



Youth Engagement in Business within Democratic Republic of Congo: A Comparative Analysis across Africa

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Abstract

Youth engagement in business has become a critical issue across Africa, particularly within emerging economies such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where economic reforms and political instability intersect to shape entrepreneurial activities. The research employs a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative interviews with quantitative data analysis using surveys distributed among young entrepreneurs in various provinces of DRC. Data collection covers the period from to , focusing on factors such as access to finance, education levels, and government support. Findings indicate that despite significant disparities across regions, youth entrepreneurship in DRC is predominantly driven by necessity rather than opportunity, with a notable proportion (35%) of respondents indicating survival-oriented business models. Additionally, educational attainment remains a critical barrier for young entrepreneurs, affecting their ability to secure financing and operate sustainably. The analysis reveals that while there are regional variations in youth engagement patterns, the overall trend underscores the urgent need for inclusive economic policies and targeted support initiatives tailored to address specific challenges faced by young entrepreneurs in DRC. Based on these findings, recommendations include fostering a more conducive business environment through policy reforms aimed at reducing bureaucratic hurdles, enhancing access to finance mechanisms specifically designed for youth entrepreneurs, and improving educational curricula to better equip them with the skills needed for sustainable business growth. Youth entrepreneurship, Democratic Republic of Congo, African investment studies, comparative analysis

Keywords: *Youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, microfinance, economic development, participatory governance, indigenous knowledge systems, developmental economics*

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