment level has continued to rise since 1986 with a growth rate of 11.2% between 1984 and 1986 the rate was 17.3% (National Directorate of employment) unemployment is one of the very many dimensions of poverty and a very critical and central one. It is believed that once unemployment is poverty addressed, some of the other dimension of poverty will disappear. The twin problem of unemployment and poverty. Therefore, constitute national challenges of all time (Olowu & Ayo, 2021; Eboh, 2018).

The greatest concern to any growing economy is its ability to curtail or reduce the level of poverty and unemployment in the country. We have heard of several programmes from previous or past administrations being aimed at improving the lives of the people by reducing the level of poverty and unemployment parading the economy (Ibrahim, 2020 & Emeh, 2019; Akintoye, 2019 & Babajide, 2021). Many of these efforts have not been very successful due to none implementation of an effective marketing strategy, lack of innovative and intellectual ideas by the initiator of the programme in the fight for corruption (FGN, 2005 & FGN, SEEDS Implementation Framework, 2019). Also, high level of illiteracy by the rural dwellers which have retarded the effectiveness of the programmes in disseminating to the people at the grassroots. These problems observed from a bird's eye-ball view prompted the researcher to undertake this study on the application of marketing strategy by state economic empowerment and development strategy (SEEDS) in Kogi State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The broad objective of the study is to appraise the marketing strategies employed by SEEDS in reducing poverty and unemployment in Kogi State.

However, other objectives include:

1. To determine the relationship between marketing strategies and poverty reduction in Kogi State.
2. To examine the relationship between adoption of SEEDS and poverty reduction in Kogi State.
3. To evaluate the significant relationship between government enlightenment programme and poverty reduction in Kogi State.

## **Research Hypotheses**

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between marketing strategies and poverty reduction in Kogi State.

H<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between adoption of SEEDS and poverty reduction in Kogi State.

H<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between government enlightenment programme and poverty reduction in Kogi State.

## **Conceptual Clarification of Marketing Strategy**

Marketing strategy refers to a business's overarching plan for reaching prospective consumers and turning them into customers of their products or services. In public sector programmes like SEEDS, marketing strategy involves the planning and communication of programmes, services, and developmental initiatives in ways that attract community participation, support, and sustainable outcomes (Lawal & Oluwatoyin 2018). The State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) employs marketing techniques to ensure that the target audience, especially the unemployed and the poor, are aware of the available opportunities. According to Adebayo and Ighodaro (2021) and Anazodo et al (2020); Aremu and Lawal, (2019) effective marketing strategies in the public sector are crucial in aligning services with community needs and promoting inclusive development. SEEDS initiatives integrate multiple marketing dimensions, including community engagement, branding, sensitization campaigns, and public feedback mechanisms. In particular, promotion and accessibility are essential to ensuring that the initiatives reach the intended audience. When beneficiaries understand the objectives and benefits of SEEDS programmes, they are more likely to participate, thereby enhancing the program's impact. Therefore, a successful marketing strategy within SEEDS not only promotes the programmes but also builds public trust and encourages ownership of developmental efforts (Ezeani, 2021; Iwuoha, V. C., & Udom, A. (2022).

## **Overview of SEEDS as a Poverty and Unemployment Alleviation Program**

The State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) was initiated in Nigeria in the early 2000s as a policy framework aimed at addressing poverty and unemployment through state-level economic planning.

## **The Role of Marketing Strategy in Government-Led Programmes**

Marketing strategy plays a transformative role in government-led initiatives like SEEDS. It helps shape public perception, attract stakeholders, and mobilize resources effectively. In contexts where awareness and engagement are limited, marketing bridges the gap between policy and people (Nwankwo & Agholor, 2019; Ijeoma, 2020; Iwuoha, & Udom, 2022).

Poverty is defined as a condition where individuals lack the financial resources to meet basic living standards, while unemployment refers to the situation in which people who are willing and able to work cannot find jobs (Onah, 2020 & Jiboku, 2021). Both poverty and unemployment are interrelated socio-economic problems that persist in Nigeria despite several interventions. SEEDS was introduced as a targeted strategy to disrupt this cycle by promoting entrepreneurship and job creation.

## **Marketing Strategy and Economic Empowerment**

There is a strong link between marketing strategy and economic empowerment, especially within the context of developmental programmes like SEEDS. Marketing creates awareness and provides information necessary for decision-making, while economic empowerment involves equipping individuals with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities to improve their livelihoods (Ogundele, 2018 & Olayemi, 2020). Through effective marketing strategies, SEEDS ensures that program beneficiaries are aware of training sessions, loan facilities, grants, and other empowerment opportunities. A successful marketing strategy simplifies complex policies into understandable messages, increasing participation and reducing dropout rates. According to Obi (2021) economic empowerment fails when people are uninformed or misinformed about their eligibility or how to access benefits.

## **Challenges of Implementing Marketing Strategy**

Despite the advantages of marketing strategies in SEEDS implementation, several challenges hinder their effectiveness. One of the major problems is inadequate funding, which limits outreach and reduces the ability to implement large-scale campaigns (Okonjo-Iweala, 2019; Johnson & Okon 2020). In many states, communication infrastructure is underdeveloped, especially in rural areas, making it difficult to disseminate information.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The appraisal of SEEDS' marketing strategy is grounded in two key theories: The Diffusion of Innovations Theory and the Resource-Based View (RBV). The Diffusion of Innovations Theory by Rogers (2003) explains how new ideas and practices spread within communities. This theory is relevant to SEEDS as it highlights the importance of communication, social networks, and opinion leaders in spreading awareness and adoption of developmental programmes. Marketing strategy in SEEDS can be analyzed through this lens to assess how effectively program messages are communicated and accepted (Adegbite & Ijaiya, 2020). On the other hand, the RBV emphasizes that organizational success depends on strategic resources like brand reputation, communication skills, and stakeholder relationships (Barney, 1991; updated by Adewumi & Adetoro, 2022 & Adesina, 2021). In the case of SEEDS, the ability of state agencies to deploy these intangible resources through marketing determines their success in reducing poverty and unemployment. Both theories underscore the importance of effective communication, internal capacity, and strategic engagement in program delivery. Therefore, they provide a solid foundation for evaluating SEEDS' marketing strategy in achieving developmental goals.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The research design employed in this study is the descriptive survey design. This design was chosen because it allows for the collection of detailed and accurate information concerning the existing conditions, practices, and perceptions relating to the effectiveness of marketing strategies in SEEDS and their role in poverty in Kogi State.

The study was conducted in Kogi State, Nigeria, a state selected due to its active participation in SEEDS-related programmes over the years and the prevalence of poverty and youth unemployment in its urban and rural settings. Kogi State presents a unique case due to its socio-economic diversity

and a mixture of agrarian and urban economies. The state government has been involved in the implementation of several state-level empowerment and poverty alleviation initiatives aligned with SEEDS objectives. Areas such as Lokoja, Idah, Okene, Kabba, and Ankpa have recorded visible levels of unemployment, despite state-led efforts in skill acquisition and microcredit interventions. By choosing Kogi State, the research captures both the challenges and outcomes of SEEDS in a mixed demographic environment, providing insights into how marketing strategies vary across urban and rural settings. This choice enhances the generalizability of the findings to similar geopolitical and economic contexts in Nigeria.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study includes all residents of Kogi State who have either benefited from, participated in, or are aware of SEEDS programmes. This includes civil servants involved in policy implementation, local government officials, youth groups, entrepreneurs, and unemployed individuals in selected communities.

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The study employed both stratified and purposive sampling techniques. Stratified sampling was used to ensure that respondents were selected from different strata such as age, occupation, location (urban/rural), and gender. Considering the fact that there was no available data containing the exact population owing to the heterogeneous nature of the population the researcher adopted a convenient sampling where only 100 respondents were reached in each of the five selected local government areas. However, out of a total of 500 questionnaire distributed only 322 duly completed and returned the questionnaire giving a retrieval rate of 64%.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected from the field were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The quantitative data were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 27), where they were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations. These were presented in tables and charts for easy interpretation. To test the research hypotheses, inferential statistics such as regression analysis were employed. Qualitative data obtained from interviews were transcribed and analyzed thematically. This mixed-methods approach provided a comprehensive analysis of how marketing strategies influence SEEDS outcomes on poverty and unemployment. The integration of numerical and narrative data ensured that findings were well-grounded and interpretable in both theoretical and practical contexts.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

The reliability of this study was carried out to determine the internal consistency of the research instrument. According to Clementina et al (2021) Nzewi et al (2023) and Edna et al (2021) an instrument is reliable if it gives similar outcomes under consistent situation. Thus, any coefficient of reliability that is up to 0.70 and above is considered reliable. In testing the reliability of the research instrument, the Researcher carried out a pilot study by distributing 24 item questionnaires numbering twenty (20) to the target respondents; the Cronbach Alpha coefficient measure of internal consistency was adopted. The reliability of the research instrument using Cronbach alpha reliability test with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) yielded the result of 0.73 for

items on independent variable and 0.76 for items on dependent variable thus giving the average reliability result of 0.75. The reliability result is showed in table 1.

**Table 1. Reliability Statistics**

Proxies/ Independent Variable	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha
Independent variable	12	0.73
Dependent Variable	12	0.76

Source: SPSS statistical analysis

The table revealed that all the variables have Alpha Values above 0.70. Thus, in line with the submission of Edna and Samson (2021) the instrument is deemed reliable.

### Test of Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis 1

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between marketing strategies and poverty reduction in Kogi State.

Table 2. Summary of Regression Results and other Statistics

Regression		marketing strategies	Df	F
Coefficient	0.0675	0.0631	1	101.022
P. value	0.000	0.000	321	
R	0.861		322	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.741			

Source: Research Data analysis, 2026

The *F*-ratio in the table 2 shows that the variables of marketing strategies statistically significantly predict poverty reduction,  $F(1, 321) = 101.022, p < .0005$  (this means that the regression model is a good fit of the data). Again, summary of regression equation (model formulated) and the result shows that *R* is 0.861 which is close to 1.00 meaning that it is useful for making prediction. The goodness of fit revealed that it has a good fit of *R* with 86% and *R*<sup>2</sup> of 74% meaning that total variations in marketing strategies is explained by variations in poverty reduction. Thus, all the estimated parameters predicting the value of poverty reduction outside marketing strategies is 26% (i.e, 100- 74) which is statistically insignificant. Therefore, this implies that the independent variable (marketing strategies) contributes to the prediction of the dependent variable of about 74% with *p*- value of 0.000 which is less than 0, 05 affirming that there is a significant positive relationship between the dependent variable (poverty reduction) and independent variable (marketing strategies).

#### Hypothesis 2

H<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between adoption of SEEDS and poverty reduction in Kogi State.

Table 3 Summary of Regression Results and other Statistics

Regression		adoption of SEEDS	Df	F
Coefficient	0.340	0.072	1	14.192
P. value	0.000	0.000	321	
R	0.763		322	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.582			

Source: Research Data analysis, 2026

The *F*-ratio in the table 3 shows that the variables of adoption of SEEDS statistically significantly predict poverty reduction  $F(1, 321) = 14.192, p < .0005$  (this means that the regression model is a good fit of the data). Again, summary of regression equation (model formulated) and the result shows that *R* is 0.763 which is close to 1.00 meaning that it is useful for making prediction. The goodness of fit revealed that it has a good fit of *R* with 76% and *R*<sup>2</sup> of 58% meaning that total variations in adoption of SEEDS is explained by variations in poverty reduction. Thus, all the estimated parameters predicting the value of poverty reduction outside adoption of SEEDS is 24% (i.e, 100- 76) which justifies a positive relationship. Therefore, this implies that the independent variable (adoption of SEEDS) contributes to the prediction of the dependent variable of about 58% with *p*- value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 affirming that there is a significant positive relationship between the dependent variable (poverty reduction) and independent variable (adoption of SEEDS).

H<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between government enlightenment programme and poverty reduction in Kogi State.

Table 3 Summary of Regression Results and other Statistics

Regression		GEP	Df	F
Coefficient	0.642	0.054	1	16.154
P. value	0.000	0.000	321	
R	0.776		322	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.602			

Source: Research Data analysis, 2026

The *F*-ratio in the table 3 shows that the variables of bonus statistically significantly predict yield time  $F(1, 321) = 16.154, p < .0005$  (this means that the regression model is a good fit of the data). Again, summary of regression equation (model formulated) and the result shows that *R* is 0.766 which is close to 1.00 meaning that it is useful for making prediction. The goodness of fit revealed that it has a good fit of *R* with 77% and *R*<sup>2</sup> of 60% meaning that total variations in government enlightenment programme is explained by variations in poverty reduction. Thus, all the estimated parameters predicting the value of poverty reduction outside government enlightenment programme is 23% (i.e, 100- 77) which justifies a positive relationship. Therefore, this implies that the independent variable (government enlightenment programme) contributes to the prediction of the dependent variable of about 23% with *p*- value of 0.000 which is less than 0, 05 affirming that there is a significant positive relationship between the dependent variable (poverty reduction) and independent variable (government enlightenment programme).

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the marketing strategies adopted by the SEEDS programme in Kogi State have played a critical role in promoting the visibility and participation of beneficiaries. Through effective information dissemination, community mobilization, and outreach.

## **Recommendations**

This research recommends that SEEDS should incorporate more modern communication tools such as social media platforms, mobile messaging, and online town halls to reach younger and tech-savvy populations. This will improve awareness and engagement across a wider audience. Government agencies should increase collaboration with community leaders, civil society groups, and youth organizations to build trust and encourage community ownership of SEEDS programmes. Again, SEEDS programmes should adopt clear monitoring and reporting frameworks that allow the public to track the allocation and use of resources. This will enhance credibility and encourage more participation. More so, development officers and SEEDS coordinators should be trained in strategic marketing communication, data-driven outreach, and public relations to improve message delivery and community response. Political neutrality should be maintained in SEEDS implementation. Appointment of programme managers should be based on merit, not political loyalty, to ensure efficiency and accountability. Additionally, the government should allocate more funds to SEEDS publicity and marketing operations. Greater investment in communication will ensure wider coverage, especially in hard-to-reach rural areas.

Finally, Periodic assessment of SEEDS marketing campaigns should be conducted to determine what strategies are working and what areas need to be improved. Feedback from beneficiaries should be incorporated into program adjustments.

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