

**IRREGULAR MIGRATION WITH DRUG TRAFFICKING AS A RESULT OF  
UNEMPLOYMENT AND LACK OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS AMONG  
NIGERIAN YOUTHS: AN ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED MIGRANT RETURNEES  
IN NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study was carried out to assess the level of entrepreneurial skill of identified migrant returnees in Nigeria as it links to the reason for their involvement in irregular migration and drug trafficking. The study was carried out by the author through a pre and post training assessment of identified migrant returnees during their vocational business and entrepreneurial reintegration training program. Supplementary information was also gathered during the class interaction session with the participants as they were sharing their migration experience. The result revealed that 52.6% of the migrant returnees admitted that they have been involved in drug peddling and trafficking during their migration. From the pre training assessment, 72.5% of the participants agreed that they have not received any vocational business training before. The post assessment showed that 93% of the participants would like to start up one of the businesses they were exposed to after the vocational training they received and were willing to start up their own business in the country to better their livelihood. The participants (97%) agreed that the entrepreneurial and business vocational training given to them have exposed them with specific idea and skills to develop business idea. 76.5% were able to develop a business plan after the training. Eighty-seven (89%) of the participants want such entrepreneurial and business vocational training program to continue as a means to reintegrate the migrant returnees and to discourage irregular migration and drug trafficking. It is expected that if these migrant returnees had acquired entrepreneurial or vocational skills, they would have established various businesses in their country and therefore would not have fall victims of irregular migration and drug trafficking as an alternative to make a living.

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The increasing rate of unemployment in Nigeria resulting to irregular migration of both young men and women is a distressing phenomenon. The National Bureau of Statistics 2010 Research Studies indicate that 32.5 million Nigerians are unemployed (NBS, 2010). Of concern is the undeniable link between the high unemployment rate of Nigerians between the ages of 18-30 and the high rate of poverty and social malaise currently bedevilling the nation.

Many young men and women are deceived coupled with wrong information that they will find better jobs outside the country. These young people often fall into wrong hands of organized recruiters who facilitate their movement outside the country. Some of these migrants are introduced into drug trafficking, and at the same hand these migrants face a lot of hardship both on their way and to their final destination and sometimes end up being stranded as many goes into drug peddling, prostitution, street begging while some of them end up in prisons as a result of penalty against their crimes and therefore constituting nuisance to the country where they migrated into (UNODC 2006/2011; IOM 2005; UNCRI 2004). Europe has become one of the major continents with high rate of migrants from Nigeria (UNODC 2011).

The premise being that most Nigerian school leavers and graduates have relatively little job related skills and are ill-prepared for the job market, thereby always fall victims of irregular migration and drug trafficking to other countries in order to better their livelihood.

### **1.1 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

This study was carried out to assess the level of entrepreneurial skill of identified migrant returnees in Nigeria as it relates to the reason for their involvement in irregular migration and drug trafficking.

## **2.0 METHODOLOGY**

The study was carried out through a pre and post training assessment of identified migrant returnees. The questionnaires were self-administered to a total number of 104 participants (identified migrant returnees) before and after their vocational business and entrepreneurial reintegration training program. Supplementary information was also gathered during the class interaction session with the participants as they were sharing their migration experience.

The participants were trained in the following topics; Overview of Nigeria Business Environment; Best Lucrative MSMEs Business Opportunities in Nigeria; Business Financing; Book-keeping Basics and Record Keeping; Catfish Farming, Poultry Farming, Piggery; Cassava Production; Interior Decoration; and Cosmetic Production.

## **3.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

### **3.1 Respondents (Participants) Involvement in Drug Peddling or Trafficking**

From assessment, 52.6% admitted that they have been involved in drug peddling and trafficking, and related issues during their migration as shown in Figure 1.

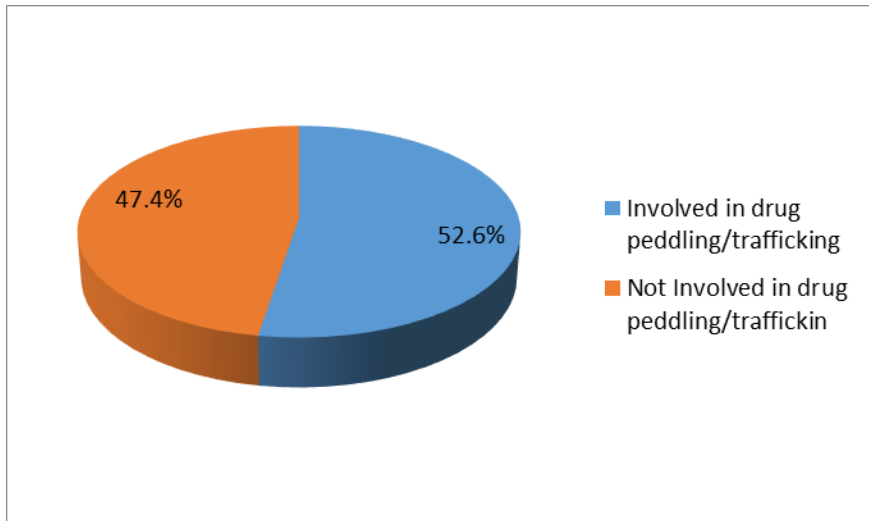


Fig 1

Excerpt from experience sharing;

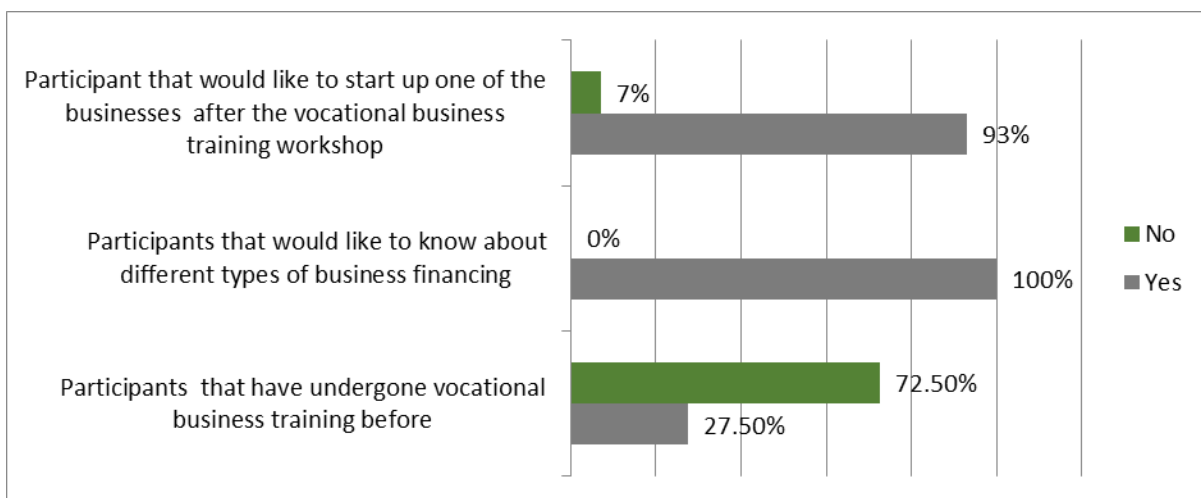
*I was imprisoned in Italy due to my involvement in drug trafficking – participant*

*I met some irregular migrants on our journey through desert that carry drugs and some of them die in the desert – participant*

*I have to peddle drugs in order to survive in Europe - participants*

### 3.2 Participants' Pre training assessment

Figure 2: Shows that 72.5% percent of the participants have not received any vocational business training before while 27.5% have received vocational training formerly. All the participants (100%) were interested to know about different sources of business financing. 93% of the participants responded that they would like to start up one of the businesses they were exposed to after the vocational training workshop.





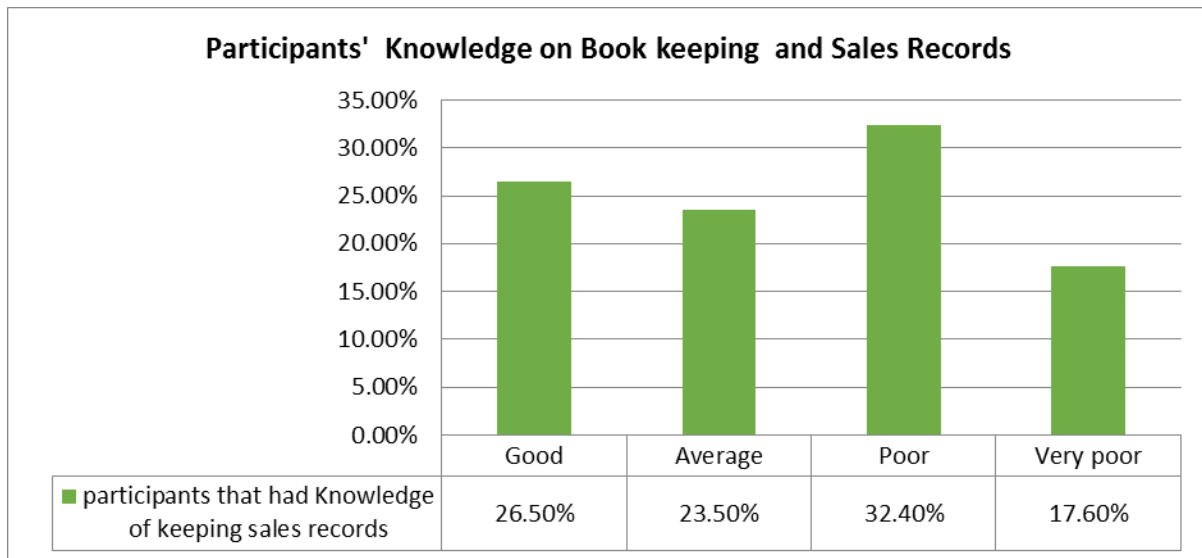


Fig 4

### 3.3 Participants' Post training assessment

According to the participants' post-training assessment as illustrated in figure 5 below, 97.0% of the participants agreed that the entrepreneurial and business vocational training given to them have exposed them with specific idea and skills to develop business idea while 3.0% have not yet got specific idea and skills to develop business idea. 76.5% were able to develop a business plan after the training. Based on the training received, 87% of the participants were willing to start up their own business in the country to better their livelihood. About 89% of the participants want such entrepreneurial and business vocational training to continue as a means to reintegrate the migrant returnees and to discourage irregular migration.

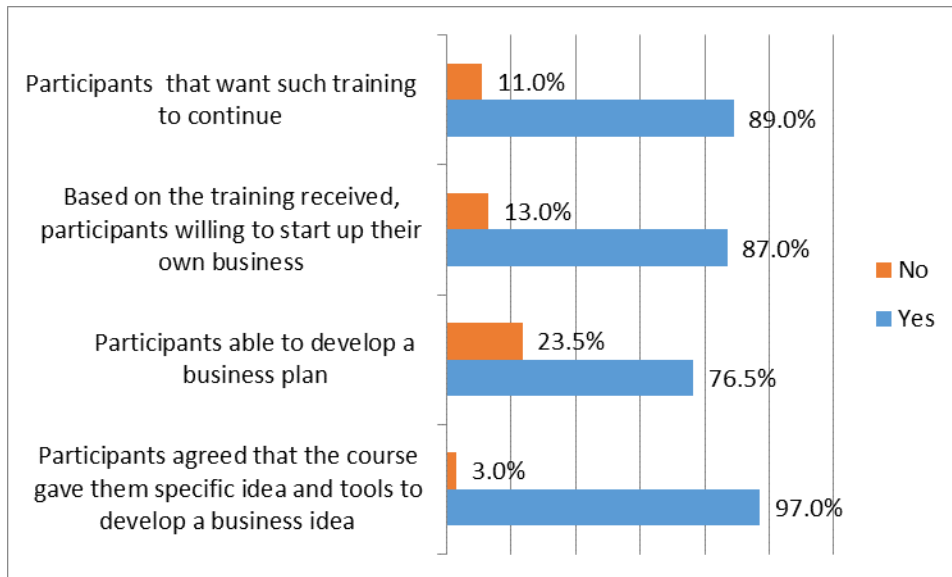


Fig 5

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

Nigeria is presently facing high rate of unemployment and youths are illegally migrating to other countries and most being involved in drug trafficking and at the same time being deported or repatriated back to Nigeria and these young people are roaming about the street without any meaningful achievement, and thereby can fall victims of drug use, re-migrating and drug trafficking, and other crime. It is assumed that if these migrant returnees had acquired entrepreneurial or vocational skills, they would have established various businesses in their country and therefore would not have fall victims of irregular migration and drug trafficking as an alternative to make a living.

#### 5.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the government should review the school curriculum and educational policies, and incorporate more engaging entrepreneurship studies in the educational curriculum from the basic education to the tertiary institutions to reduce potential migration and drug trafficking as an alternative for better livelihood. For the migrant returnees, the government should identify them and provide them with vocational and business skill acquisition through training as a form of reintegration program to discourage re-migration and drug trafficking, and reduce unemployment, crime and terrorism within and outside the country.

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