

Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre as a Tool for Youth Empowerment in Orun Local Government, Ekiti State

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Abstract - *Youth unemployment and economic vulnerability remain major challenges in Nigeria despite the expansion of formal education. This has increased the demand for alternative educational pathways that emphasize practical skills and self-reliance. This study assessed the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre as a tool for youth empowerment in Orun Local Government, Ekiti State. The study was guided by two objectives: to identify the vocational skills provided by the centre and to examine its contribution to youth empowerment. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 225 respondents. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency counts and percentages. The findings revealed that the centre provides diverse vocational skills relevant to local socio-economic needs and capable of promoting self-employment and employability among youths. The study further established that participation in the centre's programmes enhances income generation, self-reliance, and standard of living. The study concludes that skills acquisition centres are effective tools for promoting youth empowerment at the grassroots level.*

Index Terms: *Youth Empowerment, Skills Acquisition, Vocational Training; Entrepreneurship Education.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Skills acquisition has become a critical component of contemporary development strategies as societies seek practical solutions to youth unemployment, poverty, and economic dependency. Beyond formal academic education, vocational and entrepreneurial skills provide young people with competencies that enhance self-reliance, productivity, and participation in local economies. Scholars emphasize that skills acquisition is a core driver of human capital development, equipping individuals with practical knowledge, creativity, and problem-solving abilities that conventional classroom education often fails to deliver (Okafor 42; Akinyemi 18). Within this

context, skills acquisition centres serve as structured platforms for empowering youths by linking education directly to employable skills and entrepreneurial opportunities, thereby contributing to sustainable socio-economic development.

In Nigeria, the challenge of youth unemployment has persisted despite the expansion of formal education, largely due to a mismatch between academic qualifications and market-relevant skills. This situation has intensified the need for alternative educational pathways that emphasize vocational competence and entrepreneurship. National and international development frameworks recognize skills-based training as a means of bridging the gap between education and labour market demands, promoting self-employment and reducing economic vulnerability among young people (UNESCO 15). In Ekiti State, a region historically known for its strong commitment to education, the absence of sufficient industrial outlets has further underscored the importance of skills acquisition programmes as viable tools for empowering youths to create livelihoods within their local environment (Ogunleye 63; Adeyemi 77).

Against this backdrop, the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre in Orun Local Government emerged as a strategic intervention aimed at equipping youths and women with vocational and entrepreneurial skills rooted in local cultural and economic realities. Established initially as an adult literacy centre and later expanded into a skills acquisition hub, the centre offers training in traditional and practical trades that promote self-reliance and community development. However, concerns relating to funding, equipment availability, and institutional support have raised questions about the extent to which such centres effectively empower their beneficiaries (Eze 54; Nwosu 91). This study is

therefore situated within the need to assess the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre as a tool for youth empowerment in Orun Local Government, focusing on its role in enhancing employability, fostering entrepreneurship, and contributing to socio-economic development in Ekiti State.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the expansion of formal education in Nigeria, youth unemployment and underemployment remain persistent challenges, indicating that academic qualifications alone are insufficient for meaningful economic engagement. The Nigerian educational system has been widely criticized for its inability to adequately address indigenous socio-economic realities, resulting in a growing population of educated youths who lack employable and entrepreneurial skills (Okafor 42). Although successive governments and stakeholders have established skills acquisition centres to mitigate this gap, the overall impact has been limited, as unemployment levels remain high and youth productivity remains constrained. This situation underscores the need to critically examine skills-based interventions as practical tools for empowering youths beyond conventional classroom instruction.

In Ekiti State, where educational attainment is relatively high but industrial opportunities are limited, skills acquisition centres such as the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre were established to promote self-reliance and youth empowerment through vocational training. However, evidence suggests that many of these centres face challenges including inadequate funding, insufficient training equipment, weak institutional support, and inconsistent policy commitment, all of which undermine their effectiveness (Eze 54). Furthermore, concerns have been raised regarding the extent to which the skills acquired translate into sustainable livelihoods and economic independence for youths in the local community (Nwosu 91). These challenges necessitate a focused assessment of the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre as a tool for youth empowerment in Orun Local Government, in order to determine its capacity to address unemployment and contribute meaningfully to socio-economic development in Ekiti State.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study seeks to provide answers to the following questions:

- i. What vocational skills are provided by the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre for youth empowerment in Orun Local Government?
- ii. In what ways has the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre contributed to youth empowerment in Orun Local Government, Ekiti State?

IV. AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study is to assess the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre as a tool for youth empowerment in Orun Local Government, Ekiti State. The specific objectives seeks to:

- i. Identify the vocational skills provided by the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre for youth empowerment in Orun Local Government.
- ii. Examine the contribution of the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre to youth empowerment in Orun Local Government, Ekiti State.

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant because it emphasizes the importance of skills acquisition centres as practical tools for youth empowerment and sustainable socio-economic development at the grassroots level. By examining the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre in Orun Local Government, the study demonstrates how vocational and entrepreneurial training can equip youths with relevant skills that enhance self-reliance, employability, and income generation. The study also underscores the complementary role of skills acquisition in addressing the limitations of formal education, particularly the persistent gap between academic learning and practical competence. In addition, the findings provide useful insights for policymakers, educational planners, and development stakeholders by revealing operational challenges that affect the effectiveness of skills acquisition centres, such as funding constraints, inadequate facilities, and weak institutional support. Overall, the study contributes to knowledge on youth empowerment by presenting a localized assessment

that can inform improved policy formulation, programme implementation, and the sustainable development of skills acquisition initiatives in Ekiti State and similar contexts.

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Youth

Youth refers to a distinct social category that represents a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, characterized by physical strength, creativity, adaptability, and the potential for productivity. In development discourse, youths are often regarded as critical agents of change whose energy and innovation can drive social and economic transformation when properly harnessed. However, without access to relevant education, skills, and opportunities, youths are also vulnerable to unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion. The productive engagement of youths therefore remains a central concern for societies seeking sustainable development and stability.

In Nigeria, the youth population constitutes a significant proportion of the total population, yet many young people face structural challenges arising from limited employment opportunities and inadequate skill preparation. The overreliance on formal academic education has contributed to a growing mismatch between the aspirations of youths and the realities of the labour market, leaving many educated youths economically idle (Okafor 42). Scholars argue that addressing youth-related challenges requires targeted interventions that equip young people with practical competencies aligned with local economic realities, thereby enabling them to transition successfully into productive adulthood (Ogunleye 63).

Youth Empowerment

Youth empowerment is the process of enabling young people to gain the skills, confidence, and resources necessary to make meaningful contributions to their own lives and to society. It involves strengthening youths' capacity to make informed decisions, engage in productive activities, and achieve economic independence. Empowerment initiatives often focus on education, skills development, and access to opportunities that enhance employability and self-reliance. When

youths are empowered, they are better positioned to overcome socio-economic challenges and participate actively in community and national development.

In the Nigerian context, youth empowerment has increasingly been linked to skills-based interventions aimed at addressing unemployment and poverty. The limitations of conventional education systems in providing practical and market-relevant skills have made empowerment programmes essential for sustainable youth development. Skills acquisition centres and community-based training programmes are therefore viewed as effective tools for empowering youths by equipping them with competencies for self-employment and income generation (Akinyemi 18). Such empowerment efforts are particularly important in regions with limited industrial presence, where youths must rely on vocational and entrepreneurial skills to create economic opportunities (Adeyemi 77).

Skills Acquisition

Skills acquisition refers to the systematic process through which individuals learn and master specific practical abilities required for performing particular tasks or occupations. It emphasizes experiential learning, hands-on training, and the application of knowledge to real-life situations. Skills acquisition plays a crucial role in human capital development, as it enhances productivity, innovation, and adaptability in a changing economic environment. Unlike purely theoretical education, skills acquisition focuses on functional competence and problem-solving abilities that are directly applicable to livelihood activities.

In Nigeria, skills acquisition has been widely promoted as a strategy for reducing unemployment and enhancing economic participation, especially among youths. Despite the establishment of several skills acquisition centres by government and private stakeholders, challenges such as inadequate funding, insufficient equipment, and weak institutional support have limited their effectiveness (Eze 54). Nevertheless, scholars maintain that when properly implemented, skills acquisition programmes can empower individuals to become self-reliant, reduce dependency on paid employment, and contribute meaningfully to local economic development (Nwosu 91). As such, skills acquisition remains a vital tool for addressing youth unemployment and promoting sustainable socio-economic growth.

Impact of Vocational Education and Training on Youths

Vocational Education and Training (VET) has a profound impact on youths by equipping them with practical, technical, and occupational skills that enhance employability and productivity. Through hands-on instruction and experiential learning, vocational training prepares young people for specific trades and crafts that are directly relevant to societal and economic needs. Unlike conventional academic education, VET emphasizes functional competence and problem-solving abilities, enabling youths to acquire skills that can be immediately applied in real-life work situations (Akinyemi 18). This practical orientation makes vocational education a critical pathway for reducing youth unemployment and facilitating smoother transitions from school to work.

In developing economies such as Nigeria, the impact of vocational education on youths extends beyond employment to include self-reliance and economic inclusion. Vocationally trained youths are better positioned to engage in self-employment and small-scale enterprise development, particularly in contexts with limited formal job opportunities. International development frameworks recognize vocational education as an inclusive strategy for empowering young people with lifelong skills and enhancing their participation in local economies (UNESCO 15). However, scholars note that the effectiveness of vocational education depends on adequate funding, relevant curricula, and functional training facilities, without which its impact on youth development remains limited (Eze 54).

Entrepreneurship Education as a Tool for Youth Empowerment

Entrepreneurship education is a vital tool for youth empowerment as it develops the capacity of young people to identify opportunities, initiate ventures, and manage economic activities successfully. It promotes creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and risk-taking, which are essential attributes for self-employment and enterprise development. By shifting the focus from job-seeking to job creation, entrepreneurship education empowers youths to take control of their economic futures and contribute meaningfully to community development (Okafor 42). This form of education equips youths with the mindset and competencies required to navigate

economic uncertainty and adapt to changing market conditions.

Within the Nigerian context, entrepreneurship education has been widely adopted as a response to persistent youth unemployment and economic dependency. When combined with vocational training and skills acquisition, entrepreneurship education enables youths to convert technical skills into viable income-generating ventures. Scholars argue that entrepreneurship education enhances youth empowerment by promoting self-reliance, wealth creation, and reduced dependence on government employment (Nwosu 91). In regions with limited industrial presence, entrepreneurship education provides youths with practical tools for leveraging local resources and skills to achieve sustainable livelihoods and socio-economic advancement (Adeyemi 77).

VII. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Vocational Skills Training and Youth Empowerment
Empirical studies have consistently shown that vocational skills training plays a significant role in empowering youths by equipping them with practical competencies necessary for economic participation. Okoye and Eze found that the integration of vocational and technical skills into educational programmes enhances creativity, productivity, and economic independence among youths, thereby reducing poverty levels. Their study emphasized that neglect of vocational education contributes to youth disempowerment, while skills-based training promotes self-reliance and empowerment through income-generating activities (Okoye and Eze). Similarly, Ezugwu's study on integrating cultural elements into skill-based learning revealed that vocational training improves youths' confidence, creative capacity, and ability to engage in entrepreneurial ventures, reinforcing empowerment beyond formal schooling.

Further studies suggest that vocational skills training contributes to youth empowerment by fostering social inclusion and reducing vulnerability to unemployment-related social challenges. Adenuga's study on skill acquisition programmes in Lagos State demonstrated that youths who underwent vocational training were more likely to engage in self-employment and small-scale enterprise development than their untrained

counterparts. The study concluded that vocational skills training empowers youths by enhancing their economic resilience and reducing dependence on government and wage employment (Adenuga). These findings collectively indicate that vocational skills training is a vital empowerment strategy, particularly in developing economies where formal employment opportunities remain limited.

Skills Acquisition Centres and Youth Employability
Studies focusing on skills acquisition centres reveal their positive influence on youth employability through the provision of job-relevant and market-oriented skills. Bukola's assessment of skill acquisition centres in Ekiti State found that participation in skills acquisition programmes improves youths' employability by enhancing their practical competence and readiness for self-employment. The study observed that although many graduates remain unemployed, those exposed to skills acquisition centres demonstrated greater adaptability and willingness to engage in vocational trades (Bukola). This suggests that skills acquisition centres serve as alternative pathways for improving employment outcomes among youths.

However, existing literatures also highlights challenges that limit the effectiveness of skills acquisition centres in enhancing youth employability. Adebayo's studies on vocational and entrepreneurship education in Ekiti State revealed that inadequate facilities, insufficient instructional materials, and limited practical exposure reduce the employability outcomes of skills training programmes. Despite these constraints, the studies acknowledged that skills acquisition centres remain critical for preparing youths with employable skills when adequately supported (Adebayo). Similarly, Ajala's investigative report showed that poor management and lack of government commitment can undermine the employability potential of skills acquisition centres, emphasizing the need for sustained institutional support to maximize their impact on youth employment.

Entrepreneurship-Oriented Training and Youth Self-Reliance

Empirical studies on entrepreneurship-oriented training demonstrate its effectiveness in promoting youth self-reliance by shifting the focus from job seeking to job creation. Nwosu's work emphasizes that entrepreneurship education equips youths with

the mindset and competencies required to initiate and manage income-generating ventures. The study found that youths exposed to entrepreneurship-oriented training were more inclined toward innovation, risk-taking, and independent economic activities, all of which contribute to self-reliance (Nwosu). Similarly, Onyenemezu's study on entrepreneurship education and community development established that entrepreneurial training empowers youths to become economically independent and actively contribute to community development initiatives.

Additional studies further affirm that entrepreneurship-oriented training strengthens youth self-reliance when combined with practical skills acquisition. Adebayo's research on entrepreneurship education in Ekiti State revealed that although instructional approaches were often theory-based, exposure to entrepreneurial concepts still enhanced students' awareness of self-employment opportunities. The study concluded that entrepreneurship-oriented training promotes self-reliance by enabling youths to apply acquired skills in business creation and livelihood activities (Adebayo). Collectively, these empirical findings suggest that entrepreneurship-oriented training is a critical mechanism for fostering youth self-reliance, particularly in environments where formal employment opportunities are scarce.

VIII. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on Achievement Motivation Theory of Entrepreneurship, propounded by David McClelland, which explains entrepreneurship and productivity as outcomes of an individual's need for achievement. The theory posits that individuals with a high need for achievement are more likely to take initiative, embrace risk, and engage in entrepreneurial activities as a means of personal and economic advancement. McClelland argues that entrepreneurial behaviour is not innate but learned and can be nurtured through appropriate educational and training environments that stimulate motivation, creativity, and goal orientation (McClelland 67). Within the context of youth empowerment, the theory provides a useful lens for understanding how skills acquisition programmes can stimulate youths' inner drive to achieve economic independence and self-reliance.

Achievement Motivation Theory is particularly relevant to skills acquisition and vocational training initiatives, as it emphasizes the role of structured learning in fostering entrepreneurial behaviour. In environments where formal employment opportunities are limited, youths who are exposed to vocational and entrepreneurial training are more likely to develop achievement-oriented attitudes that encourage self-employment and innovation. The theory explains why skills acquisition centres serve as platforms for empowering youths by providing them with opportunities to set goals, master skills, and translate competence into productive ventures. In the context of the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre, the theory helps to explain how vocational training can motivate youths to utilize acquired skills for livelihood creation and socio-economic participation, thereby reducing dependency and unemployment.

The study also adopts Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) developed by David A. Kolb, which conceptualizes learning as a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Kolb's theory emphasizes learning-by-doing and identifies four stages of the learning cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb 23). This theory is particularly applicable to skills acquisition and vocational education, where learners engage directly with tools, materials, and real-life tasks. Experiential Learning Theory provides a strong theoretical foundation for assessing how hands-on vocational training at the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre enhances youths' practical competence, confidence, and capacity for self-employment, thereby reinforcing youth empowerment and sustainable development outcomes.

IX. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre as a tool for youth empowerment in Orun Local Government, Ekiti State. This design was considered appropriate because it allows for the systematic collection of data from respondents in order to describe existing conditions, practices, and perceptions related to vocational skills training and youth empowerment. The target population comprised youths, trainees, instructors, and relevant

education officers associated with the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre. A sample size was drawn from the population using appropriate non-probability sampling techniques to ensure that respondents possessed adequate knowledge of the activities and operations of the centre.

Data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire, which served as the primary research instrument. The questionnaire was designed to elicit information on the types of vocational skills offered, the relevance of skills acquisition to youth empowerment, and the contribution of the centre to employability and self-reliance. The instrument consisted mainly of close-ended questions to facilitate ease of response and descriptive analysis. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency counts and simple percentages, and the results were presented in tables and narrative form to allow for clear interpretation. This approach ensured that the findings were systematically linked to the objectives of the study and provided a reliable basis for assessing the role of the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre in youth empowerment.

X. RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	150	66.7
	Female	75	33.3
	Total	225	100.0
Age	18–20 years	10	4.4
	21–30 years	60	26.7
	31–50 years	110	48.9
	51 years and above	45	20.0
	Total	225	100.0
Marital Status	Single	60	26.6
	Married	130	57.8
	Divorced	25	11.1
	Widowed	10	4.4
	Total	225	100.0

Education al Status	Primary	13	5.7
	Secondar y	132	58.7
	Tertiary	80	35.6
	Total	225	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The demographic characteristics of the respondents indicate notable variations across gender, age, marital status, and educational background. With respect to gender, male respondents constituted 66.7% of the total sample, while females accounted for 33.3%, showing a higher level of male participation in the study. This distribution may reflect the greater involvement of males in vocational and skills acquisition activities within the study area. The age distribution further reveals that the majority of respondents fell within the 31–50 years age bracket, representing 48.9%, followed by those aged 21–30 years at 26.7%. Respondents aged 51 years and above accounted for 20.0%, while the youngest group, 18–20 years, represented only 4.4%. This suggests that participation in skills acquisition programmes is more pronounced among adults within the economically active age range.

The marital status of the respondents shows that a significant proportion were married (57.8%), while 26.6% were single. Those who were divorced constituted 11.1%, and widowed respondents accounted for 4.4% of the sample. This pattern implies that marital responsibilities may influence the decision to engage in skills acquisition as a means of improving economic stability. In terms of educational status, respondents with secondary education formed the largest group at 58.7%, followed by those with tertiary education at 35.6%, while respondents with primary education accounted for only 5.7%. This distribution indicates that skills acquisition programmes attract individuals with diverse educational backgrounds but are particularly relevant to those with secondary and tertiary education who seek to complement formal schooling with practical and employable skills.

Research Question One: What vocational skills are provided by the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre for youth empowerment in Orun Local Government?

Table 2: Respondents' Perception of Vocational Skills Provided by the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre

S/ N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	Tot al
1	The Oba Abiodu n Skill Acquisi tion Centre offers diverse vocatio nal skills relevant to youth empow erment	120 (53. 3%)	65 (28. 9%)	15 (6. 7%)	15 (6. 7%)	10 (4. 4%)	225 (10 0%)
2	The vocatio nal skills taught at the centre are relevant to the socio- econom ic needs of Orun Local Govern ment	110 (48. 9%)	70 (31. 1%)	20 (8. 9%)	15 (6. 7%)	10 (4. 4%)	225 (10 0%)
3	The skills provide d by the centre enable youths to engage in self-employ ment after training	130 (57. 8%)	60 (26. 7%)	15 (6. 7%)	10 (4. 4%)	10 (4. 4%)	225 (10 0%)
4	The vocatio nal skills offered at the centre comple ment formal educati on	105 (46. 7%)	75 (33. 3%)	20 (8. 9%)	15 (6. 7%)	10 (4. 4%)	225 (10 0%)

	receive d by youths						
5	Trainin g at the centre exposes youths to practical skills that enhance employ ability	125 (55. 6%)	65 (28. 9%)	15 (6. 7%)	10 (4. 4%)	10 (4. 4%)	225 (10 0%)

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The results presented in table 2 indicate a generally positive perception of the vocational skills provided by the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre. A majority of the respondents, 53.3% strongly agreed and 28.9% agreed that the centre offers diverse vocational skills relevant to youth empowerment, giving a combined agreement of 82.2%. Only 11.1% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, while 6.7% were undecided. This suggests that most respondents acknowledge the availability of a wide range of vocational skills at the centre that are considered useful for empowering youths within the study area.

Similarly, responses to the relevance of the skills to local socio-economic needs show strong approval. About 48.9% of the respondents strongly agreed and 31.1% agreed that the vocational skills taught at the centre align with the socio-economic needs of Orun Local Government, resulting in a combined agreement of 80.0%. Only 11.1% expressed disagreement, while 8.9% remained undecided. In addition, a substantial proportion of respondents affirmed the usefulness of the skills for self-employment, with 57.8% strongly agreeing and 26.7% agreeing, amounting to 84.5% overall agreement. This indicates that the skills provided by the centre are largely perceived as practical and capable of enabling youths to engage in self-reliant economic activities.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that the vocational skills offered by the centre are viewed as complementary to formal education and beneficial for employability. A combined 80.0% of respondents, made up of 46.7% who strongly agreed and 33.3% who agreed, indicated that the skills complement formal education, while 11.1%

disagreed and 8.9% were undecided. Similarly, 55.6% strongly agreed and 28.9% agreed that training at the centre exposes youths to practical skills that enhance employability, totaling 84.5% agreement. These results collectively suggest that the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre plays a significant role in equipping youths with vocational skills that support empowerment, self-employment, and improved employability within the local community.

Research Question Two: In what ways has the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre contributed to youth empowerment in Orun Local Government, Ekiti State?

Table 3: Perception of the Contribution of the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre to Youth Empowerment

S / N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
6	The Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre contributes to youth empowerment in Orun Local Government	130 (57. 8%)	60 (26. 7%)	15 (6. 7%)	10 (4. 4%)	10 (4. 4%)	225 (10 0%)
7	Training received at the centre has improved youths' ability to generate income	125 (55. 6%)	65 (28. 9%)	15 (6. 7%)	10 (4. 4%)	10 (4. 4%)	225 (10 0%)
8	The centre has helped to reduce youth unemployment	120 (53. 3%)	70 (31. 1%)	15 (6. 7%)	10 (4. 4%)	10 (4. 4%)	225 (10 0%)

	through skills development						
9	Skills acquired at the centre enhance youths' confidence and self-reliance	135 (60.0%)	55 (24.4%)	15 (6.7%)	10 (4.4%)	10 (4.4%)	225 (10.0%)
10	Participation in the centre's programmes has improved youths' standard of living	115 (51.1%)	70 (31.1%)	20 (8.9%)	10 (4.4%)	10 (4.4%)	225 (10.0%)

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The results in table 3 reveal a strong positive perception of the contribution of the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre to youth empowerment in Orun Local Government. A majority of the respondents, 57.8%, strongly agreed and 26.7% agreed that the centre contributes significantly to youth empowerment, resulting in a combined agreement of 84.5%. Only 8.8% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, while 6.7% were undecided. This indicates that most respondents recognize the centre as an important institution for empowering youths within the community.

Further analysis shows that respondents largely affirmed the economic benefits of the training received at the centre. About 55.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and 28.9% agreed that the training had improved youths' ability to generate income, giving a combined agreement of 84.5%. Similarly, 53.3% strongly agreed and 31.1% agreed that the centre has helped to reduce youth unemployment through skills development, amounting to 84.4% agreement. In both cases, only 8.8% of respondents expressed disagreement, while 6.7% remained undecided. These findings suggest that the centre plays a crucial role in enhancing youths' economic productivity and employability.

In addition, the results indicate that skills acquisition at the centre positively influences youths' confidence, self-reliance, and overall standard of living. A combined 84.4% of respondents, comprising 60.0% who strongly agreed and 24.4% who agreed, reported that skills acquired at the centre enhance youths' confidence and self-reliance. Furthermore, 51.1% strongly agreed and 31.1% agreed that participation in the centre's programmes has improved youths' standard of living, yielding a total agreement of 82.2%. Only 8.8% disagreed with this statement, while 8.9% were undecided. Overall, these results demonstrate that the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre contributes meaningfully to youth empowerment by improving economic capacity, self-reliance, and living conditions within the study area.

XI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study reveal that the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre provides vocational skills that are relevant to youth empowerment, employability, and self-reliance within Orun Local Government. A substantial proportion of respondents affirmed that the centre offers diverse and practical vocational skills that complement formal education and align with local socio-economic needs. This finding is consistent with earlier studies which established that vocational and skills-based training equips youths with functional competencies that enhance economic participation and reduce dependence on paid employment (Okoye and Eze; Adenuga). The result confirms that skills acquisition centres serve as effective platforms for empowering youths by bridging the gap between formal education and practical livelihood opportunities.

The positive perception of the centre's contribution to income generation, unemployment reduction, and improved standard of living further underscores its role in youth empowerment. Respondents largely agreed that skills acquired at the centre enhance confidence, self-reliance, and the capacity for self-employment. These findings align with studies which indicate that structured skills acquisition programmes improve youth employability and economic resilience when adequately implemented (Bukola; Nwosu). From a theoretical perspective, this outcome supports Achievement Motivation Theory, which posits that individuals are more likely

to pursue entrepreneurial and productive activities when exposed to enabling environments that stimulate the need for achievement. The centre's training programmes appear to motivate youths toward economic independence by providing them with skills that can be transformed into income-generating ventures.

Furthermore, the findings support the assumptions of Experiential Learning Theory, as the hands-on and practice-oriented nature of training at the centre enhances skill mastery and practical competence. Respondents' agreement that the skills acquired improve employability and self-reliance suggests that learning through direct experience is effective in preparing youths for real-life economic challenges. This is consistent with empirical studies which show that experiential and vocational learning strengthens youths' capacity for innovation, adaptability, and entrepreneurship (Akinyemi; Ezugwu). Overall, the findings demonstrate that the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre contributes meaningfully to youth empowerment by integrating practical skill development with motivational and experiential learning processes, reinforcing its relevance as a tool for socio-economic development at the local level.

XII. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that skills acquisition centres remain vital instruments for addressing youth empowerment challenges at the grassroots level. By providing vocational and entrepreneurship-oriented training that aligns with local socio-economic realities, the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre demonstrates the capacity of community-based initiatives to equip youths with practical skills, enhance self-reliance, and promote productive engagement. The centre's emphasis on experiential learning and achievement-driven skill development underscores the relevance of alternative educational pathways in complementing formal education and fostering sustainable livelihoods. Overall, the study affirms that well-structured skills acquisition centres can serve as effective platforms for empowering youths and supporting socio-economic development within local government areas.

XIII. RECOMMENDATION

In line with the findings of this study, there is a need for increased funding and stronger institutional

support for the Oba Abiodun Skill Acquisition Centre by government and relevant stakeholders. Adequate financial commitment will enable the centre to procure modern training equipment, improve infrastructure, and create a conducive learning environment for effective skills development. Strengthening institutional support will also enhance programme sustainability and ensure that the centre continues to function as a reliable platform for youth empowerment and socio-economic development.

The study further recommends that greater emphasis should be placed on strengthening the practical and entrepreneurship-oriented components of training at the centre. While vocational skills acquisition is central to youth empowerment, integrating entrepreneurship education more effectively will equip youths with the capacity to translate acquired skills into viable income-generating ventures. This approach will enhance self-reliance and reduce dependence on paid employment by encouraging innovation, creativity, and business development among trainees.

Finally, the expansion and replication of community-based skills acquisition centres across other local government areas in Ekiti State is recommended. Such expansion should be guided by local economic needs and labour market realities to ensure relevance and impact.

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