

средние значения студенты показали по шкале альтруистических эмоций. По шкалам экзистенциальной ответственности, интуиции в морально-этической сфере и морально-этических ценностей средние значения находятся в среднем диапазоне. Наиболее низкие средние значения студенты продемонстрировали по шкале рефлексии на морально-этические ситуации. Подтверждением данных результатов служат также устные опросы будущих инженеров, которые свидетельствуют о большом интересе студентов к материальным благам, материальным ценностям и недооценке роли духовных, нравственных ценностей в развитии личности и общества. Очевидно, что полученные результаты указывают на необходимость привлечения внимания к данной проблеме и организации мероприятий, позволяющих сформировать более высокий уровень духовно-нравственных качеств.

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**Summary.** The article is devoted to the study of the problem of moral and ethical responsibility of future engineers. As a result of the conducted research, the average level of moral and ethical responsibility has been revealed. The reflection scales' average values on moral and ethical situations, moral and ethical values, intuition in the moral and ethical sphere, existential responsibility, and altruistic emotions are defined in the range from 1.67 to 2.89 points (5 points maximum). The obtained data indicate the need to organize events to form a higher level of spiritual and moral qualities.

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### **BUSINESS EDUCATION: A VERITABLE TOOL FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT FOR JOB-CREATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION. [A SURVEY OF SOKOTO METROPOLIS]**

**Abstract.** This study was aimed at exploring the potentials of business education as a strategic planning in combating youth unemployment challenges to job-creation and poverty reduction, with a focus on Sokoto-Metropolis, sokoto state, Nigeria. It was premised on three research objectives and corresponding three research questions, employing a survey research design approach. The target population comprised 150 young people, 30 lecturers, and 20 entrepreneurs in Sokoto-Metropolis. All the population of 200 was used as participants through a structured survey involving young

individuals' educators, and entrepreneurs who have benefitted from business education programmes, data were collected and analyzed to determine the impact of business educative issues on youth empowerment. The findings revealed that while business education significantly and entrepreneurial skills, financial literacy, and self-reliance, practical application of learnt knowledge and competences of the curriculum exhibit that gaps exist. Additionally, alignment with the demands of the contemporary business environment is noted as an area sending improvement. Based on these findings, it was recommended for expanded access to business education, particularly in underserved areas, and advocates for stronger support system such as incubation centers and funding initiatives, to support young entrepreneurs. Enhanced collaborations between educational institutions and the private sector are suggested as bridge the gap between theoretical training and real-world application ultimate maximizing the potential of business education to mitigate youth unemployment and poverty reduction.

**Keywords:** Business Education, Youth Empowerment, Job-creation, Poverty-Reduction

**Introduction.** In an increasingly complex, and competitive global economy, unemployment and poverty remain pressing challenges, particularly among the youth. Unemployment is a key economic Indicator because it signals the ability or otherwise of workers to obtain gainful work and productively contribute to the output of the economy. Business education has emerged as a pivotal tool for addressing these issues by equipping young individuals with the skills, knowledge and competence necessary to thrive in the workforce and create their own economic opportunities. Business education offers its recipients an opportunity to develop abilities, skills and understanding of vocational opportunities available.

**Statement of the Problem.** Youth unemployment and poverty-reduction are critical challenges in Sokoto-Metropolis of Sokoto State, Nigeria, hindering economic development and contributing to social instability. Despite various interventions programmes, a significant proportion of the youthful population remains jobless, with limited access to resources and opportunities to improve their socio-economic statuses. This situation perpetuates a cycle of poverty, reducing the overall quality of life and fuelling discontent and restiveness among the youth. Business education is increasingly recognized as a viable strategy for empowering young people with the skills and knowledge needed to create and sustain their own enterprises. By equipping the youth with entrepreneurial skills, business education can foster self-reliance, creation of job opportunities through innovation, creativity and also.

**Research Questions.** In line with the objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised to give direction to the study:

1. To what extent does business education equip young people with skills, knowledge and competences for self-reliance in Sokoto State?
2. How effective are existing business education initiatives as crucial tode in meeting the needs and aspirations of the youth in Sokoto State?

3. What are the challenges faced by both donators and students in implementation of skills acquisition from business education programme in Sokoto State?

**Methodology.** The study adopted a survey research design. This design allowed for collection of data from a sample of the target population in Sokoto-Metropolis to assess their views on the effect of business education on employment creation and poverty alleviation.

The population consisted of the youth between the ages of 18 and 35 in Sokoto-Metropolis numbering 150, lecturers and instructors involved in business education programs numbering 30 and local entrepreneurs who have benefited from business education initiatives numbering 20 giving a total of 200 members of the study population.

200 participants consisting of 150 young people both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of business education programmers, 30 lecturers from local institutions offering business education programmers and 20 local entrepreneurs who have completed business education programs. The study was therefore a census survey. The population was considered manageable but large enough to reduce sampling error and allow for generalization of findings while yet manageable in terms of data collection.

The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire which was administered to the young people and educators. The questionnaire was closed-ended items to capture quantitative data on the extent of agreement or otherwise about the impact of business education on employment and poverty alleviation. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with local entrepreneurs who have benefited from business education programs. These interviews were aimed at gathering in-depth insights into how business education has directly influenced their entrepreneurial activities and economic empowerment. All participants were briefed on the purpose of the study and consents obtained before administering the questionnaire of conducting the interviews.

**Data Presentation and Analyses.** Data elicited by the study were given a tabular presentation and simple percentages calculated to address the questions raised for the study.

**Table 1** shows the extent to which business education has equipped young people with their competencies to be self-reliant. As regards business education having improved entrepreneurial skills of the youth, 91% agreed. With regard to being empowered to start own businesses after undergoing business education and training, 92% of the youth respondents were in agreement. With respect to business education being key to reducing youth unemployment, 93% were in agreement. In relation to business education helping young people to understand financial management better than they had known, 97% agreed that they were well-informed about management of finances after undergoing training in business education programmes.

**Table 2** shows effectiveness of existing business education Initiatives in meeting the needs and aspirations of the youth in Sokoto-Metropolis. In respect of business education adequately preparing young trainees for the workforce 60% was in agreement. With regard to more practical approaches being required in the training of business education, 97% indicated agreement.

**Table 3** indicates responses of entrepreneurs in respect of challenges posed to trainers and trainees in skill acquisition of business education programmers. In respect of trainee's sniggling with applying what they've learnt in actual business scenarios, 90% were in agreement. With regard to relevance of skills acquired falling short of requirements of current business environment, 85% were in agreement.

**Discussion of Findings.** Responses regarding extent to which business education equips young people with skill and competences for self-reliance indicate a strong consensus that business education significantly enhances entrepreneurial skills, empowers individuals for self-employment aids in reducing youth unemployment, and improves knowledge of financial management. This study is in line with Wardana *et al.* (2020) who found out that entrepreneurial education not only equips individuals with the knowledge to identify business opportunities but also fosters a proactive attitude towards entrepreneurship. This mindset is associated with the skills necessary to start and sustain businesses, thus empowering young people for self-employment and economic independence.

Responses of lecturers in respect of effectiveness of existing business education initiatives in meeting the needs of the youth, there was agreement to effectiveness of business education in preparing the youth for employment, and hence empowerment. Regarding the need for more practical approaches in the training of the youth for empowerment, there was strong agreement that practical hands-on approaches are required to improve the relevance and impact of current business education initiatives. This is corroborated by Sagagi, (2010) Handayati *et al.* (2020) who reported that many graduates struggle to translate classroom-acquired skills into actionable business competencies. The Nigerian example further that these assertions, as reported indicate that despite great aides in entrepreneurship

**Conclusion.** This study underscores the vital role that business education plays in addressing youth unemployment and poverty, particularly in: Sokoto-South Local Government Area. The findings revealed that business education significantly equips young people with entrepreneurial skills, fosters self-reliance and enhances financial management knowledge, making it a crucial tool for economic empowerment.

The study has also shown that while business education has proven effective in preparing young people for entrepreneurship and employment, there is a strong need for more practical, hands-on approaches to adequately meet the aspirations of the youth, as the relevance of skills acquired falls short of evolving market demands of the business world.

The study also observed that trainees cannot easily be absorbed into entrepreneurial ventures without further training as the skills and competencies acquired require refresher training to make them employable

**Recommendations.** From the discussion of findings and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. The government is urged to expand access to business education programmed. Especially in underserved areas, as a way of promoting than as tools for combating youth unemployment. Collaborating with private sector stakeholders to increase funding and provision of required resources for such programmed would be an initiative in the right direction.

2. Educational institutions are encouraged to ensure regular review and update of business education curriculum to ensure it gets aligned with requirements of the evolving business landscape and the needs of learners, thereby ensuring relevance and applicability.

3. The government is implored to offer additional support for new entrepreneurs, such as start-up incubation centers, business grants and advisory services to help transform their business ideas into reality and promote self-reliance and self-sufficiency

4. Educational institutions are enjoined to build stronger partnership relationships with businesses to offer more practical, hands-on entrepreneurial experiences, internships and mentorship programmed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application.

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