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**ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF KATSINA YOUTH CRAFT  
VILLAGE SKILL ACQUISITION PROGRAMMES ON THE SOCIO-  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTHS IN KATSINA STATE,  
NIGERIA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the impact of skill acquisition programmes on youths in Katsina State, Nigeria, focusing on participation, socio-economic benefits, and the effects of non-participation on sustainable development. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 200 youth participants of Katsina Youth Craft Village across four skill areas, such as Tailoring, Fashion and Design, Computer Repairs, and Shoe Making, through structured questionnaires. Analysis using a four-point Likert scale revealed a high participation and strong positive perceptions of the programmers' benefits, including improved employability, entrepreneurship, income, and socio-economic status. Consequently, non-participation was associated with unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, and limited contributions to community development. The study concluded that skill acquisition programmes are vital for youth empowerment, economic self-reliance, and sustainable development in Katsina State, and recommended, among other things, expanding access, raising awareness, and providing post-training support to enhance their developmental impact.

**KEYWORDS:** Youth Craft Village, Skill Acquisition Programmes, Socio-Economic Development, Youths.

## INTRODUCTION

Skill acquisition programs are recognized worldwide as key drivers of youth empowerment and sustainable development, especially in developing economies where high rates of unemployment and joblessness among young people are major concerns. These programs are designed to equip young individuals with specific job-related and technical skills to improve their employability and reduce dependency on limited formal sector jobs.

Johnson and Majewska (2024) claim that youth who are involved in skill development programmes get not only the basic technical competencies but also the entrepreneurial know-how and the ability to manage resources, thus the youth become a strong factor to develop the community and the nation. Moreover, economic advantages aside, these programmes turn out to be the main driver in the social inclusion, civic engagement, and resilience of the youth in the poorest and most insecure places that suffer from mainstream educational deprivations mostly. On the other hand, the skill acquisition programs are known for their benefits, yet the access and participation of the youth are not equal. The young people who are affected the most by the barriers still number among those unaware of the facilities offered. The most common barriers include a lack of information between the service providers and the youth, financial constraints, sociocultural limitations, and a lack of institutional support. It is the situation in the North of Nigeria, especially in Katsina State, where the high birthrate of youth matches the low offer of jobs, that the barriers become very strong. As a consequence, many young people are trapped with their unproductive potential and are more likely to be excluded socially and economically, thus resorting to the already negative coping strategies.

To address youth unemployment and promote sustainable livelihoods, the government of Katsina State has set up a number of skill acquisition centres. One noteworthy project is the Katsina Youth Craft Village, which offers instruction in a range of technical and vocational trades with the goal of empowering young people and promoting regional economic growth. Nevertheless, a sizable portion of the youth population is still either unaware of these opportunities or unable to fully take advantage of them despite the existence of such centres.

Okay, here's a more human-sounding rewrite of that text:

Therefore, with all this in mind, this study examines how skill-learning programs at the Katsina Youth Craft Village support youth in Katsina State. We aim to determine how many youths are participating in these programs, what barriers prevent them from enrolling or staying involved, and how these programs can contribute positively to the area's development. By gathering real data on what's effective and what needs improvement at the Katsina Youth Craft Village, we hope to suggest ways to enhance the programs, plan more

effective initiatives, and empower young people in Katsina State and similar areas.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Numerous studies have explored the contribution of skill acquisition programmes to youth empowerment and sustainable development in Katsina State, particularly in improving self-reliance among youth. These programmes are designed with specific target groups in mind, ranging from farmers to individuals seeking vocational training in various trades. By equipping participants with practical skills, such programmes aim to enhance productivity, reduce poverty, and promote socio-economic inclusion across Nigeria. In Katsina State, skill acquisition services are delivered through a network of governmental and non-governmental organizations, with active involvement from political leaders who often sponsor short-term training centres. These programmes typically span one to four weeks and cater to both men and women. Upon completion, participants may receive basic tools or starter kits to facilitate the application of their newly acquired skills. In some cases, financial incentives or materials are provided to support the launch of small-scale enterprises.

Despite the widespread implementation of these programmes, a critical question remains: do they result in a significant transformation in the social and economic status of youth in Katsina State? This inquiry forms the basis for further investigation into the effectiveness and long-term impact of skill acquisition programmes on youth development.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following set of goals would accomplish the objective of the study:

1. To assess the extent of youth participation in skill acquisition programmes as a means of promoting sustainable development in Katsina State.
2. To evaluate the effects of youth participation in skill acquisition programmes on their socio-economic advancement in Katsina State.
3. To examine the implications of youth non-participation in skill acquisition programmes for sustainable development in Katsina State.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What is the extent of youth participation in skill acquisition programmes in Katsina State, and how does such participation contribute to sustainable development?
2. What effects does youth participation in skill acquisition programmes have on their socio-economic advancement in Katsina State?
3. What are the implications of youth non-participation in skill acquisition programmes for

sustainable development in Katsina State?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The progress and stability of any society are closely associated with the quality and effectiveness of its educational systems, including formal, informal, and non-formal modes of learning. Education is widely acknowledged as a fundamental driver of social transformation, as no society has achieved meaningful development in its absence. According to Okoye, K. & Ibezhinim C. (2021), national advancement depends less on material wealth or military capability and more on the presence of informed, ethically grounded, and well-educated citizens. In a similar vein, Abdulkarim B. & Ramandeep K. (2016) conceptualized education as a process through which individuals gain conscious awareness of themselves and their environment, thereby enabling intentional and productive participation in society. They further asserted that education primarily serves to improve individuals' quality of life and promote self-reliance within the broader social system.

Within this framework, skill acquisition programmes constitute an important component of non-formal education. Adam S. A., Muhammad B. M. and Usman K. I. (2019) characterized such programmes as structured and purposeful learning activities delivered outside the formal education system, aimed at providing specific competencies to targeted groups, including youths and adults. Similarly, Abdullahi M. Y., Balogun B. I., and Jibrin A. (2023) identified skill acquisition programmes as deliberate interventions designed to respond to the educational and developmental needs of young people and out-of-school populations in developing contexts. These programmes seek to encourage active participation, support the acquisition of practical and marketable skills, foster positive work-oriented behaviours, and enhance beneficiaries' overall standard of living. Extending this perspective, Hamzat H. Y., Isa B., and Bashir A. I. (2024) highlighted the broader global significance of skill acquisition programs, noting that they are commonly implemented by governments and other institutions to promote critical thinking, rational decision-making, and social cohesion. He further observes that classical liberal philosophers regarded rational thought as the highest form of knowledge and considered it fundamental to human growth and societal advancement.

Empirical evidence supports the transformative potential of educational interventions. For instance, Eze and Laz (2020), in their study found that literacy programmes significantly impacted the socio-economic empowerment of women. Their findings revealed that post-literacy education had the strongest effect, followed by intermediate literacy and beginner-level literacy. These results suggest that higher literacy levels correlate with increased

capacity for socio-economic participation.

A study conducted by Adam et al (2019) found that the program has positively impacted the lives of the beneficiaries. Finally, it was recommended, among other things, that the government should provide jobs for unemployed youths by engaging them in skills acquisition programs aimed at poverty reduction. Another study conducted by Rakiya (2025) discovered that unemployment contributes to poverty, and the attitude of people does not embrace skill acquisition, making it deficient in terms of contributing to the economic sustainability of society.

A study conducted by Oladeji (2021) revealed that the skills acquisition programme has been able to provide employment opportunities for youth beneficiaries, reduce their involvement in social vices, improved their standard of living.

This study is therefore anchored in the Theory of Deschooling, as proposed by Ivan Illich, which critiques traditional formal education systems for limiting learners' engagement with real-world experiences. Illich advocates for alternative educational models that prioritize experiential learning and personal exploration. In alignment with this theory, the present research examines whether skill acquisition programmes in Katsina State effectively facilitate the practical learning of trades and skills among youth, and whether such engagement contributes to improved socio-economic outcomes. Ultimately, the core objective of these programmes is to enhance the social and economic conditions of participants. The Theory of Deschooling supports this aim by promoting educational environments that empower individuals to discover and apply their potential in meaningful ways.

Therefore, this study aimed to examine the impact of the Katsina Youth Craft Village Skills Acquisition Programme on the socio-economic status of youths in Katsina State, Nigeria. The programme is recognized as a strategic mechanism for enhancing youth development and encouraging self-reliance among participants. The research aimed to highlight the critical role skill acquisition programmes play in improving the livelihoods of youths in Katsina State and Nigeria as a whole.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design, deemed the most appropriate and reliable approach for investigating the research problem. The descriptive survey method is particularly suitable for this study as it allows for the observation and analysis of phenomena in their natural settings, thereby enhancing the feasibility and authenticity of the findings. It

also facilitates the systematic collection of data from a representative sample of the target population.

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire, which was administered to selected youth participants. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; Section 'A' gathered demographic and personal information of the respondents. Section B contained items derived from the research questions, designed to elicit responses relevant to the study objectives.

To ensure inclusivity, especially for respondents with limited literacy in Western education, interviews were conducted, and responses were recorded directly into the questionnaire by trained field assistants. The target population for this study comprises 400 youths both Male and Female enrolled in Katsina Youth Craft Village across the four skills such as Tailoring, Fashion and Design, Computer repairs and Shoe Making. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure fair representation across the youths both male and female. The sampling process was involved a simple random draw using folded slips marked "Yes" or "No." Individuals who select "Yes" were included as respondents for the study where 200 respondents were selected.

For data analysis, the tabulation method was employed, utilizing the Likert scale to quantify responses. A four-point Likert scale was used, with the following response options: Strongly Agree (4) Agree (3) Disagree (2) Strongly Disagree (1)

The analysis involved calculating the mean score for each item and comparing it with the weighted mean threshold of 2.5, derived as  $\text{Weighted Mean} = \{4 + 3 + 2 + 1\} / \{4\} = 2.5$ . The decision rule is if the calculated mean score is greater than 2.5, the result is considered positive, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. While if the calculated mean score is less than or equal to 2.5, the result is considered negative, and the null hypothesis is accepted while the alternative is rejected. This analytical framework enabled the study to assess the effectiveness of skill acquisition in Katsina State, with implications for enhancing self-reliance and economic development of the youth in Katsina State.

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

**Research Question 1: What is the extent of youth participation in skill acquisition programmes in Katsina State, and how does such participation contribute to sustainable development?**

Item	SA	A	SD	D	Rule	No.	X	Remark
You have participated in one or more skill acquisition programmes in Katsina State.	150600	30 90	10 20	10 10	2.5	200	3.6	Agreed
The skill acquisition programme(s) you attended equipped you with practical skills that are useful for sustainable employment or self-employment.	170 680	20 60	5 10	5 5	2.5	200	3.8	Agreed
Your participation in skill acquisition programmes has contributed to improving your economic self-reliance and livelihood sustainability.	168 672	12 36	10 20	10 10	2.5	200	3.7	Agreed
Skills acquired through these programmes have enabled you to contribute positively to sustainable development within your community.	180 720	15 45	2 4	3 3	2.5	200	3.9	Agreed

The findings reveal a high level of youth participation in skill acquisition programmes in Katsina State, as indicated by a mean score above the decision rule. Respondents agreed that these programmes provide practical, marketable skills that support sustainable employment and self-employment, enhance economic self-reliance, and improve livelihood sustainability. The results further show that skills acquired through the programmes enable youths to contribute positively to community-based sustainable development. Therefore, the study confirmed that skill acquisition programmes play a significant role in promoting employability, economic independence, and sustainable development among youths in Katsina State.

**Research Question 2: What effects does youth participation in skill acquisition programmes have on their socio-economic advancement in Katsina State?**

Item	SA	A	SD	D	Rule	No.	X	Remark
Participation in skill acquisition programmes has improved your chances of gaining paid employment in Katsina State.	170 680	20 60	5 10	5 5	2.5	200	3.8	Agreed
Skills acquired through these programmes have enabled you to engage in self-employment or entrepreneurial activities.	187 748	10 30	3 6	0 0	2.5	200	3.9	Agreed
Your income level has improved as a result	190	7	2	1				

of participating in skill acquisition programmes.	760	21	4	1	2.5	200	3.9	Agreed
Participation in skill acquisition programmes has enhanced your socio-economic status, including financial stability and standard of living.	188 752	10 30	2 4	0 0	2.5	200	3.9	Agreed

The results have shown a strong positive perception of the socio-economic benefits of youth participation in skill acquisition programmes in Katsina State. All items recorded high mean scores ( $\bar{X} = 3.8\text{--}3.9$ ), exceeding the decision rule mean of 2.5, indicating general agreement among respondents. The findings revealed that participation in these programmes improves employment opportunities, supports self-employment and entrepreneurship, enhances income levels, and strengthens socio-economic status, including financial stability and living standards. The results, therefore, confirmed that skill acquisition programmes significantly contribute to the socio-economic advancement of youth and serve as an effective tool for youth empowerment and sustainable development in Katsina State.

**Research Question 3: What are the implications of youth non-participation in skill acquisition programmes for sustainable development in Katsina State?**

Item	SA	A	SD	D	Rule	No.	X	Remark
Youth who do not participate in skill acquisition programmes are more likely to experience unemployment or unstable sources of livelihood.	156 624	34 102	7 14	3 3	2.5	200	3.7	Agreed
Non-participation in skill acquisition programmes limits youths' ability to contribute effectively to economic and community development in Katsina State.	177 708	13 39	5 10	5 5	2.5	200	3.8	Agreed
Absence of relevant vocational and entrepreneurial skills among non-participating youths negatively affects sustainable development efforts in Katsina State.	167 668	20 60	8 16	5 5	2.5	200	3.7	Agreed
Youth non-participation in skill acquisition programmes increases socio-economic vulnerability, such as poverty and social exclusion, within communities in Katsina State.	189 756	9 27	2 4	0 0	2.5	200	3.9	Agreed

The results have shown a strong agreement among respondents that youth non-participation in skill acquisition programmes has negative implications for sustainable development in

Katsina State. All items recorded high mean scores ( $\bar{X} = 3.7-3.9$ ), exceeding the decision rule mean of 2.5.

The findings indicated that non-participating youths are more likely to face unemployment and unstable livelihoods, have limited capacity to contribute to economic and community development, and lack vocational and entrepreneurial skills necessary for sustainable development. Additionally, youth non-participation increased socio-economic vulnerability, including poverty and social exclusion. In brief, the results underscore the importance of promoting participation in skill acquisition programmes to reduce vulnerability and support inclusive and sustainable development in Katsina State.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The findings of this study revealed a high level of youth participation in skill acquisition programmes in Katsina State and confirmed their significant role in promoting employability, self-employment, socio-economic advancement, and sustainable development. These findings were strongly supported by existing empirical evidence reviewed in this study.

In the first place, the study established that skill acquisition programmes provide youths with practical and marketable skills that enhance sustainable employment, self-employment, and economic self-reliance. Therefore, this finding aligned with the study by Adam et al. (2019), which reported that skill acquisition programmes had a positive impact on the lives of beneficiaries, particularly in terms of poverty reduction and improved livelihoods. Both studies emphasized that engaging youths in skill-oriented programmes is an effective strategy for addressing unemployment and enhancing economic independence.

Similarly, the present study's finding that participation in skill acquisition programmes improved employment opportunities, income levels, and overall socio-economic status was consistent with the findings of Olajide, M. F. & Abubakar O. (2021). They reported that skill acquisition programmes provided employment opportunities for youth beneficiaries, reduced their involvement in social vices, and improved their standard of living. This convergence suggested that skill acquisition programmes not only address economic challenges but also contributed to social stability and improved quality of life.

Furthermore, the study revealed that skill acquisition enhances youths' capacity to contribute positively to community-based sustainable development. This outcome supported the findings of Eze and Laz (2020), who found that literacy and post-literacy education programmes significantly improved socio-economic empowerment. Their conclusion that

higher levels of education increase individuals' capacity for socio-economic participation reinforced the current study's assertion that skill acquisition equips youths with competencies necessary for productive engagement in both economic and community development.

In addition, the finding that youth non-participation in skill acquisition programmes led to unemployment, unstable livelihoods, poverty, and social exclusion was strongly supported by Rakiya Y. (2025). Rakiya's study identified unemployment as a major contributor to poverty and highlighted negative attitudes toward skill acquisition as a factor limiting economic sustainability. This corroborates the present study's conclusion that lack of participation in skill acquisition programmes increased socio-economic vulnerability and undermines sustainable development efforts.

In a nutshell, the findings of this study were consistent with prior empirical evidence, demonstrating that participation in skill acquisition and related educational programmes enhanced employability, income generation, socio-economic empowerment, and sustainable development, while non-participation exacerbated unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion. The convergence of these findings underscored the critical importance of strengthening and expanding skill acquisition programmes as a strategic intervention for youth empowerment, poverty reduction, and sustainable development in Katsina State and Nigeria in general.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study recommended the following:

1. Expanding and adequately funding skill acquisition programmes to improve facilities, update curricula, and ensure access to modern training tools in the Katsina Youth Craft Village.
2. It also emphasizes the need for increased awareness and inclusive strategies to encourage wider youth participation, particularly among marginalized groups in Katsina State.
3. Strong post-training support, such as access to finance, mentorship, and private sector partnerships, is necessary to help beneficiaries translate acquired skills into sustainable employment, entrepreneurship, and improved socio-economic outcomes in Katsina State.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study has shown that skill acquisition programmes play a vital role in youth empowerment and sustainable development in Katsina State. The high youth participation confirmed that these programmes that are existing in Katsina Youth Craft Village provide

practical skills that enhance employability, self-employment, economic self-reliance, and positive contributions to community development. The findings also revealed strong socio-economic benefits, including improved employment opportunities, higher income, and better living standards. In contrast, non-participation exposes youths to unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, and limited developmental contribution. Therefore, the study concluded that sustained investment and expanded access to skill acquisition programmes in Katsina Youth Craft Village are essential for reducing youth vulnerability and promoting inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development in Katsina State and Nigeria at large.

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