

AGRIPRENEURSHIP AS A PRIME MEANS FOR REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTH IN YEWA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT OGUN STATE

Jimoh I. B and Ogunsanwo A. O

The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Ogun State, Nigeria. Tel. 08065075070, 08052941098
E-mail ibrahim.jimoh@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng, abayomi.ogunsanwo@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng

Abstract

Unemployment problem among Nigerian youth has been a major problem facing the nation and different methods and measures had been applied to curb and control the menace. This paper considered Agripreneurship as a prime means for reducing unemployment among Nigerian youth in Ogun State. The study employed a descriptive research design. A sample of one hundred and twenty (120) staff were randomly selected from some selected farms in Yewa South local government. Two hypotheses were raised and regression was used to analyse the data collected. The research result shows that Agripreneurship encompasses important economic activities that could be employed at any level to tackle unemployment especially graduate unemployment. The findings indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between Agripreneurship and employment generation, this implies that Agripreneurship has the potential to contribute to a country's economic development by creating employment and economic sustenance for the teeming youth. This paper among others calls for urgent attention of all stakeholders in educational and curriculum development in Nigeria to incorporate Agripreneurship into Entrepreneurship development programmes in educational institution especially higher educational institution. Also, Government should enshrine in school curriculum especially higher institution of learning the appropriate policies that will instill Agripreneurial skills in Nigerian youth.

Keywords: Agripreneurship Antidote, Unemployment and Youth

Introduction

Unemployment among the numerous social-economic problems is one of the major challenges faced by government and policy makers especially in the face of present economy situation. One of the fundamental developmental challenges facing Nigeria in the recent time that requires urgent intervention from every sectors in the country is unemployment. Research have shown that unemployment was high in the 1980s, but the available reports from various local and international bodies, and the glaring evidence of joblessness in this decades are clear indications that there was no time in Nigeria's chequered history where unemployment is as serious as now. At one time or the other, government had made conscientious effort to improve the living standard and control unemployment of people through the creation of various policies and programs.

For instance, In 1976, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) created by the government to encourage people to return to farming; In order to control the unemployment level in the country, the unemployed are capture and equip with the necessary skills that will make them employable and self-sustaining through National Directorate of Employment of 1986 (Onah, 2010). In an attempt to reduce unemployment level and raise effective demand in the economy, Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) of 2000 was created and National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) of 2001, provided many youths with the "keke NAPEP" mass transit vehicles. Other programs include the National Accelerated Food Production Program (NAFPP), Poverty Eradication Program (PEP), National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), to mention but a few. Despite the creation and intervention of these numerous schemes and projects, unemployment is still a national issue in Nigeria.

Unemployment according to ILO, is among the biggest threats to social stability in many countries (including Nigeria), putting the global rate at 12.6% (ILO, 2012). When compared with her counterparts in the continent, Nigeria's unemployment crisis is more serious. For instance, South Africa's unemployment rate is currently standing at 25.2%, and in Ghana is about 14% in 2010, while Nigeria is around 37%. Recent statistics by the World Bank has put the unemployment rate in Nigeria at 22 percent, while the youth unemployment rate is 38 percent. The report shows that the bracket age of 15-35 years olds account for close to 60 percent of the Nigeria's population and 30 percent of the work force. The report also indicates that approximately 4 million people entered into the labour market every year (Subair, 2013).



Rufai (2013) described youth unemployment as a socio-economic problem challenging the Sub – Saharan Africa. A reasonable percentage of the total numbers of the unemployed in Africa are majorly youths. Youth empowerment is one of the major instrument of sustainable development, particularly because youths are seen as the greatest human resources of any society (Armstrong, 2009). This alarming statistics of youth unemployment in Africa reflects the magnitude of the problem. Thus, a refocus on agriculture is considered a pertinent remedy (Africa Development Indicators, 2009).



Figure 1

Source: IMF @ Statista, (2017)

Instruments, Catalysts and measures had been put in place to reduce and eradicate this menace that had eaten deep into national development of the nation. To reduce or eradicate the persistent problem of unemployment in the country researchers had looked into many instruments that can eradicate or reduce the rate unemployment to a reasonable minimum level. Other aspect of entrepreneurship programme like Technopreneurship, Agripreneurship, Socialpreneurship, Infopreneurship and Political Entrepreneurship etc. had been considered by Researchers to manage the identified menace (Unemployment) in the country.

Agripreneurship as a concept specific to agriculture and drawn from wider entrepreneurship is very critical and urgent. The peculiarities of the country's agriculture sector provide further compulsion to the dire need for Agripreneurship. Agriculture is the mainstay of Nigerian economy because it supports high share of employment and livelihood creation. Agriculture employs about two third of Nigeria's labour force and contributing about 42% to the Gross



Domestic Product (GDP). It is also an important source of raw materials. However, growth in the sector has not met the needs and expectation of Nigeria (National Planning Commission 2009).

Agripreneurship is the profitable marriage of agriculture and entrepreneurship. Agripreneurship turn your farm into an agribusiness. The term Agripreneurship is synonym with entrepreneurship in agriculture and refers to agribusiness establishment in agriculture and allied sector. Agripreneurship is necessary for the socio-economic upliftment of the greater population through creation of new agribusinesses; agricultural commodities value chains and overall economic growth (Bairwa, Kalia, Meena, Lakra, & Kushwaha, 2014). In consistence with a modern integrated economy, the agro - business sector is primarily based on specialisation and exchange, resulting from economies of scale. Thus creating an enormous platform for the expansion of employment opportunities, through down stream agro-industrial processing value chains (Chatman House, 2011).

Sudharani (n.d) defined Agripreneurship as generally sustainable, community oriented, directly marketed agriculture. The aspects of agriculture that could be opened up for entrepreneurship include both the on-farm activities and off-farm ventures. The on-farm activities may involve production, processing, farm input manufacturing, and agro-service ventures. Off-farm Agripreneurship ventures may include activity such as agric-tourism entrepreneurship. The necessity of an Agripreneurship education programme is to increase the amount of entrepreneurship education taught in local agriculture programmes across the country. This will prepared the mind of an average Nigerian youth to becoming entrepreneurs and then begin to pursue agribusiness as viable career choice.

Agripreneurship has the potential to contribute to a country's economic development by creating employment for the local populace in direct and indirect ways, improving nutrition, and contributing to food security and food sovereignty (Bairwa et al., 2014). Alsos, et.al, (2011) posited that communities and nations dependent on agriculture as their main source of livelihood can develop by transforming the agriculture sector to embrace Agripreneurship and support aspiring Agripreneurs. However, because most extension agents are specialists in a particular field, they may require additional training in the principles of agricultural entrepreneurship to be effective at mentoring aspiring Agripreneurs (Kahan, 2013). Real world experiences in agricultural entrepreneurship through *hands-on, minds-on* approaches is needed by young aspiring agripreneurs to prepare themselves towards professional challenges and problems that may be experienced in the course of operation.

Statement of the Problem

Unemployment problem among Nigerian youth has been a major problem facing the nation. Though the challenge is not peculiar to Nigeria alone, it has become vast increasing phenomenon of the 21st century mostly in the African continent. Unemployment, underemployment and unmitigated rural-urban migration have come to characterize the Nigerian Labour Market. The



peculiarities of the country's agriculture sector provide further compulsion to the dire need for Agripreneurship. Social vices like kidnapping, robbery, prostitution, internet crime, child abuse, human trafficking and unfair labour practices experienced mostly by the unemployed youths are the adverse effect of unemployment. Knowledge of agripreneurship will create a better intention and instill confidence in youth who cannot venture into agriculture as encouraged by the government due to lack of finance or experience. It is in the wake of the above that this study aimed at examining the possibility of curbing the unemployment among Higher Institution Graduates in Nigeria through Agripreneurship.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to find out the role of Agripreneurship in curbing youth unemployment in Nigeria. The study will highlight the various agripreneurship activities available to Nigerian youths with a view to determining the extent to which the identified agripreneurship ventures can contribute to employment generation and facilitate economic sustenance among Nigerian youths.

Research Hypotheses

H0₁: Agripreneurship does not have any significant impact on youth employment generation in Nigeria.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between Agripreneurship and economic sustenance of Nigerian youth.

Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, the following questions were formulated to guide:

1. What are the various Agripreneurship activities available to Nigerian youths
2. How can unemployment problem in Nigeria be eradicated through Agripreneurship?
3. How can Agripreneurship facilitate economic sustenance among Nigerian youths?

Methodology

A survey design was adopted for the study where questionnaire was the instrument used to elicit information from one hundred and twenty (120) staff in some selected farms across Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government and Yewa South Local Government. A convenience and random sampling technique was used to select the respondents based on gender, marital status and age. The age range of the respondents is between 25-60 years. A well-structured research instrument was used for data collection. Two hypotheses were raised and Product moment correlation and multiple regression analyses were used in analyzing the data collected.



Findings

For a better understanding of responses made, the data collected on research question one was formed in table. Each of the twelve questions used in the questionnaire were analysed using the mean method. The responses received from the questionnaire were grouped under, “Strongly Agreed”, “Agreed”, “Disagreed” and “Strongly disagreed”. In order to arrive at a decision as to the interpretation of results, the normal values of the responses were added together and divided by the number of this value thus:

$$\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.5$$

This implies that 2.5 is the decision point. Every set of questionnaire used for each research question was analysed together to determine whether they are accepted or rejected. The average percentage was obtained by dividing the total responses to the questions by the number of the questions.

Table 1

S/N	Items	Respondents	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	Remarks
1	Agro chemicals	118	61	40	7	10	3.29	Accepted
2	Supply of Agro chemicals	118	60	40	9	9	3.28	Accepted
3	Breeding Stock	118	55	50	8	5	3.31	Accepted
4	Farm Implements	118	21	13	32	52	2.02	Rejected
5	Veterinary Services	118	22	14	30	52	2.05	Rejected
6	Arable crops	118	28	54	30	6	2.89	Accepted
7	Livestock	118	71	40	6	1	3.53	Accepted
8	Fisheries	118	77	39	1	1	3.63	Accepted
9	Roots and tubers	118	66	34	7	11	3.31	Accepted
10	Cereals	118	60	40	9	9	3.28	Accepted
11	Nuts and legumes	118	50	39	17	12	3.07	Accepted
12	Oil Production	118	22	32	33	31	2.38	Rejected
	Total	1416	593	435	189	199	36.04	
	Average	118	49.4	36.3	15.8	16.6	3.00	

Agriprenurship environment is diverse, complex, and full of opportunities and activities for interested youth to dwell in. Effort by government and Nigerian youth to thoroughly exploit the opportunities that abound in the agriprenurship environment will amount to growth in agricultural sector.

On this note, Table 1 presents the analysis of agriprenurship activities available to Nigerian youth. The result showed that agriprenurs invested more in fisheries, livestock, breeding stock and roots and tubers with a mean score of 3.63, 3.53, 3.31 and 3.31 while agro chemicals, supply of agro chemicals, breeding stock, root and tubers, cereal and nuts/legumes are the next in invested with a mean score of 3.29, 3.28, 3.31, 3.31, 3.28 and 3.07 respectively. However, the least being invested in are farm implement and veterinary services with a mean of 2.02 and 2.05. Reason for the low investment in this area is that veterinary services required a specialized training and higher educational qualification to operate. The low mean score in farm implements is attributed to the fact that it requires huge amount of money to invest in and the sales of the



goods is not as frequent as other consumable. However, this implies that there are better and wider opportunities in these areas for interested youth to invest in.

Reliability

Table 2

		N	%
Cases	Valid	118	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	118	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.963	18

Table 2 and 3 shows the relationship the reliability of questionnaire used for the survey. The Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.963, showing that the questionnaire is highly reliable because the value is above 0.6.

Table 4

	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
YEMP	MALE	93	18.3226	3.14214	.32583
	FEMALE	25	19.8400	3.43608	.68722
ESY	MALE	93	17.7957	3.53110	.36616
	FEMALE	25	19.1200	3.85487	.77097

Table 4, shows the average response of respondents to the questions on agripreneurship, youth employment and economic sustenance of youth. The result revealed average responses of male and female respondents to agripreneurship as a means of youth employment to be 18.3226 and 19.84 respectively with standard deviation of 3.14214 and 3.43608. Similar response for economic sustenance of youth for male and female is 17.7957 and 19.1200 with standard deviation of 3.53110 and 3.85487 respectively.



Table 5

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ESY	Between Groups	126.471	2	63.235	5.151	.007
	Within Groups	1411.843	115	12.277		
	Total	1538.314	117			
YEMP	Between Groups	167.308	2	83.654	8.993	.000
	Within Groups	1069.743	115	9.302		
	Total	1237.051	117			

There is also significant difference in the opinion of respondents on agriprenurship as a means of youth employment and economic sustenance. Table 5 shows the F-Value and P-Value for agriprenurship as a means of economic sustenance of youth using marital status to be 5.151 and 0.007 respectively. This signifies that the opinion of Married, Single and Divorce varied from each other. In addition, the F-Value and P-Value for youth employment according to marital status is 8.993 and 0.000 respectively. This result also suggest that there is a variation of married, divorced and single to the question on agriprenurship as a means of economic sustenance of youth. Therefore, the outcome of this result suggested for post-hoc test, which is displayed in table 6.

Post Hoc Tests

Table 6

Multiple Comparisons							
LSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) MARSTATUS	(J) MARSTATUS	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ESY	SINGLE	MARRIED	1.77143	.92598	.058	-.0628	3.6056
		DIVORCED	-.50000	1.04464	.633	-2.5692	1.5692
	MARRIED	SINGLE	-1.77143	.92598	.058	-3.6056	.0628
		DIVORCED	-2.27143*	.76460	.004	-3.7860	-.7569
	DIVORCED	SINGLE	.50000	1.04464	.633	-1.5692	2.5692
		MARRIED	2.27143*	.76460	.004	.7569	3.7860
YEMP	SINGLE	MARRIED	1.99524*	.80602	.015	.3987	3.5918
		DIVORCED	-.63333	.90932	.488	-2.4345	1.1678
	MARRIED	SINGLE	-1.99524*	.80602	.015	-3.5918	-.3987
		DIVORCED	-2.62857*	.66555	.000	-3.9469	-1.3102
	DIVORCED	SINGLE	.63333	.90932	.488	-1.1678	2.4345
		MARRIED	2.62857*	.66555	.000	1.3102	3.9469

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.



The result in table 6 suggest that there is a difference in response of the divorce compared to that of married in terms of agripreneurship as a means of economic sustenance of youths; because the p-value is 0.04 which is less than 0.05. In addition, the response of divorced is significantly different from that of married and single with P-Value of 0.000 and 0.015 respectively in terms of youth employment. This result suggest that divorced respondents are more in favour of agripreneurship compared to single and married respondents.

Table 7

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.878 ^a	.771	.769	1.56154

a. Predictors: (Constant), AGP

Table 8

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	954.197	1	954.197	391.321	.000 ^b
	Residual	282.854	116	2.438		
	Total	1237.051	117			

a. Dependent Variable: YEMP

b. Predictors: (Constant), AGP

Table 9

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.194	.596		12.063	.000
	AGP	.695	.035	.878	19.782	.000

a. Dependent Variable: YEMP

Table 7 shows that there is a strong positive relationship between agripreneurship and youth employment. In addition, the result further shows that about 77.1% variations in youth employment can be attributed to agripreneurship. Moreover, the F-Value of the result as seen in table 8 is 391.321 with P-Value of 0.000; which is an indication that the model is valid and significant in relating agripreneurship (AGP) and Youth Employment (YEMP). Hence, we can accept the alternative hypothesis that there exist significant relationship between agripreneurship and Youth employment. From table 9, it can be observe that a unit increase in Agripreneurship will cause about 69.8% increase in youth employment.



Table 10

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.923 ^a	.853	.851	1.39760

a. Predictors: (Constant), AGP

Table 11

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1311.732	1	1311.732	671.551	.000 ^b
	Residual	226.581	116	1.953		
	Total	1538.314	117			

a. Dependent Variable: ESY

b. Predictors: (Constant), AGP

Table 12

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.652	.534		8.714	.000
	AGP	.815	.031	.923	25.914	.000

a. Dependent Variable: ESY

The result from table 10 shows that there is high positive relationship between agripreneurship and economic sustenance of youth with correlation coefficient of 0.923. Also, 85.3% variation in economic sustenance of youth can be attributed to agripreneurship. Moreover, table 11 shows that the model is adequate in relating agripreneurship and economic sustenance of youth with F-Value of 671.551 and P-Value of 0.000. We then accept the alternative hypothesis and conclude that agripreneurship has significant effect on economic sustenance of youth. Table 12, result shows that a unit increase in agripreneurship will cause 81.5% increase in economic sustenance of the youths.

Discussions and Conclusion

The findings shows that there are better and wider opportunities in agripreneurship where interested youth can invest but the reason for low investment in some area was because it required special skills, huge amount of money and low sales. It also indicate the diverse opinion of respondents based on marital status; divorced are more interested in agripreneurship than married and single.

First hypothesis revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between agripreneurship and youth employment in Nigeria. It was discovered that agripreneurship, if embraced by youth will reduced the



level of unemployment among Nigerian youth. It was clearly observed that a unit increase in Agripreneurship would result in a reasonable increase in youth employment percentage. This was supported by Chatman House (2011) findings that consistence with a modern integrated economy, the agro-business sector based primarily on specialisation and exchange, resulting from economies of scale. Thus creating an enormous platform for the expansion of employment opportunities, through downstream agro-industrial processing value chains (Chatman House, 2011).

The data elicited by hypothesis two indicates that there is high positive relationship between agripreneurship and economic sustenance of youth. The fact that agripreneurship would be reducing unemployment level in the country is a clear indication that it will have a positive result on sustainability of the economy. However, the finding revealed that any unit increase in agripreneurship would have an increasing percentage of economic sustenance of the youths. This is in tandem with Bairwa et al. (2014) findings that Agripreneurship has the potential to contribute to a country's economic development by creating employment for the local populace in direct and indirect ways, improving nutrition, and contributing to food security and food sovereignty.

Agripreneurship is an important factor in determining unemployment level and economic sustenance. The findings indicate that there is a statistical significant relationship between Agripreneurship and employment generation, this implies that Agripreneurship has the potential to contribute to a country's economic development by creating employment and economic sustenance for the teeming youth. This paper calls for urgent attention of all stakeholders in educational and curriculum development in Nigeria to incorporate Agripreneurship into Entrepreneurship development programmes in educational institution especially higher educational institution. In addition, Government should enshrine in school curriculum especially higher institution of learning the appropriate policies that will instil Agripreneurial skills in Nigerian youth.

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