

**YOUTH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND  
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA**

**NWOGU FRED**

**(18PAE01768)**

**B.Sc Business Administration, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt**

**MBA Finance, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt**

**MSc Demography and Social Statistics, Covenant University, Ota**

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**B.Sc Business Administration, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt  
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MENTS FOR THE AWARD OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D) IN  
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MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, COVENANT UNIVERSITY,  
OTA, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

**JULY, 2024**

## **DECLARATION**

**I, NWOGU FRED (18PAE01768)** declare that this research was carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Muyiwa Oladosun and Prof. Emmanuel O. Amoo of Demography and Social Statistics Programme, Department of Economics and Development Studies, College of Management and Social Sciences, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria. I attest that the Ph.D thesis has not been presented either wholly or partially elsewhere. All sources of data and scholarly information used in this Thesis are duly acknowledged.

**NWOGU FRED**

**Signature and Date**

## **CERTIFICATION**

We certify that this Thesis titled "**YOUTH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA**" is an original research work carried out by **NWOGU FRED** (18PAE01768) of Demography and Social Statistics, in the Department of Economics and Development Studies, College of Management and Social Sciences, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria. We have examined and found this work acceptable as part of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Demography and Social Statistics.

**Dr. Muyiwa Oladosun**  
(Supervisor)

**Signature and Date**

**Prof. Emmanuel O. Amoo**  
(Co-Supervisor)

**Signature and Date**

**Prof. Oluwatoyin A. Matthew**  
(Head of Department)

**Signature and Date**

**Prof. Solanke L. Bola**  
(External Examiner)

**Signature and Date**

**Prof. Akan B. Williams**  
(Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies)

**Signature and Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This Thesis is dedicated to my younger children, Shalom and Zoe, for their sacrifices during this programme.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
AMC	Abuja Metropolitan Council
AU	African Union
AYC	African Youth Charter
AYEEN	Africa's Young Entrepreneurs Empowerment Nigeria
BOI	Bank of Industry
CAYE	Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CDA	Community Development Association
CDC	Community Development Committee
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
EBI	Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index
EE	Entrepreneurial education
EFInA	Enhancing Financial Innovation and Access
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
FMSYD	Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEI	Global Entrepreneurship Index
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
GERA	Global Entrepreneurship Research Association
GIS	Graduate Internship Scheme
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications
GYE	Global Youth Entrepreneurship
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IE	Indigenous Entrepreneurship
IEI	Innovation Enterprise Institutions
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
JAMB	Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board
KII	Key Informant Interview
LASTVEB	Lagos State Technical and Vocational Education Board
LCCI	Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry
LGA	Local Government Area
LGC	Local Government Council
LIC	Lagos Island Connect Initiative
LIFE	Livelihood Improvement Family Enterprise programme
LSETF	Lagos State Employment Trust Fund
MDYE	Malabo Decision on Youth Empowerment
MMC	Maiduguri Metropolitan Council
MSME	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
NAFDAC	National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control
NASMSE	Nigerian Association of Small and Medium-Scale Entrepreneurs

NBC	National Bureau of Statistics
NBTE	National Board for Technical Education
NCCE	National Commission for Colleges of Education
NDE	National Directorate of Employment)
NEET	not in employment, education or training
NERDC	Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NIDB	Nigeria Industrial Development Bank
NOAS	National Open Apprenticeship Scheme
NPE	National Policy on Education
NUC	National Universities Commission
NYC	National Youth Council
NYP	National Youth Policy
NYSC	National Youth Service Corp
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development
PHC	Port Harcourt City
PRB	Population Reference Bureau
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
PWSEY	Productive Workforce and Sustainable Economic Engagement of Youth
P-YES	The Presidential Youth Empowerment Scheme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Media Enterprises
SMEDAN	Small and Medium Development Agency of Nigeria
SSA	sub-Saharan Africa
TEA	Total Entrepreneurial Activity
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNYO	United Nations Youth Office
VEI	Vocational Enterprise Institutions
WBGES	World Bank Global Entrepreneurship Survey
WCEFA	World Conference on Education For All
WPAY	World Programme of Action for Youth
WYR	World Youth Report
YBI	Youth Business International
YCAD	Youth in Commercial Agriculture Development Program
YDPA	Youth Decade Plan of Action
YEAP	Youth Employment in Agriculture Programme
YESP	Youth Entrepreneur Support Program
YEN	Youth Employment Network
YEN	Youth Empowerment Nigeria
YFF	Youth Futures Foundation
FGUYS	Fadama Graduate Unemployed Youths and Women Support Programme
YIA	Youth In Agriculture
YISA	Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria
YOUWIN	Youth Enterprise With Innovation In Nigeria



## ABSTRACT

Youth participation in the labour force is essential for continued economic development. Nigerian youths face challenges in transitioning fully to the labour force, and this has led to limited progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, *promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*, as of 2023. Entrepreneurship training programmes are offered to youth in Nigeria to improve their participation in the labour force, but has the strategy translated to business ownership and gainful employment? The study assessed the skills and entrepreneurship interventions to better understand Nigeria's youth labour force participation (LFP). It gave insights into how LFP can be improved to increase the country's demographic dividend. The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative research designs. A structured questionnaire was administered in the quantitative segment to obtain information from 2,396 male and female youth aged 15-35 following a multistage sampling procedure. The qualitative component featured 12 key informant interviews and 12 focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analysed using univariate, bivariate, and multivariate logistic regression statistical techniques using IBM SPSS 25. Qualitative data analysis was done mainly using content analysis. Findings showed that age had a direct positive effect on LFP (OR=2.16; CI=1.49, 3.13). Owning a business venture is enhanced by the youth's entrepreneurial family background (OR=1.35; CI=1.03, 1.75). Unforeseen situations like the cash crunch affected youth entrepreneurs adversely. Participation in skills/entrepreneurship development programmes has an indirect relationship with LFP (OR=1.54; CI=1.51, 2.05). Exposure to entrepreneurship information to skills/entrepreneurship development programmes is a critical success factor for LFP. Youth who knew about the resources available in their environment desired future startup businesses (OR=1.63; CI=1.29, 2.07). Successful youth-owned business ventures were those with knowledge of organising and running a business (OR=1.71; CI=1.14, 2.57). Results further show that acquiring skills/entrepreneurial abilities is necessary to own a business (OR=1.52; CI=1.08, 2.14) but insufficient to grow a successful venture and create the employment needed to impact the youth labour force. The study recommends that the federal government of Nigeria should support setting up ecosystems where the benefits of skills/entrepreneurship will be disseminated. The government should engage youth entrepreneurs before developing policies drastically affecting their businesses, such as the cash withdrawal limits and currency change policies suddenly imposed by the Central Bank of Nigeria. The government and training institutions should set up functional hubs/ecosystems/garages to increase LFP. Such centres should give seed funds for innovations and startups, and those at the scale-up stage should be supported with grants. Existing youth businesses that require financing should attract concessionary rates on loans and working capital.

**Keywords:** *Demographic dividend, entrepreneurship, labour force participation, skills, youth.*