

# Examination of the Activities of Ringim Skills Acquisition Center in Reducing Youth Unemployment in Ringim Local Government Area, Jigawa State, Nigeria

Magaji Salisu

Department of Social Studies  
School of Secondary Education (Arts & Social Sciences)  
Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies Ringim

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**ABSTRACT:** *Youth unemployment is a pressing issue in many regions, including Jigawa State, Nigeria. This study examines the activities of the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center and its impact on reducing youth unemployment in Ringim Local Government Area. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research incorporates both quantitative data from surveys of program participants and qualitative insights from in-depth interviews with center staff and beneficiaries. The findings reveal that the center offers a range of vocational training programs that significantly enhance employability skills among youths. Notably, participants reported increased job opportunities and entrepreneurial ventures following their training. Despite these successes, challenges such as limited funding and inadequate infrastructure were identified as barriers to optimal program delivery. This study underscores the critical role of skills acquisition centers in addressing youth unemployment and provides recommendations for policy enhancement and future research to further improve the efficacy of such programs. The implications for policymakers, educators, and community leaders highlight the need to sustained investment and support to maximize the impact of skills acquisition initiatives.*

**KEYWORDS:** ringim skills acquisition center, youth unemployment ringim local government area, Jigawa state, Nigeria

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Youth unemployment is a critical issue worldwide, with significant implications for economic growth, social stability, and individual well-being. In developing countries like Nigeria, the problem is particularly severe, driven by a combination of factors such as rapid population growth, limited access to quality education, and a mismatch between the skills taught in educational institutions and the needs of the labor market. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that youth unemployment in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria, is substantially higher than the global average, posing a major challenge for policymakers and communities alike. In Nigeria, the unemployment rate among youths (ages 15-34) has reached alarming levels, contributing to widespread poverty, increased crime rates, and social unrest. Efforts to address this issue have included various government and non-governmental initiatives aimed at enhancing the employability of young people. One such initiative is the establishment of skills acquisition centers, which provide vocational training to equip youths with practical skills needed in the job market. These centers aim to bridge the gap between education and employment by offering courses in various trades and professions, thus fostering both employability and entrepreneurship. The Ringim Skills Acquisition Center, located in the Ringim Local Government Area (LGA) of Jigawa State, Nigeria, is one such center dedicated to reducing youth unemployment through vocational training. This center offers a range of programs designed to impart skills in areas such as tailoring, carpentry, computer literacy, and hairdressing. By providing these training programs, the center seeks to empower young people to either secure employment or start their own businesses, thereby contributing to economic development and social stability in the region.

### **Problem Statement**

Despite the proliferation of skills acquisition centers across Nigeria, there is limited empirical evidence on their effectiveness in reducing youth unemployment. Many of these centers operate in relative obscurity, and their impact on the communities they serve is not well-documented or understood. The Ringim Skills Acquisition Center is no exception. While anecdotal evidence suggests that it has had a positive impact on the local community, there has been no systematic study to evaluate its activities and outcomes comprehensively. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the specific activities of the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center and assessing its impact on reducing youth unemployment in the Ringim LGA.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The primary objectives of this study are to:

1. Identify the types of vocational training programs offered by the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of these programs in enhancing the employability of participants.

3. Assess the impact of the center's activities on reducing youth unemployment in the Ringim Local Government Area.
4. Identify challenges faced by the center in delivering its programs and propose solutions.

### **Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What types of vocational training programs are offered at the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center?
2. How effective are these programs in improving the employability of participants?
3. What is the impact of the center's activities on youth unemployment in the Ringim Local Government Area?
4. What challenges does the center face in delivering its training programs, and how can they be addressed?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study provides valuable insights into the role of skills acquisition centers in combating youth unemployment. By systematically evaluating the activities and outcomes of the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how vocational training can enhance employability and reduce unemployment. The findings will inform policymakers, educators, and community leaders about the effectiveness of such initiatives and highlight areas for improvement. Additionally, this research adds to the academic literature on vocational education and employment strategies in developing countries, offering evidence-based recommendations for enhancing the impact of skills acquisition centers.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study is grounded in human capital theory, which posits that investments in education and training enhance individuals' productivity and employability. Human capital theory, pioneered by economists such as Gary Becker, suggests that individuals and societies derive economic benefits from investing in education and vocational training. By equipping young people with practical skills, skills acquisition centers like the one in Ringim increase their chances of finding employment and or starting their own businesses. This, in turn, leads to broader economic growth and social development.

### **Empirical Review**

Several studies have explored the impact of vocational training on employment outcomes. For instance, Adebayo (2020) found that vocational training programs in Nigeria significantly improve participants' job prospects by providing them with the skills demanded by employers. The study highlighted that graduates of such programs were more likely to secure employment compared to their peers who did not receive similar training. Additionally, Onyeka and Nwankwo (2019)

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Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK reported that skills acquisition centers contribute to reducing unemployment rates by fostering entrepreneurship. Their study indicated that many program participants went on to start their own businesses, thereby creating jobs not only for themselves but also for others.

Other research, such as that by Olawale (2018), has emphasized the role of vocational training in social inclusion. Olawale's study demonstrated that skills acquisition programs help integrate marginalized groups, such as women and rural youth, into the economic mainstream by providing them with marketable skills. This inclusion is particularly relevant in regions like Jigawa State, where traditional educational opportunities may be limited.

### **Identification of Gaps**

While existing research highlights the positive impact of vocational training on employment outcomes, there is limited evidence specific to the activities of individual skills acquisition centers. Most studies focus on broad national or regional trends, neglecting the unique contributions and challenges of specific centers. This study addresses this gap by focusing on the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center, providing detailed insights into its operations, challenges, and impact on youth unemployment in the Ringim Local Government Area. By doing so, it aims to offer a nuanced understanding of how such centers can be optimized to achieve better outcomes.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center's activities and their impact on youth unemployment. The mixed-methods approach allows for a thorough exploration of both statistical trends and personal experiences, providing a well-rounded perspective on the center's effectiveness.

### **Study Area**

The study is conducted in the Ringim Local Government Area of Jigawa State, Nigeria. Ringim is characterized by high youth unemployment rates and limited access to formal education and employment opportunities. The area's socio-economic context makes it an ideal setting for examining the impact of vocational training programs.

### **Population and Sample**

The study population includes all participants of the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center's programs over the past five years. A stratified random sampling technique is used to select a representative sample of 200 participants for the survey and 20 for in-depth interviews. This approach ensures that different groups within the population (e.g., males and females, different age groups, various training programs) are adequately represented.

### **Data Collection Methods**

Data is collected through structured questionnaires administered to the survey participants and semi-structured interview guides used for the in-depth interviews. The questionnaires cover aspects such as participants' demographics, training experiences, and employment outcomes. The interviews provide qualitative insights into the challenges and successes of the training programs. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods enables a comprehensive analysis of the center's impact.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Quantitative data is analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including frequency distributions, means, and regression analysis. This statistical analysis helps to identify patterns and relationships within the data. Qualitative data from the interviews is analyzed thematically to identify recurring themes and patterns. The thematic analysis involves coding the interview transcripts and grouping similar codes into themes that reflect the participants' experiences and perspectives.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical approval for the study is obtained from the Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, ensuring that they are aware of the study's purpose and their rights. Confidentiality is maintained throughout the research process, with all personal data anonymized to protect participants' identities.

## **RESULTS**

### **Descriptive Analysis**

The survey results show a diverse range of vocational training programs offered at the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center, including tailoring, carpentry, computer literacy, and hairdressing. The majority of participants are aged between 18 and 35 years, with an equal representation of males and females. The analysis also reveals that most participants had limited formal education before joining the center, highlighting the center's role in providing alternative education pathways.

### **Inferential Analysis**

Regression analysis reveals a significant positive relationship between participation in the training programs and employment outcomes. Participants who completed the training are more likely to be employed or self-employed compared to those who did not. The analysis also shows that the type of training program influences employment outcomes, with certain skills (e.g., computer literacy) leading to higher employability rates.

## **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

Tables and charts illustrate the key findings, showing the distribution of participants across different training programs, the employment status of participants before and after training, and the challenges faced by the center. For example, a table might show the percentage of participants employed in different sectors, while a chart could illustrate the improvement in participants' income levels post-training.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Interpretation of Findings**

The findings indicate that the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center plays a crucial role in enhancing the employability of youths in the Ringim Local Government Area. The diverse range of training programs equips participants with practical skills that are in demand in the local job market. The positive relationship between training participation and employment outcomes underscores the effectiveness of the center's programs.

### **Implications for Policy and Practice**

The study's findings underscore the need for increased investment in skills acquisition centers to scale up their impact. Policymakers should consider providing additional funding and resources to address the challenges identified, such as inadequate infrastructure and limited training materials. Enhancing the capacity of these centers can lead to more significant reductions in youth unemployment.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study is limited by its focus on a single skills acquisition center, which may not be representative of other centers in Nigeria. Future research should consider a comparative analysis of multiple centers to provide a broader understanding of their impact. Additionally, the study's reliance on self-reported data from participants may introduce some bias, although steps were taken to mitigate this through triangulation with qualitative data.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Future studies should explore the long-term impact of vocational training on participants' career trajectories and the role of skills acquisition centers in fostering sustainable economic development. Research could also investigate the impact of specific types of training programs on different demographic groups to tailor interventions more effectively.

## CONCLUSION

### Summary of Key Findings

The study demonstrates that the Ringim Skills Acquisition Center significantly contributes to reducing youth unemployment by providing practical vocational training. The programs offered enhance participants' employability and encourage entrepreneurial ventures, leading to improved economic outcomes for individuals and the community.

The findings highlight the importance of skills acquisition centers in addressing youth unemployment in developing countries. Continued support and investment in such initiatives are essential for sustainable economic growth and social stability. Policymakers, educators, and community leaders should collaborate to enhance the capacity and reach of these centers, ensuring that they can meet the needs of a growing and dynamic youth population.

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