



# The Informal Sector and Education in Urban Senegal: A Qualitative Inquiry into Local Dynamics

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## Abstract

The urban informal sector in Senegal plays a significant role in employment, particularly for youth and women, despite formal education systems. This study employs qualitative research methods including semi-structured interviews with 50 workers from various sectors of the urban informal economy, focus group discussions with educators and community leaders, and document reviews to understand perspectives on education and employment within this sector. The analysis reveals that while formal education is valued, many in the workforce see it as insufficient for securing jobs in the informal sector. There is a notable preference for vocational training over academic qualifications. The findings suggest that educational pathways tailored to the needs of the urban informal sector could enhance employability and skill acquisition among its workforce. Educational institutions should collaborate with local employers to design curricula more aligned with job market demands, and community programmes should support vocational training for those who do not pursue formal education.

**Keywords:** *Africanization, Contextual Analysis, Ethnography, Feminist Theory, Inclusion Studies, Participatory Action Research, Urban Sociology*

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