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YOUTH EMPOWERMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN JIGAWA STATE

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Abstract

This study was a baseline survey to determine the market and skills gaps existing in Jigawa state aimed at assisting the State government re-strategize and plan for a more effective way of its empowerment programs. Primary data was utilized which was sourced through structured questionnaire administered to 1500 respondents in 15 Local Government Areas. In addition, focused group discussion (FGD) and key-in-depth interview (KII) were employed to source additional qualitative data used for the analysis. Descriptive statistics, tables and charts were used in analyzing the data using Stata and Microsoft Excel. The survey found out that the major market and skill gaps for trades and vocations in Jigawa State includes provision store, farming, modern tailoring, local snacks, beauty make-up, fruits/vegetables, grains business, phone repairs and livestock businesses. Previous beneficiaries of the State empowerment programs reported that insufficient capital, low patronage and high competition were the major factors that affected the sustainability of their businesses. The study recommends that Empowerment programmes should take into cognizance the differences in the three senatorial zones in terms of the market and skill gaps as identified in this survey. It is important to give emphasis to business management in empowerment training programs in order to ensure sustainability. Government to ensure that strong supervision and monitoring of beneficiaries are put in place to ensure that take-up capitals, equipment, materials etc. are effectively used for the purpose given.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Youth empowerment, Vocations, Trades, Sustainable Development*

JEL classification: H53, H81, I38, J23, J24

1.1 Introduction

Youth account for a significant portion of the population in Nigeria, with over 60% of the population under the age of 25 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). In Jigawa State, this demographic represents both a challenge and an opportunity for sustainable development. Empowering youth involves providing them with the skills, resources, and opportunities necessary to contribute effectively to societal development. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2022), Jigawa has a high youth unemployment rate, limited access to quality education, and inadequate infrastructure.

Education is a fundamental pillar for youth empowerment. In Jigawa State, many youths do not have access to quality education due to factors such as poverty, inadequate school facilities, and lack of trained teachers (Nigeria Data Survey, 2021). This situation limits their potential and employability. The economy of Jigawa State relies heavily on agriculture, with majority of the youth engaged in subs farming. However, limited access to capital, technology, and markets constrains their economic potential (Jigawa State Economic Development Strategy, 2022). The lack of diversified economic opportunities exacerbates youth unemployment and underemployment.

Civic engagement among youth in Jigawa is relatively low, primarily due to a lack of awareness about their rights and responsibilities. Political disenfranchisement and corruption further disillusion youth, leading to apathy towards governance and civic issues (Ogunyemi, 2020).

Non-governmental organizations play a role alongside efforts by providing essential skills training programs tailored for youths within rural areas like those found across parts-of-Jigawa state (Jibril et al., 2019). Their interventions have proven instrumental towards engaging local communities through capacity-building workshops focused primarily upon entrepreneurial skill development.

Various government initiatives aimed at empowering youths have been implemented in Jigawa State. Programs such as the Social Investment Program (NSIP) has been introduced to provide vocational training and financial support for young entrepreneurs (Ahmed et al., 2021). However, despite these efforts, there were concerns regarding accessibility and effectiveness. Poverty is still widespread and unemployment endemic amongst the young vulnerable groups. There are some views that some of the beneficiaries of these programmes dispose the equipment donated or mismanage the seed-capital provided. The programmes appear to be more politically driven than demand driven.

The main purpose of this study is to identify the market demands for trades and vocations, and the skill-gaps that should be filled in order to guide the youth/women empowerment programmes in the state. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section two presents the research methodology, section three contains the data and discussion and section four concludes the study.

2.1 Literature Review

Numerous studies have examined youths and entrepreneurship in Nigeria from different perspectives. For instance, Adebayo (2020) and Ogunleye and Adeye (2019) examined the impact and challenges of government empowerment programmes and on youths in Nigeria. Okafor and Nwankwo (2018) assessed the how education contributes in empowering youths in Nigeria and its

impact on employment opportunities. Whereas Ezeani and Nwankwo (2017) explore how involving youths in political processes affects their empowerment and contributions to democratic governance.

Umojie-Mpamu and Buowari (2020) studied the effect of vocational training in reducing unemployment among Nigerian youths. In a similar study, Iwuanyanwu and Osuafor (2020) examined effect of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on enhancing sustainable livelihood among rural youths.

In another prominent study, Adetunji and Falola (2021) analyzed the impact of social media on information dissemination regarding empowerment opportunities available to Nigerian youths. Daniel.,Alabi and Dada (2022) examined the socio-economic factors influencing youth empowerment initiatives across the six geopolitical zones within Nigeria. In another perspective Aliyu, Omoregie and Adamu (2020) considered education as pivotal towards effective empowerment amongst Nigerian youths

The researchers came across some few studies that examined youth empowerment and poverty in Jigawa state which are presented in the next paragraphs. Hussaini and Muhammad (2018) analyzed the dynamics of poverty among rural households in Jigawa state and determined trends, decomposition and factors that influence poverty among rural households in Jigawa State. The employed a multistage sampling technique and randomly selected 360 respondents for the study. The finding showed that the majority of households living in the rural part of the state were poor or wallowed in abject poverty.

Idika, Hassan, Doshiro and Paul (2022) examine the influence of Agribusiness training programme on youth empowerment and economic development in Nigeria. The study population consists of 965,157 beneficiaries of FADAMA III project. Yamane formula was use to draw a sample size of 520 participants that was increased by 30% with a 93.85% response rate. Primary quantitative data was collected through a survey questionnaire with the aid of multistage sampling technique. In analyzing the collected data, the use of the PLS-SEM technique was applied in this study. Findings of this study confirmed a positive and significant effect of agribusiness training programme on self-employment, income generation, poverty reduction, and standard of living among youth in Nigeria

Abdullahi, Abdullahi, Yahya and Musa (nd) examined the factors affecting the participation of youths in the state poultry empowerment programme in Jigawa state. Primary data for this study was collected using questionnaire; a simple random sampling technique was used to elicit information from two hundred respondents from eleven wards in Dutse Local Government area of Jigawa state. Descriptive statistics and Factor Analysis were used to analyse the data. The results from factor analysis revealed that the participation in the state poultry empowerment program among the youths in Dutse LGA was influenced by five (5) factors, namely: perceived behavioural control, subjective norms, behavioural intention, perceived barrier, and attitude.

Hussaini and Abubakar (2016) investigated the relationship between Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) and Youth Employment in Jigawa State, Nigeria for the period (2007-2014). The data for the study was collected through the administration of questionnaire on

some selected representative samples of skill acquisition training and fund recipients. OLS model was used to estimate the relationship between Youth Employment (YE) and the two measures of EDPs. The paper concludes that Entrepreneurship Development Programs through Skills Acquisition in Jigawa State does not adequately support the establishment of entrepreneurial ventures among youth and does not produce the desired level of jobs for the youth.

Some studies examined the relevance of ICT education and training in poverty reduction and economic empowerment (Rislana, Good, Adams and Scott, 2016).

3.1 Methodology

The study was a survey that relied on primary data collected by administering 1400 questionnaires. In addition, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Key Informant Interview (KII) were used to source the data. The targeted respondents were male and female youth. For the KII 112 respondents were interviewed and 14 FGDs were held with at least ten persons, one in each of the targeted LGAs. Besides the youth, other key stakeholders that were involved in the FGD and KII were the community leaders, youth associations, women groups, trade associations, non-governmental associations and community-based organizations (CBOs). 14 LGAs were selected for the survey based on the three Senatorial zones in the State: North-East (Hadejia, Kafin Hausa, Kaugama and Birniwa), North -West (Gumel, Gwiwa, Gagarawa, Kazaure, Babura and Ringim), and Jigawa Central (Dutse, Buji Gwaram and Miga). Simple descriptive statistics, tables and charts were used in analyzing the data using Microsoft Excel 2021 and Stata version 15.

4.1 Presentation and Discussion

Table 1 Completed Questionnaire

Option	Sample size	Frequency of completed	Percentage
Questionnaires	1400	1369	97.8
KII	112	101	90.2%
FGD	14	14	100%

Table 1 indicates that a total of 1400 questionnaires were administered across the 14 selected LGAs out of which 1369 were returned representing 97.8%.

Table 2 Gender Distribution of Respondents by Senatorial Zones

Senatorial zone	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
North east	Male	219	15.9%
	Female	170	12.5%
North west	Male	327	23.9%
	Female	261	19.1%
South west	Male	233	17.0%
	Female	159	11.6%
Total		1369	100%

Table 2 reveals gender balanced sampling of the respondents in the three Senatorial Zones in the state. This has given a more inclusive opinion of the respondents considering the differences in the aspirations of male and female youths.

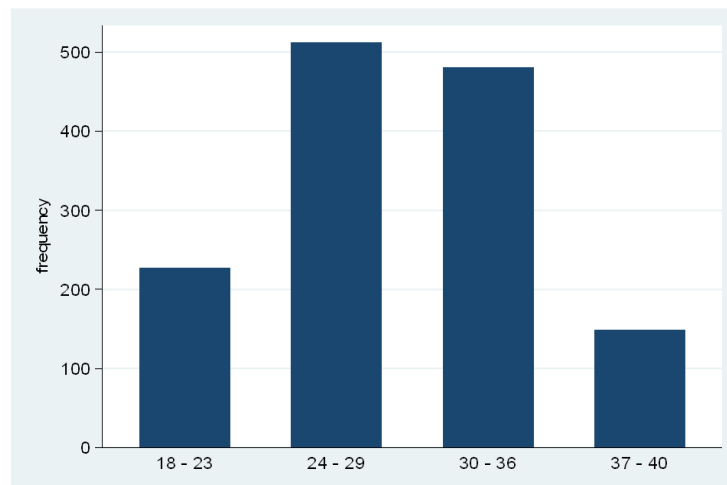


Figure 1 Age Distribution of the Respondents

Figure 2 shows that majority of the respondents fall within the age class i.e. 24 – 39 years (36.5%) followed by the class of 30 – 36 (35.0%) respectively. This indicates that the targeted respondents of the study was achieved. The focus of the State empowerment program is mainly on youths (males and females), therefore this study considered youth to be those below the age of 40 years.

Table 3 level of Education of Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percent	Cum.
Degree/HND	45	3.29	3.29
NCE/ND	248	18.12	21.40
Non-formal/Qur'anic	227	16.58	37.98
Postgraduate	4	0.29	38.28
Primary	262	19.14	57.41

Secondary		583	42.59	100.00
-----+				
Total		1,369	100.00	

Table 3 indicates that majority of the respondents had secondary school education (42.59%) and primary school about 19.14%. 18.12% had NCE/ND. This shows that a substantial number of the youths in the state are educated and have potential for acquiring higher level of education and training in vocations and trade.

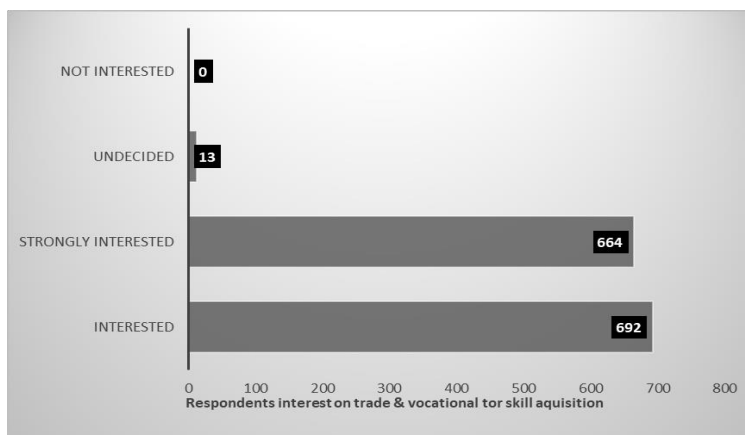


Figure 2 Respondents' interest in acquiring training

Most of the respondents reported that they have interest and were willing to participate in any kind of vocational training. Figure 3 shows that about 692 respondents (50.1%) or half of the total respondents were strongly interested to acquire trainings in skills and vocations. None of the respondents was found to have no interest in trainings and skills in trades or vocations.

Table 4 Respondents Motivation

Motivation	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Existing businesses	100	7.30	7.30
Others	94	6.87	14.17
Self-reliance	925	67.57	81.74
Source of income	250	18.26	100.00
-----+			
Total	1,369	100.00	

About 67.57% of respondent were motivated to acquire training for the purpose of becoming self-reliant as revealed in Table 4. While about 18.26% was for getting a source of income. This implies that most of the youths have the zeal to engage in a trade or vocation to become self-employed.

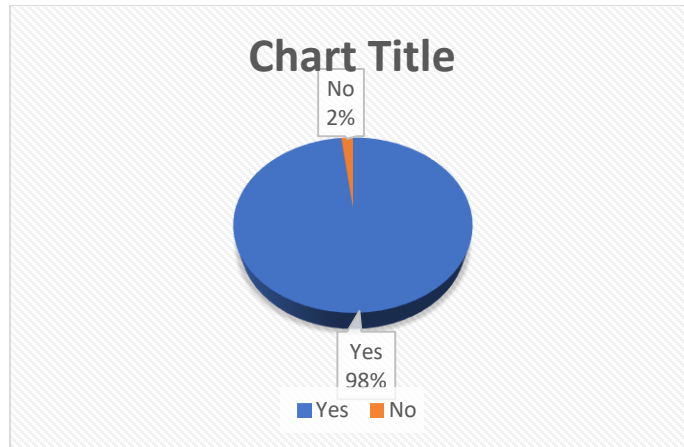


Figure 3 Chosen Area of Specialization

Figure 4 indicates that 98% of the respondents have their chosen areas of skill acquisition and empowerment. This is buttressed in Figure 5 depicting the various preferred trades and vocations of the respondents.

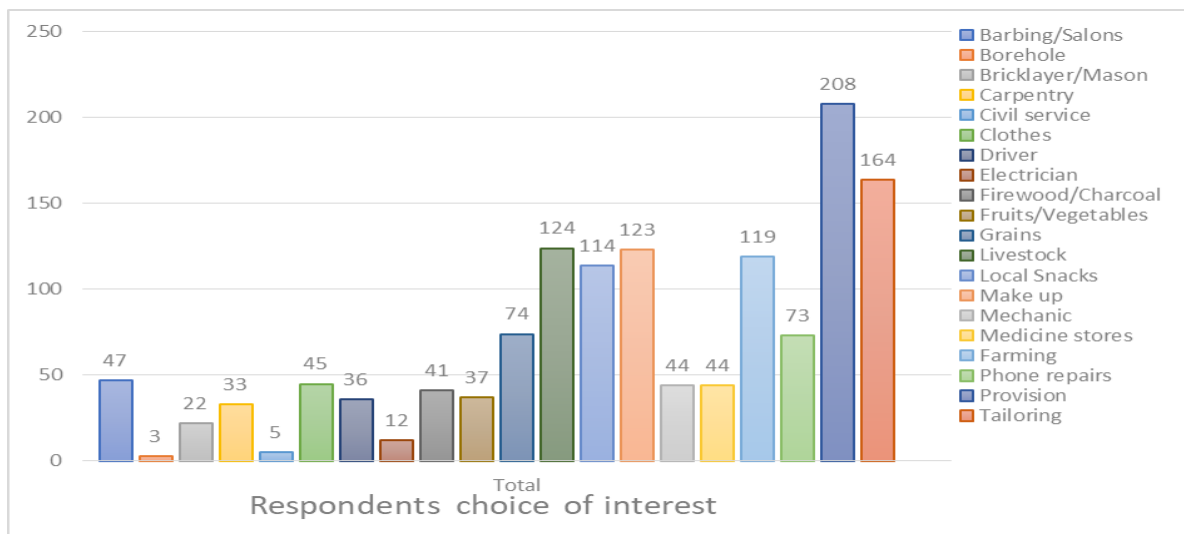


Figure 4 Respondents choice of trade and vocation

Majority of the respondents about 15.2 % (or 208 respondents) choose to specialize in provision store business. Modern tailoring is the second most preferred choice with 12% (164). Livestock and make-up businessse were the third and fourth with 9.1% each respectively.

The survey also revealed that 68% of the respondents reported the targeted markets for chosen trades and vocations to be their immediate neighboring communities. This implies that their choice of interest were highly likely, a reflection of the existing gaps in their respective communities.

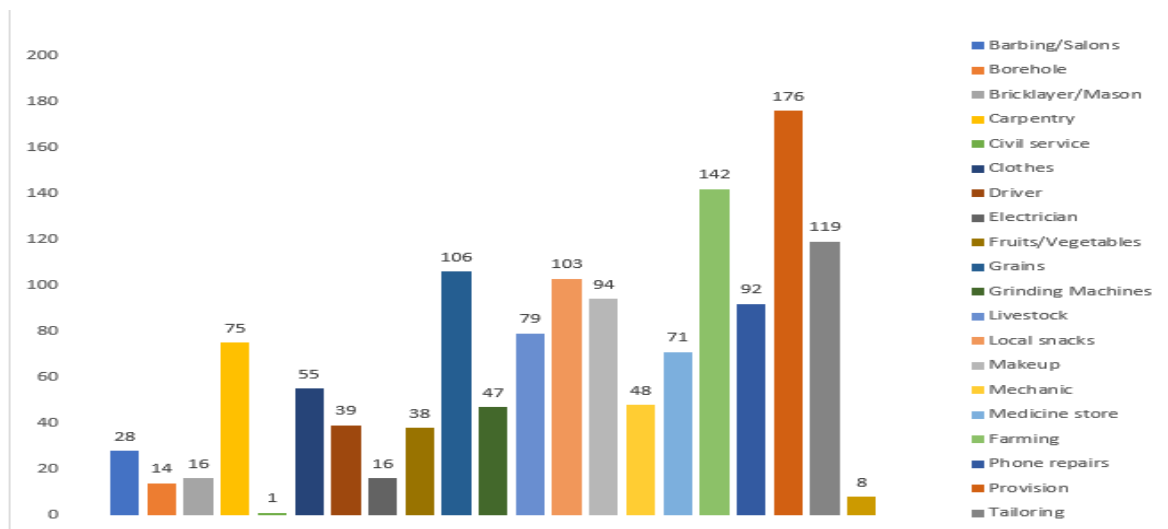


Figure 5 Market Gaps for Trades and Vocations

Identifying market gap on trades and vocations was one of the major objectives of this study. Figure 5 revealed that provision store business (12.86%), farming (10.37%), Modern tailoring (8.7%), grains business (7.74%), and local snacks (7.52%) businesses dominated the market gaps existing in the State.

Table 5 Market Gap for Trades and Vocations

Trades	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Barbing/Salons	28	2.05	2.05
Borehole	14	1.02	3.07
Bricklayer/Mason	16	1.17	4.24
Carpentry	75	5.48	9.72
Civil service	1	0.07	9.79
Clothes	55	4.02	13.81
Driver	39	2.85	16.65
Electrician	16	1.17	17.82
Fruits/Vegetables	38	2.78	20.60
Grains	108	7.89	28.49
Grinding Machines	47	3.43	31.92
Livestock	79	5.77	37.69
Local snacks	103	7.52	45.22
Makeup	94	6.87	52.08
Mechanic	48	3.51	55.59
Medicine store	71	5.19	60.77
Farming	142	10.37	71.15
Phone repairs	92	6.72	77.87
Provision	176	12.86	90.72
Modern tailoring	119	8.69	99.42
Water Vendors	8	0.58	100.00
Total	1,369	100.00	

About 9.3% of the respondents reported that modern tailoring services were inadequate and have large market potential and profitability. This was corroborated by the report and data collected during that KII as depicted in Table 5.

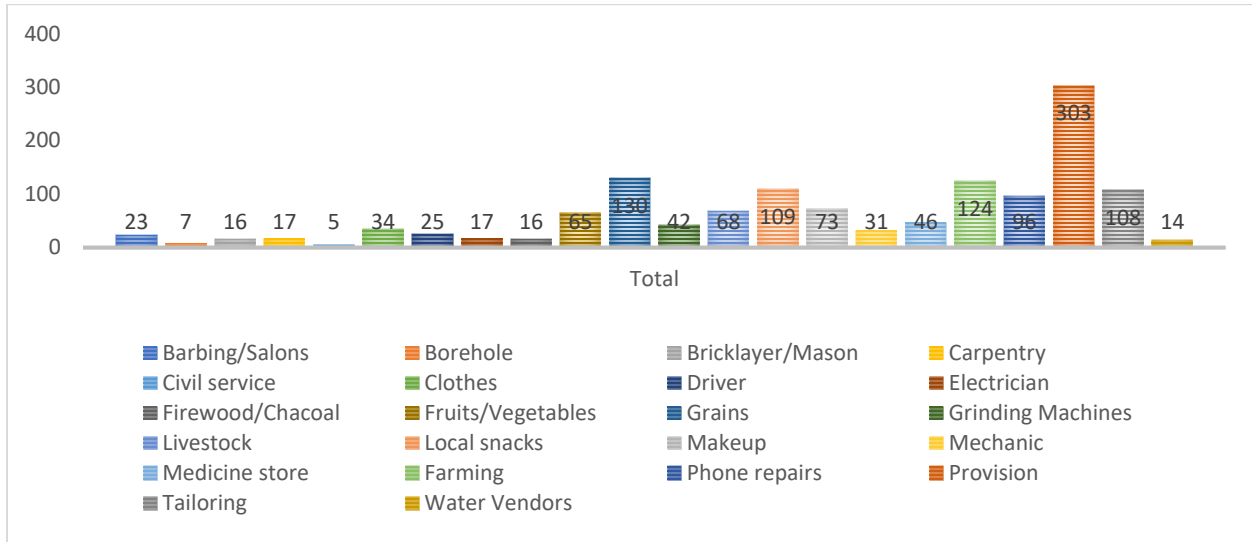


Figure 6 Profitable business

On the profitable area of business and services, provision business was reported to be the most profitable with about 22% (303) as shown in the Figure 6. Grains, Modern tailoring, Clothes and Make-up businesses were the other profitable businesses mentioned by the respondents.

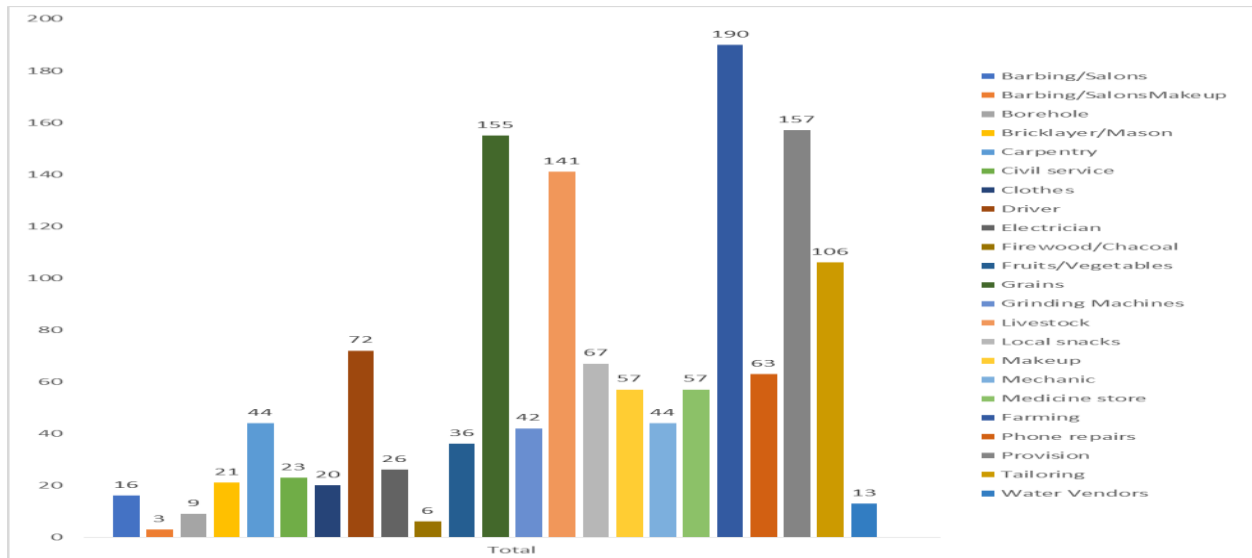


Figure 7 Trade and vocations requiring government intervention

Figure 7 shows over 190 (13.9%) of the respondents suggested that the focus of government empowerment should be on crop farming (rain-fed and irrigation). Borehole installation and maintenance 11.4%, grains 11.3%, livestock 8%, and Modern tailoring 7.8% were next in priority amongst the respondents. Report of the FGD particularly of the Hadejia Senatorial Zone, crop farming dominated the areas that require government intervention. This is perhaps due to the presence of the Hadejia-Jamaare River and fertile land for farming.

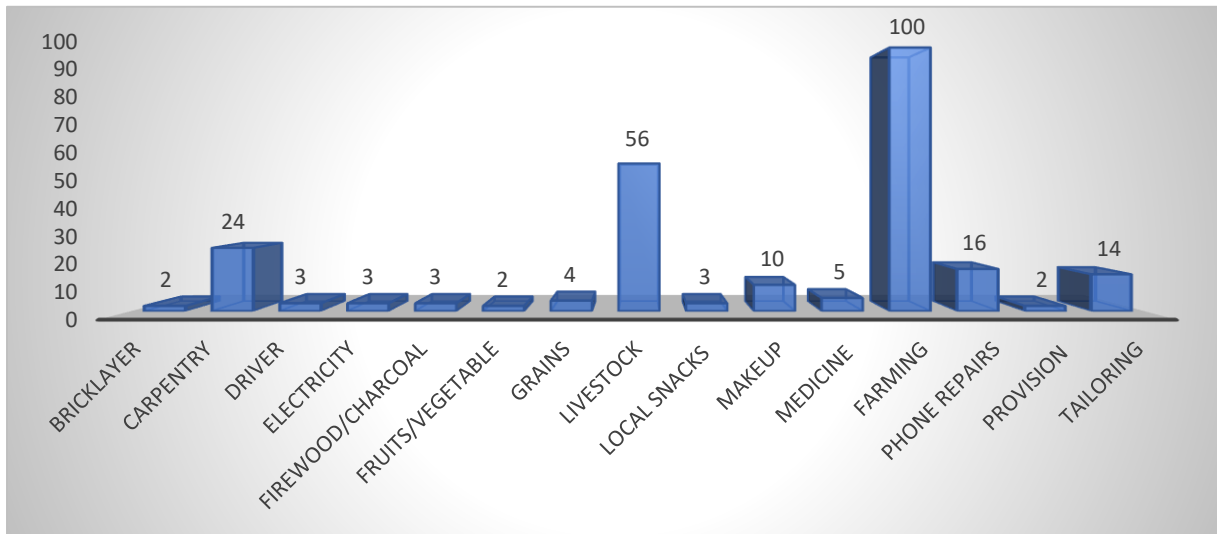


Figure 8 Previous beneficiaries of state empowerment programmes

The survey equally examined previous beneficiaries of government empowerment in the state. Most of the respondents reported that they have benefited from Jigawa State government empowerment programs in the past. Figure 8 revealed that farming was the sector given much priority as 100 (41.5%) respondents reported to have benefited from one intervention or the other. Livestock (goat breeding) 23.2%, carpentry 10%, phone repairs 6.6% and modern tailoring 5.8% were other areas youth benefited in the past.

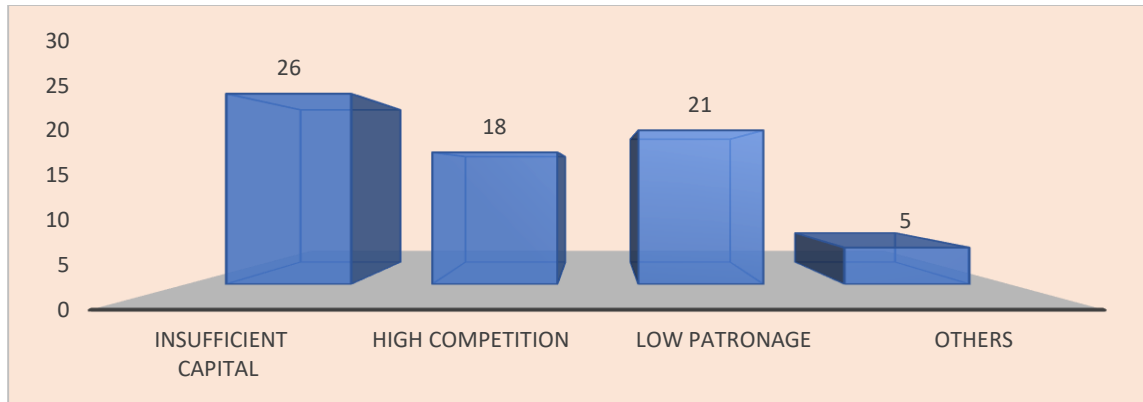


Figure 9 Factors affecting Businesses Sustainability

The beneficiaries reported that insufficient capital, low patronage and high competition were the major factors that affected the sustainability of their businesses as shown in Figure 9.

Most of the respondents were of the opinion that if the government will consider the market and vocations gap that exist in their various communities, empowerment programs will be more effective and sustainable. It will encourage the youth to become more responsible and accountable of their vocations and trades.

5.1 Conclusion

The survey found out that the major market and skill gaps for trades and vocations in Jigawa State includes provision store business, crop farming, modern tailoring services, local snacks, beaut/make-up business, fruits/vegetables business, grains business, phone repairs and livestock (goat breeding) businesses. Previous beneficiaries of the State empowerment programs reported that insufficient capital, low patronage and high competition were the major factors that affected the sustainability of their businesses.

The study recommends that the government should base its empowerment programs on identified market and skill gaps discovered in this survey. It is also important to be including business management training in the empowerment trainings. It is further recommended to train the youths on how to utilize the social media and online platforms for marketing of products and services. When take-up capital and equipment are disbursed to trainees, it is important to put in place effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism (using civil societies) to make sure they are used for the intended purpose.

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