PROCLIVITY FOR AGRIPRENEURSHIP AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF AGRICULTURE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship has become one of the most dynamic forces reinforcing world's economic growth. This study compared proclivity for agripreneurship among final year undergraduates of agriculture and entrepreneurship in selected universities in southwestern Nigeria. Using purposive and random sampling techniques, four universities were selected from where one hundred and twenty (120) each, of final year undergraduates of agriculture and entrepreneurship were selected giving a total sample size of 240 respondents. Relevant data were obtained on respondents' socioeconomic characteristics and parental background, specific areas of agripreneurship interest and perceived constraints to agripreneurship. Data were analysed using frequencies, percentages, means and chi-square. Results showed that undergraduates of agriculture were males (54.2%), single (96.7%) with mean age of 24 years and 75.8% had proclivity for agripreneurship with specific interests in poultry production: egg, meat and feed milling (67.5%) while undergraduates of entrepreneurship were males (48.3%), single (95.0%) with mean age of 23 years and 65.0% had proclivity for agripreneurship with 53.3% being specifically interested in poultry production. Undergraduates of agriculture ranked inadequate support infrastructure highest (1.90) as their perceived most severe constraints to agripreneurship while unfavourable government policies was ranked highest (1.74) among undergraduates of entrepreneurship. Relationships were found between undergraduates of agriculture's course of study (χ^2=7.59) as well as mother's discipline (χ^2=5.33) and proclivity for agripreneurship while gender (χ^2=5.83) and mother's discipline (χ^2=22.34) were significantly related to proclivity for agripreneurship among undergraduates of entrepreneurship. Government should continue to provide necessary support infrastructures and formulate farmer friendly policies to achieve sustainable youth engagement in Agripreneurship.

Keywords: Proclivity, Entrepreneurship and Agripreneurship

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is an agrarian country which at independence, inherited an economy dominated by a robust agricultural sector in income and foreign exchange earnings, and whose share in the Gross domestic product was 65.7% (Brooks *et al*., 2012). Despite the strategic importance of the oil sector, the role of the agricultural sector still remains significant to the economy, accounting for 35.6% of the GDP compared to 33.7% and 31.0% from manufacturing and services, respectively (World bank, 2012). Entrepreneurship has become one of the most dynamic forces reinforcing world's economic growth. It has been acknowledged as a main driver of economic development as it encourages growth, innovation and technology adoption as well as poverty reduction (United Nations, 2013). Universities education through entrepreneurship is expected to play a vital role in improving students' attitude, personal values, technical abilities and self-efficacy in entrepreneurial activities**.** Agripreneurship, entrepreneurship in agriculture related business is one of the major drivers of economic growth and development in every emerging economy. Agripreneurship defines the wealth creation activities among economies of both developing and developed countries; and it is also the best solution for reducing unemployment in developing countries (Nwofoke *et al*., 2020). Entrepreneurship in agriculture entails the creation of innovative economic organisation for the purpose of growth or gain under conditions of risk and uncertainty in agriculture. Agripreneurship is greatly influenced mainly by the economic situation, education and culture (Singh, 2013).

The engines for agripreneurship development among young graduates and undergraduates are based on training and inculcating agripreneurship work culture (Mohamed, Rezai, Shamsudin and Mahmud, 2012).The importance of agripreneurship education in the development of future agripreneurs has become a major concern of many parties including the policy makers based on the assumption that 'entrepreneurs can be made'. Africa has an exceptional population profile: 200 million people living in Africa are between the ages 15 to 24, constituting over 20% of the African population; 70% of African youths reside in rural areas and account for 65% of agricultural labour force. Young people make up 36% of the working population, and account for 60% of the total unemployed persons (International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2012). Brooks *et al*. (2012) and Kararach *et al*. (2011) revealed that creation of non-agricultural jobs may not happen in the short run; as such agriculture is likely to continue being a source of employment and livelihood in the medium to long term especially for countries that heavily depend on agriculture like Nigeria. Nigeria as a nation is experiencing great economic challenges that include unemployment of her teeming undergraduates, which presents the need for entrepreneurial skills acquisition to curb this menace (Nwankwo, 2011). The Agripreneurship

programme is necessary to develop entrepreneurs and manage workforce to cater for the agricultural industry across the world (Bairwa *et al*., 2014). Nwofoke *et al*. (2020) affirmed that despite the importance of the agripreneurship sector in economic growth, unfavourable government policies, multiple taxation, poor access to finance, lack of education and training, environmental issues, and corruption have remained major constraints to start-ups by young people in Nigeria Notwithstanding, agricultural entrepreneurship being a breeding ground for micro-businesses, presents far more opportunities for entrepreneurial development. It is against this background that this study was poised to undertake a comparative analysis of proclivity for agripreneurship among undergraduates offering agriculture and those offering entrepreneurship as their courses of study in selected universities in southwestern, Nigeria, by addressing the following specific objectives.

Objectives of the study

i. to describe the socioeconomic characteristics and parental background of the sampled undergraduates;
ii. to identify specific areas of interest in agripreneurship among the respondents and
iii. to examine respondents' perceived constraints to agripreneurship.

The hypotheses of the study are stated as follow;

i. There is no significant relationship between selected socioeconomic characteristics and proclivity for agripreneurship among respondents
ii. There is no significant difference in proclivity for agripreneurship between undergraduates of agriculture and undergraduates of entrepreneurship

METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out in southwestern, Nigeria. Four universities were selected to draw the study sample. Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA) and Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba (AAUA) were randomly selected to sample undergraduates of agriculture (with options in Agric. Economics, Agric. Extension, Agronomy and Animal Science), while Kwara State University (KWASU) and Osun State University (UniOsun) were purposively selected to sample undergraduates of entrepreneurship (with no option) owing to limited number of universities presently offering entrepreneurship as a course of study in Nigeria. Sixty one (61) and fifty nine (59) undergraduates of agriculture were selected from FUTA and AAUA respectively, while seventy (70) and fifty (50) undergraduates of entrepreneurship were selected from UniOsun and KWASU respectively, to give one hundred and twenty final year undergraduates each, of agriculture and entrepreneurship randomly selected proportionate to size thereby resulting in a total sample size of two hundred and forty (240) respondents in all. Socioeconomic variables including age, gender, marital status, father's discipline and occupation, mother's discipline and occupation, reasons for the choice of course of study and employment plan upon graduation were measured as appropriate, proclivity for agripreneurship-the dependent variable was measured with yes or no response options to whether respondents were interested in agripreneurship or not, while specific areas of interest were indicated. Constraints to agripreneurship and its level of severity were measured via ranking. Relevant primary data were elicited from respondents using well-structured questionnaires and same were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics used in the study included frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Chi-square analysis was used to test for relationships between selected socioeconomic variables and proclivity for agripreneurship among respondents while t-test was used to test for difference in proclivity for agripreneurship between undergraduates of agriculture and undergraduates of entrepreneurship.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socioeconomic characteristics and parental background

Table 1 reveals the mean age of undergraduates of agriculture as 23.7 years, 54.2% were male and most (96.7%) were single. The mean age of entrepreneurship undergraduates was 23.0 years, 48.3% were male, while 95.0% were single. Table 2 shows that 30.0% of agricultural undergraduates' fathers studied agriculture related courses while 48.3% had their fathers engaged in trading. Also, 25.0% of the fathers of undergraduates of entrepreneurship studied agriculture related courses and 25.0% were also traders. However, 35.0% of both categories of respondents had their fathers being civil servants. Similarly, Adekunle *et al.* (2009) found just 3.3% of their sampled respondents' fathers as being farmers and this is expected to affect proclivity for agripreneurship among youths. The Table further reveals that 35.0% of agricultural undergraduates' mothers studied agriculture related courses, 36.7% had their mothers engaged in trading, while 63.3% had their mothers being civil servants. Also, 25.8% of entrepreneurship undergraduates' mothers studied agriculture related courses, 63.3% had their mothers engaged in trading, while 25.8% had their mothers being civil servants.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on socioeconomic characteristics

Variables	Undergraduates of Agriculture		Undergraduates of Entrepreneurship	
Age (Years)	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
15 – 20	00	0.0	01	0.8
21 – 25	36	30.0	47	38.3
26 – 30	52	43.3	38	31.7
31 – 40	32	26.7	34	28.3
Mean	**23.65**		**22.95**	
Gender				
Male	65	54.2	58	48.3
Female	55	45.8	62	51.7
Marital status				
Single	116	96.7	114	95.0
Married	04	3.3	06	5.0
Total	**120**	**100.0**	**120**	**100.0**

Table 2 also reveals that 35.0% of agricultural undergraduates' mothers studied agriculture related courses, 36.7% were engaged in trading, while 63.3% were civil servants. On the other hand, 25.8%, 63.3% and 25.8% of entrepreneurship undergraduates' mothers studied agriculture related courses, are traders and civil servants, respectively.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents based on parental background

Variables	Undergraduates of Agriculture		Undergraduates of Entrepreneurship	
Father's Discipline	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Agric. Related	36	30.0	30	25.0
Non-Agric. Related	84	70.0	90	75.0
Father's Occupation				
Trading	58	48.3	30	25.0
Civil service	42	35.0	42	35.0
Farming	05	4.2	09	7.5
Contractor	10	8.3	04	3.3
Clergy	00	0.0	04	3.3
Artisan	05	4.2	29	24.2
Military	00	0.0	02	1.7
Mother's Discipline				
Agric. Related	42	35.0	31	25.8
Non-Agric. Related	78	65.0	89	74.2
Mother's Occupation				
Trading	44	36.7	76	63.3
Civil service	76	63.3	31	25.8
Farming	00	0.0	05	4.2
Clergy	00	0.0	01	0.8
Artisan	00	0.0	07	5.8
Total	**120**	**100.0**	**120**	**100.0**

Table 3 indicates that 38.3% and 24.2% of undergraduates of agriculture chose their course of study due to personal interest and settled for the courses offered them by their universities, respectively. Also, 49.2% and 23.3% of entrepreneurship undergraduates chose their course of study due to personal interest and settled for the courses offered them by their universities respectively. Almost half (45.8%) of agricultural undergraduates were willing to be self-employed in agribusiness, while 28.3% of entrepreneurship undergraduates were willing to be gainfully employed in the private sector.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents based on other socioeconomic characteristics

Variables	Undergraduates of Agriculture		Undergraduates of Entrepreneurship	
Reasons for choice of course of study	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Parental influence	36	30.0	12	10.0
Personal interest	46	38.3	59	49.2
Peer group influence	08	6.7	06	5.0
Influence of mentor	01	0.8	15	12.5
Course offered by the university	29	24.2	28	23.3
Course of study				
Agric. Economics	33	27.5	NA	NA
Agric. Extension	27	22.5	NA	NA
Agronomy	31	25.8	NA	NA
Animal Science	29	24.2	NA	NA
Employment plan				
Private sector	15	12.5	34	28.3
Public sector	18	15.0	23	19.2
Engagement in family business	21	17.5	10	8.3
Self-employment in Agribusiness	55	45.8	19	15.8
Self-employment in non-agribusiness	07	5.8	32	26.7
Undecided	04	3.3	02	1.7
Total	**120**	**100.0**	**120**	**100.0**

NA = Not Applicable

Respondents' specific areas of interest in agripreneurship

Table 4 indicates that 75.8% of undergraduates of agriculture had proclivity for agripreneurship, while 65.0% of entrepreneurship undergraduates had proclivity for agripreneurship. Specifically, undergraduates of agriculture were highly interested in poultry egg production (65.7%), poultry meat production (60.0%) and poultry feed milling (50.8%) but less interested in agricultural produce marketing (26.7%) and beekeeping (7.5%). Similarly, undergraduates of entrepreneurship had specific interests in poultry egg production (53.3%), poultry meat production (48.7%) and poultry feed milling (40.0%) and less interested in agricultural produce marketing (26.7%) and beekeeping (9.2%).

Table 4: Distribution of respondents based on proclivity for selected areas of agripreneurship

Variables	Undergrad of Agriculture		Undergrad of Entrepreneurship	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Proclivity	91	75.8	78	65.0
Specific areas of interest				
Poultry egg production	81	65.7	64	53.3
Poultry meat production	72	60.0	56	46.7
Poultry feed milling	61	50.8	48	40.0
Small ruminant production	48	40.0	21	17.5
Cattle rearing	49	40.8	16	13.3
Piggery/swine production	45	37.5	19	15.8
Snail rearing	55	45.3	15	12.5
Fish farming	43	35.8	32	26.7
Beekeeping	09	7.5	11	9.2
Arable crop production	46	38.3	24	20.0
Tree cropping	36	30.0	15	12.5
Agro-processing and value addition	45	37.5	08	6.7
Agric. Produce Marketing	32	26.7	32	26.7

Respondents' perceived constraints to agripreneurship

Table 5 presents respondents' perceived constraints to agripreneurship. The table shows that the sampled undergraduates of agriculture ranked inadequate support infrastructures 1st as their perceived most severe constraint to entrepreneurship. This is closely followed by unfavourable government policies and lack of farmland which were ranked 2nd and 3rd, respectively. As for undergraduates of entrepreneurship, unfavourable government policies was ranked 1st, followed by inadequate support infrastructures and lack of fund ranked 2nd and 3rd. However, undergraduates of both agriculture and entrepreneurship ranked lack of technical know-how 6th as their perceived least severe constraint to agripreneurship. Adekunle *et al.* (2009) found that the major constraints hindering youth participation in agriculture included inadequate credit facility, lack of agricultural insurance, poor returns to agricultural investment, lack of basic farming knowledge and lack of access to tractors and other farm inputs.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents' perceived constraints to agripreneurship

Variables	Undergraduates of Agriculture		Undergraduates of Entrepreneurship	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Inadequate support infrastructures	1.90	1st	1.63	2nd
Unfavourable government policies	1.80	2nd	1.74	1st
Lack of farmland	1.61	3rd	1.28	5th
Lack of high value market for agric. Produce	1.58	4th	1.37	4th
Lack of fund	1.45	5th	1.38	3rd
Lack of technical know-how	1.15	6th	1.25	6th

Test of relationship between selected socioeconomic characteristics and proclivity for agripreneurship

Table 6 reveals positive relationships between undergraduates of agriculture's course of study (χ^2=7.588, p=0.050) as well as mother's discipline (χ^2=5.328, p=0.021) and proclivity for agripreneurship while gender (χ^2=5.822, p=0.016) and mother's discipline (χ^2=22.335, p=0.000) were significantly related to proclivity for agripreneurship among undergraduates of entrepreneurship. Osondu, Obike, and Ogbonna (2015) identified sex, age of the youth, annual income, location, and ethnicity as the factors influencing affinity for entrepreneurship.

Table 6: Result of Chi-square for test of relationship between socioeconomic characteristics and proclivity for agripreneurship

Variables	Undergraduates of Agriculture		Undergraduates of Entrepreneurship	
	χ^2 value	p-value	χ^2 value	p-value
Gender	0.907	0.341	5.822	0.021**
University attended	1.621	0.203	1.504	0.220
Course of study	7.588	0.050**	NA	NA
Mother's discipline	5.328	0.021**	22.335	0.000*
Father's discipline	0.659	0.417	2.889	0.089

** Significant at p≤0.05 NA: Not Applicable

Source: Field survey, 2019.

Test of difference in proclivity for agripreneurship between undergraduates of agriculture and undergraduates of entrepreneurship

Table 7 shows the result of test of hypothesis for significant difference in proclivity for agripreneurship between undergraduates of agriculture and undergraduates of entrepreneurship. From the table, the t calculated (1.710) is greater than the t tabulated (1.640) at 5% level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that significant difference existed in proclivity for agripreneurship between undergraduates of agriculture and undergraduates of entrepreneurship. This may be probably because undergraduates of entrepreneurship are more likely to see agripreneurship as a risky business venture due to production uncertainties caused by weather vagaries and climate change among other factors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that more of the sampled agricultural undergraduates (75.8%) had penchant for agripreneurship compared to undergraduates of entrepreneurship (60.5%). Respondents were specifically willing to engage in

poultry production but grossly less interested in bee-keeping. Inadequate support infrastructures, unfavourable government policies and lack of fund among others, were pointed out as the major perceived constraints to agripreneurship. Course of study (degree option) and mother's discipline determined proclivity for agripreneurship among undergraduates of agriculture while undergraduates of entrepreneurship were influenced by gender and mother's discipline. Therefore, the study recommended that government at all levels should:

i. Endeavour to provide adequate support infrastructures on a sustainable basis, thus creating enabling environment for successful and rewarding agribusiness engagements, while prospective agripreneurs should pull resources together via cooperative societies to secure fund among other factors of production.
ii. Formulate farmer friendly policies to attract prospective entrepreneurs, towards sustainable youth engagement in agripreneurship.

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