
Empowerment Strategies for Enhancing Youths' Participation in Fishery Enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State

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Abstract – This study focused on empowerment strategies, for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for the study was 83 registered fish farmers in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. There was no sampling due to the manageable size of the population. Data were collected with the use of researcher's structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was validated by three experts, two in Agricultural Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation all in Faculty of Education Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. The reliability of the instrument was ensured using Cronbach alpha which yielded at 0.76 coefficient index level. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data collected. The hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. Findings among others was that financial assistance is needed to empower the youths' to participate in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki LGA of Ebonyi State and it was recommended among others that the State Government should make provision for financial assistance in form of loan, grant, subsidy.

Keywords – Empowerment, Youths', Participation and Fishery.

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture used to be the mainstay of Nigerian economy before discovery of crude oil. The country's economy rested highly on agricultural products export which used to represent 66% of foreign exchange and later increased to 73.4% in 1968 (Richard, 1978). Agricultural potentials gradually went down and gave way to petroleum when oil was discovered in large quantity in 1958, and exploration commenced around 1980 (Babatunde, 2010). Petroleum became major revenue source for Nigeria and the country rise to become the 6th largest oil exporter, and 8th largest deposit of natural gas in the world (Soludo, 2006). During this period, petroleum business became a new bride to Nigerian populace, including the youth population either as oil firm workers or vendors as the case may be. This is because of the high profit and fast return on investment and fat salary of the sector at the detriment of agriculture, which apart from being the highest employer of labour, it was also the source of food security for the nation.

As the population increased and large population of youths have oversubscribed the employment market at the detriment of agriculture that was the mainstay, unemployment rate increased and became alarming at 67 million out of the 167 million people (NBS 2010). According to the report of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, (UNECA), unemployment rate in Nigeria rose from 21.1% in 2010 to 23.9% in 2012. This figure shows that, one out of every four Nigerian is unemployed. The report also claimed that, Nigeria has one of the worst youths unemployment rate in Africa sub-Sahara at 37.7%. By further analysis, it means that, among every five Nigerian youth, two are unemployed. This condition can be traced to over dependent on white collar job, oil boom,

rural-urban migration, etc. while 60% to 70% farming population are left in the hands of aged subsistence farmers who are likely to fade out soon on account of age (Okoro, 2017). The overall effect of this situation made Nigerian face more youth unrest and restiveness as well as engaged in anti-social activities and economic sabotage like armed robbery, oil bunkering, kidnapping, internet syndicate that has caused serious damage to the image of the country as well as hunger due to lack of food production via shortage of generation of commercial farmers.

However, despite all the acclaimed success of the youth empowerment programs, there are indications of decline in youth participation on agriculture as indicated in the continuous emphasis on youth unemployment. There are a number of agricultural activities in which youths can be encouraged to participate in, such include snail rearing, goat rearing, cassava farming, fish farming and many more. Fish farming is a lucrative farming activity of producing fish in commercial quantity. Fish farming is an integral element of the overall agricultural production system in Nigeria. Youth's participation can be actively increased through many strategies. The strategies can be the government related strategies, extension workers related strategies school and community related strategies to harness the opportunity in fish farming enterprises.

Government has embarked on many agricultural development programs in order to refocus the nation to the potentials of farming, to boost food production and at the same time reduce unemployment rate. These programs were crippled by political instability as each government that came introduced new agriculture program. The first agricultural program was National Accelerated Food Production Program (NAFPP) in 1972 which was aimed to boost farmer's productivity, income and living standard (Obasi, 2013). In 1976 Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) was established to improve the capacity of local farmers with modern agriculture equipment, increase food production and reduce importation of food (Nzechi, 2006). "Back to land" was another agricultural program introduced in 1984, but the shortest lived due to another change of government that swept the administration away in 1985 (Isiaka, Badmus & Ogunmola 2010). The entire programs were focused on agriculture and farmers generally without specific attention to the youth among the farmers until 1989 when the federal government specifically initiated National Directorate of Employment which specifically emphasized on youths empowerment.

While NDE programs created youth empowerment scheme through vocational training, "better life for rural women" a pet project of wife of the military head of government was focused on female youth including farming youth at the rural areas (Akpan, 2010). As at 2004 under a democratically elected government, more attention were drawn to the youth particularly on agriculture through National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), State Economic Empowerment Strategy (SEEDS), and Local Economy Empowerment Development Strategy (LEEDS) at the federal, state and local government level respectively. It was also at this period that more investments were committed into youth empowerment on agriculture by various states in Nigeria. In the State of Osun, the government introduced Osun State Agricultural Youth Empowerment Program to encourage youth participation in agriculture business (Ogunremi, Ogunremi & Faleyimu 2012). Also Integrated Farm Scheme was introduced in Akwa Ibom State to reduce youth unemployment and boost agriculture in the state (Akpan, 2010) and Youth Integrated Training Farm Maleta, Kwara State which was the pioneer youth agriculture empowerment program among others. These youth agriculture empowerment programs were targeted to empower the unemployed youth population in order to make them self-dependent, develop the skills and knowledge through capacity building that will make them take control of their lives socially, economically psycho

-logically and by extension, politically (Zimmerman & Rappaport 1988).

According to FAO (1991), fishing accounts for about one fifth of the world total supply of animal protein and this has raised five folds over the last 40 years from 20million metric tons to 98 million in 1993, and projected then that it should exceed 150 million metric tons by the year 2010. Nigerians are large consumers of fish and it remains one of the main products consumed in terms of animal protein. Longhurst, (1961) stated that fish farming activities in Nigeria started about 50 years ago with the establishment of a small experiment station at Onikan, Lagos. This generated much interest in fish farming with other involvements from different levels of government and private businesses. Anthonio and Akinwumi, (1991) argued that fish allows for protein improved nutrition in that it has a high biological value in terms of high protein nutrition in the body system. Fish farming generates employment opportunity either directly or indirectly, by employing people in the production output of fishing and other allied business which also generates income for all categories of people engaged in fish farming, thus contributing to the national economy (Olagunju, 2007). According to Adeola (2006), opportunity to establish fish farming businesses in different and several locations across Nigeria abound to investors. He also stated that only around 50% of demand for fish is currently being met by local supply. Thus, the fisheries sector is estimated to contribute 3.5% of Nigeria's GDP and provides direct and indirect employment to over six million people.

Fisheries are significant and lucrative subsector in the Nigerian economy. According to Central Bank of Nigeria's (2003) published figures, Fisheries maintained a steady contribution to total GDP in (2000 – 2004) at 1.2%, 1.6%, 1.7% 1.5% and 1.55% respectively. This translates to about 5% of agricultural GDP (Omotayo, 2005). According to FAO (2007), Nigeria's fish major supply in imports are; coastal (56%); brackish-water and inland fishery (37.6%); industrial trawl fishery (2.6%); and aquaculture (3.8%). Nigeria's demand for food fish in 2005 was projected at 1 million tone while effective demand was 1.2 million tone.

However, Nigerians are high fish consumers leaving a total current consumption of about 1.2 million tone per year, from which about 650,000 tone is imported (FAO 2008). This makes Nigeria the highest importer of fish and fishery products in Africa. According to Zango-Daura (2000), as cited by Rahji and Teslem Bada (2010), Nigeria requires 750,000 tones of fish, while domestic production is 350,000 tones, Fish importation makes up the balance of 400,000 tones. Importation is used most often to tie the fish supply-demand linkage in Nigeria (Rahji et al; 2010). Nigeria requires about 1.5 million tons of fish annually, this is what is required to meet FAO's suggested minimum fish consumption rate of 12.5 Kilograms each head annually to meet the basic protein needs (Zango-Daura, 2000). At the moment, the unsatisfied demand will continue to be met via importation until policy actions are geared towards improving domestic productions by ameliorating those factors militating against aquaculture in the country which has been discussed earlier.

1.1 *Statement of the Problem*

The federal government through Industrial Training Fund (ITF) in collaboration with the State Government through Songai Farms Ltd trained over 2,000 youths in fishery in Abakaliki and Ebonyi Local Government Areas of Ebonyi State. The choice of the two Local Government Areas in Ebonyi North senatorial zone was due to higher opportunities for fishery enterprises: the training was in line with both the Federal and State Government agents on reduction of unemployment among the youths. It is quite disheartening that the youths after receiving the training abandoned the fishery enterprises and roam about the street in search of Government work. It is on this premise that the study is poised to determine the empowerment strategies for enhancing the youth to participa

-te in fishery enterprise in Abakaliki L.G.A. of Ebonyi State.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the empowerment strategies for enhancing youths participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. The government related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki L.G.A of Ebonyi State.
2. The social workers related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki L.G.A of Ebonyi State.
3. The school related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki L.G.A of Ebonyi State.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the government related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki L.G.A of Ebonyi State?
2. What are the social workers related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki L.G.A of Ebonyi State?
3. What are the school related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki L.G.A of Ebonyi State?

1.4 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female youths' fish farmers with respect to the government related strategies for enhancing youth's participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki LGA of Ebonyi State

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female youths' fish farmers with respect to the social workers related strategies for enhancing youth participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki LGA of Ebonyi State.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female youths' fish farmers with respect to the school related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki LGA of Ebonyi State.

1.5 Method

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. This design according to Alio (2008) and Nworgu (2015) is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. The design was used in order to collect

the opinion of the respondents on the strategies for enhancing youth participation in fishery enterprise in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. The population of the study was 83 registered fish farmers in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. There was no sampling due to the manageable size of the population.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher based on the reviewed literature. The instrument contained 24 items grouped according to the three research questions that guided the study. The items of the questionnaire were structured in four point response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with weighted numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was face validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha which yielded 0.76 indicating that the instrument was reliable for data collection.

The questionnaire was distributed by the researcher with the help of two trained research assistant. The entire 83 copies were properly filled and were collected for data analysis, thus representing 100 percent return rate. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and t-test statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The decision of the mean was based on the principle of upper and lower limit of the mean:

Strongly Agree = 3.50 – 4.00

Agree = 2.50 – 3.49

Disagree = 1.50 – 2.49

Strongly Disagree = 1.00 – 1.49

It was decided that when the t-calculated value is more than the critical value, the null hypothesis was significant and when the t-calculated is less than the t-table value, the null hypothesis was not significant.

1.6 Results

The results obtained from data analysis were presented in Table one to six below based on the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

II. RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What are the government-related strategies for enhancing youth’s participation in fishery enterprise in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State?

Table 1. Mean Rating and Standard Deviation on the Government-Related Strategies for Enhancing Youths’ Participation in Fishery Enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

| S/N | Government-related Strategies | Male N = 49 | | Female N = 34 | | Overall | | Decision |
|-----|--|----------------|------|------------------|------|-----------|------|----------|
| | | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | |
| 1 | Provision of soft loan and grant for fish farming | 2.89 | 0.94 | 3.61 | 0.48 | 3.25 | 0.71 | Agree |
| 2 | Provision of fish storage facilities for preservation after harvesting | 3.33 | 0.67 | 3.41 | 0.59 | 3.37 | 0.63 | Agree |
| 3 | Mapping out area of land for fish pond development | 3.55 | 0.73 | 3.38 | 0.77 | 3.47 | 0.75 | Agree |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 4 | Provision of steady water supply for the ponds | 3.83 | 0.45 | 3.09 | 0.93 | 3.46 | 0.69 | Agree |
| 5 | Development of a fingerlings production centre for the fish farmers | 3.37 | 0.72 | 3.46 | 0.56 | 3.42 | 0.64 | Agree |
| 6 | Facilitating fresh fish marketing in Abakaliki | 3.48 | 0.80 | 3.27 | 0.74 | 3.38 | 0.77 | Agree |
| 7 | Provision of drugs and fish feed at affordable rate | 3.51 | 0.61 | 3.43 | 0.66 | 3.47 | 0.64 | Agree |
| 8 | Stabilizing market price for fishery | 3.63 | 0.71 | 3.05 | 0.94 | 3.34 | 0.83 | Agree |
| 9 | Provision of modern technologies for fishery to reduce drudgery | 3.25 | 1.03 | 3.35 | 0.63 | 3.30 | 0.83 | Agree |
| Grand Mean/Standard Deviation | | 3.43 | 0.74 | 3.34 | 0.70 | 3.40 | 0.72 | Agree |

The data analysis presented in Table 1 above shows that the mean rating of the respondents to the items ranges from 3.25 to 3.47 indicating agree. The Table shows that the respondents agree on all the items with respect to government related strategies for enhancing youth participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki. The grand mean further showed agree. The low standard deviation showed that the respondents have consensus opinion as the mean deviation is not wide.

2.1 Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female fish farmers with respect to the government related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

Table 2. T-Test Analysis on the Mean Rating of Male and Female Fish Farmers with respect to the Government Related Strategies for Enhancing Youths' Participation in Fishery Enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

| Variable | \bar{X} | SD | N | df | P | t-cal | t-tab | Decision |
|----------|-----------|------|----|----|------|-------|-------|-----------------|
| Male | 3.43 | 0.74 | 49 | 81 | 0.05 | 0.476 | 1.990 | Not Significant |
| Female | 3.34 | 0.70 | 34 | | | | | |

The result of null hypothesis tested shows that the t-calculated value of 0.476 is less than the critical level of 1.99. Since the t-calculated is less than t-critical, the null hypothesis is therefore not significant. The implication is that there is no statistical difference between the mean rating of male and female fish farmers on the government related strategies for enhancing youth participation in fishery enterprise in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

III. RESEARCH QUESTION 2

What are the social workers related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprise in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State?

Table 3: Mean Rating and Standard Deviation on the Social Workers Related Strategies for Enhancing Youths' Participation in Fishery Enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State

| S/N | The social workers-related strategies | Male N = 49 | | Female N = 34 | | Overall | | Decision |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | |
| 1 | Providing training services to the youth on fish farming | 3.37 | 0.72 | 3.09 | 0.85 | 3.23 | 0.79 | Agree |
| 2 | Monitoring the fish farmers on progress rate | 3.44 | 0.81 | 3.31 | 0.67 | 3.38 | 0.74 | Agree |
| 3 | Providing consultancy services to the youth in Abakaliki Area | 2.99 | 1.07 | 3.07 | 0.94 | 3.03 | 1.01 | Agree |
| 4 | Assisting the fish farmer in securing loan to boost their farm. | 3.32 | 0.76 | 3.52 | 0.62 | 3.42 | 0.69 | Agree |
| 5 | Assisting the youth's in producing fingerlings in their farm. | 3.40 | 0.79 | 3.15 | 0.81 | 3.28 | 0.80 | Agree |
| 6 | Assisting farmers in getting fish feed from vendors | 3.19 | 0.84 | 3.37 | 0.74 | 3.28 | 0.79 | Agree |
| 7 | Organizing free workshops/training on drugs and diseases of fish from time to time. | 3.47 | 0.70 | 3.18 | 0.63 | 3.33 | 0.67 | Agree |
| Grand Mean/Standard Deviation | | 3.31 | 0.81 | 3.24 | 0.75 | 3.28 | 0.78 | Agree |

The result presented in Table 3 shows that the mean rating of the respondents ranges from 3.03 to 3.42 indicating agree. This shows that the respondents agree on the seven items as the social workers related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki. The grand mean of 3.28 further shows agree. The low standard deviation of 0.78 indicates that the opinion of the respondents do not differ remarkably on the mean deviations.

3.1 Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female fish farmers on the social workers related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprise in Abakaliki Local Government area of Ebonyi State.

Table 4. T-Test Analysis on the Mean Rating of Male and Female Fish Farmers on the Social Workers Related Strategies for Enhancing Youths' Participation in Fishery Enterprise in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

| Variable | \bar{X} | SD | N | df | P | t-cal | t-tab | Decision |
|----------|-----------|------|----|----|------|-------|-------|-----------------|
| Male | 3.31 | 0.81 | 49 | 81 | 0.05 | 0.356 | 1.990 | Not Significant |
| Female | 3.24 | 0.75 | 34 | | | | | |

The Table above shows that the t-calculated value of 0.356 at 81 degree of freedom for the seven items is 0.356 while the critical value is 1.990. Since the t-calculated is less than the critical value, the null hypothesis is not significant. The implication is that there is no influence of gender on the mean responses of the fish farmers on the social workers related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What are the school related strategies for enhancing youths’ participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State?

Table 5. Mean Rating and Standard Deviation on the School Related Strategies for Enhancing Youths’ Participation in Fishery Enterprise in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

| S/N | School related strategies | Male N = 49 | | Female N = 34 | | Overall | | Decision |
|-----|---|----------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | \bar{X} | SD | |
| 1 | Ensuring that entrepreneurship skills are taught to youth’s while they are in school. | 3.57 | 0.75 | 3.35 | 0.59 | 3.46 | 0.67 | Agree |
| 2 | Providing students with practical training in fish farming | 3.18 | 0.81 | 3.05 | 0.96 | 3.12 | 0.89 | Agree |
| 3 | Organizing workshop for the students on the fingerling production | 3.09 | 1.01 | 3.36 | 0.72 | 3.23 | 0.87 | Agree |
| 4 | Organizing workshop on fish feed production. | 3.31 | 0.73 | 3.21 | 0.80 | 3.26 | 0.77 | Agree |
| 5 | Enlightening the students on sources of loan for starting a small scale business. | 3.23 | 0.96 | 3.40 | 0.70 | 3.32 | 0.83 | Agree |
| 6 | Providing practical guides for starting up a fish farming enterprise | 3.28 | 0.86 | 3.63 | 0.56 | 3.46 | 0.71 | Agree |
| 7 | Providing consultancy services to youth in fish farming. | 3.18 | 0.90 | 3.65 | 0.68 | 3.42 | 0.79 | Agree |
| 8 | Organizing workshops on new innovation in research finding in fish farming. | 3.48 | 0.50 | 3.49 | 0.71 | 3.49 | 0.61 | Agree |
| | Grand Mean/Standard Deviation | 3.29 | 0.82 | 3.39 | 0.72 | 3.35 | 0.77 | Agree |

Table 5 shows that the respondents mean ratings range from 3.12 to 3.49 indicating agree. The respondents agreed to all the eight items identified as the school related strategies for enhancing youths’ participation in fishery enterprises. The grand mean and standard deviation show that respondents have homogenous response to the items.

4.1 Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female youth fish farmers with respect to the school related strategies for enhancing youths’ participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government of Area of Ebonyi State.

Table 6. T-Test Analysis on the Mean Rating of Male and Female Fish Farmers With Respect to the School Related Strategies for Enhancing Youths’ Participation in Fishery Enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

| Variable | \bar{X} | SD | N | df | P | t-cal | t-tab | Decision |
|----------|-----------|------|----|----|------|-------|-------|-----------------|
| Male | 3.29 | 0.82 | 49 | 81 | 0.05 | 0.514 | 1.990 | Not Significant |
| Female | 3.39 | 0.72 | 34 | | | | | |

The t-test analysis shows that t-calculated at 0.05 level of significant and 81 degree of freedom is 0.514 and the t-table value is 1.990. Since the t-calculated value is less than t-table value, the null hypothesis is not significant. The implication is that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female youths' fish farmers on the school related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion is done in accordance with the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study. The identified government related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprises among others include; provision of soft loan and grant for fish farming, fish storage facilities for preservation after harvesting, mapping out area of land for fish pond development, provision of steady water supply for the ponds, development of fingerlings production centre, facilitating fresh fish marketing in Abakaliki, provision of drugs and fish feed, stabilizing market price for fishery and provision of technologies for fishery to reduce drudgery. The findings of the study indicated that government has a strong role to play in enhancing youth participation in fish farming in Abakaliki. The finding of the study is in line with the finding of Obi and Omeje (2010) that government needs to provide an enabling environment to encourage youths' participation in economic development and job creation in the society. The findings of the study are in agreement with Isiaka, Badmus and Ogunmola, (2010) that government needs to provide agricultural farming inputs and machinery to encourage youth participation.

The result of the study showed no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female fish farmers on the government related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery. The implication is that gender has no influence on their responses to the items.

Further, the study found among others that providing training services to the youths' on fish farming, monitoring the fish farmers on progress rate, providing consultancy services to the youth, assisting the fish farmers in securing loan to boost their farm, assisting the youth's in producing fingerling, getting fish feeds from vendors and organizing workshop on drugs and diseases of fish from time to time are social workers strategies for enhancing youth's participation. The findings of the study showed that the extension agents/social workers have a significant role to play in enhancing youths' participation in fish farming in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. The finding of the study is in line with Okoro (2017) who noted that the extension agents and social workers have a role to play in the sensitization of the youths' in fish farming, assisting the youths in securing loan and establishing their farms.

The result of the study showed that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female fish farmers on the social workers related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in fishery enterprise in Abakaliki Local Government Area. This implies that gender of the respondents have no significant influence on the items.

The study also found that ensuring that entrepreneurship skills are provided to youths while they are in school, providing students with practical training in fish farming, organizing workshops for the students on the fingerlings production, organizing workshop on fish feed production, enlightening the students on source of loan for starting a small scale businesses, providing practical guides for starting up a fish farming enterprise and providing consultancy services to youths in fish farming are school related strategies for enhancing youths' participation in

fishery enterprises. The identified strategies showed that the school has a stake in the enhancing youths' participation in fish farming. The findings are in line with the findings of Obi and Omeje (2010) which noted that schools should provide quality entrepreneurship skills and training to the students to enable and encourage them in the participation in entrepreneurial activities. The findings of the study showed that schools can provide practical training to students in fish farming, organize workshop for the students in fish farming, fish feed production, production of fingerlings, sourcing of loan and others.

The findings of the study showed that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female fish farmers on the school related strategies for enhancing youths participation in fish farming. This means that there is no influence of gender on the school related strategies for enhancing youth's participation in fish farming.

VI. CONCLUSION

The challenges of youth unemployment has create a gap that needs to be filled through enhancing youths in agriculture especially fish farming. The findings of the study showed that youth participation in agricultural fish farming could be improved through the government strategies, social workers strategies and school strategies. These strategies showed that government can provide enabling environment, storage facilities and loan to the youths to encourage them to participate actively in fish farming. The social workers and schools on their own can provide training and consultancy services to enable the youths to gain the skills and knowledge needed in fish farming. It is the conclusion of this study that effort should be made by government, social workers and schools to encourage youths through the identified strategies to participate in fish farming enterprise in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Government should provide an enabling environment to attract youths' participation in fish farming.
2. Low interest rate loans should be provided by the government for the youths to enable easy take off.
3. Regular workshops should be organized by extension workers and the schools to train the youths in fish farming.
4. Entrepreneurship education in schools should be more practical to equip the students adequately before graduation.
5. Extension workers should carry mentorship services to encourage the youths in fish farming.

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