

Factors Militating Against Nigerian Youths Taking Up Careers in Agriculture in Gwarinpa, Abuja, Nigeria

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Abstract

The research was carried to determine the factors militating against Nigerian youths taking up careers in agriculture in Gwarinpa, Amac, and FCT. The population for this study was derived from the youths in 5 Avenues in Gwarinpa, Amac, FCT, and Abuja. A simple random sampling method was used in this research to select a sample size of 120 respondents for this research. Respondents in Gwarinpa were given self-administered questionnaires, which were used to gather data. Based on the questionnaires, data were analyzed using a statistical software for social sciences utilizing descriptive statistics. According to the findings, there were more male youths (65.00%) than female youths (35.00%). 34.17% were within the age of 31 – 35 (34.17%) while 29.17% were within the age of 26 – 30. 60.00% were single, while 25.83% were married and 6.67 were divorced. 68.33% had house hold size between 1-5 while 17.50% of the youth had 6-10 people in their house hold. 39.17% had tertiary education, 48.33% had secondary education while 12.50%. The respondents indicated that; agriculture is a lucrative occupation (mean = 3.08), agriculture as an occupation is not for a highly educated youth (mean = 3.23) and agriculture is a decent job for employer of labour (mean = 2.87) and that agriculture is for the elderly and illiterates (mean = 2.91). Family choice and youth preference (mean = 3.64) was the major factor affecting youths decision in agricultural career. Respondents concurred that the absence of Agriculture support services, such as youth extension in the community is another factor affecting the career choice of youth in agriculture. Other factors that were agreed by respondents as affecting career choice in agriculture are; Lack of an organized ready market (mean = 3.04), Lack of credit facility without collateral (mean = 3.05), absence of agriculture inputs such as modified seeds, seedlings and agrochemicals (mean = 2.93). Poultry farming was the young people's top profession choice in the research area (93.33%) followed by fisheries production (85.00%) and agronomic practice (68.33%). Socio-economic elements that play a role in perception of youths on agriculture showed that socio economic characteristics such as gender, occupation, annual income and level of education had significant effect on the perception on the youth on agriculture.

Keywords: Youth, Career, Agriculture, Education, Perception.

1. Introduction

Youth by definition is a stage in human life by which man transforms from childhood to adulthood. It is usually identified in man with such characteristics as serious vigour, very sharp or intelligence, highly enthusiastic, hope and innovative. These attributes make way for growth and development, these cush-

ion their inability for economic power or having resources at their disposal that will enable them to become independent (Jabal et al, 2021). Youths are said to conform to a heterogeneous group with continuous evolution based on varying experiences that may be on account of region or country, There are so many variations in the definition of youth and this makes the youth

think that he is neither here nor there, he is not a child, neither is he regarded as an adult [1]. However, the United Nations defined youth as individuals who are between the age ranges of 15 -24 years of age. Some Psychologists in their own view see youth as a state of readiness in which the high energy in such an individual is converted into potentials for full employment [2]. Researchers grade youths as people between 10-30 years of age, while Nigeria officially places persons above 18 as adults while those below 18 are minor, these people cannot marry nor cast vote by law. According to 18 years is the average age of youth in their study while took 29.6 years as their own average. Reported 28 years. Said 24 years while reported 10 -24 years as indices for defining youths. In Nigeria however young people between the ages of 18 -30 are called youths because they still depend on their parents for livelihood.

According to youth is an evolutionary stage in the development of humans and thus is a stage in man's life which is at the middle of childhood and Adulthood, this is the reason why youth is neither a child nor an adult [3]. It is this disparity that causes problem in their personality development as this will make them seek for where they really belong hence the term 'Youth' means an age bracket while 'Youth hood' is psychological meaning a turning point in the development of man, a time to emerge into adult hood because of this they are usually addressed as the 'Leaders' of tomorrow or the Future of the Country because of the energetic level and aspirations they possess. According to World Bank youths most times are called prime movers or pacesetters of any nation and as such their involvement in agriculture will improve the socioeconomic life of the state like Nigeria where they make up 60% of the population. Found out that Nigerian economy can be called youth economy since the young ones now will become parents, leaders and labour force of the nearest future.

However, such constraints as unemployment, poverty, urbanisation, lack of capacity and skill, these have kept them from moving forward in this country. Stated that the Agricultural Sector is a big industry with several opportunities that are yet to be harnessed in other to bring about ensuring food security through the cultivation of sustainable crops, access to market which will translate to a higher income earning that will finally improve the livelihood of farmers at the community level [4]. Agriculture is dynamic abound in many opportunities various areas, including Administration, production, post production and marketing. Some of the career areas in Agriculture include Soil and water conservation experts, Rural Development officers, Agricultural development officer, Horticulture development officer, other areas include Animal health and husbandry, Agricultural Technology, Agricultural Extension, Agro-industry and entrepreneurship. Upon all these laudable career spaces, the Nigerian youth has still not found the reason why he or she may join the agricultural sector thus the continuous lack in skill and labour in this sector [2, 5].

1.1. Career Options in Agriculture

A person's career is the progression and actions they do during their lifetime, particularly those that are connected to their employment. Instead of only referencing to one position, a career is sometimes made up of the positions held, titles obtained, and

work completed over a lengthy time frame. According to a person's career is the order and range of paid and unpaid jobs they hold during their lifetime [6]. More broadly, "career" refers to a person's life roles, hobbies, education, and employment.

Careers are an organized series of experiences that help students get ready for effective involvement in their families, communities, higher education, and careers. Students are equipped for achievement in the contemporary world through careers and vocational technical education [7]. Any profession that is offered to individuals has the potential to develop new possibilities, alter, or become outdated. Careers are dynamic, and our ability to adapt, innovate, and learn new things is now essential to maintaining our way of life [8]. As a result of their research, claim that "parents or guardians and friends are the ones most affecting in career choice; lack of interest in agriculture; and lack of career options influence career choice [9]." Also, they suggest that the primary influences on deciding to pursue a career in agriculture include other areas of interest in terms of careers, personal considerations, and other experiences and events. Throughout their study, few minorities mentioned having received poor grades, and the exhaustion from both school and job prevented them from choosing a career in agricultural education [10].

Career options in agriculture include a wide range of fields. Careers in agriculture include marketing, engineering, communications, and even psychology. The most crucial role of agricultural education, according to is preparing children and adults for professions in the field [11]. Most crucially, all schools must prepare students for professions in agriculture in order to address the anticipated shortfall of trained agricultural professionals [11, 12, and 13]. Opportunities for career advancement in agriculture are as many as the specializations, according to [14]. They consist of the following:

1.2. Crop Production

- a. Agronomy
- b. Crop protection
- c. Horticulture
- d. Plant breeding

1.3. Soil and Surveying

- i. Soil science
- ii. Farming planning
- iii. Preservation of soil
- iv. Fertilizer planning
- v. Soil analysis
- vi. Pedology

1.4. Fisheries and Livestock Production

- i. Fish farming
- ii. Livestock alimentation
- iii. Animal husbandry
- iv. Animal pathology
- v. Animal health
- vi. Extension educator
- vii. Global initiatives
- viii. Agriculture financing as well as borrowing
- ix. Agricultural sales

- x. Education and development
- xi. Farming/ranching
- xii. Nutritional counselling for livestock or agriculture (agricultural science and technology education, 2012).

1.5. Factors Influencing Youths Participating Agricultural Entrepreneur

Yet, numerous researches have demonstrated the validity of Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) in the study of student voluntary participation, or intention to participate, in volunteer programs [15]. Hence, discovered that behavioral perceptions, subjective standards, and disposition control emerged as significant individual predictors of students' intention to volunteer in the UPM program [15]. Thus, discovered that attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control predicted intent, and also intent, in turn, predicted volunteer enrolment in the program [16]. Also, found that the attitude, approval and young people's interest in starting their own businesses are significantly related [17]. Additionally, found that Factor affecting entrepreneur's intention in agricultural sector is subjective norm or external factor.

1.6. Socioeconomic Characteristics

Most scholars have found a relationship between demographic factors and intention to take agriculture as a career. For instance, found that respondents' gender has impact on intention to engage in agricultural activity [18]. Also, found that age, marital status, place of domicile influences the intention of the respondents in engaging in agriculture [19]. Furthermore, found that from the students' perspective such factors as personal have influence on intention to engage in agricultural entrepreneur [20].

1.7. Social Factors

Social factors equally influence the intention of individuals to engage in agricultural entrepreneur. Thus, found that others in the family involved in Agricultural activities will influence one to engage in agricultural entrepreneur [18]. Also, identified family support, also found that most students said, on average, their parents were supportive of them actively engaging in the YFCs and also that their parents had a career related to agriculture, and they had a sibling or another relative employed in agriculture [17]. Thus, With respect to relationships, "father" exerted the greatest influence on their career choice. Identify social influences and financial associate with social obstacles as the predictors of agriculture as a career choice [20]. Therefore, contact with entrepreneurs, close relations between university and successful businesses, desire to increase income and considering needs of the labor market by agricultural university had the greatest entrepreneurial incentives of the respondents [20].

1.8. Educational Factors

Educational factors have an impact on youths' career choice [20]. As a result, academic achievement in agricultural science is a factor in the decision to pursue a career in vocational agriculture. Went on to say that great academic achievement has a strong and favorable influence on the decision to choose a profession in vocational agriculture. On the other hand, according to a student's profession decision will be influenced by their parents' educational backgrounds [19]. And found that "skills, competencies, and abilities" and "education and training" (intrinsic

career choice factors) have the most impact on the decision of a management career. There are further elements that forecast a career in agriculture. For instance, argue that the presence of a school garden will influence the secondary school students towards agricultural entrepreneur. Thus, practical agricultural experience and risks tolerance have significant influence on students' intention to take up agribusiness as a source of future self-employment avenue Also, found that desire for job security, support entrepreneurs, need for achievement and financial aspects influence the youth intention to engage in business [19, 20]. Furthermore, found that government support and promotion through of festivals and carnivals will boost youth participation in agriculture [17]. According to the estimates from the Logit model, youth's commitment to participate in agricultural activities was positively influenced by their years of social formation, access to ICT, type of land rights, and participation in state-owned agricultural programs.

There are some contradictions on the findings of various scholars. found that attitude toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control have no effect on agricultural entrepreneur's intention. Also, found that knowledge has no significant relationship with interest of youth to become entrepreneurs [17]. The decision to pursue vocational agriculture as a profession was strongly but negatively influenced by poor academic achievement.

1.9. Objectives

The main objectives of this research include the following:

1. Describe the socioeconomic traits of the young individuals residing in the research area.
2. Find out the perception of Youths towards agriculture or agricultural business.
3. Highlight government agricultural policies that can attract Youths to take up careers in agriculture.
4. identify factors that militate against the appeal of youths towards taking up careers in agriculture

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Study Area: The study was carried out in Gwarinpa, AMAC, Federal Capital Territory, and Abuja- Nigeria. FCT-Abuja is the capital city of Nigeria. FCT-Abuja was founded in 1976 from parts of the state of Nassarawa, Niger, Kaduna and Kogi. It is within the middle belt region of the country. The territory is located just north of Lokoja the confluence of the Niger River and Benue River. It is bordered by the states of Niger to the West and North, Kaduna to the northeast, Nasarawa to the east and south, and Kogi to the southwest. Lying between latitude 9.083 and longitude 7.533, Abuja is geographically located in the center of the country. The Federal Capital Territory has a landmass of approximately 923,768 km². It is situated within the Savannah region with moderate climatic conditions. The indigenous inhabitants of Abuja are the Gbagyi is the major language and others include Bassa, Gwandara, Gade, Ganagana and Koro. The major stable crops grown in the area includes; cassava, yam, sweet potato, sorghum, maize, crop, onions, tomatoes, pepper, rice, groundnut, cowpea, eggplant, etc. Three out of the six zones shall sampled, namely; Abaji, Gwagwalada, and Kwali due to large concentration of youth farmers in these zones. The territory is made up of six agricultural zones namely; Abaji, Abuja

Municipal Area Council, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje, and Kwali (FCT ADP (2018)).

2.2. Population of the Study

The demographic for this study is all the small scale farmers in Gwarinpa, AMAC, and Abuja.

2.3. Sample and Sampling Techniques

A simple random sampling technique was used in this research to select a sample size 120 respondents for this research.

2.4. Procedure for Data Collection

The study used primary data was gathered through the self-administered questionnaires distributed to respondents by the researcher. The questionnaire was thereafter coded to obtain the data for statistical analysis which was used to provide answer to the research question raised in this present research.

2.5. Data Analysis

Statistics were employed to analyze the data, both descriptive and inferential. Based on the questionnaires, data were analyzed using a social science statistical software. We will use a variety of statistics, including mean scores, standard deviations, percentages, and frequency distribution, to summarize the responses and illustrate the degree to which they are similar and dissimilar.

3. Results and Discussion

Distribution of respondents according to their socio-economic characteristics: The outcomes that were displayed in table shows the socioeconomic characteristic of the youths in the study area. The findings show that there were more male youths

(65.00%) than female youths (35.00%) in the study area. Majority (34.17%) were within the age of 31 – 35 (34.17%) while 29.17% were within the age of 26 – 30. Majority of the youths were single (60.00%) were married and 6.67 were divorced. 68.33% had house hold size between 1-5 while 17.50% of the youth had 6-10 people in their house hold, this lower number of people in the household is attributable to the fact that vast majority of responders were indeed young and single. The level of education among the youth moderately high as 39.17% had tertiary education, 48.33% had secondary education while 12.50% had primary education, this level of education implies that the young people in the study area should be knowledgeable about the different vocations in agriculture and therefore be able to make informed choice on the type of career to choose in agriculture. This also means that the youths can easily comprehend trainings in vocational agriculture. This also means that that the respondents stand a high chances of accessing agricultural information. This results is a consensus with the report of that the more educated a population is, it will likely enhance the adoption of modern farm technologies thereby sustain a strong farming population.

Majority of the respondents were artisans (35.83%) who engage in different trades including agricultural trades while 24.17% were self-employed. The results implies of this youths have free time in their hand to engage in agricultural programs within the study area if the farming profession is made attractive through the implementation of productive policies by the government and provision of incentives. This results is in consensus with the findings of Ajani and that youths will engage in agriculture more if innovations that make the occupation attractive are adopted.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	78	65.00
Female	42	35.00
Age (years)		
20 - 25	26	21.67
26 – 30	35	29.17
31 – 35	41	34.17
36 – 40	12	10.00
41 -45	6	5.00
Marital Status		
Single	72	60.00
Married	31	25.83
Divorced	8	6.67
Widowed	9	7.50
Educational Level		
Primary	15	12.50
Secondary	58	48.33
Tertiary	47	39.17
Occupation of the Respondent		
Self Employed	29	24.17
Employee	21	17.50

Artisan	27	22.50
Un-employed	43	35.83
Annual income		
50,000-100,000	18	15.00
101,000-200,000	12	10.00
201,000-300,000	53	44.17
>300,000	37	30.83
Household Size		
1 -3	82	68.33
4 -6	21	17.50
7 -9	12	10.00
10 and above	5	4.17

Field survey, 2023

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their socio-economic characteristics

Perceptions of career areas in agriculture by Gwarinpa Youths

Table 2's findings indicate the respondents' perceptions about a profession in agriculture. The respondents demonstrated that; Agriculture is a lucrative occupation (mean = 3.08). Agriculture as an occupation is not for a highly educated youth (mean

= 3.23) and Agriculture is a decent job for employer of labour (mean = 2.87) and that Agriculture is for the elderly and illiterates (mean = 2.91). This results implies that the youths have a positive perception about careers in agriculture except for their believe that agriculture is for the elderly and illiterates.

Perception	Mean	SD	Decision
Agriculture is a lucrative occupation.	3.08	0.15	Agreed
Agriculture is a decent job for employer of labour.	2.87	0.45	Agreed
Agriculture is for the elderly and illiterates.	2.91	0.33	Agreed
Agriculture as an occupation is not for a highly educated youth.	3.23	0.17	Agreed

Field survey, 2023

Table 2: Perceptions of career areas in agriculture by Gwarinpa Youths

Provisions of incentives and empowerment by the government

The respondents agreed to all the items raised concerning the provisions of incentives and empowerment by the government except that government provided access to land in your place (mean =1.82). It was however agreed that there is provision of financial assistance through a loan scheme without collateral (mean = 2.68), there is provision of agricultural extension service program by the government for acquisition of knowledge

(mean = 2.52) and there exists an engagement in policy dialogue through associations like young farmers club (mean = 2.71). The availability of this items as listed in this table will go a long way to enhance the interest of youths in the agriculture. One of the most significant challenges of agriculture is the lack of input which has discourage many people from venturing in agriculture, this results implies that if the government will provide this incentives more people will enter the agricultural sector.

STATEMENT	Mean	SD	Decision
Government provided access to land in your place.	1.82	0.41	Agreed
Provision of financial assistance through a loan scheme without collateral.	2.68	0.91	Agreed
An Agricultural Extension service program by the Government for acquisition of knowledge, information and training run in your locality.	2.52	0.32	Agreed
Engagement in Policy Dialogue through associations like Young farmers club.	2.71	0.48	Agreed

Field survey, 2023

Table 3: Provisions of incentives and empowerment by the government

Factors militating against youths interest in taking up careers in agriculture

Table 4 shows the factors militating against youth's interest in taking up careers in agriculture. The results showed that family choice and youth preference (mean =3.64) was the major factor affecting youths decision in agricultural career. This was fol-

lowed by poor social values such as the saying that agriculture is a dirty job and energy sapping and the public reference to agriculture as a profession for blockheads and the poor (3.15). Respondents also agreed that lack of Agriculture support services, such as youth extension within the community is another factor affecting the career choice of youth in agriculture. Other fac-

tors that were agreed by respondents as affecting career choice in agriculture are; Lack of an organized ready market (mean = 3.04), Lack of credit facility without collateral (mean = 3.05), absence of farm inputs like modified seed varieties, seedlings and agrochemicals (mean = 2.93). These findings showed that the majority of young people will go into agriculture if it is the choice of the family and if some supports such as credit facilities

and training of the youths are made available by the government. This results is in compliance with the findings of that the perception or believe of the can determines their choice to pursue a career in agriculture [12]. Youths will most likely go into agriculture if they perceive the sector as lucrative and if they believe practicing agriculture pays higher or as much as other sectors.

VARIABLES	Mean	SD	Decision
Family choice and youth preference	3.64	0.51	Agreed
Public reference to agriculture as a profession for blockheads and the poor	3.15	0.33	Agreed
Poor social values, example Agriculture is a dirty job and energy sapping.	3.21	0.48	Agreed
Lack of credit facility without collateral	3.05	0.17	Agreed
Lack of Agriculture support services, example Youth extension in the community.	3.13	0.99	Agreed
Absence of farm inputs like modified seeds, seedlings and agrochemicals.	2.93	0.45	Agreed
Lack of an organized ready market.	3.04	0.14	Agreed

Field survey, 2023

Table 4: Factors militating against youths interest in taking up careers in agriculture

Career area of interest in Agriculture

The results in table 5 showed the list of careers in agriculture accessible to young people in the study area. The most preferred career option among the youth in the study area was poultry production (93.33%) followed by fisheries production (85.00%) and agronomic practice (68.33%) while crop production was the least preferred. The interest of youths in production of fish and

poultry as against crop production can be attributed due to the fact most of the youth perceived crop production as a dirty job and labour intensive compared to the crop production. This result is in conformity to the report of that large majority of youths have wrong notion about agriculture especially crop production as it is considered a dirty job by most people in this young generation.

Career Areas	Frequency	Percentage %
Crop Production.	61	50.83
Poultry Production	112	93.33
Fisheries Production	102	85.00
Agronomic practice	82	68.33

Field survey, 2023

Table 5: Career area of interest

Logit Regression result of socio-economic factors that influence perception of youths on agriculture

The logit regression result of socio-economic factors that influence perception of youths on agriculture showed that socio economic characteristics such as gender, occupation, annual income and level of education had significant impact on the perception on the youth on agriculture. The fact that gender affects the preference of a career is true in most African setting as some job are known to be best done by men. The land tenure system practiced in the study area can also influence the decision of a gender to pursue a career in agriculture because women are typically prohibited from owning farmland in most farming communities. This can in turn discourage the female from developing interest

in agriculture as land is needed to practice agriculture. This is agrees with the report of that access to land by the youth affects their participation in agriculture. Occupation, annual income and level of education also showed significant effect; this is so because the occupation of a youth will determine whether he/she have enough free time to venture into agriculture. This can be traced back to the results in table 1 where most of the respondents were self-employed or artisans who can apportion appropriate time to the practice of agriculture if given the necessary support by the government and relevant organizations. The level of education of the youth will determine if they have enough access to correct information on agriculture. This in turn will motivate youths to engage in the practice of agriculture.

Variables	Coefficient (B)	Standard error	t	P
Constant	11.72	0.0120	0.802	0.0147
Gender	0.9047	0.5298	0.552	0.0041**
Age	9.37	0.0830	0.252	0.2035
Marital status	0.0357	0.2579	0.082	0.1291

Occupation	0.0304	0.1040	0.002	0.0003**
Annual income	0.0468	0.4685	0.608	0.0001**
Level of Education	0.0426	0.4260	0.034	0.0028**
R ²	0.31			
Adjusted R ²	0.26			
F- ratio	6.11			

Field survey, 2023

Key ** = Significant at 1% significant levels

Table 6; Logit Regression result of socio-economic factors that influence perception of youths on agriculture

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

Following the findings of this research, it is concluded that majority of the youths have a positive perception of agriculture careers. It is although discovered that most of them won't venture into agriculture because of some factors such as lack of credit facility without collateral, lack of agriculture support services, example youth extension in the community and the lack of agricultural inputs like modified seeds, seedlings and agrochemicals. Also, it was revealed that far more of the youths would rather choice a career in poultry and fish production rather than crop production. The research further concluded that, gender, level of education, occupation and income level of the youths can affect their choice of career in agriculture. Hence, it is advocated that government at all level provide incentives and trainings that will encourage youth involvement in agriculture. Agriculture ought also to be thought in school in order to encourage young people of the need of the youths to be involved in agriculture.

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