

DETERMINANTS OF EXPOSURE TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION AND YOUTH LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA

Fred Nwogu^{1,2}, Muyiwa Oladosun^{1,2}, Emmanuel O. Amoo¹

¹Department of Economics and Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria

²Public-Private Partnership Research Cluster, Covenant University Centre for Research Innovation and Discovery

Corresponding Author: Fred Nwogu

Email: fred.nwogups@stu.cu.edu.ng

Abstract

Job and entrepreneurship opportunities available to the youth are limited in Nigeria, making participation in the labour force highly competitive. To expand their chances of participating in the labour force, skills/entrepreneurship intervention programmes sponsored by public and private sector organisations have targeted the youth as a solution to closing the unemployment gap in Nigeria. Participation in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes is determined by the information available to the youth about such opportunities. Therefore, exposure to entrepreneurship development information becomes crucial for enhanced youth labour force participation. So, to understand this phenomenon, the study undertook primary research using quantitative and qualitative research approaches to obtain data from youth aged 15-35 years across Nigeria. A total of 2,396 questionnaires were completed and retrieved. Also, the study held 12 FGDs with 96 participants and 12 key informant interviews. The findings of the study showed that exposure to skills/entrepreneurship development information is critical for owning a business, growing the business successfully, or securing employment. Policymakers should increase efforts at setting up platforms and systems that will provide credible information on skills/entrepreneurship programmes and their benefits to individuals and the country.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, exposure to information, labour force participation, skills, youth.

INTRODUCTION

Job and entrepreneurship opportunities available to the youth are limited in Nigeria, making participation in the labour force highly competitive. Nigeria has an estimated population of 218.5 million according to projections made for 2022 by national institutions and global agencies (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2021; Population Reference Bureau [PRB], 2022). The country's population is predominantly youthful, estimated at 73 million as of 2022 (National Population Commission [NPC], 2020); 33.4% of the country's population in the age bracket 15-35 as of 2022 were youth. United Nations estimates show that Nigeria's youth population will be 140.9 million by 2050 (UN, 2022). The African Youth Charter defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 35 (AU, 2006). In order to provide decent work and economic growth specified in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8: *promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all* (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2020; UN, 2015), skills and entrepreneurship development is presented as a practical strategy to reduce this social and economic vulnerability among the youthful population as well as widely expand labour force participation for a demographic dividend in the long run. To this end, several investments have been made in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes in Nigeria to prepare the youth to set up future ventures (Omeje, Jideofor & Ugwu, 2020), including change in school curricula

that teach entrepreneurial skills to stimulate entrepreneurial intentions and activities among students (Ajagun, 2019; Olutuase et al., 2020).

To expand their chances of participating in the labour force, skills/entrepreneurship intervention programmes sponsored by public and private sector agencies have targeted the youth as a solution to closing the unemployment gap in Nigeria. Youth unemployment in Nigeria has been a concern and multiplied over the years from 8.2% in 2015 to 42.5% in 2020 (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2021; World Bank, 2022) and increased to 53.4% in 2022. This has necessitated the design of programmes that focus on the youth as contained in the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 policies and programmes.

A key intervention programme used to create demand for skills/entrepreneurship development among youth is exposure to information on skills/entrepreneurship development benefits. So, exposure to entrepreneurship development information becomes crucial for enhanced youth labour force participation. In fact, the first step to accessing the labour market is exposure to the right information on skills/entrepreneurship development programmes.

Thus, the youth, training centres and policymakers must understand the determinants of exposure to information on skills/entrepreneurship development for labour force participation. This study examines the determinants of exposure to skills/entrepre-

neurship development information and youth labour force participation in Nigeria. The research question in this study is: what are the determinants of exposure to skills/entrepreneurship development information and youth labour force participation in Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Skill is a social construct affected by several factors, including age, sex, and motivation. According to ILO (2019), It refers to the knowledge, competence and experience needed and acquired through learning and practice to perform a specific task, activity, or job (manual or mental). Entrepreneurship, on the other hand, is the creation of new business enterprises by individuals or small groups (Kent, Sexton & Vesper, 1982)

Background factors used in this paper include age, sex, region, residence, education, employment status, income level, entrepreneurial ecosystem availability, family background, unforeseen situations (e.g., COVID-19), and personal motivation. Several scholars have studied age and have confirmed that it has a negative effect on entrepreneurial activities and an important variable in understanding entrepreneurial motives and behaviour and readiness to accept a change (Backman & Karlsson 2017; Bohlmann, Rauch and Zacher, 2017; Okolo-Obasi and Asongu (2018).

Studies have been conducted to understand the gender gap in entrepreneurship activities (Zelekha, 2021; Cardella, Hernández-Sánchez & Sánchez-García 2020). Women entrepreneurs have grown in number in recent years; however, some obstacles are said to limit them, including asset ownership, apprenticeship, parental role, mentoring, inequality in education, and underrepresentation (Hechevarría, Bullough, Brush, & Edelman, 2019; Jaiyeola et al., 2021;). According to World Bank data, the share of female business owners in Nigeria in 2020 was 33.7% (World Bank, 2020).

Region of residence is a strong predictor of entrepreneurial intent and ideation to find solutions to unmet needs in the environment (Eckhardt, Harris, Chen, Khoshimov & Goldfarb, 2021; Guiso, Pistaferri, and Schivardi (2021). Related to the region is the place of residence. Levels of entrepreneurial activities are affected by the entrepreneur's place of residence (urban or semi-urban) due to lack of, or access to, key enablers such as technology, information, and infrastructure (Srinuan & Bohlin, 2011. Some studies have shown that educational background directly affects entrepreneurial intentions or activities or plays a mediatory role with other demographic factors (Gujrati, Tyagi, & Lawan, 2019; Ume, Agha, & Arisi, 2021). In contrast, other scholars hold that educational background does not play a significant role in entrepreneurial acumen (Gbadebo et al., 2019). On employment Status, individuals in paid employment or involved in self-employment have heightened desirability for entrepreneurship as they interact with the existing system (Barry, Cormican and Browne (2021; Gänser-Stickler, Schulz & Schwens, 2022). The income level of an intending entrepreneur is an important matter to consider in deciding to venture into a business, especially if the venture requires substantial startup capital (Gänser-Stickler et al., 2022).

Entrepreneurial family and community background influence the decision to become an entrepreneur (Georgescu & Herman, 2020; Palmer et al., 2021). Ume, Agha, and Arisi (2021) found that entrepreneurial family background significantly affects the creation of business ventures. Others, however, argue that family background does not influence entrepreneurship (Theodor,

Lindquist, Sol and Praag, 2021). The availability of an entrepreneurial hub/ecosystem helps accelerate entrepreneurial innovations (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020).

Unforeseen Situations like the COVID-19 impact and cash scarcity in Nigeria are essential factors. One area of COVID-19 impact was entrepreneurship, where people, especially the youth, were affected adversely (Ogar, Okuta, Okon & Odama, 2021). However, it prompted innovations in different areas of human endeavour, like health, value-chain management, logistics, and game technology (Adebisi, Aregbesola, Asamu, Arisukwu & Oyeyipo, 2021). Cash crunch emerged as an unforeseen situation during the data collection crunch that resulted from the cashless and currency redesign policies introduced by the Central Bank of Nigeria. Personal motivation denotes processes that prompt and sustain the goal-directed activities of the individual, tenancy and the understanding of the threshold levels of individuals (Holland & Shepherd, 2011; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Youth exposure to credible and adequate information about government and other development partners' skills development programmes through institutionalised frameworks is critical in promoting entrepreneurship (Sendra-Pons, Comeig & Mas-Tur (2022). The frameworks through which youths can obtain skills development information are traditional and contemporary. Examples of the traditional approach to exposure to information are through skills development programmes, friends and relatives, and job centres/agencies. Exposure to the media, including social media, is a veritable source of information on skill development programmes. Barrera and Villarroel (2021) recommend incorporating social media channels as a formal source of information for sustaining entrepreneurship. Youth are taking advantage of entrepreneurship development opportunities to empower themselves to increase labour force participation.

METHODOLOGY

The paper adopted quantitative and qualitative research designs using a cross-sectional survey to collect data across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, including a state in each zone and two Local Government Areas (LGAs) in each state. The eligible population for the study comprised male and female youth aged 15-35 years, as defined by the African Union (AU, 2006). According to the 2006 Population and Housing Census of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the population is 1,832,605 persons. The study group included youth who have participated in skill development and entrepreneurship programmes organised by the government, private organisations/institutions and non-profit organisations. A control group included a random assignment of youth in the eligible population who have not benefited from any skills and entrepreneurship training programmes.

The study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique to select respondents. The first stage involved the pre-selection of six (6) states and 12 LGAs in the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. A State was selected from each zone, while two LGAs were chosen from each state. The selection criteria included a high youth population using the 2006 census, high business density and GDP as an indicator or proxy for the presence of entrepreneurial activities. A critical consideration for selection was also states and LGAs with considerable ongoing youth entrepreneurship intervention programmes.

The second stage of the sample selection involved a stratified random selection of enumeration areas in each LGA. The Stratification was according to urban and semi-urban using the Enumeration Area Demarcation (EAD) list developed by the National Population Commission (NPC). A random selection was

made within each stratum to select study EAs. Finally, respondents for the survey were selected in each EA with the support of youth leaders, experienced enumerators in the areas, and the use of landmarks like worship places, business outlets and centres. The enumerators recruited were people with minimum tertiary education qualifications who resided in the areas and had previous experience collecting data on similar projects. A total of 2,397 was calculated as the study sample using the Yamane (1967) sample size determination; however, 2,430 questionnaires were administered to male and female youth aged 15-35 years in the six geopolitical zones. A total of 2,396 questionnaires were completed and retrieved. Each respondent selected was administered a questionnaire until the sample size was achieved. The questionnaire for the study was designed in part by the researchers, while some aspects were adapted from standardised instruments used in previous related studies by the National Centre for Technology Management [NACETEM] (2022); GEM (2021); Olofinyehun and Egbetokun (2021); Staniewski and Awruk (2019); FATE Foundation (2021) and MindTool (2022). The survey instrument was tested using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for reliability, which was 0.75. Also, subject area experts reviewed the tool, and a pretest (n=20) was conducted in Abuja and Lagos and modified to improve its validity.

The qualitative participants were purposefully identified and selected during the administration of the questionnaires. An interview guide for the qualitative research was developed before going to the field, noting the study’s objectives and information from the literature review. The qualitative segment featured key informant interviews (KIIs) with representatives of funders and training centres and focus group discussions (FGD) with the youth. Accordingly, the study held 12 FGDs with 96 participants comprising youth aged 15-35 across Nigeria. Twelve (12) key informant interviews were also conducted. The interviews featured discussions using semi-structured question guides with policymakers and representatives of organisations (teachers, managers, coordinators of training centres) that provide entrepreneurship education and skills development training and who are knowledgeable about the subject. The break character for the FGDs was according to sex, participation in a training programme or not, and across different age groups. The FGDs had 8 participants in each session.

Data analysis was done using IBM SPSS 25. Three levels of analysis were conducted and are presented in this paper. They include univariate, bivariate and multivariate statistical techniques to describe frequencies and test for the effects of skills/entrepreneurial development on youth labour force participation in Nigeria at specified significance levels. Qualitative data was analysed using the content analysis method.

Model Specification

Research questions were stated for this study to examine the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The relationships are presented in mathematical or functional form as below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1AOY_1 + \beta_2AOY_2 + \beta_3AOY_3 + \beta_4AOY_4 + \beta_5AOY_5 + \beta_6SOY_1 + \beta_7REG_1 + \beta_8REG_2 + \beta_9REG_3 + \beta_{10}REG_4 + \beta_{11}REG_5 + \beta_{12}RES_1 + \beta_{13}YED_1 + \beta_{14}YED_2 + \beta_{15}EPL_1 + \beta_{16}EPL_2 + \beta_{17}EPL_3 + \beta_{18}INC_1 + \beta_{19}INC_2 + \beta_{20}INC_3 + \beta_{21}HUB_1 + \beta_{22}FAM_1 + \beta_{23}C19_1 + \beta_{23}PEM_1 + \beta_{24}PEM_2 + \beta_{25}PEM_3 + \beta_{26}PEM_4 + \beta_{27}PEM_5 + \beta_{28}PEM_6 + \beta_{29}PEM_7 + \beta_{30}PEM_8 + \beta_{31}PEM_9 + \beta_{32}PEM_{10} + \dots \tag{3.7}$$

Where:

Y: the outcome variable, which is the logistic transformation of the probability of labour force participation occurring

$$Y = f(X, Z) \tag{3.1}$$

Where:

Y: is the outcome variable, labour force participation with four categories: own startup venture, startup business successful, desires to have a startup, and secured employment.

f: is the function of the explanatory variables.

X: represents the background factors.

Z: represents the exposure to skills/entrepreneurship information

X and Z are vectors of variables whose components are as stated in equations (3.2) and (3.3), respectively.

$$X = f(AOY, SOY, REG, RES, YED, EPL, INC, PEM, HUB, FAM, C19) \tag{3.2}$$

$$Z = f(HSD, PSD) \tag{3.3}$$

Thus:

$$Y = f(AOY, SOY, REG, RES, YED, EPL, INC, PEM, HUB, FAM, C19, HSD, PSD) \tag{3.4}$$

Where:

AOY - Age of youth, SOY - The sex of youth, REG - Region, RES - Residence, YED - Youth Education, EPL - Employment status, INC - Income level, HUB - Availability of Entrepreneurial hub/ecosystem, FAM - Entrepreneurial family background, C19 - Unforeseen situations (e.g. COVID-19 impact), PEM - Personal motivation, HSD - Heard about skills/entrepreneurship development programmes, PSD - Participated in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes.

Binary Logistic Regression was used to estimate the model expressed in equation form as:

$$Ln \left(\frac{P}{1-P} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \dots + \beta_kX_k \tag{3.5}$$

Where:

P: the probability of the event occurring

(1-P): the probability of non-occurrence of the event

[P/(1-P)]: odds ratio function

β₀: the intercept

β₁ - β_k: the coefficients of the variables/regression coefficients

X₁ - X_k: the independent variables

Three models were set up for the study. Model 1 was set up to test if a significant direct or indirect relationship exists between background independent factors (X) and the outcome variable Y.

The Implicit function of the relationship can be expressed as follows:

$$Y = f(X) \tag{3.6}$$

The logistic form becomes:

$$Ln \left(\frac{P}{1-P} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \dots + \beta_kX_k$$

Therefore,

The explicit function for Model 1 is denoted as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \dots + \beta_kX_k$$

β₀: the intercept, that is, the probability of occurrence of labour force participation in the absence of the background factors.

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$\beta_1, \dots, \beta_{32}$: the odds ratios of labour force participation occurring.

Model 2 was set up to test for the relationship between the background factors and each of the exposure factors. There were two binary logistic regression equations denoted as V_i where $i = 1-2$.

The explicit function for Model 2 is denoted as:

$$V_i = \delta_0 + \delta_1 AOY_1 + \delta_2 AOY_2 + \delta_3 AOY_3 + \delta_4 AOY_4 + \delta_5 AOY_5 + \delta_6 SOY_1 + \delta_7 REG_1 + \delta_8 REG_2 + \delta_9 REG_3 + \delta_{10} REG_4 + \delta_{11} REG_5 + \delta_{12} RES_1 + \delta_{13} YED_1 + \delta_{14} YED_2 + \delta_{15} EPL_1 + \delta_{16} EPL_2 + \delta_{17} EPL_3 + \delta_{18} INC_1 + \delta_{19} INC_2 + \delta_{20} INC_3 + \delta_{21} HUB_1 + \delta_{22} FAM_1 + \delta_{23} C19_1 + \delta_{23} PEM_1 + \delta_{24} PEM_2 + \delta_{25} PEM_3 + \delta_{26} PEM_4 + \delta_{27} PEM_5 + \delta_{28} PEM_6 + \delta_{29} PEM_7 + \delta_{30} PEM_8 + \delta_{31} PEM_9 + \delta_{32} PEM_{10} \quad (3.9)$$

Where:

V_i : the outcome variable, which is each of the exposure factors.

β_0 : the intercept.

$\beta_1, \dots, \beta_{32}$: the odds ratios of labour force participation occurring.

Model 3 was set up to test the effect of the background factors that make it to the outcome, LFP, after adjusting for the exposure variables. This model is an expanded model 1, with the exposure

The explicit function of the relationship is given as:

$$Y = \vartheta_0 + \vartheta_1 AOY_1 + \vartheta_2 AOY_2 + \vartheta_3 AOY_3 + \vartheta_4 AOY_4 + \vartheta_5 AOY_5 + \vartheta_6 SOY_1 + \vartheta_7 REG_1 + \vartheta_8 REG_2 + \vartheta_9 REG_3 + \vartheta_{10} REG_4 + \vartheta_{11} REG_5 + \vartheta_{12} RES_1 + \vartheta_{13} YED_1 + \vartheta_{14} YED_2 + \vartheta_{15} EPL_1 + \vartheta_{16} EPL_2 + \vartheta_{17} EPL_3 + \vartheta_{18} INC_1 + \vartheta_{19} INC_2 + \vartheta_{20} INC_3 + \vartheta_{21} HUB_1 + \vartheta_{22} FAM_1 + \vartheta_{23} C19_1 + \vartheta_{23} PEM_1 + \delta_{24} PEM_2 + \delta_{25} PEM_3 + \delta_{26} PEM_4 + \delta_{27} PEM_5 + \delta_{28} PEM_6 + \delta_{29} PEM_7 + \delta_{30} PEM_8 + \vartheta_{31} PEM_9 + \vartheta_{32} PEM_{10} + \vartheta_{33} HSD_1 + \vartheta_{34} PSD_2 \quad (3.11)$$

Where:

Y : the outcome variable, labour force participation (LFP).

ϑ_0 : the intercept.

$\vartheta_1, \dots, \vartheta_{34}$: the odds ratios of labour force participation occurring.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the percentage distribution of respondents by background factors, exposure to skills development information and labour force participation. The results showed that 24.0 per cent of the youth who participated in the survey were 20 or less. Age distribution across the other categories include 21-23, 24-26, 27-29, 30-32 and 33-35 with 18.7 per cent, 15.9 per cent, 15.1 per cent, 13.3 per cent and 13.0 per cent, respectively. Fifty-two (52) per cent were males, and 47.2 per cent were females, respectively.

The survey showed that almost an equal number of youths from the north (49.8%) and southern (50.2%) regions of Nigeria participated in the study. Likewise, 46.7 per cent of the youth surveyed were from the semi-urban area, while 53.3 per cent were from urban centres. Furthermore, the survey results showed that a few (1.3 per cent) of the youth surveyed had no formal education. Almost an equal number of youth surveyed had secondary/primary/other equivalents (49.5 per cent), with those that reported having OND or higher (49.2 per cent). About 27.3 per cent of the respondents were unemployed, while those unemployed constituted 72.7 per cent. Those who are self-employed were 43.2 per cent. Notably, a larger proportion of the survey participants (35.8 per cent) reported earning less than N30,000.00 per month, Nigeria's minimum wage. Meanwhile, respondents who earned N30,000.00 – N49,999.99, N50,000.00-N79,999.99 and N80,000.00 and above were 29.4 per cent, 19.7 per cent, and 15.2 per cent, respectively.

Each exposure variable (factor) was a dependent variable in each regression equation expressed functionally as:

$$V_i = f(X) \quad (3.8)$$

The logistic form is stated as:

$$V_i = \text{Ln} \left(\frac{V_i}{1-V_i} \right) = \delta_0 + \delta_1 X_1 + \delta_2 X_2 + \dots + \delta_k X_k$$

variables added to the background variables. The relationship is stated implicitly as:

$$Y = f(X, Z) \quad (3.10)$$

The functional form is expressed as:

$Y =$

$f(AOY, SOY, REG, RES, YED, EPL, INC, PEM, HUB, FAM, C19, HSD, PSD)$

The logistic model form is:

$$Y = \text{Ln} \left(\frac{P_i}{1-P_i} \right) = \vartheta_0 + \vartheta_1 X_1 + \vartheta_2 X_2 + \dots + \vartheta_k X_k$$

About 73.1 per cent of the survey respondents had entrepreneurial family backgrounds. Conversely, as few as 28.5 per cent of respondents said entrepreneurial hubs/ecosystems exist in their locations. Following a similar trend with family background, 28.8 per cent said they were affected by unforeseen situations like the COVID-19 pandemic. An unforeseen situation that emerged during interviews with youth was the issue of cash scarcity that occurred in Nigeria at the time of fieldwork for the study.

Personal motivation (PM) is one of the background variables in this study. It is further categorised into ten variables, namely: keep myself in check (PM1), set goals, and achieve them (PM2), create a vivid vision of my future success (PM3), study my environment often (PM4), maximum effort and work harder if I suffer a setback (PM5), think positively about making sure my needs are met (PM6), use rewards to keep myself focused (PM7), sustain my belief (PM8), move in a new direction (PM9), do the minimum amount of work necessary (PM10). Survey participants were requested to measure the ten categories as 'never', 'sometimes' or 'always'. Nearly half (48 per cent) of the youth reported that they sometimes/always keep themselves in check to remain motivated in their entrepreneurial practice. Forty-nine and a half per cent said they set goals and achieve them. Similarly, 48.6 per cent noted that they are motivated by creating a vivid vision of their future success. Those who reported that they study their environment often, as well as others who make maximum efforts and work harder if they suffer a setback, were 49.1

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per cent apiece. Think positively about making sure my needs are met (PM6), use rewards to keep myself focused (PM7), sustain my belief (PM8), move in a new direction (PM9), do the minimum amount of work necessary (PM10) were 49.6 per cent, 47.3 per cent, 48.9 per cent, 46.2 per cent, and 44.6 per cent, respectively.

Also, a little below half (45.5 per cent) have heard of skills training/entrepreneurship development programmes. Similarly, 66.6

per cent of the respondents reported participating in skills training/entrepreneurship development programmes. Only 37 per cent of the respondents surveyed reported owning a business venture, while 38.1 per cent said that their business is successful (profitable). However, more than half (57.1 per cent) of the youth surveyed desire to have a startup in the future. A few respondents (25.3 per cent) have secured employment from their skill/entrepreneurship training.

Table 1: Percentage frequency distribution of background factors, exposure to skills development information and labour force participation

Variables	Freq.	Per cent	Variables	Freq.	Per cent	Variables	Freq.	Per cent
Age group			Entrepreneurial hub/ecosystem			Use rewards to keep myself focused		
20 or Less	575	24.0	No	1714	71.5	Never	1264	52.8
21-23	448	18.7	Yes	682	28.5	Sometimes	531	22.2
24-26	381	15.9	Unforeseen situations (e.g. COVID-19)			Always	601	25.1
27-29	361	15.1	No	1706	71.2	Sustain my belief		
30-32	319	13.3	Yes	690	28.8	Never	1224	51.1
33-35	312	13.0	Personal Motivation (PM)			Sometimes	309	12.9
Sex			Keep myself in check			Always	863	36.0
Male	1265	52.8	Never	1246	52.0	Move in a new direction		
Female	1131	47.2	Sometimes	493	20.6	Never	1289	53.8
Region			Always	657	27.4	Sometimes	511	21.3
Northern Nigeria	1193	49.8	Set goals, and achieve them			Always	596	24.9
Southern Nigeria	1203	50.2	Never	1211	50.5	Do the minimum amount of work necessary		
Residence			Sometimes	438	18.3	Never	1327	55.4
Semi-Urban	1120	46.7	Always	747	31.2	Sometimes	432	18.0
Urban	1276	53.3	Create a vivid vision of my future success			Always	637	26.6
Education			Never	1231	51.4	Heard of skills training /entrepreneurship devt prog		
None	31	1.3	Sometimes	391	16.3	No	1307	54.5
Secondary/Primary/Other equivalents	1185	49.5	Always	774	32.3	Yes	1089	45.5
OND or higher	1180	49.2	Study my environment often			Participated in skills training/entrep devt prog		
Employment Status			Never	1220	50.9	No	801	33.4
Unemployed	653	27.3	Sometimes	479	20.0	Yes	1595	66.6
Self-Employed	1035	43.2	Always	697	29.1	Own a business venture		
Employed (Priv Sector)	462	19.3	Maximum effort and work harder if I suffer a setback			No	1510	63.0
Employed (Pub Sector)	246	10.3	Never	1220	50.9	Yes	886	37.0
Income level			Sometimes	415	17.3	Business successful (profitability)		
Less than N30,000.00	858	35.8	Always	761	31.8	No	1482	61.9
N30,000.00-N49,999.00	704	29.4	Think positively about making sure my needs are met			Yes	914	38.1

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N50,000.00 to N79,999.00	471	19.7	Never	1207	50.4	Desire startup in the future		
N80,000.00 and above	363	15.2	Sometimes	398	16.6	No	1027	42.9
Entrepreneurial family background			Always	791	33.0	Yes	1369	57.1
No	645	26.9	Total	2396	100.0	Secured Employment		
Yes	1751	73.1				No	1789	74.7
Total	2396	100.0				Yes	607	25.3
						Total	2396	100.0

Multivariate results

In model 1 of Table 2, results showed that the odds of owning a business venture are significantly higher for youth aged 24-26 compared to the reference category (OR=1.56; CI=1.09, 2.22). Also, youth aged 27-29, 30-32, and 33-35 had significantly higher odds of owning a business venture compared to their counterpart in the reference category (OR=2.33; CI=1.62, 3.35), (OR=2.35; CI=1.61, 3.41), (OR=2.40; CI=1.64, 3.52), respectively. The odds of owning a business were higher for female youth compared to their male counterparts (OR=1.25; CI=1.02, 1.54).

Similarly, results showed that the odds of owning a business venture were significantly lower for respondents in southern Nigeria compared to the reference category (OR=0.60; CI=0.48, 0.75). Qualitative study results suggest that available resources in the area or state influence ownership of any form of youth business. Kano State has the highest number of startups among the youth, and most of the businesses the participants reported are agriculture-inclined.

On employment, results showed that the odds of owning a business venture were significantly higher for youth who are self-employed compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=2.97; CI=2.19, 4.03). Further, the results on income showed that the odds of owning a business venture are significantly higher for youth who earn ₦30,000-₦49,999.99 and ₦80,000.00 and above income per month compared to their counterpart in the reference category (OR=1.37; CI=1.04, 1.81) and (OR=1.77; CI=1.25, 2.51), respectively. In the same vein, the results showed that the odds of owning a business venture were significantly higher for youth with entrepreneurial family backgrounds compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=1.59; CI=1.23, 2.05).

Results from the interviews with representatives of training/funding institutions buttressed that entrepreneurial family background has a relationship with owning a business among the youth. The interviewees stated that family background contributes to owning a business. A representative of a training centre interviewed said:

“Some of our students are doing well in entrepreneurship practice. Some are traced to the fact that they already have a background in business in their families, so that is why we cannot lay claim to the totality of factors that contribute to some of our graduates doing well in the entrepreneurship space. Some of them are called upon to take over their parents’ businesses. We have trained, and we currently have some of them in our programmes who are at their tender age but are MDs of companies just because it’s their family business.”

Similarly, results showed that the odds of owing a business venture were significantly higher for youth who have experienced unforeseen situations like the COVID-19 pandemic or general cash scarcity that occurred in Nigeria during the field work for this study compared to the reference category (OR=5.86;

CI=4.66, 7.36). Likewise, results showed that the odds of owing a business venture were significantly higher for youth who have participated in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes (OR=1.54; CI=1.51, 2.05).

Representatives (funders, teachers, coaches, policymakers, and managers) of training centres and schools interviewed on the issue of exposure of youth to skills/entrepreneurship development noted that youth exposure by participation was significant for owning a business and that it cuts across different background factors. The response below by a representative from a training centre buttresses this result.

“adolescents and youths between the ages of 10 to 35 years, in and out of school, with or without disabilities, from wealthy and middle income, the haves and have-nots, and some have been reported to run their businesses.”

In model 2, the results show that the odds of building a successful business venture were significantly higher for youth aged 24-26 compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=1.50; CI=1.04, 2.17). Also, youth aged 27-29, 30-32, and 33-35 years had significantly higher odds of building a successful business venture compared to their counterpart in the reference category (OR=1.93; CI=1.33, 2.81), (OR=2.38; CI=1.61, 3.52), (OR=2.38; CI=1.60, 3.55), respectively. Contrarily, results showed that the odds of building a successful business venture were significantly lower for youth in the southern part of Nigeria compared to the reference category (OR=0.63; CI=0.50, 0.80). On employment, results showed that the odds of building a successful business were significantly higher for youth who are self-employed compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=3.09; CI=2.25, 4.24). Further, the results show that the odds of building a successful business venture are significantly higher for youth who earn ₦30,000-₦49,999.99, ₦50,000.00-₦79,999.99 and ₦80,000.00 and above per month compared to the reference category (OR=1.51; CI=1.13, 2.02), (OR=1.51; CI=1.09, 2.10) and (OR=1.58; CI=1.08, 2.23), respectively. Likewise, the results show that the odds of building a successful business venture were significantly higher for youth with entrepreneurial family backgrounds compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=1.90; CI=1.45, 2.48).

Similarly, the results show that the odds of building a successful business venture were significantly higher for youth who have experienced unforeseen situations like the COVID-19 pandemic as against those who have not (OR=8.06; CI=6.33, 10.27). Following the same pattern, the odds of building a successful business venture were significantly higher for youth who participated in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes than those who did not (OR=1.72; CI=1.28, 2.31). Results show that the odds of building a successful business venture were significantly higher for youth who are motivated by keeping themselves in check sometimes or always compared to those in the reference category (OR=1.99; CI=1.03, 3.86), (OR=2.24;

CI=1.17, 4.31). Results show that the odds of building a successful business venture were significantly higher for youth who keep themselves in check sometimes or always compared to the youth in the reference category (OR=2.24; CI=1.17, 4.31) or (OR=1.99; CI=1.08, 3.86). Also, results show that the odds of building a successful business venture were significantly lower for youth motivated by thinking positively about ensuring their needs are always met compared to the youth in the reference category (OR=0.40; CI=0.17, 0.89). From the qualitative survey, participants posit that motivation was critical to building a successful business. Participants revealed that the youth were mainly motivated by a combination of the desire for achievement and the intrinsic rewards expected to take care of themselves and their families. Comments during the focus group discussions buttress this view on motivation and building a successful business:

“I like designing and want to be independent and not work with the government. I want to see myself at the top.” Espousing the assertion, she further said: *“I decided to learn because I am in a state university, and the fees in state universities are quite expensive, and following the death of my dad, I felt I couldn't continue to be dependent on my uncles for every need, so I learnt making yoghurt (informally at my auntie's business area), and now I am doing business with it.”* (Female, 20, Lagos).

Results show that the odds of securing employment were significantly lower for youth who always use rewards to keep themselves focused compared to the youth in the reference category (OR=0.56; CI=0.34, 0.97). Lastly, results show that the odds of building a successful business venture were significantly lower for youth motivated by doing the minimum amount of work necessary compared to those in the reference category (OR=0.58; CI=0.35, 0.94).

In model 3, results show that the odds of desiring a startup in the future were significantly higher for youth aged 24-26, 27-29, 30-32 and 33-35 years compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=0.65; CI=0.48, 0.90), (OR=0.47; CI=0.33, 0.65), (OR=0.47; CI=0.33, 0.67), and (OR=0.44; CI=0.31, 0.63), respectively. Regionally, the results show that the odds of desiring a startup in the future were significantly higher among youth in the southern part of the country compared to the youth in the reference category (OR=2.84; CI=2.32, 3.48). The results of assessing education show that the odds of desiring a startup in the future were significantly higher for youth with secondary/primary/other equivalents compared to those in the reference category (OR 2.42; 1.04, 5.63). On employment, results showed that the odds of desiring a startup in the future were significantly lower for youth who are self-employed and employed in the public sector compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=0.36; CI=0.28, 0.48) and (OR=0.52; CI=0.36, 0.77). Further, the research results show that the odds of desiring a startup in the future were significantly higher for youth who reside in areas with entrepreneurship hubs/ecosystems compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=1.34; CI=1.03, 1.69). *Results from qualitative on the issue of entrepreneurship hub/ecosystem and its impact on the desire for startups indicate that most participants were unaware of the existence of entrepreneurship hubs in their locations or at least were unaware that several hubs exist. This occurred more among participants in the southwest region of Nigeria who were unaware of the youth business incubation hubs/ecosystems in Yaba and elsewhere in the state.* From the research results, the odds of desiring a startup in the future were significantly higher for respondents who have experienced unforeseen situations in their businesses

and have heard about skills/entrepreneurship programmes compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=0.33; CI=0.27, 0.41); and (OR=1.33; 1.01, 1.75), respectively. On the contrary, the results show that the odds of desiring a startup in the future were significantly lower for youth who have participated in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes compared to the youth in the reference category (OR=0.66; CI=0.50, 0.86).

In model 4, the results show that the odds of securing employment were profoundly significant for only youth aged 27-29 years compared to those within the reference category (OR=1.76; CI=1.20, 2.56). The results show that the odds of securing employment were significantly higher for youth with secondary/primary/other equivalents compared to those in the reference category (OR=5.56; CI=1.18, 26.33). On employment, results showed that the odds of securing employment were significantly higher for youth who are self-employed, employed in the private sector and employed in the public sector compared to their counterparts in the reference categories (OR=1.45; CI=1.03, 2.05), (OR=2.18; CI=1.48, 3.19), and (OR=2.48; CI=1.59, 3.86), respectively. On income, the results show that the odds of securing employment were significantly higher for N50,000-N79,999.99 per month and N80,000.00 and above compared to their counterpart in the reference category (OR=2.46; CI=1.66, 3.42), and (OR=1.76; CI=1.23, 2.54), respectively. Family background has a significant effect on securing employment among youth. The results show that the odds of securing employment were significantly higher for youth with entrepreneurial family backgrounds compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=1.67; CI=1.24, 2.21). Also, the results show that the odds of securing employment were significantly higher for youth who have experienced unforeseen situations like the COVID-19 pandemic as against their counterpart in the reference category (OR=2.39; CI=1.90, 3.01). Likewise, the results show that the odds of securing employment were significantly higher for youth who have participated in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes compared to their counterparts in the reference category (OR=1.77; CI=1.31, 2.39). On personal motivation, the results show that the odds of securing employment were significantly higher for respondents who are always motivated by sustaining their beliefs compared to the youth in the reference category (OR=2.07; CI=1.01, 4.23). Results of the study confirm the relationship between exposure to entrepreneurship information and youth labour force participation, which agrees with the result of Barrera and Villarreal (2021). Participating in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes is a critical success factor for owning a business, growing the business successfully, securing employment, knowledge about resources available, developing a business, organising a business venture, and running a business venture. However, some youth who have not participated in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes also have appreciable success in business ownership. Youth who have participated in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes repeatedly have become uninclined of desiring a startup in the future. Some of these youths have had the chance to participate more than once. The results show that they attended different vocations, which inadvertently denies others the opportunity to participate, limiting the chances for more labour force participation. As was found by Ubfal et al. (2022), soft and technical skills have been blended into training programmes, as witnessed during the survey. Still, beneficiaries' lack of freedom to choose their vocation has affected outcomes. The study results indicate that most ben-

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eficiaries participated in programmes through funding by parents, religious organisations, or donors/philanthropists to learn preconceived vocations that these benefactors can or are interested in financing per time.

The study results confirm that youth who have not participated in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes have not heard of them. In contrast, all those who participated confirmed that they had heard of the programmes through social media, television, religious places of worship, job centres and friends and family. Worthy of discussion is the dimension introduced in the FGD sessions where participants elaborated on the issue of ever heard of skills/entrepreneurship interventions organised for the youth. Results show that the youth have developed an attitude

towards entrepreneurship development programmes, especially those organised by the government. They believe that government interventions do not work as promised, so they do not take the trouble applying. The concept of 'ever heard' has been affected deeply by the youth's loss of trust in the system, such that they refuse to hear (give attention to) even when it is 'said.' The consequence is seen in their response of not being inclined to hear of skills/entrepreneurship development programmes, as the quantitative aspect has shown on the issue of 'ever heard'. Notwithstanding, results indicate that desiring a startup in the future was significantly higher for youth who have heard about skills/entrepreneurship programmes.

Table 2: Effects of background factors, and exposure to skills development information by Labour force participation

Variables	Own a business venture		Business successful		Desire startup in the future		Secured Employment	
	Model 1:		Model 2:		Model 3:		Model 4:	
	OR (95% CI)	Sig.	OR (95% CI)	Sig.	OR (95% CI)	Sig.	OR (95% CI)	Sig.
Age								
20 or less	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
21-23	1.07(0.75, 1.51)	.722	1.01(0.7, 1.45)	.964	0.98(0.72, 1.33)	.905	0.88(0.61, 1.28)	.504
24-26	1.56(1.09, 2.22)	.014	1.5(1.04, 2.17)	.029	0.65(0.48, 0.9)	.009	1.21(0.83, 1.77)	.317
27-29	2.33(1.62, 3.35)	.000	1.93(1.33, 2.81)	.001	0.47(0.33, 0.65)	.000	1.76(1.2, 2.56)	.004
30-32	2.35(1.61, 3.41)	.000	2.38(1.61, 3.52)	.000	0.47(0.33, 0.67)	.000	1.41(0.95, 2.09)	.088
33-35	2.4(1.64, 3.52)	.000	2.38(1.6, 3.55)	.000	0.44(0.31, 0.63)	.000	1.28(0.86, 1.92)	.225
Sex								
Male	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Female	1.25(1.02, 1.54)	.033	1.17(0.94, 1.45)	.158	0.93(0.77, 1.12)	.422	0.92(0.74, 1.14)	.423
Region								
Northern Nigeria	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Southern Nigeria	0.6(0.48, 0.75)	.000	0.63(0.5, 0.8)	.000	2.84(2.32, 3.48)	.000	1.05(0.83, 1.32)	.705
Residence								
Semi-Urban	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Urban	1.15(0.93, 1.42)	.212	0.99(0.8, 1.24)	.949	0.94(0.78, 1.15)	.564	0.94(0.75, 1.18)	.590
Education								
None	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Secondary/ Primary/ Other equivalents	0.64(0.27, 1.53)	.313	1.19(0.47, 3.02)	.716	2.42(1.04, 5.63)	.039	5.56(1.18, 26.33)	.030
OND or higher	0.73(0.3, 1.75)	.478	1.22(0.48, 3.11)	.674	2.23(0.95, 5.19)	.064	3.48(0.74, 16.49)	.116
Employment								
Unemployed	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Self-Employed	2.97(2.19, 4.03)	.000	3.09(2.25, 4.24)	.000	0.36(0.28, 0.48)	.000	1.45(1.03, 2.05)	.035
Employed (Priv Sector)	1.11(0.77, 1.58)	.587	1.31(0.9, 1.9)	.156	0.87(0.63, 1.2)	.401	2.18(1.48, 3.19)	.000
Employed (Pub Sector)	1.09(0.71, 1.67)	.709	1.28(0.82, 1.99)	.276	0.52(0.36, 0.77)	.001	2.48(1.59, 3.86)	.000
Income								
Less than N30,000.00	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
N30,000.00 to N49,999.99	1.37(1.04, 1.81)	.028	1.51(1.13, 2.02)	.005	0.98(0.75, 1.26)	.850	1.36(1, 1.84)	.052
N50,000.00 to N79,999.99	1.23(0.89, 1.69)	.209	1.51(1.09, 2.1)	.015	1.24(0.92, 1.68)	.155	2.46(1.77, 3.42)	.000
N80,000.00 and above	1.77(1.25, 2.51)	.001	1.55(1.08, 2.23)	.019	0.96(0.69, 1.33)	.806	1.76(1.23, 2.54)	.002
Entrepreneurial family background								
No	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	1.59(1.23, 2.05)	.000	1.9(1.45, 2.48)	.000	0.81(0.64, 1.01)	.065	1.66(1.24, 2.21)	.001
Entrepreneurial hub/ecosystem								

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No	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	0.9(0.69, 1.17)	.425	0.78(0.59, 1.03)	.075	1.32(1.03, 1.69)	.030	1.17(0.91, 1.5)	.233
Unforeseen situations (e.g. COVID-19)								
No	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	5.85(4.65, 7.36)	.000	8.06(6.33, 10.27)	.000	0.33(0.27, 0.41)	.000	2.39(1.9, 3.01)	.000
Heard of skills training /entrepreneurship devt prog								
No	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	0.91(0.68, 1.24)	.557	1.11(0.81, 1.51)	.524	1.33(1.01, 1.75)	.041	1.42(1, 2)	.048
Participated in skills training/entrep devt prog								
No	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	1.54(1.15, 2.06)	.004	1.72(1.28, 2.31)	.000	0.66(0.5, 0.86)	.003	1.77(1.31, 2.39)	.000
Personal Motivation								
Keep myself in check								
Never	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Sometimes	1.59(0.85, 2.96)	.144	2.25(1.17, 4.31)	.015	1.02(0.56, 1.84)	.953	1.16(0.62, 2.15)	.649
Always	1.86(0.99, 3.49)	.055	1.99(1.03, 3.86)	.041	0.98(0.54, 1.78)	.940	0.86(0.46, 1.61)	.642
Set goals and achieve them								
Never	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Sometimes	1.08(0.47, 2.51)	.858	0.98(0.41, 2.35)	.963	0.7(0.31, 1.58)	.385	1.35(0.59, 3.08)	.473
Always	1.13(0.48, 2.66)	.786	1.18(0.48, 2.87)	.717	0.73(0.32, 1.67)	.453	1.5(0.65, 3.45)	.338
Create a vivid vision of my future success								
Never	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Sometimes	1.25(0.61, 2.54)	.540	1.42(0.68, 2.95)	.350	0.79(0.4, 1.56)	.496	0.6(0.31, 1.19)	.146
Always	1.08(0.53, 2.2)	.844	1.42(0.68, 2.98)	.353	0.88(0.44, 1.75)	.710	0.66(0.33, 1.31)	.236
Study my environment often								
Never	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Sometimes	0.64(0.32, 1.27)	.200	0.89(0.44, 1.82)	.747	1.58(0.8, 3.15)	.191	1.16(0.57, 2.35)	.677
Always	0.49(0.24, 1)	.048	0.64(0.31, 1.33)	.232	1.9(0.94, 3.86)	.075	1.85(0.9, 3.82)	.094
Maximum effort and work harder if I suffer a setback								
Never	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Sometimes	1.41(0.71, 2.81)	.326	1.92(0.94, 3.92)	.074	0.79(0.4, 1.54)	.485	1.12(0.55, 2.28)	.754
Always	0.98(0.49, 1.97)	.960	1.78(0.86, 3.66)	.120	0.86(0.44, 1.68)	.653	0.98(0.48, 2.01)	.951
Think positively about making sure my needs are met								
Never	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Sometimes	0.71(0.32, 1.54)	.381	0.69(0.31, 1.55)	.373	1.13(0.54, 2.39)	.745	1.21(0.57, 2.57)	.617
Always	0.52(0.24, 1.15)	.104	0.4(0.17, 0.89)	.026	1.67(0.79, 3.56)	.182	0.8(0.37, 1.71)	.560
Use rewards to keep myself focused								
Never	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Sometimes	0.74(0.43, 1.29)	.293	0.95(0.54, 1.68)	.853	1.08(0.64, 1.8)	.785	0.73(0.43, 1.23)	.235
Always	0.71(0.41, 1.24)	.230	0.75(0.42, 1.32)	.314	1.24(0.74, 2.07)	.420	0.58(0.34, 0.97)	.039
Sustain my belief								
Never	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Sometimes	1.96(0.94, 4.07)	.073	1.32(0.61, 2.84)	.479	0.55(0.27, 1.1)	.090	2.01(0.97, 4.15)	.059
Always	1.65(0.81, 3.38)	.172	1.2(0.56, 2.54)	.640	0.77(0.39, 1.52)	.449	2.07(1.01, 4.22)	.046
Move in a new direction								
Never	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Sometimes	1.11(0.65, 1.91)	.698	0.83(0.47, 1.45)	.508	1.02(0.61, 1.71)	.932	1(0.59, 1.69)	.999
Always	1.68(0.98, 2.89)	.061	1.24(0.7, 2.18)	.463	0.71(0.42, 1.2)	.197	1.35(0.79, 2.28)	.273

Do the minimum amount of work

Never	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Sometimes	1.15(0.72, 1.84)	.554 0.79(0.49, 1.29)	.350 0.88(0.56, 1.37)	.558 0.71(0.45, 1.13) .146
Always	0.93(0.58, 1.48)	.747 0.58(0.35, 0.94)	.029 1.15(0.73, 1.8)	.546 0.92(0.58, 1.45) .714

Note: Level of Significance; $p \leq .1$, $p \leq .05$, $p \leq .01$, $p \leq .001$.

Model 1: dependent variable: own startup venture; Chi-square = 814.415, -2 Log likelihood = 2342.747^a, Nagelkerke R Square = .394.

Model 2: dependent variable: startup venture successful; Chi-square = 989.408, -2 Log likelihood = 2196.212^a, Nagelkerke R Square = .460.

Model 3: dependent variable: desire startup venture; Chi-square = 603.030, -2 Log likelihood = 2669.548^a, Nagelkerke R Square = .299

Model 4: dependent variable: secure employment; Chi-square = 537.062, -2 Log likelihood = 2175.084^a, Nagelkerke R Square = .296

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined determinants of youth skills/entrepreneurship development and labour force participation in Nigeria. Findings from a mixed method approach showed that several factors, including age, region, income, and family background, determine youth labour force participation and the realisation of SDGs 4 and 8 for Nigeria. Youth acquired skills/entrepreneurial abilities through formal or informal training in soft and technical skills. Similarly, exposure to skills/entrepreneurship information significantly relates to labour force participation.

This study's findings suggest that exposure to skills/entrepreneurship development information is critical for youth labour force participation. Exposure impacted participation by over three times; hence, a strong policy recommendation would be that policymakers should increase efforts at setting up platforms and systems that will provide credible information on skills/entrepreneurship programmes and their benefits to individuals and the country. Region of residence and self-employed persons are essential background factors determining youth exposure to skills/entrepreneurship information. So, government enlightenment programmes should engage youths in all the country's regions through its agencies to ensure inclusion in disseminating information on skills/entrepreneurship development programmes.

Conflict of Interest

The authors state no conflict of interest exists.

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