



**PROMOTING AGRIPRENEURSHIP IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS TOWARD ACHIEVING SELF-  
RELIANCE ORIENTATION AND ASPIRATION AMONG UNDERGRADUATES**

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*Abstract*

*One of the key issues bothering on socio-economic growth of developing nations is youth unemployment and under-employment. Despite the series of efforts by governments at different levels to salvage the situation, unemployment rate keeps increasing with noticeably frustrating trend of joblessness and poor motivation of young people to embrace agripreneurship among other options. Research evidences on the importance of agricultural sector in alleviating standard of living and national earnings give credence to the need for embracing agripreneurship development as a model for driving youth aspiration toward agriculture and agro-services, and to facilitate productive engagement and self-reliance among youths. The study is descriptive in design and the population comprised final year students of selected tertiary institutions in Ogun State from which 300 were selected using multi-stage sampling technique. A 4-point likert scale questionnaire with descriptive parameters was used and data collected were analysed with descriptive statistics involving frequency count, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The results indicated low response patterns in favour of students' orientation and aspiration for agripreneurship and a moderately high inclination for conventional entrepreneurship options. It was concluded that the promotion of agriprenuership orientation and aspiration among students, especially at tertiary level is essentially critical in motivating the participation of youth undergraduates in agriculture and agro-services. This paper calls for deliberate and dedicated efforts by management of tertiary institutions towards inculcating agripreneurship aspiration among their students and towards providing or securing supports to interesting students or group of students.*

**Keywords:** Agripreneurship, Agriprenuership aspiration, Self-reliance orientation, Undergraduates

**Background to the Study**

In Nigeria and many other developing nations, the rising spate of unemployment has remained one of the worrisome situations bothering on social and economic integration of young people for sustainable national development.

Research evidences reveal that one out of every five persons in the youthful age are unemployed which suggest that youth unemployment rate is growing at a rate that has ever been experienced (Plecher, 2019; Green, 2020), giving credence to the development of innovative mindset, entrepreneurial thinking, hand-on-skill training, small business orientation, etc. (Lucas & Marie, 2017). These necessitated the teaching of entrepreneurship and vocational trainings at different levels of education.

While entrepreneurship programmes of tertiary institutions are meant to raise attitudes and behaviour capable of provoking entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduates and leveraging same into aspiration and active entrepreneurial engagement after graduation, orientation for self-job and reliance is poorly manifested among the youths. While there is rising trend of youth engagement in illicit activities such as cybercrimes, drug addiction, kidnapping, smuggling, drug peddling, prostitution, and casualization of willing-to-do graduates, viable options for productive engagement have been identified in agro-businesses - crop production, poultry and livestock farming, etc. and provide further compulsion to the dire need for Agripreneurship.



Developing self-reliance orientation among the graduates is integral to poverty reduction efforts and initiatives that are capable of improving employment availability and economic growth (Nwachukwu, 2014). In the context of employment purpose, being self-reliant implies autonomy of decision-making on the sourcing, deployment and management of resources available to an individual and a reflection of abilities for goal setting, appropriate use of capital and other resources (Iroegbu, 2017). According to Aluko and Mbada (2020), when a reasonable percentage of youth exhibit aspiration and capacity for self-employment and job creation, the manifestation of poverty in economic dependency, social deprivation, poor health care, food shortage and insecurity, lack of shelter and even access to good education, will be alleviated. Thus, entrepreneurial programmes are capable of reducing vulnerability to poverty, prevent young people from being abjectly poor and will be instrumental in lifting many out of poverty situation (Acha, 2014; Iro-Idoro & Jimoh, 2020).

One of the many approaches regarded as veritable in achieving self-reliance and job creation orientation among youth through enterprise skill acquisition and utilization is entrepreneurial dynamism for innovative, productive and creative engagement (Andrew et al., 2009; Iro-Idoro & Jimoh, 2020). Such production-oriented skill utilization is often times, hinged on the level of awareness and aspirations of young people towards entrepreneurial choices (Gardiner & Goedhuys, 2022). The inability to transit into gainful self-employment or paid engagement and lack of entrepreneurial aspiration among young people especially from low socio-economic and underprivileged backgrounds are responsible for social categorization as disengaged youths, vulnerable youths, youths at risk and other labels (Tang & Wong, 2017) depicting demeaning economic situation, social engagement and living standard (Tang & Zhang, 2022).

While youth engagement in entrepreneurial activities has been widely acknowledged as viable option for economic sustenance, livelihood and contribution to national development through job and wealth creation (Iro-Idoro & Jimoh, 2020), such engagement in entrepreneurial activities is linked to a number of factors (Zwan, et al., 2016; Cavada, et al., 2017), particularly their awareness on entrepreneurship and their level of aspiration to be entrepreneurs (Ismail, 2021; Iro-Idoro & Jimoh, 2020). Individual aspirations serve as the triggers and drivers of life path and are essentially the proxies for choices made and steps taken in education, career, occupation, jobs, social interactions, etc. and their outcomes (Gardiner & Goedhuys, 2022).

While researches have pointed out that personality traits have direct relationship with creativity, innovativeness, need for achievement, acceptance of outcomes from individual choices entrepreneurial doggedness, growth, etc. (McGrath et al., 1992; Craig & Siri, 2006; Frederick, 2016), there are situational, economic and environmental factors that necessitate involvement in entrepreneurship and imbue such aspirations in young people (Hopp & Stephan, 2012; Kosa & Mohammed, 2017) which forms the alter-basis for the inclusion of entrepreneurship in the curricula of tertiary education.

While efforts are invested in entrepreneurship training – vocational, social, technical and other forms of entrepreneurial inclinations encompassing a number of training options in which students in tertiary institutions are enrolled with a view to driving economic sustenance, growth and diversification as well as wealth creation, there are emerging disposition driven by available evidences that efforts geared towards the development of agric-entrepreneurship are capable of improving peoples livelihood, enhance job creation, revenue generation and productive engagement of youth (Alam, 2019). Policy shift and interest in the development of agricultural sector, the encouragement and engagement of young people in agric-related activities are necessary to expand employment opportunity (International Labour Organisation (2017), and the restructuring of agro-food system for the future (Franzel et al., 2022).

Agripreneurship is the entrepreneurial processes involving “the adoption of new methods, processes, techniques in agriculture or the allied sectors of agriculture for better output and economic earnings (Chand, 2019). As obtained in other forms of entrepreneurship, identifying opportunity, sourcing and deploying resource, taking risks, devotion to profit-making are essential attributes that should speak for an Agripreneur who engages in agriculture or agric-business related ventures by starting farm, producing farm tools or allied products or distributing same to consumers or other middlemen (Mukhopadhyay & Mukhopadhyay, 2020).

Agripreneurship encompasses a general, system-based approach to agriculture and agro business and spans across seedling production, crop farming, agricultural input sales, dairy, goat and sheep rearing, rabbit rearing, fisheries,



shrimp farming, vegetable cultivation, nursery farming, apiaries, feed and seed processing units, mushroom production (Franzel et al., 2022). It also covers the management of agro-produce manufacturing units, agro-inputs manufacturing units, food processing outlets, agro-service centres, equipment repairs, etc. and market exploration for organic vegetable and fruits retail outlet and other farm produce (Alam, 2019; Chand, 2019; Mukhopadhyay & Mukhopadhyay, 2020; Franzel et al., 2022). Considerable involvement in agripreneurship, according to Gnana and Michael (2020), will provide job opportunities and earnings to vulnerable, enhanced general quality of living, facilitate social development and contribute to the national income

Considering the importance of entrepreneurship training of tertiary institutions and the indispensable role of agriculture in food security initiative, employment, social and economic development, the this study focused on determining the level of availability of agripreneurship options in entrepreneurship training of selected tertiary institutions, ascertaining the level of agripreneurship aspiration among students in the selected tertiary institutions, and identifying the likely basic agripreneurship options which the undergraduates could aspire to venture into as a means of self-reliance after graduation.

In line with the objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised:

- What is the level of agripreneurship options in entrepreneurship training programmes of selected tertiary institutions in Ogun State?
- What is the level of agripreneurship aspiration among students in the selected tertiary institutions in Ogun State?
- What are the likely agripreneurship options that that graduates could take advantage of towards self-reliance?

## **Methodology**

This study is descriptive in design and it employed the survey approach with the use of questionnaire for data collection. A sample of 300 final year students of 3 tertiary institutions across the 3 senatorial districts in Ogun State was covered – The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro in Ogun West, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-iwoye in Ogun East and Federal College of Education, Osiele in Ogun Central. Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted. On one hand, the population was stratified into the three Senatorial Districts in the Ogun State and the three forms of tertiary educational institutions were covered with one form from any of the senatorial districts. Purposive sampling was used to cover only final year students who were deemed to be in better position to express opinions on entrepreneurship programmes of their institutions, availability of agripreneurship options and students aspiration for agripreneurship. Respondents were then selected across faculties, department and programmes. On the other hand, 50 agro practitioners and experts were selected across the states on agripreneurship options that could avail graduates the opportunity of self-reliance.

A structured questionnaire designed with a 4-point likert was used and descriptive statistics involving frequency counts, percentage and means, was used for analysis.

## **Results and Discussions**

Data used for this study were collected from two different categories of respondents – students of selected tertiary institutions and farmers/agro-business practitioners in the study area. Analysis of data was done with descriptive statistics involving frequency count, mean and standard deviation. The results are as follow:



**Table 1: Availability of Agripreneurship Options in Entrepreneurship Training**

<b>Agripreneurship Options</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Crop production	1.53
Livestock	1.41
Fishery	2.83
Snail Rearing	1.32
Tubers, Root and Legume farming	2.11
Poultry	2.99
Agro-chemicals (Production/Sales)	2.49
Pests and disease control	1.94
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.16</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2022**

The above table shows a weighted mean value of 2.16 which portrays a low level of availability of agripreneurship options in the entrepreneurship content of the selected tertiary institutions.

**Table 2: Agripreneurship Aspiration Level**

<b>Agripreneurship Options</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Crop production	2.44
Livestock	2.41
Fishery	2.91
Snail rearing	2.22
Tubers, root and legume farming	2.56
Poultry	3.12
Agro-chemicals (production/sales)	2.66
Pests and disease control	1.73
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.51</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2022**

Table 2 reveals the mean responses of respondents' aspiration for agripreneurship in terms of the selected agripreneurship options. The result shows a fair level of aspiration of the respondents (mean value = 2.51) towards agripreneurship ventures.

**Table 3: Perceived Viable Agripreneurship Options for Graduates**

<b>Viable Agripreneurship for Graduates</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Crop production	3.38
Livestock	3.36
Fishery	3.42
Snail Rearing	3.48
Poultry	3.50
Honey bee farming	3.62
Tubers/root Farming	3.33
Nuts and legumes farming	3.14
Animal feed production	3.56
Agro-chemicals Production	3.16
Agro-chemicals distribution and sales	3.22
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.37</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2022**

Table 3 revealed the perceived viable agripreneurship ventures available for grasp by graduates from the perspective of agro practitioners, farmers and experts.



**Table 4: Summary of Mean Responses**

Inputs	Item	No of Respondents	Mean Response	Stand. Dev.
7	Availability of Agriprenuership Options on Entrepreneurship Training	286	2.16	0.528
7	Agriprenuership Aspiration Level of Respondents	286	2.51	0.341
10	Perceived Viable Agriprenuership Options for Graduates	47	3.37	0.150

The results shows a considerable low level of agriculture-oriented entrepreneurship training in the selected tertiary institutions depicting a low inclusion of agricultural options in the training coverage of entrepreneurship for the students. It was evident that fishery, poultry and allied/agro-chemical productions were indicated to be moderately available in the overall response patterns while crop production, livestock, crops and legumes, snail rearing were represented as either not available or fairly available to students to choose as training options of interest. This result revealed a clear indication of low awareness of agro ventures as viable options for productive engagement and self-reliance among the students in the selected institutions. This implies that agric-based entrepreneurship options available were not sufficient to stimulate awareness, interest and disposition of undergraduates into agro businesses.

The analysis revealed a fairly good disposition and aspiration level of the respondents towards agriprenuership (mean = 2.51) which points to the students' possible inclination towards agro-based entrepreneurship. This means that the students have fairly high tendencies to embrace any of the identified agric-based businesses as own-job creation opportunities and also considered them as means of livelihood, economic sustenance and self-reliance as submitted by Alam (2019), Gnana & Michael (2020) and host of other research findings.

From the perspective of agro business practitioners, farmers and experts, the result showed a number of viable entrepreneurship ventures and opportunities which interested young graduates could take advantage of and venture into for self-reliance. Out of series of agric-based entrepreneurship ventures identified, 11 were ranked as highly viable for job creation purposes, productive engagement and self-reliance of graduates. These are crop production, livestock, fishery, snail rearing, poultry, honey bee farming, tubers, root, nuts and legumes, animal feed production, agro-chemicals production and agro-chemicals distribution and sales. The result implies that the graduates could seek opportunities in these agriprenuership areas with a view to becoming self-reliance in midst of scarce paid employment. This result is in tandem with Alam (2019) that agric-entrepreneurship has the efficacy of engaging youths in productive activities, provide them with livelihood and revenue generation and Mukembo, et al. (2020) that youth participation in agriprenuership will offer them job opportunities and earnings, reduce poverty, prevent them from indecent works and contribute to economic growth.

## **Conclusion**

Agriprenuership is an essential and viable model of entrepreneurial engagement capable of providing job creation opportunities and self-reliance for youths especially, graduates from tertiary institutions. A self-reliant individual has autonomy of decision-making on any functional productive engagement and activities, exhibition of capacities for the sourcing and management of capital, skills, resources, etc. and the utilization of same for the achievement of specific economic goals capable of facilitating wealth creation and enhancing earnings, economic sustenance, independence and better livelihood.

The inclusion of viable agric-related entrepreneurship training in the curricula and vocations of higher educational institutions will create considerable agriprenuership awareness to the student and will trigger aspiration of the teeming undergraduates towards functional agriprenuership engagement for self-reliance after graduation.

A number of agriculture-related businesses are available for grasp by graduates to be self-reliant in the midst of worrisome job scarcity in Nigeria. Some of such viable agro businesses include crop production, livestock rearing,





legumes, roots and fibre farming, snail rearing, fishery, poultry keeping, agro-chemical productions, sales of allied products, etc.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the finding of this study, the following are recommended:

- Management of tertiary institutions should strengthen the available agripreneurship content and options in their entrepreneurship vocations and introduce more youth-friendly agric-related trainings with a view to exposing students to agripreneurship.
- Managers of entrepreneurship development programmes of tertiary institutions should institute mechanism for encouraging students to participate in agripreneurship training so as to stimulate their interest in same after leaving school.
- Management of tertiary institutions should make provision and necessary support to willing students in terms of land for cultivation, seeds, pest and disease control, etc. and other inputs needed to embark on any chosen agric entrepreneurship options.
- Government should implement policies to revive and strengthen agricultural practices and encourage farmers in crop production, poultry, fishery and other agro businesses.

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