

Effects of Sale of Scrap and Renewable Materials among Youth in Katsina State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The informal sale of scrap and renewable materials has long served as a source of livelihood for youth in Katsina State. However, recent socio-economic, policy, and environmental dynamics have led to a noticeable decline in youth participation and profit generation from this sector. This study investigates effects of sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in katsina state, Nigeria. Three objectives were examined and three research questions were raised and the three hypotheses were formulated in line with the stated objectives. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 120 respondents using structured questionnaires. From the Findings hypothesis one was accepted (p-value of $.722 > 0.05$). Hypothesis two was also accepted (p-value of $.519 > 0.05$). Hypothesis three was accepted (p-value of $.127 > 0.05$). Recommendations include sensitization programs, youth empowerment schemes, and the regulation of scrap trade policies to enhance productivity in the sector.

Keywords: negative impact, informal sale of scrap, renewable materials, socio-economic.

Introduction

In many parts of Nigeria, the informal economy plays a pivotal role in youth employment, especially in resource-limited areas like Katsina State. One of the emerging informal activities is the collection, processing, and resale of scrap and renewable materials such as metals, plastics, and electronic waste. These activities provide a means of survival for many unemployed youth (Aliyu & Lawal, 2021). However, recent developments have shown a sharp decline in youth participation and profitability in this sector.

This paper investigates the negative factors affecting the sale of scrap and renewable materials in Katsina State and assesses the socioeconomic consequences for youth in the region. The research seeks to answer: What are the key challenges affecting the scrap material trade among youth, and what are the consequences on their livelihoods?

Katsina State, located in Northern Nigeria, faces high rates of youth unemployment. The scrap and renewable material industry, including metals, plastics, and electronic waste, provides informal

income opportunities (Lawal, 2021). Nevertheless, societal perceptions that label scrap collection as demeaning, along with inadequate institutional support, have led to a declining interest among young people.

In recent years, Nigeria has witnessed an increasing youth population struggling with unemployment and economic marginalization. One promising yet underutilized avenue for livelihood is the sale of scrap and renewable materials. This informal sector contributes significantly to waste management and recycling, promoting both environmental sustainability and youth entrepreneurship (Adebayo & Yusuf, 2020). However, in Katsina State, this opportunity remains largely untapped due to several negative factors that discourage youth involvement.

Scrap and renewable material trading has long been a component of the informal sector in Nigeria, offering employment to youth and contributing to environmental sustainability (Omisore & Abayomi, 2020). Youth engagement in this sector often stems from high unemployment rates and limited access to formal job markets (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2021).

According to Babalola and Ogunyemi (2019), factors such as inconsistent government regulations, community harassment, and lack of technical knowledge limit the viability of this trade. Similarly, Akinbinu (2020) notes that the stigmatization of youth involved in scrap collection and resale further dis-incentivizes participation. The scrap economy, when properly harnessed, not only offers economic opportunities but also contributes to environmental cleanup (Ibrahim & Musa, 2021); However, the absence of institutional support continues to hinder its development.

Several studies highlight how urbanization and modernization reduce access to recyclable waste due to more centralized waste management systems (Ajani, 2018). Additionally, youth now associate scrap collection with low social status, leading to reduced interest (Muhammad, 2021). This is compounded by a lack of institutional support for renewable material initiatives and recycling enterprises in Northern Nigeria (Yahaya & Danladi, 2022).

The sale of scrap materials serves both economic and environmental functions by providing employment and reducing waste (Okoro & Okechukwu, 2020). In countries like Nigeria, it has historically served as an informal economic buffer. However, scholars such as Eze and Sani (2022) argue that the lack of formal support, regulation, and infrastructure weakens its sustainability. Youth in Northern Nigeria, including Katsina State, often resort to scrap sales due to limited employment opportunities (Garba, 2021), but stigma, health hazards, and policy barriers are rising concerns.

The informal recycling sector, including scrap trading, has historically provided employment for marginalized groups in developing countries (Medina, 2000). In Nigeria, this sector has served as a fallback for unemployed youth, offering minimal entry barriers (Adewuyi, 2016). However, recent changes—ranging from unfavorable environmental policies to societal perceptions—have limited its potential (Onifade & Adedokun, 2020).

Negative Factors Affecting Youth Participation Social Stigma

One of the most significant deterrents is the social stigma associated with collecting and selling scrap. Youth involved in this trade are often perceived as uneducated or involved in criminal activities, which negatively impact their social standing (Ibrahim & Ahmed, 2022).

Lack of Access to Capital

Many young people lack the startup capital needed to scale their operations or invest in tools and equipment required for efficient scrap collection and resale (Okonkwo, 2019). This lack of financial support discourages sustained involvement.

Inadequate Government Regulation

The absence of formal policies or structured support from the government has left the sector largely unregulated. This makes it difficult for youth to operate legally or profitably (Garba, 2020).

Environmental and Health Hazards

Exposure to hazardous materials during collection and processing, especially electronic waste, poses serious health risks. Without proper training or protective gear, many youths abandon the practice after initial involvement (Ogunleye & Musa, 2021).

Socioeconomic Implications

The reduced participation of youth in the scrap trade has dual consequences. Firstly, it exacerbates youth unemployment and poverty levels in the state. Secondly, it undermines environmental sustainability, as fewer recyclable materials are collected and processed, leading to increased pollution and waste accumulation (Bello & Danjuma, 2022).

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the effect of sale of scrap and renewable materials in Katsina State.
2. To examine the effect of sale of scrap and renewable materials on urban and rural areas among youth in Katsina State.
3. To assess the gender differential effect on the sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State.

Research Question

1. What is the effect of sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State?
2. What is the effect of sale of scrap and renewable materials on urban and rural areas among youth in Katsina State?
3. What is the gender differential effect on the sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State?

Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant effect of sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State.
2. There is no significant effect of sale of scrap and renewable materials on urban and rural areas among youth in Katsina State.
3. There is no significant gender differential effect on the sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design, which allowed for the collection of data through structured questionnaires and in-depth interview to understand the perceptions and experiences of youth involved in scrap sales in Katsina State.

The population of the study comprised of five thousand (5000) youth aged 18–35 engaged or formerly engaged in the sale of scrap and renewable materials across urban and semi-urban areas of Katsina State, including Daura, Funtua, and Katsina city (News Agency of Nigeria 2024).

Table 1: Population

S/N	SENATORIAL ZONE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	AGE	GENDER	
				MALE	FEMALE
1	KATSINA ZONE	2,057	18-35	2,005	52
2	DAURA ZONE	1,654	18-35	1,644	10
3	FUNTUA ZONE	1,289	18-35	1,276	13
4	TOTAL	5,000		4,025	75

Source: News Agency of Nigeria (2024)

A sample of 120 respondents was selected using a simple random sampling technique, focusing on those with firsthand experience in the scrap trade. A structured questionnaire was developed with both closed and open-ended questions and 90 questionnaires were administered to the participants to collect quantitative data. In-depth interviews were conducted with 30 participants, local scrap dealers, and government officials to gain qualitative insights.

Table 2: Sample Size

S/N	SENATORIAL ZONE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	AGE	GENDER	
				MALE	FEMALE
1	KATSINA ZONE	40	18-35	30	10
2	DAURA ZONE	40	18-35	35	5
3	FUNTUA ZONE	40	18-35	35	5
4	TOTAL	120		100	20

Source: News Agency of Nigeria (2024)

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by three experts in sociology and entrepreneurship studies.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and hypotheses stated were tested using T-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Result

Table 3: Result of Independent t-test on the Effect of Sale of Scrap and Renewable Materials among youth in Katsina State

Variable	N	Mean	Std. dev.	Std. err.	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	P-value
Age								
18-25	20	1.250	.500	.250	12	.173	2.92	.722
26-35	20	1.300	.483	.152				

From table 3 above, p-value of .722 was found to be greater than the alpha value of 0.05 level of significant. Hence the hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect of the sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State is hereby retained and accepted.

Table 4: Result of Independent t-test on rural and urban on Sale of Scrap and Renewable Materials among youth in Katsina State

Variable	N	Mean	Std. dev.	Std. err.	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	P-value
Area								
Rural	20	1.00	.626	.2466	14	.661	2.92	.519
Urban	20	1.33	.487	.126				

From table 4 above show that, p-value of .519 was found to be greater than the alpha value of 0.05 level of significant. Hence the hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect on Rural and Urban of the sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State is hereby retained and accepted.

Table 5: Result of Independent t-test on Gender of the Sale of Scrap and Renewable Materials among youth in Katsina State

Variable	N	Mean	Std. dev.	Std. err.	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	P-value
Gender								
Male	20	3.818	6.030	1.818				

				15	.728	2.92	.127
Female	20	2.000	.000	.000			

From table 5 above show that, p-value of .127 was found to be greater than the alpha value of 0.05 level of significant. Hence the hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect on Gender on sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State is hereby retained and accepted.

Findings

1. Hypothesis one was accepted because p-value of .722 found to be greater than alpha value of 0.05 level of significant which shows that there is on significant effect of the sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State
2. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect on sale of scrap and renewable materials on Rural and Urban among youth in Katsina State was accepted because p-value of .519 was found to be higher than the alpha value of 0.05 level of significant.
3. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant gender differential effect on sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State was accepted because p-value of .127 was found to be higher than the alpha value of 0.05 level of significant.

Discussion

Hypothesis one of this research revealed that, there is no significant effect of the sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State. This finding is in line with the work of Babalola and Ogunyemi (2019), that investigated on factors such as inconsistent government regulations, community harassment, and lack of technical knowledge limit the viability of this trade and recommended that, The reduced participation of youth in the scrap trade has dual consequences. Firstly, it exacerbates youth unemployment and poverty levels in the state. Secondly, it undermines environmental sustainability, as fewer recyclable materials are collected and processed, leading to increased pollution and waste accumulation (Bello & Danjuma, 2022). Eze and Sani (2022) argue that the lack of formal support, regulation, and infrastructure weakens its sustainability.

The finding of hypothesis two of this research work revealed that, there is no significant effect on Rural and Urban of the sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State. This findings is in conformity with the findings of Akinbinu (2020) who investigated on the societal neglect of the informal sector, scrap and renewable material trade and recommended that, informal sector plays a vital role in youth empowerment and waste management. The government's lack of formal recognition and supportive frameworks for the industry continues to hinder its growth. And the absence of formal policies or structured support from the government has left the sector largely unregulated. This makes it difficult for youth to operate legally or profitably.

From the finding of hypothesis three of this research work which revealed that, there is no significant effect on Gender on sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina

State. This is in agreement with the findings of Garba, (2020) who carried out a study on community attitudes and institutionalized harassment on youth motivation in the sale of scrap.

Conclusion

The sale of scrap and renewable materials represents a vital yet neglected avenue for youth employment in Katsina State. Without proactive policy and societal support, the continued decline of this sector may exacerbate youth unemployment and social unrest. Collaborative efforts from government, community, and NGOs are crucial to revive this informal economy. In addition the sale of scrap and renewable materials among youth in Katsina State is both a symptom and a cause of broader socioeconomic challenges. While it provides short-term economic relief, the negative consequences including theft, health risks, and social alienation require urgent attention. A holistic approach involving policy reform, youth engagement, and community cooperation is essential for addressing these challenges and promoting sustainable development in Katsina State.

Recommendations

1. **Policy Review and Regulation:** Government should develop formal regulations to guide and support scrap and renewable material sales.
2. **Capacity Building:** Training and empowerment programs should be organized to equip youth with skills in recycling and sustainable waste management.
3. **Awareness Campaigns:** Public sensitization should be carried out to reduce the stigma associated with scrap trading.
4. **Incentivisation:** Provision of tools, safety gear, and startup capital to youth groups can encourage productive participation in the sector.
5. **Collaboration with NGOs:** Civil society organizations should be involved in creating sustainable scrap and recycling programs targeting vulnerable youth.
6. **Community Engagement:** Educate the public and youths on the dangers of unregulated scrap trading and promote community policing.

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