



**YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND ITS EFFECT ON UNEMPLOYMENT
REDUCTION AMONG YOUTHS IN TARABA STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study focused on youth empowerment and its effect on unemployment reduction among youths in Taraba State, Nigeria. Specifically, it investigated the effect of educational empowerment and economic empowerment on unemployment reduction. The study was anchored on empowerment theory. Survey research design was adopted; the population of the study consists of 664,699 youths across the Sixteen (16) local Government Areas of Taraba state. This study used both secondary and primary sources of data; secondary data was sourced through established record such as reports, journals, databases, and official statistics, while the primary data was collected with the aids of observations, interviews and structured questionnaire on five-point likert scale administered to the sample size of four hundred (400) youths across the state. This study used stratified random sampling technique in selecting the respondents. The hypothesis of the study was tested using multiple regression analysis. The result revealed that both educational empowerment and economic empowerment have a significant positive effect on unemployment reduction among youths in Taraba State. Based on the findings the study recommended that Taraba State government should establish community-based vocational training centers across local government areas in the State, integrated into the formal education system, to equip youths with both academic knowledge and marketable skills such as ICT, agriculture, tailoring, and renewable energy technologies. Also the state government should implement a youth-targeted microfinance scheme in partnership with local cooperatives and financial institutions, offering accessible, low-interest loans and financial literacy training to economically empower young people in the State. By providing start-up capital and business management skills, this initiative enables youths to launch and sustain small-scale enterprises, thereby creating employment for themselves and potentially for others, which directly contributes to reducing unemployment in the state.

Keywords: Economic empowerment, educational empowerment, unemployment reduction, youth empowerment

Introduction

Youth unemployment is a persistent global challenge that continues to hinder economic development and social stability. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2023), over 73 million youths worldwide are unemployed, with developing countries bearing a

disproportionate share of the burden. This alarming trend threatens future workforce sustainability, increases poverty levels, and fosters insecurity. In Africa, the youth unemployment rate remains one of the highest globally, with structural economic challenges, limited access to education, and

poor policy implementation compounding the problem (Abalogu & Nwokedi, 2024).

In Nigeria, the situation is particularly concerning. The National Bureau of Statistics (2023) reported that youth unemployment stands at over 35%, with the majority of young people either jobless or underemployed. Despite numerous government interventions, such as the N-Power scheme and the Youth Empowerment and Social Support Operation (YESSO), many Nigerian youths still lack the necessary skills and resources to secure or create sustainable employment (Akinbola, 2024). The challenge is more severe in rural states like Taraba, where socio-economic development is relatively low, and access to quality education and financial support remains limited. Local reports indicate that many youths in Taraba State remain unemployed due to limited vocational skills, financial exclusion, and inadequate access to empowerment opportunities (Adi et al., 2024).

Youth empowerment has emerged as a strategic approach to tackling unemployment by equipping young people with the capabilities and resources needed to improve their livelihoods. Empowerment, in this study, involves enhancing youths' education, economic capacity, decision-making power, and

participation in societal development. When properly implemented, youth empowerment can significantly reduce unemployment by promoting skill acquisition, self-reliance, and entrepreneurial initiatives (Olowolagba, 2025). For this study, youth empowerment is assessed using two key dimensions: educational empowerment and economic empowerment, given their prominence in contemporary academic discourse.

The significance of educational empowerment in unemployment reduction lies in its ability to build human capital, promote creativity, and enhance adaptability to dynamic labor markets. Youths with adequate education are more likely to find meaningful employment or initiate entrepreneurial ventures. Educational empowerment involves providing youths with relevant formal and informal education, vocational training, and digital literacy to improve their employability and entrepreneurial capacity. Educational empowerment equips youths with the intellectual and technical competencies necessary for job creation and innovation (Ezema-Kalu, 2024).

Economic empowerment on the other hand, directly contributes to unemployment reduction by enabling youths to start and sustain businesses, access markets, and

become financially independent, thereby creating employment for themselves and others. Economic empowerment entails providing access to financial resources, such as microloans, credit schemes, and business development services, enabling youths to engage in income-generating activities. Economic empowerment fosters self-employment and supports small business growth among youths, thereby reducing dependency and joblessness (Ogunniyi, 2023). The motivation for this study arises from the urgent need to address the persistent youth unemployment crisis in Taraba State through evidence-based interventions. Despite existing programs, the high unemployment rate suggests gaps in the implementation of youth empowerment strategies. Therefore, this study sought to investigate educational and economic empowerment and its effect on unemployment reduction among youths in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Youth unemployment remains a persistent challenge in Taraba State, where a large proportion of the youth population faces limited access to sustainable job opportunities. Despite various governmental and non-governmental interventions, the unemployment rate

among youths continues to rise, contributing to social instability, poverty, and underdevelopment. (Usman & Yahaya, 2025). Educational and economic empowerment are globally recognized as effective strategies for equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to become self-reliant and competitive in the labour market, yet the Taraba State government have not fully utilized it, as a significant number of youths across the state remain jobless, raising concerns about the effectiveness and implementation of these strategies (Korter et al., 2023). This situation raises critical questions, therefore, the need to investigate the extent to which educational and economic empowerment contribute to unemployment reduction among youths in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Previous studies such as (Oladipo et al., 2025; Kamau , 2025; Mwangi, 2025; Adeyemi & Nwachukwu, 2025; Nwachukwu , 2024; Ibrahim & Okonkwo, 2024;Omaliko, 2022) have investigated youth empowerment on its effect on unemployment reduction across various sectors, economies as well as methodologies, however there is a paucity of empirical research specifically examining the topic on unemployment reduction among youths in Taraba State.

Recognizing the identified gaps in the literature, this study investigated focused on youth empowerment and its effect on unemployment reduction among youths in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate youth empowerment and its effect on unemployment reduction among youths in Taraba State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. assess the effect of educational empowerment on unemployment reduction among youths in Taraba State, Nigeria; and
- ii. examine the effect of economic empowerment on unemployment reduction among youths in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Conceptual Review

Youth Empowerment

Youth empowerment refers to the process of equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, resources, and opportunities necessary to take control of their lives and contribute meaningfully to society. Adewale and Musa (2022) defined youth empowerment as a strategic process through which young individuals acquire the capacity to make decisions, act

independently, and influence their communities socially and economically. Similarly, Nnamdi and Okafor (2023) described youth empowerment as enhancing the abilities of young people through education, skills training, and economic opportunities that promote active participation in national development. From a development perspective, Abubakar and Salisu (2021) stated that youth empowerment is the promotion of conditions that enable young individuals to unlock their full potential, overcome socio-economic barriers, and become agents of change.

Kusi and Owusu (2022) emphasized that it is a multidimensional concept involving psychological, social, political, and economic dimensions that strengthen youth autonomy and societal relevance. Ogundele and Alabi (2023) argued that youth empowerment includes targeted interventions in areas such as leadership training, employment creation, and civic participation to ensure youth inclusion in decision-making processes. In addition, Eze and Nwachukwu (2022) defined it as the active engagement of youths in programs and policies that provide them with a sense of purpose, reduce vulnerability, and build resilience in the face of global and local challenges

Educational Empowerment

Educational empowerment refers to the process of equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, values, and confidence needed to make informed decisions, take control of their lives, and contribute meaningfully to society through education. It involves providing equal access to quality learning opportunities that promote critical thinking and personal development (Kabeer, 2025). Youth educational empowerment Is a process by which young people gain control over their lives by developing the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to influence their educational outcomes and participate meaningfully in decisions affecting their learning environments (Zimmerman, 2023).

Christens and Peterson (2023) described youth educational empowerment as an intentional, ongoing process centered in the local community through which youth gain the ability, authority, and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own education and learning spaces. However, Stromquist (2022) defined educational empowerment as the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, and critical awareness necessary to challenge social injustices and improve their personal and collective

circumstances through education. Holdsworth (2021) viewed it as the process of enabling young people to have a voice, influence, and control over decisions that affect their education, thereby fostering responsibility, autonomy, and active citizenship within learning environments.

Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment is defined as the provision of enabling conditions such as access to capital, entrepreneurial skills, and policy support that enhance the capacity of young people to engage in income-generating activities and contribute meaningfully to national development (Olaleye & Ajayi, 2021). Youth economic empowerment refers to the process of equipping young people with the resources, skills, opportunities, and support they need to achieve economic independence and actively participate in the economy. It involves enabling youths to access decent jobs, start and sustain businesses, manage finances effectively, and contribute productively to economic development (Adebayo & Ogunyomi, 2024).

This empowerment includes access to education, vocational training, financial services, mentorship, and policies that remove barriers to youth employment and entrepreneurship. Ultimately, youth

economic empowerment enhances their ability to make informed decisions about their economic futures and improves their overall well-being and contribution to society (Koech & Namusonge, 2020). Nwankwo and Ifeoma (2019) sees it as strengthening young people's capacity to make autonomous economic decisions, improve their livelihoods, and reduce dependency by providing relevant education, employability skills, and access to financial services. Chigunta (2021) opined that youth economic empowerment is defined as a process through which young people are enabled to gain the skills, access, and opportunities necessary to secure sustainable livelihoods and engage in productive work.

Unemployment Reduction

Unemployment reduction refers to the deliberate and systematic efforts undertaken by governments, private sectors, and development partners to lower the rate of joblessness within an economy, particularly by creating employment opportunities, fostering skill development, and encouraging entrepreneurship. According to Okon and Bassey (2022), unemployment reduction entails policies and strategies designed to increase labor market absorption of job seekers, particularly youth and women, through

targeted interventions. Similarly, Afolabi and Adebayo (2021) define unemployment reduction as the implementation of economic and social measures that aim to match job demand with job supply while addressing structural and cyclical causes of unemployment.

Mensah and Boateng (2023) emphasized that unemployment reduction involves enhancing employability through education reform, vocational training, and labor market reforms that align with the demands of the contemporary workforce. From a policy standpoint, Aliyu and Yusuf (2022) argue that unemployment reduction includes both direct job creation programs and enabling environments for private sector growth and informal sector formalization. Chukwu and Eze (2021) highlighted that reducing unemployment is not just about job creation but also about promoting decent work, improving job security, and ensuring equal access to labor opportunities across social groups.

Empirical Review

Oladipo et al. (2025) examined the effect of youth empowerment on unemployment reduction among young adults in Oyo State, Nigeria. Objectives, research questions, and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted a descriptive

survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 680 registered youths participating in empowerment programs under the Oyo State Ministry of Youth and Sports. A sample size of 600 respondents was selected using a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.72, indicating acceptable internal consistency. The data collected were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions, while the t-test statistical tool was used to test the formulated hypotheses. The findings showed that youth empowerment significantly contributes to the reduction of unemployment.

Kamau (2025) examined the effect of educational empowerment on unemployment reduction among college graduates in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study was guided by two research questions and adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population consisted of 220 final-year students from technical and vocational education training (TVET) institutions in Nairobi. Using simple random sampling, a total of 160 students were selected for the study. A structured questionnaire was used as the instrument

for data collection. The instrument underwent expert validation to ensure its relevance and clarity. Reliability was tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient method, yielding a coefficient value of 0.78, indicating acceptable reliability for the study. The findings revealed that educational empowerment had a significant positive effect on reducing unemployment among the youth in Kenya.

Adeyemi and Nwachukwu (2025) explored the impact of economic empowerment on unemployment reduction among young adults in Ogun State, Nigeria. The researchers adopted a sequential explanatory mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue. Primary data were collected through the administration of a structured questionnaire and follow-up interviews with selected beneficiaries of economic empowerment programmes, including youth enterprise and microcredit schemes. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 250 participants across three local government areas. The quantitative data were analyzed using Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics, while thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative interview

responses. The results revealed a strong and positive relationship between economic empowerment initiatives and reduction in youth unemployment in the study area.

Theoretical framework

The Empowerment Theory

The Empowerment Theory, developed by Rappaport (1987) and expanded by Zimmerman (1995), emphasizes the process through which individuals and communities gain control over their lives, access vital resources, and participate in decision-making that affects their well-being. It is grounded in the belief that people, especially marginalized groups like youths, can develop the capacity to influence social, economic, and political systems when empowered through appropriate interventions such as education, skills acquisition, and access to opportunities. Furthermore it focuses on how individuals and groups gain control over their lives by accessing resources, acquiring competencies, and participating actively in decision-making processes.

The theory has received support for its practical relevance and adaptability. Zimmerman (2000) highlights that the theory provides a strong foundation for designing community-based programs that enhance self-efficacy and economic

participation. Likewise, Perkins and Zimmerman (1995) note that one of its strengths lies in its multi-level application—allowing empowerment to be studied and implemented at individual, organizational, and community levels. Despite its relevance, the theory has faced criticism. According to Peterson (2014), Empowerment Theory often lacks clarity in operationalizing key constructs, making it difficult to measure empowerment outcomes consistently. Similarly, Maton (2016) argues that the theory sometimes overlooks structural barriers such as systemic poverty and inequality, focusing too narrowly on individual agency without adequately addressing societal constraints.

Empowerment Theory is highly applicable. It explains how empowering youths with skills, knowledge, and access to resources enhances their ability to secure employment or create self-sustaining ventures. In Taraba State, where unemployment remains a challenge, the theory provides a framework for evaluating how empowerment initiatives—such as educational and economic empowerment can reduce joblessness and promote economic independence.

Methodology

This study employed the survey research design; the design involves studying a sample of the population once at a point in time for the purpose of drawing inference that is generalized to the entire population

of the study. The population of the study consists of 664,699 youth across the Sixteen (16) local Government Areas of Taraba state. Table 1 shows the distribution of youth population in each local government:

Table 1: Population Distribution of Youths in Taraba State

S/No	Local Government Area	Population of Youths
1.	Ardo Kola	41,111
2.	Bali	59,551
3.	Donga	47,561
4.	Gashaka	24,592
5.	Gassol	69,148
6.	Ibi	437,85
7.	Jalingo	39,598
8.	Karim Lamido	347,86
9.	Kurmi	25,757
10.	Lau	17,075
11.	Sarduana	63,300
12.	Takum	34,139
13.	Ussa	25650
14.	Wukari	67,228
15.	Yorro	35,363
16.	Zing	36,055
TOTAL		664,699

Source: National Population Commission of Nigeria Bureau of Statistics, 2022

Based on the above, the minimum sample size for this study was ascertained using the formula by Taro Yamane for statistically attaining sample size from a given population (Yamane, 1973), which is 664,669. Calculations were made at 5% significance level as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Substituting in to the formula:

$$n = \frac{664,669}{1 + 664,669(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 400$$

Thus; a minimum sample size of four hundred (400) was used for the study, this study used stratified random sampling technique in selecting the respondents and it was done by dividing the youth population into distinct, non-overlapping strata based on relevant characteristics such local government area. From each stratum, respondents were randomly selected in proportion to their representation in the overall youth population. By dividing the population into strata and selecting respondents randomly within each category, stratified sampling minimizes bias, enhances comparability across groups, and improves the reliability of results and generalizability of findings to the broader youth population.

This study used both primary and secondary source of data; secondary data

was used to analyze the existing information collected by other researchers, institutions and agencies for purposes related to this study. It helps in identifying trends, supporting comparisons, and validating primary data findings; furthermore, for this study the secondary data was sourced through established record such as reports, journals, databases, and official statistics. On the other hand, the primary data was collected through the observations, interviews and questionnaire on five-point likert scale ranging from (Strongly agree = 5, A= Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree= 4 to Strongly Disagree = 1) as the research instrument. The study employed Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) method of evaluate the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The regression model is represented as;

$$UR = f(EDE, ECE)$$

Where

UR = Unemployment reduction

f = Functional notation

EDE = Educational empowerment

EDC = Economic Empowerment

This model is stated in econometric form as:

$$YU = \alpha + \beta_1 EDE + \beta_2 ECE_2 + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where:

Y =Dependent Variables, α = Constant Term, β = Beta coefficients, ϵ = Error Term

Data Presentation and Analysis

The distribution and retrieval of questionnaire across the sixteen local government area in Taraba State is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Distribution and Retrieval of Questionnaires

Questionnaires	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Properly filled/Returned	368	92
Not Properly filled / Not Returned	32	8
Total	400	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2: showed that four hundred (400) copies of questionnaire were administered to youth across the state, of which three hundred and sixty eight (368) copies were properly filled and returned which represent 92% response rate. Consequently all further analysis was conducted using three hundred and sixty eight (368) valid responses.

Analysis of Items in the Study Scale

The survey responses gathered through questionnaire have been meticulously organized and displayed in tables, breaking down the data based on individual variables and represented as simple percentages table as depicted below:

Table 3: Distribution of Responses on Educational Empowerment

Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
1 Educational empowerment helps me gain relevant knowledge for self-reliance	210(57%)	96(26%)	18(5%)	15(4%)	29(8%)
2 Access to quality education increases my chances of securing employment	81(22%)	117(48%)	18 (5%)	40(11%)	52(14%)
3 Skills acquired through education can help me start and manage a business	144 (39%)	147(40%)	26 (7%)	18 (5%)	33 (9%)
4 Youths in my community are given equal opportunities to benefit from educational programs	166 (45%)	147 (40%)	15(4%)	22 (6%)	18 (5%)
5 Educational empowerment builds my confidence to participate in economic and social activities	96 (26%)	210 (57%)	11 (3%)	37 (8%)	14(6%)

Source: Author's Computation, 2025

The responses from Table 3 indicated that 210 of the respondents representing (57%) strongly agreed that educational empowerment helps to gain relevant knowledge for self-reliance, 96 (26%)

agreed, 18 (5%) were undecided, 15(4%) disagreed and 29 (8%) strongly disagreed. The responses also showed that (22%) of the respondents strongly agreed, (48%) agreed, (5%) were undecided, (11%)

disagreed while (14%) strongly disagreed that access to quality education increases their chances of securing employment. Similarly, the responses showed that (39%) strongly agreed, (40%) agreed, (7%) were undecided, (5%) disagreed and (9%) strongly disagreed that skills acquired through education can help them start and manage a business. In continuation, the table showed that (45%) strongly agreed, (40%) agreed (4%) were undecided, (6%) disagreed and (5%) strongly disagreed that youths in their community are given equal opportunities to benefit from educational programs. Lastly it was also revealed from

the respondents gathered that (26%) strongly agreed, (57%) agreed, (3%) were undecided, (8%) disagreed and (6%) strongly disagreed that educational empowerment builds their confidence to participate in economic and social activities. The practical implication of this analysis is that investing in youth education especially in skills-based, vocational, and entrepreneurial training can directly reduce youth unemployment by equipping them with the knowledge and competencies needed to access jobs or create self-employment opportunities.

Table 4: Distribution of Responses on Economic Empowerment

	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Youth economic empowerment programs provide me with practical skills for self-employment.	166 (45%)	147(40%)	15(4%)	18 (5%)	22 (6%)
2	Access to financial resources (e.g., loans, grants) helps me pursue entrepreneurial opportunities.	132 (36%)	195(53%)	15 (4%)	11 (3%)	15 (4%)
3	Government and empowerment initiatives have improved youth economic conditions in my area	184 (50%)	151(41%)	7(2%)	18 (5%)	8 (2%)
4	I have received adequate training to start and manage a small business	103 (28%)	207(59%)	11 (3%)	18 (5%)	19(5%)
5	Economic empowerment plays a key role in reducing youth unemployment in my community.	99(27%)	203(55%)	22 (6%)	22 (6%)	23 (6%)

Source: Author's Computation, 2025

In Table 4, the responses showed that 166 respondents which indicated (45%) strongly agreed, 147 (40%) agreed, 15 (4%) were neutral, 18 (5%) disagreed while 22 (6%) strongly disagreed that youth economic empowerment programs provide them with practical skills for self-employment. Also the findings revealed that (36%) strongly agreed that access to financial resources (e.g., loans, grants) helps them pursue entrepreneurial opportunities, while (53%) agreed, (4%) were undecided, (3%) disagreed and (4%) strongly disagreed. In addition the findings revealed that (50%) of the respondents strongly agreed, (41%) agreed, (3%) were neutral, (5%) disagreed and (2%) strongly disagreed that government and empowerment initiatives have improved

youth economic conditions in their area. Additionally, (28%) of the respondents strongly agreed, (59%) agreed that they have received adequate training to start and manage a small business, while (3%) were neutral, (5%) and (5%) disagree and strongly disagree respectively. In conclusion (27%) strongly agreed, (55%) agreed, (6%) were undecided, (6%) disagreed and (6%) strongly disagreed to the assertion that economic empowerment plays a key role in reducing youth unemployment their community. The practical implication is that providing youths with access to financial resources, entrepreneurial support, and income-generating opportunities can significantly reduce unemployment.

Table 5: Distribution of Unemployment Reduction

	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	I have noticed a decline in youth unemployment in my community over the past two years	63 (17%)	48 (13%)	70(19%)	18 (19%)	117 (32%)
2	Government initiatives have played a significant role in reducing youth unemployment	33(9%)	48 (13%)	081 (5%)	11 (22%)	188(51%)

3	Skill acquisition programs have helped many youths find jobs or start businesses	29(8%)	59 (16%)	26 (7%)	18 (19%)	184 (50%)
4	There are sufficient job opportunities available for young people in my community	48 (13%)	40 (11%)	18 (5%)	18 (19%)	192(52%)
5	Young people have easy access to information about available job openings	44 (12%)	44(12%)	7 (2%)	22 (23%)	188(51%)

Source: Author's Computation, 2025

The responses from Table 5 revealed that 70 respondents which represent (17%) strongly agreed, 53(13%) agreed, 78(19%) were undecided, 78 (19%) disagreed and 130 (32%) strongly disagreed that they have noticed a decline in youth unemployment in their community over the past two years. Similarly, the responses also revealed that (9%) strongly agreed, (13%) agreed, (5%) were undecided, (22%) disagreed and (51%) strongly disagreed that government initiatives have played a significant role in reducing youth unemployment. Furthermore, 33 (8%) strongly agreed, 65 (16%) agreed, 29 (7%) were neutral, 77 (19%) disagreed and 205 (50%) strongly disagreed that skill acquisition programs have helped many youths find jobs or start businesses. In addition the responses indicated that (13%)

strongly agreed, (11%) agreed, (5%) were undecided, (19%) disagreed and (52%) strongly disagreed that there are sufficient job opportunities available for young people in their community Finally, (12%) strongly agreed, (12%) agreed, (2%) were neutral, (23%) disagreed and (51%) strongly disagreed that young people have easy access to information about available job openings. This practical implication of these responses is that the Taraba State government has not fully utilized educational and economic empowerment as effective strategies for equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to become self-reliant and competitive in the labour market, as a significant number of youths across the state remain jobless.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.792 ^a	.627	.622	.86842

Predictors: (Constant), EDE, ECE

Source: SPSS (2025)

The results indicate an R-squared value of .627, meaning that 62.7% of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the collective influence of the independent variables. Furthermore, the adjusted R-squared value of .622 implies that 62.2% of the factors related to the youth empowerment are captured within the model, with 37.8% remaining unaccounted for.

Table 7: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	208.939	2	104.470	138.525	.000 ^a
				.754		
	Residual	124.436	165			
	Total	333.375	167			

a. Predictors: (Constant), EDE, ECE

b. Dependent Variable: UR

Source: SPSS (2025)

Table 7 shows an F-statistic value of 138.525 with a significance level of .000, indicating that the model is well-fitted and statistically significant at the 5% level. This result confirms that the model is reliable for decision-making purposes

Test of Hypothesis

Table 8: Coefficients^a

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	-3.090	.763		-4.052	.000
	EDE	1.391	.117	1.174	11.878	.000
	ECE	507	.106	.475	4.801	.000

a. Dependent Variable: UR

Source: SPSS (2025)

Table 8 presented the statistical analysis results, showing a t-statistic of 11.878 with a significance level of 0.000, indicating that educational empowerment has a significant and positive effect on unemployment reduction amongst youths in Taraba State. Consequently, the null hypothesis, stating that educational empowerment has no significant effect on unemployment reduction amongst youths in Taraba State, is rejected.

Additionally, Table 8 reported a t-statistic of 4.801 with a significance level of 0.000, further demonstrating that the economic empowerment significantly and positively affects unemployment reduction amongst youths in Taraba State, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis which states that economic empowerment has no significant effect on unemployment reduction amongst youths in Taraba State.

Discussion of Findings

Firstly, the study examined the impact of educational empowerment on unemployment reduction amongst youths in Taraba State. The results show that

educational empowerment has a significant positive on unemployment reduction. The practical implication of this finding is that investing in youth education especially in skills-based, vocational, and entrepreneurial training can directly reduce youth unemployment by equipping them with the knowledge and competencies needed to access jobs or create self-employment opportunities. The finding of this study is consistent with the result of (Kamau, 2025; Mwangi, 2025) who conducted a study earlier and also found a significant positive effect of educational empowerment on unemployment reduction.

The findings from the second hypotheses reveal that economic empowerment has a significant positive effect on unemployment reduction amongst youths in Taraba State. The practical implication is that providing youths with access to financial resources, entrepreneurial support, and income-generating opportunities can significantly reduce unemployment. The significant positive effect of economic empowerment on

unemployment reduction agrees with the findings of Adeyemi and Nwachukwu (2025); Ibrahim and Okonkwo (2024) respectively.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated youth empowerment and its impacts on unemployment reduction amongst youths in Taraba State, Nigeria. Data were sourced from primary sources and were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. Therefore, the study concluded that youth empowerment had a significant effect on unemployment reduction amongst youths in Taraba State.

In line with the findings of the study, following recommendations are proffered:

- i. Taraba State government should establish community-based vocational training centers across local government areas in the State, integrated into the formal education system, to equip youths with both academic knowledge and marketable skills such as ICT, agriculture, tailoring, and renewable energy technologies. This dual empowerment approach increases their employability and entrepreneurial capacity, thereby

reducing unemployment by creating job-ready graduates and self-employed individuals capable of generating income within their local communities.

- ii. Taraba State government should implement a youth-targeted microfinance scheme in partnership with local cooperatives and financial institutions, offering accessible, low-interest loans and financial literacy training to economically empower young people in the State. By providing start-up capital and business management skills, this initiative enables youths to launch and sustain small-scale enterprises, thereby creating employment for themselves and potentially for others, which directly contributes to reducing unemployment in the state.

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Appendix I

Questionnaire

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U = Undecided, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree	
S/N	Educational Empowerment
	SA A U D SD
1	Educational empowerment helps me gain relevant knowledge for self-reliance
2	Access to quality education increases my chances of securing employment

- 3 Skills acquired through education can help me start and manage a business
- 4 Youths in my community are given equal opportunities to benefit from educational programs
- 5 Educational empowerment builds my confidence to participate in economic and social activities

Economic Empowerment

- 1 Youth economic empowerment programs provide me with practical skills for self-employment.
- 2 Access to financial resources (e.g., loans, grants) helps me pursue entrepreneurial opportunities.
- 3 Government and empowerment initiatives have improved youth economic conditions in my area
- 4 I have received adequate training to start and manage a small business
- 5 Economic empowerment plays a key role in reducing youth unemployment in my community.

Unemployment Reduction

- 1 I have noticed a decline in youth unemployment in my community over the past two years
- 2 Government initiatives have played a significant role in reducing youth unemployment
- 3 Skill acquisition programs have helped many youths find jobs or start businesses
- 4 There are sufficient job opportunities available for young people in my community
- 5 Young people have easy access to information about available job openings