

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUTHS' INFORMATION SOURCES AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT STATUS IN ZAMFARA STATE, NIGERIA

By

Gadanga, Aliyu Tsafe PhD  
Chukwuji, Charles Nwabueze  
and  
Bello, Jamilu

### Abstract

This study was aimed at establishing the relationship between information sources for the youths in Zamfara State and their empowerment status. The descriptive survey design was used with a questionnaire as the instrument of data collection. The population of the study consisted of youths in Zamfara State, Nigeria from fourteen local government areas. A purposive sampling technique was used to select three accessible Local Government Areas because of the prevailing insecurity situation in the state. A total of 1,144 copies of questionnaires were administered using 8 trained Research Assistants. Out of the total number of questionnaires, 1,122 were returned and found usable, giving a response rate of 98%. The data collected was analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation as well as Frequencies, and Percentages. One alternate hypothesis was tested using chi-square. SPSS (version 20) was used for all computations. The study revealed that the major sources of information for youths in Zamfara State are the Radio, Tv and the internet, while unemployment was found to be high. The study concluded that Government at all levels should establish more functional ICT hubs/internet facilities within the Local Government Areas to avail youths access to the internet for more and improved access to information.

**Keywords:** Youths, Information sources, Youth empowerment, Zamfara State, Relationship

### Introduction

In as much as information is a vital tool for advancement in life, its usefulness should be measured by its source. The source of every piece of information is therefore very important because it is with the right information that one can make the right decisions. This is in line with the position of Abba and Adamu (2019) that every bit of information exists for a purpose, hence, it can be factored into the course of production, direct the course for action, and stands as a tool for decision – making. Information is a priced commodity in today's world because the world of today is driven by knowledge. This knowledge is conveyed as information and it comes in

various forms and categories like print (published documents, books etc, non-print (audio/visual, electronics, speech etc.

Youth as active members of the workforce, information that will aid their quest for gainful empowerment should be made available to them through the right sources otherwise they would be at the mercy of fake news carriers and scammers and consequently remain without meaningful engagement.

Generally, youths need information on education, skill acquisition, entrepreneurial skills, job opportunities, Curriculum vitae writing/interview tips, and information on how to source capital for start-ups among others etc. According to Awojun, (2011), information sources are the various means by which information is recorded for use by an individual or an organization which could either be a website or a book. Information sources go beyond these, for example, the radio, television, NGOs, Government agencies, newspapers/magazines, relatives, worship centres, Banks, Associations etc. as information needs are varied so are sources also. The sources where they can get authentic information on these are very important. Broadly, there are three types of information sources namely: primary, secondary and tertiary sources of information.

Youth empowerment is in two ways, namely being gainfully employed by either the government or private organization and two, being self-employed, that is establishing his/her own business or industry. To a large extent information sources play a major role in determining the category one belongs to. According to Ibrahim (2010), successive Nigerian governments have put in place various empowerment programmes for the youths, prominent among them are, Olusegun Obasanjo's, 1979-Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Shehu Shagari's 1979-1983 – The Green Revolution, Ibrahim Babangida's 1985-1993 – Peoples Bank, Community Banks,

Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI), Nigerian Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) and Nigerian Directorate of Employment (NDE), Gen. Abacha's 1993-1998, Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), Olusegun Obasanjo's 1999-2007 – National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS), Social Welfare Service Scheme (SOWES) and National Resource Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS), Umaru Ya'Adua's 2007-2009-Amnesty Programme for Niger Delta. Others are Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's 2009-2015, YouWin, SURE-P (Akande, 2014), as well as the present President Buhari's Npower, Farmer Moni, Trader Moni, Market Moni, DYNG, GIS, YES-P etc.

According to Chukwuji, Tsafe, Sayudi, Yusuf, and Zakariya, (2018) Zamfara State with an area of 39, 762 square kilometres was one of the six new states created by the then Head of State, Gen. Sani Abacha on October 1, 1996. Zamfara State has its capital at Gusau carved out from the old Sokoto. It has Fourteen Local Government Areas. Zamfara is home to the Hausa, Fulanis with some other Nigerian tribes residing in it, and with Islam as the predominant religion. Zamfara State is bordered in the north by Niger Republic, to the south by Kaduna State, while Katsina is in the east, and Sokoto and Niger States are in the west (Okeke, 2014). According to National Population Commission (NPC), (2006), Zamfara State has a total population of Three Million, two hundred and seventy-eight thousand, eight hundred and seventy-three (3,278,873) and a Youth population of Eight Hundred and Fifty Thousand Three Hundred and Forty-nine (854, 349). Zamfara State has a high youth unemployment rate of 41.73% (Sasu, 2022). It is in view of these that this study was aimed at establishing the

relationship between information sources for the youths in Zamfara State and their empowerment status.

### **Statement of problem**

Information has turned the world into a knowledge economy and has remained the game changer between the haves-and-have-nots. In essence, the man with the right information makes the right decision(s). Therefore, being empowered or not is a function of not only the availability of the right information (on education, job adverts/interviews, skill acquisition news etc) but also the sources. This will help eliminate the chances of youths falling into the hands of fraudsters. Fake news and scammers feed on victims' ignorance and youth constitute a greater percentage of the active workforce of our population and therefore most vulnerable.

Zamfara State is among the top three states in Nigeria with the highest rate of unemployment which is put at 41.73%. These figures are not a good explanation for all the efforts being made towards empowering the youth both in Zamfara and Nigeria at large.

The implication of this situation is the attendant consequences of poverty and crime and other vices like the way and manner our youths roam the streets of this country, engaging in kidnapping for ransom, cattle rustling, banditry, political thuggery substance abuse etc resulting also in a high rate of mental deranged Nigerian youths put at 85% (Ibrahim, 2018). All these are evident in Nigeria and Zamfara State and seem to suggest that a large percentage of our youths despite abundant information/knowledge that they can access and utilize for their meaningful engagement and empowerment are still not meaningfully engaged, this is worrisome.

Of great concern, there seems to be a dearth of literature on youths' information sources and their empowerment status. This study, therefore, intends to bridge that gap by examining the

relationship between the Youths' Information Sources and Youth Empowerment Status in Zamfara state, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To determine the information sources of Youths in Zamfara for their empowerment
2. To find out the empowerment status of Youths in Zamfara State

### **Hypothesis**

**Ho:** There is a significant relationship between information sources and youth empowerment status of youths in Zamfara

### **Literature Review**

According to Osawuru (2021), youth has no universally accepted definition, perhaps because of its heterogeneous nature but can be defined traditionally as a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. The Nigerian Youth Policy agrees that “youth are not a homogeneous group in terms of needs and circumstances.” For this study, the definition of the Nigerian Youth Policy suffices. Nigerian Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development (2019) in the Nigerian Youth Policy document, define youth as, persons between the ages of 15 – 29 years.

According to the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development (2019), the extent of youths' responsible conduct, vitality and roles in society has a positive correlation with the development of the country. They will become productive especially in small-scale industries and other skills thereby contributing to our Gross National Product (GDP) and per capita income if availed with the right information and support to the point of establishment. Because of the important nature and dynamism of information in society, there exist various sources of information thereby posing some problems of authenticity and reliability. Buttressing this, Abba

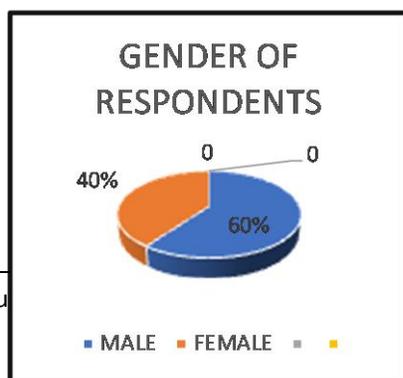
and Adamu (2019) stated that as the continuous development of new formats is taking place, the reliability of information is often hard to assess. Youths need reliable sources of information or help on how to evaluate or verify sources; hence information literacy skills are needed by the youth. Similarly, the European Youth Information and Counseling Agency (ERYICA) cited (in Abba and Adamu) describes sources of youth information as a field that is continuously changing. Corroborating this, Abba and Adamu (2019), in their mixed method study, posited that the rapidity at which information changes and updates gives room for thousands of sources and channels to emerge.

The findings of Abba and Adamu (2019), reveal that government information agencies, community custodians, television, radio, and public lectures are all sources of information for the youth but social media, youth hubs, family and peer–group friends are their major information sources. However, their findings, generally show dissatisfaction on the utilization of the information sources. Igwe and Onah (2013) in their study discovered that the youth Corps members’ main source of information is the internet. This is quite expected as the youth are known to be ICT savvy, hence, active players in the global village in which ICT and information have turned the world into.

## Results and Discussion

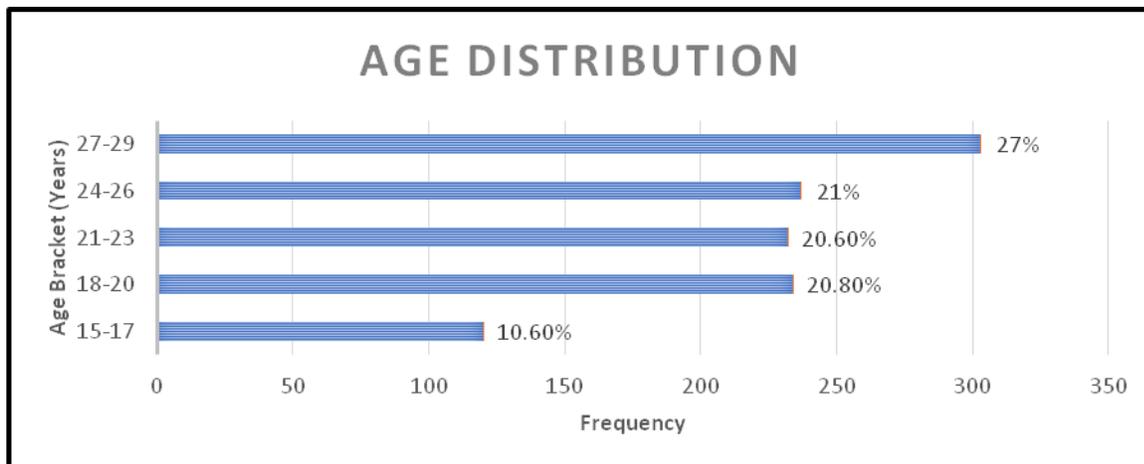
### Demographic data of the respondents

Figure 1: Gender



The above Chart shows that out of the 1122 respondents, 677 were males constituting 60% of the entire population while 445 (40%) were females. The result showed that there are more males youths than females in Zamfara State

**Figure 2:** Age Distribution of the Respondents



**Figure 2** indicates the age distribution of the respondents. It shows that youths in the oldest age bracket of 27-29 years are more in number than those of other age brackets having 303 (27%), followed by 24-26 age bracket with 237 (21%) while the first and the youngest age bracket of 15-17 with 120 (10.6%) have the lowest frequency.

**Figure 3:** Educational Qualifications

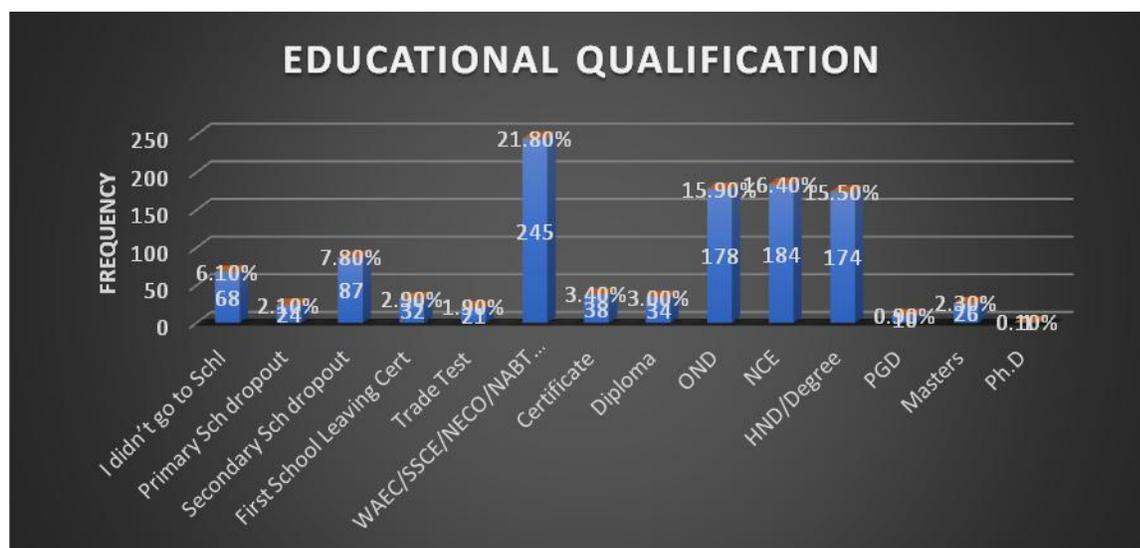


Diagram 3 above presents data on the educational qualifications of the respondents. The respondents were asked to select their highest qualification. The result shows that the majority of the respondents had only WAEC/SSCE/NECO/NABTEB with 245 (21.8%). This high number could be because the Zamfara State Government do pay the examination fee for the students, hence it is at no cost to them. Those with National Certificate on Education (NCE) followed with 184 (16.4%), Ordinary National Diploma (OND) 178 (15.9%) and Higher National Diploma (HND) & First Degree 174 (15.5%). This report shows that they are low on the Middle and Higher Manpower educational levels that would have guaranteed them good employment and pulled them out of poverty. Only one respondent has PhD 1 (.1%).

**Research Question 1:** What are the information Sources used by the youth of the study area for empowerment?

**Table 1:** Mean score of One Sample Statistics for the sources of information used by the youth

S/N	Sources of Information needs	Mean	STD	Decision
1	Schools/Fliers/Posters/Banners/Signposts etc	4.12	1.086	Accepted
2	Motivational/inspirational talks & materials	4.08	.928	Accepted
3	Libraries/information centres	4.07	.938	Accepted
4	Newspapers/magazines	4.10	.935	Accepted
5	Government Ministries/Agencies (NDE, Bank of Industry, etc)	4.00	1.035	Accepted
6	The internet/ social media, Web sites	4.17	.950	Accepted

7	ICT Training Centers/Cyber café	4.14	.972	Accepted
8	Radio	4.29	.834	Accepted
9	Tv	4.17	.982	Accepted
10	Conference/workshops/seminars	4.10	.988	Accepted
11	Skills acquisition centres	4.00	1.079	Accepted
12	Relevant NGOs	3.97	1.152	Rejected
13	Ward leaders	4.12	.956	Accepted
14	Relatives	4.11	.898	Accepted
15	Friends	4.07	.998	Accepted
16	Commercial Banks	3.83	1.078	Rejected
17	Associations like SMEDAN etc	3.90	1.074	Rejected
18	Worship Centers	3.95	1.074	Rejected
19	Hospitals	4.03	1.122	Accepted
20	Youth hubs (football fields, relaxation spots etc.)	4.03	1.077	Accepted
22	Do you agree that youths' sources of information determine youth empowerment status?	4.07	1.015	Accepted

Key: SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Table 1 shows the results on information sources of Nigerian youths in Zamfara. The table reveals that Radio has the highest mean score of 4.29, internet/social media, Web sites have a mean score of 4.17, Television (Tv) 4.17, ICT Training Centers/Cybercafé has 4.14, and Schools/fliers/posters/banners/signboards 4.12. The result also showed that Commercial banks with 3.83 have the least mean score, others are Associations like SMEDAN etc 3.90, and Worship centres 3.90.

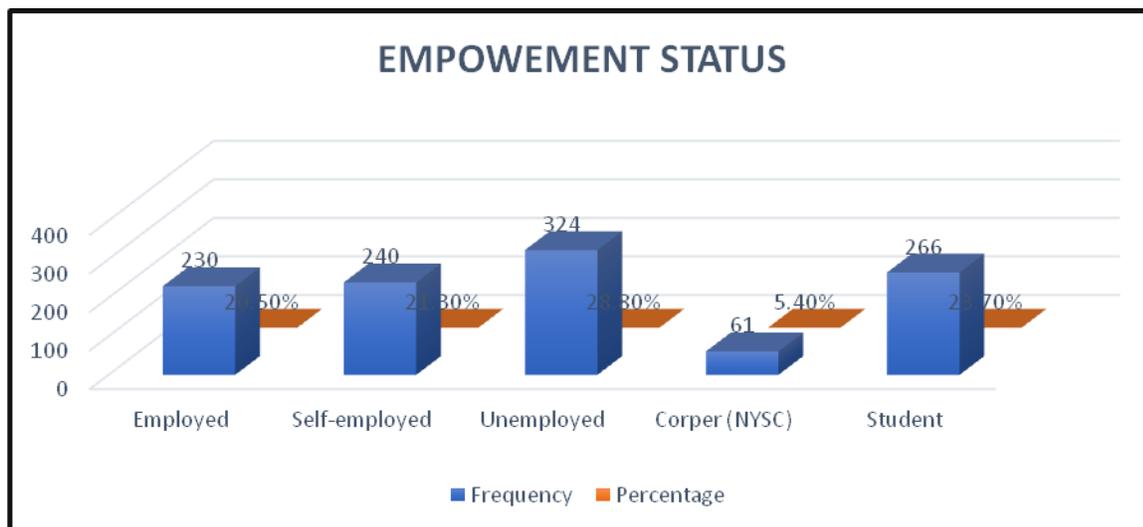
Various sources of information carry information that can empower the youths but there is a need to use authentic sources, given the prevalence of fake news and scammers. Findings on information sources of Nigerian youths in Zamfara State reveal that Radio is the major source of information for youths in Zamfara. This is a common feature among the indigenes in that part of the country as they (both old and young) are always seen holding small transistor radios. However, the result is surprising seeing that the youths still rely so much on the radio in this 21<sup>st</sup>

century. The finding contradicts that of Abba and Adamu (2019) who discovered that radio is not the major source of information for the Gwale youth of Kano State but constitutes other sources alongside television.

Further finding here shows that the internet/social media, Web sites, ICT Training Centers/Cybercafé are other sources of information for the youth. This is surprising also, going by the claim that our youths are ICT savvy. One would have expected that ICT facilities would be their major sources of information in this 21<sup>st</sup> century when the internet and its facilities (websites, social media platforms etc) host millions and millions of information just a click away. Again, this finding contradicts the results of Abba and Adamu (2019) and Igwe and Onah (2013) who Studied National Youth Corps members information sources for jobs and found that social media and the Internet respectively are their major sources of information.

**Research Question 2:** What is the empowerment status of Youths in Zamfara State?

**Figure 4:** Empowerment Status Distribution of the Respondents



The above chart presents the results of the empowerment status of youths in Zamfara State. The findings revealed that out of the 1122 youths that were surveyed, 324(28.8%) representing the

highest percentage are Unemployed, followed by Students 266 (23.7%). It further revealed that 240 (21%) respondents are self-employed while 230 (20.5%) are employed. The least respondents are Youth Corps members with 61 (5.4%).

From the study, it was revealed that there is a high unemployment rate among youths in Zamfara State. Perhaps, this could be explained by the high rate of low educational qualification (WAEC/NECO etc) over the middle and high-level manpower (OND, HND/First Degree, Master and PhD) that could guarantee them high and better empowerment and reduce the rate of unemployment and poverty in the state. This finding is in line with the study of Sasu, (2022) on the unemployment rate in Nigeria by states, that Zamfara State is among the top three Nigerian states with a high rate of unemployment.

However, as earlier noted, youth empowerment is in two ways, namely being “gainfully employed” (government or private organization or self-employed or Corps member-though just a year programme) and two, “unemployment”. So, it's either you are employed or you are unemployed. In light of this, the cumulative result of “employed” in diagram 4 above indicates that a higher number of the respondents 531 (47.3%) are empowered against 324 (28.8%) who are unemployed.

### Testing of Research Hypothesis

To provide an answer to an Alternate Hypothesis “there is a significant relationship between information sources of youths in Zamfara State and youth empowerment status” was tested using Chi-Square as presented in the table below:

**Table 2:** Chi-Square test on the relationship between information sources and youth empowerment

Q	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.974a	16	.018
Likelihood Ratio	31.212	16	.013
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.512	1	.113
N of Valid Cases	1122		

From Table 2 above, the null hypothesis was rejected since the p-value (0.018) is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , hence, the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between information sources and youth empowerment. The practical implication of the result indicates that an improvement in information sources will lead to a significant improvement in youth empowerment in Zamfara state.

### Recommendations

1. Government at all levels should make genuine efforts to put in place proper strategies to mobilize the youths to enable them to benefit from different government empowerment programmes.
2. Zamfara State Government should establish functional ICT hubs/internet facilities in the Local Government Areas to improve sources of information for the youths and avail them access to the internet to enable them to acquire the necessary skills for the digital economy.
3. Politicians and Political Appointees should find a way of empowering the youth through workable empowerment programmes with a starter pack and follow-up after the training.
4. Government at all levels, particularly in Zamfara, should show more commitment to the education of its teeming youth.
5. Zamfara youths should improve their information sourcing by accessing the Internet more, so as to utilize the plethora of ever current information it hosts for various learning and empowerment skills.

6. Further studies on this should be carried out in other parts of Nigeria.

### Conclusion

The study showed that radio is the major source of information for Nigerian youths in Zamfara State. This is surprising because it is held that Nigerian youths are ICT savvy, so one would have expected that the Internet and its facilities-social media and web pages would have been their major source of information for their empowerment considering the quantity and current information it provides. On individual items, youth unemployment was found to be high in Zamfara State but cumulatively, there are more employed youths than unemployed in Zamfara State. The study, therefore, concludes that more need to be done by both State and Local Governments in the area of empowerment of the teeming youth population in the State through provision of required information sources to avert monumental consequences in the future.

### Acknowledgement

This study was sponsored by the Tertiary Education Trustfund (Tetfund) with Grant Allocation Number, **TETF/DR&D/CE/UNI/GUSAU/IBR/2021/VOL.1**. We, therefore, wish to express our profound gratitude to Tetfund for this opportunity.

### References

- Abba, H. and Adamu, A. A. (2019). Utilization of Youth Information Sources for Community Security and Socioeconomic Development in Gwale Local Government Area of Kano State, Nigeria. Available online @ <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/sjis/article/view/195458>
- Awojunn, G. A. (2011). Module One-Information sources. <https://library.adhl.africa/bitstream/handle/123456789/2145/module1.pdf>
- Akande, T. (2014). Youth unemployment in Nigeria: A situation analysis. African Focus. Tuesday, September 23. Retrieved from [https:// www.brookings.edu/blog/afric-in-focus/](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/afric-in-focus/)

- Ayhan, F. (2016). Youth unemployment as a growing global threat. Retrieved online @ <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/306208380>
- Chukwuji, C. N.; Tsafe, A. G.; Sayudi, S.; Yusuf, Z.; and Zakariya, J.(2018). "Awareness, Access and Utilization of Family Planning Information in Zamfara State, Nigeria". *Library Philosophy and Practice* (e-journal). 771.<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1771>
- International Labour Organization (ILO), (2022). 24. Youth unemployment. Retrieved from <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/dw4sd/youth-employment/lang--en/index.htm>
- National Bureau of Statistics (2022). Unemployment rate. Retrieved from <https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/> on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022.
- Nigerian Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development (2019). National Youth Policy. Available online @ [https://web.facebook.com/nigeriafmysd/posts/unveiling-and-launching-of-the-national-youth-policy-2019-2023-pocket-size-editi/3174062299276835/?\\_rdc=1&\\_rdr](https://web.facebook.com/nigeriafmysd/posts/unveiling-and-launching-of-the-national-youth-policy-2019-2023-pocket-size-editi/3174062299276835/?_rdc=1&_rdr)
- Okeke, B. (2014). *Federal University Gusau, Nigeria Permanent Site Development*. Being a Paper Presented at the Tetfund Stakeholders Forum for the North-West Zone held at the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria on Thursday, April 10, 20-14
- Osawaru, O. C. (2021). Formation of the youth and its implications on national development. Retrieved from [https://acjol.org > index.php > ekpoma > article](https://acjol.org/index.php/ekpoma/article) on December, 2022.
- Sasu, D. D. (2022). Unemployment rate in Nigeria in 2020 by states. Retrieved from [statista.com/statistics/1119533/unemployment-rate-in-nigeria-by-state](https://statista.com/statistics/1119533/unemployment-rate-in-nigeria-by-state). Accessed 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2022.