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Imperatives of Youth engagement in Agriculture and Implications for deviance in Enugu State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Context/background:

In Nigeria, over 70% of the population engage in agriculture which implies that most of the Nigeria population rely on agriculture for sustenance. The youth category is a core segment of the population whose engagement in agriculture needs to be examined for future sustainability. This paper therefore examines the imperatives of youth engagement in agriculture and implications for deviance within the study area.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Nsukka agricultural zone, Enugu state and adopted a cross-sectional survey design. A sample of 620 youth aged 18-35 years was systematically selected. Data was collected through the questionnaire instrument and was analysed using relevant frequency tables and regression analysis.

Findings:

The study confirmed low youth engagement in agriculture. Factors responsible are lack of finance, predominant use of crude implements and lack of government support. Apathy to agriculture in the face of massive unemployment could lead to deviance activities like drug addiction, alcoholism and cultism.

Conclusion

The study concludes that agriculture should be made attractive to the youth by introducing modern techniques and equipments. Also modern crop varieties and soft loans should be provided to the youth.

KEYWORDS: Imperatives; Youth engagement; Agriculture; Implications; deviance; Nigeria

1. Introduction

Agriculture is one of the most important primary economic activity of man and the source of food supply for the entire population of the world (Smith, 2000). It includes the production of food, feed, fibre, fuel and other goods through the systematic raising of plants and animals (Diao, Hazell, Resnick & Thurlow, 2007). Anyanwu (1997) defined agriculture as involving cultivation of land, raising and rearing of animals for the purpose of providing food for man and raw materials for industries. It involves forestry, fishing, processing and marketing of agricultural products.

The American Society of Agronomy (cited in Uptal, 2001:48), defines agriculture as an activity that over the long term, enhances environmental quality and the resource base, provides for basic human food and fibre needs, is economically viable, and enhances the

quality of life of farmers and society as a whole. The Nigerian Agriculture Act 1947 had described agriculture to include horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, livestock breeding and keeping, the use of land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds, and the use of land for woodlands where that use is ancillary to the farming of land for agricultural purposes.

According to Green (2013), between 1962 and 1968, cash crops were Nigeria's main foreign exchange earner. Nigeria was number one globally in palm oil exports ahead of Malaysia and Indonesia and exported 47percent of all groundnuts in the world ahead of US and Argentina. According to Aibgokhan (2001), agriculture was a leading sector in the 1950s and 1960s, accounting for 63 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the period 1960 to1964. However, there was a sharp decline in the share of agriculture's contribution to national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from the 1970s reducing from 54 percent in 1973 to 33percent in 1974 which was also the period that marked the watershed in Nigerian economic history through the 1973/74 crude oil price (Aigbokhan, 2001). Comparing the contribution of agriculture and crude oil to National GDP between 1981-2003, Balogun (2000) and Aigbokhan (2001) found that agricultural exports accounted for 86 percent of the total export in the 1955 to 1959 period, but declined to 26 percent in the period 1970 to 1974. The contribution decreased further to 5.7 percent in the period 1975 to 1979; as low as 2.7 percent in 1980-1984; 5.6 percent in 1985 to 1989 and nose-dived to the lowest in 1990-1994 accounting for only 1.8 percent before bouncing back to 8.6 percent in the period 1994 to 1998.

Nigeria relegated agricultural production to the background especially with the oil boom. Consequently, agricultural production was no longer attractive to the youth, hence their huge apathy towards agriculture. Nigeria can no longer feed her citizens and depended on food importation for most of her food needs. According to the National Bureau of

Statistics (2017), Nigerian food imports rose to 2.5 trillion naira by end of June, 2017. The Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria also reported that Nigeria spends a whooping 1 trillion naira annually on importation of rice, wheat, sugar and fish. Another sad implication is echoed by the report of the World Poverty Clock (2018) that Nigeria has become the global capital of poverty with 87million people or about 50% of the population living in extreme poverty. There is a further tendency for the youth who do not participate in agriculture to engage in deviant activities, especially with the high unemployment level in Nigeria.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) put Nigeria's unemployment rate at 23.1%, of which youth unemployment is 55.4% (NBS, 2019). According to the United Nations Report (2018), agriculture is the single largest employer in the World and provides livelihoods for 40 percent of today's global population. However, the reliance on agriculture for food production and food security at domestic, regional and global level depends on the productive force of the youth. In the Nigerian context, the Federal Government of Nigeria (2001) defines youth as people aged between 18 and 35. The contribution of agriculture to farmers' income and rural development also depends on the active participation of the youth who are the potential labour force. They are characterized by innovative behaviour, minimal risk aversion, less fear of failure, less conservativeness, greater physical strength and greater knowledge acquisition propensity (Umeh & Odom, 2011). These same qualities also make the youth to be potential candidates for crime if not well directed. The crime wave in Nigeria today is very alarming, ranging from armed robbery to kidnapping, internet fraud, drug addiction, drug trafficking, to banditry and terrorist activities (Adesina,2017; Abdulkabir, 2017; Ogbuechi, 2018; Epron & Nwokeoma, 2019). These crimes have further been found to be mostly committed by the youth (Alabi, 2014). Daudu (2009) noted that youth constitute about 60 percent of the more than 200 million people of Nigeria.

Globally, hunger is on the increase among nations of the world (Karl, 2009). According to Pinstrup-Andersen, Pandya-Lorch and Rosegrant (2001), about 800 million people (one - sixth) of the developing world's population do not have access to sufficient food to lead healthy, productive lives. For this reason, the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) agenda set out to end all forms of poverty within the 15years implementation period (UN SDG Report, 2018). Therefore, the first two goals were dedicated to this course; number one goal is no poverty and the second goal is zero hunger. The African union also followed suit in the first aspiration of agenda 2063 which calls for a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development (AU, 2015).

Therefore, the focus of this paper is to examine the imperatives of youth engagement in agriculture and the implications for deviance in Enugu State, Nigeria. This is aimed to refocus the attention of the youth to agricultural engagements and therefore reduce deviance in Nigeria. Empirical studies on youth engagement in agriculture in Enugu state is scanty but pertinent. Therefore this study is undertaking to fill this existing research gap.

1.1 Research questions

Based on the forgoing, the following research questions are formulated to guide this study:

(1) What is the extent of youth engagement in agriculture?

(2) What are the impeding factors against youth engagement in agriculture?

(3) What are the implications of non engagement of youth in agriculture on deviance?

1.2 Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to ascertain the extent of youth engagement in agriculture in Enugu State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are:

(1) To examine the extent of youth engagement in agriculture development.

(2) To ascertain the impeding factors against youth engagement in agriculture.

(3) To know the implications of non engagement of youth in agriculture on deviance.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Structural strain theory/Youth empowerment approach

The theories that will serve as framework for this study are the structural strain theory and the youth empowerment approach. According to Robertson (1987), the structural strain frame of analyses which includes anomie theory explain criminal behavior as the outcome of structural strains that put pressure on some individuals and make them to deviate. In other words the structures of society, especially the economic, social and political realities of a society, have a significant effect and impacts on the various forms of criminal behavior in that community/society. Consequently, anomie theory asserts that the catalyst for individuals to engage in deviant behavior lies in inequities in the social and economic structures of society. Merton, (1968) asserts that the social structure of society creates situations of anomie by establishing systems of norms and values which stipulate the goals that individuals pursue; while the institutionalized means of attaining this culturally defined goals are limited. Some of these goals could be good job, economic wealth, status etc while the limited means could be employment, education, skills, agricultural production etc. The individual may respond in different ways to this discrepancy. One process of response is **Innovation**; in which a person may accept the goals of material success, and abandon the approved normative means of the society like agricultural production with limited opportunities. Individuals in this situation may therefore adopt deviant, unconventional, unapproved and unlawful means to achieving success.

Another theory of relevance is the youth empowerment approach which was traced to Freire (1973) when he advocated a plan to assist and liberate those who have limited chances and are oppressed in the society. The approach is a process where young people are

encouraged to take charge of their lives. They do this by addressing their situation and taking action in order to improve their access to resources and transform their consciousness through their beliefs, values, and attitudes. According to Fetterman (1996), youth empowerment is the process by which the youth gain access to critical economic, political, socio-cultural and educational resources. For Robin, Chatterjee and Canda (1998), youth empowerment enables the youth to gain the ability to achieve their highest personal and collective aspirations and goals.

The field of youth empowerment has solid foundation in theory at both process and outcome levels. The empowering level provides opportunities for the youth to develop skills and become problem solvers and decision makers. The outcomes or the empowered level refers to the result of the empowerment process, including the consequences of attempts to gain control in the community and the effects of interventions designed to empower participants (Zimmerman, 2000). The youth empowerment approach identifies that the youth are faced with non existing or limited chances which results from their lack of resources, skills, power to take decisions that affect their lives and other capabilities to fully participate in the socio-cultural, political and economic life of their communities. The approach aims at developing effective support systems and opportunities for those who have been blocked from achieving individual or collective goals. The youth need to be empowered through the provision of education, credit, skills, lands, extension services and other agricultural resources to enhance their participation in agricultural development. Youth empowerment provides the basis for the sustainability of agricultural development. One major critique of youth empowerment is that most programs take a risk-focused approach, with emphasis on what is going wrong for the youth in their lives rather than what goes right (Kar, Pascual & Chickering, 1999).

1.4 Study hypotheses

The following hypotheses will guide the study.

(1) There is a direct positive relationship between lack of incentive and interest by the youth in agriculture and low participation in agricultural development.

(2) The less educated youth are more likely to participate in agriculture than the more educated youth.

(3) Youth who do not participate in agriculture are more likely to engage in deviant activities than youth who participate in agriculture.

2. STUDY METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research design

This study adopted cross-sectional survey research design in which the researcher tries to get an overview of all the subjects and situations at the same time (Babbie, 2007; Obikeze, 1990). This design is chosen because the study population is large and requires a representative sample for the research subject.

2.2 Area and population of the study

The study was conducted in Nsukka agricultural zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. Enugu state is one of the 36 states of Nigeria with Enugu City as its capital (Ministry of Information, 1992). Enugu state has three political senatorial zones, namely Enugu-east, Enugu-north and Enugu-west.

Nsukka local government area is in Enugu-north senatorial zone and covers an area of about 480 km^2 (Ezeh & Ugwu, 2010). Nsukka is a University town which hosts the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, (Ofomata, 1995) and the local government is made up of 36 autonomous communities.

The major pre-occupation in the area is agriculture and farmers produce a wide variety of staple crops like cassava, yam, maize, vegetables and fruits. Cash crops such as oil palms and cashew nuts can be found in large quantities in the area. A few of the people engage in white

collar jobs mostly in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, which is the major industry and employer of labour in the area.

This study was limited to Nsukka local government area (LGA) with a population of 309,633 comprising 149,241 males and 160,392 females. The breakdown of the population shows 121,237 members fall within the age category of 15-35, (National Bureau of Statistics, 2010) which is 39 percent of the population. This age range which is made up of the youth will form the sample frame for this study. However, it aptly represents the operationalization of the youth in this study. The sample frame of 15-35years is further projected to 2016, based on 3.3% annual growth rate (Enugu State Government, 2013) which amounted to 146,818 youth.

2.3 Sample size and sampling procedure

The sample size for this study is determined statistically using Yamane (1967) formula in which the sample frame is the finite population and the level of significance is 0.04 (Eboh, 2009).

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Based on the formula, a sample size of 627 was calculated from the sample frame. Thus, 627 respondents were administered the questionnaire for the quantitative study.

A multi-stage cluster sampling technique was adopted in this study. This technique entails making use of the combination of the simple random sampling, the systematic random sampling and the purposive sampling techniques for the selection of the respondents from communities, villages, streets, and housing units. In the first stage, the 36 autonomous communities in Nsukka L.G.A were grouped into two clusters of urban and rural areas. The urban cluster is made up of Nsukka urban and the rural cluster is made up of other 35 autonomous communities. Nsukka urban was purposively selected since it is the only urban

area in the local government while random sampling method was used through balloting to select 10 out of the 35 rural autonomous communities. Ten communities were selected from the rural area because most of the farming activities take place in the rural areas.

In the urban community (Nsukka town), already existing areas were clustered into three zones namely, Odenigbo, Enugu Road and University of Nigeria, Nsukka Campus zones. Simple random sampling was used through balloting to select Odenigbo and UNN Campus clusters. New Anglican Road and Ofulonu streets were selected from Odenigbo zone, while Odim and Margaret Cartwright streets were selected from UNN Campus zone using simple random sampling. This gave a total of four streets. The researcher employed the systematic sampling technique, with a random start to select 104 dwelling units from the four streets as the research units. From the selected dwelling units, two respondents from the age interval of 15-35 years were selected into the sample from 103 units while one respondent was selected from the remaining one unit. This gave a total of 207 respondents in the urban community with provision for replacement.

In the rural areas, from the 10 selected communities, one village each was selected through a systematic process which gave a total of ten villages namely, Ozzi Edem, Okpuje, Ogbugu Obukpa, Ede Oballa, Ibagwa Ani, Eha Uno Ehalumona, Alor Uno, Eziani Obimo, Obimo and Edem Ani. In each village, systematic sampling technique with a random start was used to select 14 dwelling units (10x14=140). From the 140 units, 3 respondents within the age interval of 15-35 years were selected for the study which gave a total of 420 respondents. The number of urban respondents, 207 and the rural respondents, 420 gives a total of 627 respondents for the study.

2.4 Instruments for data collection

The quantitative method of data collection was used in this study. The questionnaire was the major instrument for data collection in this study. The questionnaire consists of two

sections (A and B). Section A consists of questions relating to the socio–demographic characteristics of the respondents, while section B consists of questions on the substantive issues of the study.

2.5 Administration of instruments

For the data collection, four research assistants were recruited by the researcher. The research assistants were trained for two days on the contents of the instruments, objectives and methodology of the study. They are fluent in both Nsukka dialect and English language and are undergraduate students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The questionnaire was self administered to the respondents by hand in a face to face interaction in their homes and collected on completion.

2.6 Methods of data analysis

This study applied quantitative method of data analysis. The data from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and percentages, pie chart and bar charts. Correlation analysis was also done using chi-square (χ^2) and the binary logistic regression to illustrate the relationship between certain socio demographic variables and participation in agricultural development and to test the study hypotheses.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A total of 627 questionnaires were distributed in the urban and rural communities selected for the study by the researcher and four research assistants. However, 620 (98.9%) of the questionnaire were validly filled, while 7 (1.1%) of the questionnaire were not properly filled and thereby discarded. Consequently, the analysis is based on the 620 questionnaire that were returned.

3.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

The socio-demographic characteristics of the 620 respondents in this study were analyzed. The variables of interest here include residence, sex, age, education, marital status, religious affiliation, occupation and income.

Distribution of Socio-Demographic Characteristics (N = 620)

The socio-demographic data of the respondents shows that 51.3 percent were males and 48.7 percent are females. Therefore, there was preponderance of males to females among the respondents. On age intervals, the table shows that 12.3 % of the youth were 18-20 years of age, 13.5% were within the age of 21-23 years, 25.8% were within the age of 24-26 years, 18.1% fell within the age of 27-29 years, 14.2% fell within the age of 30-32 years, while 16.1% were 33-35 years. Therefore, most of the youth respondents (44%) were between 24-29 years. This implies that most of the respondents were within the productive and active age to participate in agriculture. Majority (57.1%) of the respondents had secondary education, 22.9% of the respondents had primary education, 9.8% of the respondents had HND/Degree and above, 7.1% of the respondents had NCE/OND, while 3.1% of the respondents had no formal education. The distribution presents a literate youth population with about 97% haven attended primary, secondary or tertiary education. This outcome is a reflection of the high literacy level found in the south eastern Nigeria. Majority (66.8%) of the respondents were single, 25.3% of the respondents were married, 36% of the respondents were either widowed or widower, 1.6% of the respondents were separated and 0.5% of the respondents were divorced. This distribution shows that majority of the respondents were single and this is because they are mostly youth who are still young and do not have the resources to get married. The distribution of the respondents by religious affiliation shows that most of the respondents (94.2%) are Christians. This is because the study is carried out in Enugu state, Southeastern Nigeria that are predominantly Christians. From the Table, nearly one-third of the respondents (32.6%) were urban dwellers while slightly over two-third 67.4% were rural

dwellers. This reveals that two out of every three youth respondents in the study area are rural dwellers.

4.2 Substantive issues of the study

Extent of youth participation in agriculture

Views of the respondents on agricultural activities

The rate at which the youth were engaged in agricultural activities was measured by calculating the percentage of those that engaged and those that do not engage. The respondents were asked if they engage in any agricultural activity. The results show that majority of the respondents (61%**)** did not engage in any agricultural activity.

Table 1: ***Distribution of respondents on whether they engage in any agricultural activity (N=620)***

Participation in any agricultural activity	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	242	39
No	378	61
Total	**620**	**100.0**

Source: *Field survey* 2017

The result in Table 1 shows that 39% of the respondents indicated that they engage in some agricultural activity, while 61% do not engage in any agricultural activity. This shows that few of the respondent youth actually participate in agricultural activity in the study area while most of the respondents do not. The result further shows that even among the rural youth (67.4%) who are supposed to predominantly participate in agriculture, only 39% actually participate while 28.4% do not participate.

Agricultural implements used

The interest here was to know the type of implement young people use in their agricultural production in communities under study. A set of implements were presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: ***Distribution of respondents by the use of agricultural implements (N=242)***

Use of Agricultural Implements	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diggers/shovels	52	21
Modern Ploughs	00	00
Hoes and cutlasses	190	79
Harvesters/tractors	00	00
Total	**242**	**100.0**

Source: *Field survey* 2017

Table 2 shows that more than two-third of the youth farming respondents (79%) indicated that the farm implement they mostly use are hoes and cutlasses, while the few others indicated that they use diggers and shovels. Remarkable however is that none of the youth respondents use either modern ploughs or harvesters in agricultural production. Generally, therefore, 100% of the youth farmers use traditional local implements. The implications of the result above is that the youth farmers in this study use rudimentary farming tools with all its limitations and challenges in agricultural production.

Table 3: ***Distribution of respondents on whether their agricultural production increased or decreased in the last 2 years (N=242)***

Agricultural Production	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Increased	34	14.0
Decreased	178	73.6
Did not change	30	12.4
Total	**242**	**100.0**

Source: *Field survey* 2017

The data in Table 3 shows that 14.0% of the respondents indicated that their agricultural production increased. However, 73.6% of the respondents said it decreased, while a small percentage 12.4% stated that their agricultural production did not change in the last 2 years.

Factors responsible for decrease in agricultural production

This section discusses issues raised by the youth who said agricultural production in the LGA had decreased. The concern here is the barriers the respondents encountered that made them state that agricultural production decreased.

Table 4: ***Distribution of respondents by reasons for decrease in agricultural production (N=178)***

Reasons for decrease in agricultural production	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Erosion	26	14.6
Not using fertilizer/pesticide	72	40.4
Lack of labour	43	24.2
Low product prices	37	20.8
Total	**178**	**100.0**

Source: *Field survey 2017*

Table 4 shows the factors responsible for decrease in agricultural production. For 14.6% of the respondents, agricultural production decreased as a result of erosion. For 40.4% of the respondents, it is lack of fertilizer/pesticide, and for 24.2% it is lack of labour, while for 20.8% of the respondents it is low product prices. The implication of the finding is that the above factors were believed to be responsible for low agricultural productivity.

Reasons for not engaging in agriculture

The major constraints to the youth participation in agricultural production were investigated.

Table 5: ***Distribution of the respondents by reason for not engaging in agriculture (N=378)***

Reason	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of incentives/interest	185	49
Lack of land for farming	41	11
Lack of finance	42	11
Lack of basic farming knowledge	30	8
Poor returns to agricultural investment	80	21
Total	**378**	**100.0**

Source: *Field survey 2017*

Table 5 shows the problems constraining the youth from participating in farming. From the table, most of the youth, 49% indicated lack of incentive/interest as the major reason while 21% indicated poor returns from agriculture. However, 11% indicated lack of finance and lack of basic farming knowledge respectively. Some of the incentives were found to be lack of land, lack of government support and lack of modern implements.

Categories of youth that participate more in agricultural development

What was of concern here was to ascertain the categories of youth that participate more in agricultural development. The result is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: ***Distribution of the respondents on the categories of the youth that participate more in agricultural development (N=620)***

Categories of youth	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less educated	434	70
More educated	186	29.8
Total	**620**	**100.0**

Source: *Field survey 2017*

The respondents were asked to state the categories of the youth that participate more in agricultural development. Table 6 above reveals that 70% of the respondents stated that the less educated youth participate more in agriculture while 30% indicated that the more educated youth participate less in agriculture.

Implications of non engagement in agriculture on deviance: Category of youth who are most likely to engage in deviant activities

What was of concern here was to ascertain the categories of youth who are more vulnerable to deviant activities. The result is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: ***Distribution of respondents according to the category of youth who are more likely to engage in deviant activities (620)***

Category of youth	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Youth in agriculture	155	25
Youth not in agriculture	465	75
Total	**620**	**100.0**

Source: *Field survey 2017*

Table 7 shows that most (75%) of the youth respondents stated that youth who are not engaged in agriculture are more likely to engage in deviant activities. On the other hand, only 25% of the youth respondents indicated that youth who participate in agriculture are likely to be vulnerable to deviant activities. Therefore, according to the youth respondents, youth who do not participate in agriculture are more likely to be vulnerable to deviant activities. The

study further enquired about the kind of deviant activities the youth are mostly involved. The outcome mostly identified such activities as drug addiction, cultism, burglary, theft and truancy.

Views on enhancing youth engagement in agricultural development

What was of concern here is to ascertain what should be done in order to motivate youth to participate in agriculture. This is shown in Table 15.

Table 8: ***Distribution of youth respondents on what could be done in order to motivate the youth to participate in agriculture (N=620)***

Suggestions on ways to motivate the youth to participate in agriculture	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Modernization of agriculture	232	37.4
Review of traditional land tenure system	76	12.3
Agric soft loan to youth	163	26.3
Provision of modern crop varieties	149	24.0
Total	**620**	**100.0**

Source: *Field survey 2017*

Table 8 shows the youth respondents suggestions on what could be done to motivate the youth to participate in agriculture. The views which are broadly grouped into four identified modernization of agriculture, 37.4% as the most preferred, followed by provision of land and agricultural soft loans to the youth, 26.3%. The other suggestions are provision of modern crop varieties, 24% and review of traditional land tenure system.

4.3 Test of research hypotheses

The study was designed to examine the socio-cultural factors affecting youth participation in agricultural development in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State. For this reason, a total of four hypotheses designed for this study were tested in this section, using chi square statistics.

Hypothesis one

H_1: There is a direct positive relationship between lack of incentive and interest by the youth in agriculture and low participation in agricultural development.

H_0: There is no direct positive relationship between lack of incentive and interest by the youth in agriculture and low participation in agricultural development.

To test this hypothesis, government assistance/support and participation in agricultural activities were cross tabulated as shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: ***Relationship between government assistance/support and participating in agricultural activities***

	Participating in agriculture		
Incentive/interest	**Yes**	**No**	**Total**
Had incentive	97(40.1)	312(82.5)	409(66.0)
Had no incentive and interest	145(59.9)	66(17.5)	211(34.0)
Total	242(100.0)	378(100.0)	620(100.0)
Yates χ^2 =116.582; df= 1; P= .000; table value = 3.841			

The cross tabulation in table 9 reveals that among those who participate in agriculture, more than half had no incentive and interest (59.9%) while 40.1% of those who participated in agriculture indicated that they had incentive. Another interesting revelation from the table is that 82.5% of those who did not participate in agriculture had no incentive and interest while only 17.5% of those who had assistance and interest still found a way to participate in agriculture.

The Table also shows that the chi-square χ^2 value is 116.582 while it is significant at P= .000. Since it is less than the alpha value of .05, it goes on to support our initial guess that a form of relationship exists between lack of incentive and interest and participation in agriculture. In addition, the substantive hypothesis is accepted because the calculated value (χ^2 =116.582) is greater than the table value of 3.841. This supports the assertion that participation in agriculture is influenced by lack of incentive and interest.

Hypothesis two

H_1: Young people with less education are more likely to participate in agriculture than those with more education.

H_0: Young people with less education are not more likely to participate in agriculture than those with more education.

To test this hypothesis, the level of education of the respondents and participation in agriculture were cross tabulated as shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: ***Relationship between level of education and participating in agricultural activities (N=620)***

	Participating in agriculture		
Level of education	**Yes**	**No**	**Total**
Lower education	232(95.9)	283(74.9)	515(83.1)
Higher education	10 (4.1)	95(25.1)	105(16.9)
Total	242(100.0)	378(100.0)	620(100.0)

Yates χ^2 =44.773; df= 1; P= .000; table value = 3.841

Table 10 shows that there is a relationship between education and participation in agriculture. It revealed that among those that participated in agriculture, 95.9% of them had lower education classified from senior secondary certificate examination (SSCE) and first school leaving certificate. Only 4.1% of those with higher education participated in agriculture. Among those who did not participate however, only 25.1% of them had higher education while 74.9% of them had lower education.

Since it is a 2X2 table, Yates correlation for continuity was used. Thus, the χ^2 =44.773 and the significant level is P = .00 which is less than the alpha value of .05. This implies that there is a statistically significant relationship between levels of education and participation in agriculture since to be significant, the significant value needs to be .05 or less. Moreover, the substantive hypothesis is accepted because the calculated value (χ^2 =44.773) is greater than

the table value of 3.841. Clearly, this indicates that those with lower education do participate more in agriculture than those with higher education.

Hypothesis three

H_1: Youth who do not participate in agriculture are more likely to be vulnerable to deviant activities than youth who participate in agriculture.

H_0: Youth who do not participate in agriculture are not more likely to be vulnerable to deviant activities than youth who participate in agriculture.

To test this hypothesis, place of the respondents and participation in agricultural activities were cross tabulated as shown in Table 11 below.

Test of *relationship between youth engagement in agricultural activities and involvement in deviant activities*

Table 11: *Relationship between participation in agricultural activities and vulnerability to deviant activities*

	Engagement in deviant activities		
Engage in Agriculture	**Yes**	**No**	**Total**
Yes	146(60.3)	272(72.0)	418(67.4)
No	96(39.7)	106(28.0)	202(32.6)
Total	242(100.0)	378(100.0)	620(100.0)
Yates χ^2 =8.559; df= 1; P= .003; table value = 3.841			

Table 11 shows that there is a relationship between non participation in agriculture and involvement in deviant activities. Those who are likely to engage in deviant activities had the are more with 60.3% while those who do not participate in agriculture had 39.7%. Meanwhile, only 28.0% did not engage in agriculture and 72.0% engaged in agriculture.

The Yates continuity correction is put at χ^2 =8.559 with P= .003 indicating that it is significant. That is a form of significant relationship exists between place of residence and participating in agriculture. The substantive hypothesis was accepted since the calculated value of χ^2 =8.559 is higher than the table value which is 3.841. Hence, it is obvious that

place of residence influences participation in agriculture. Those in rural areas participated more than those in urban areas as noted in the table.

Binary logistic regression

Binary Logistic regression on participating in agriculture and some selected variables

Binary logistic regression

Table 12: *Binary Logistic regression on participating in agriculture and some selected variables*

Demographic Variables	**B**	**S.E**	**Wald**	**Df**	**Sig.**	**Exp(B)**	**95% CI for EXP (B)**	
							Lower	**Upper**
Level of education	-2.588	.363	50.749	1	.000	13.300	6.526	27.105
Lack of incentive	-5.760	1.143	25.390	1	.000	0.003	0.000	0.030
Lack of agric participation and vulnerability to deviant activities	3.332	1.035	10.363	1	.001	28.000	3.682	21.929
Constant	0.176	0.588	0.090	1	.764	1.193		

In Table 12 the binary logistic regression indicated overall, how well the model (goodness of fit) performed, with the predictor variable entered (χ^2=206.07; df=5; p=.000). Hosmer and Lemeshow Test also support the model as being worthwhile with a significance of 1.000. The Hosmer-Lemeshow is interpreted differently; it must be higher than .05 unlike the previous model Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients. In like manner, The Cox & Snell R Square and the Nagelkerke R Square values provide an indication of the amount of variation in the dependent variable explained by the model (from 0 to 1). It showed that .283 and .383, suggesting that between 28.3% and 38.3% of the variability is explained by this set of variables.

The contribution and importance of each of the predictor variable shows that levels of education, incentive and deviant activities predict the model. The two variables are (1) levels of education (P=.000) and (2) lack of incentive. This means that the major factors influencing whether a person will engage in agriculture are level of education and lack of incentive.

The B values further indicated that: an increase in level of education (B=-2.59), will make one less likely to participate in agriculture. If one did not receive any incentive (B=-5.76), it makes one less likely to participate in agriculture. If one did not participate in agriculture (B=3.07), one is more likely to be vulnerable to deviant activities.

5. Summary of findings

This study sought to investigate the level of youth participation in agricultural development, the reasons for non participation, whether non participating youth are more vulnerable to deviant activities and the effect of non participation on sustainable development. The findings of the study are as follows;

Most of the respondent youth (61%) do not participate in agricultural production. Correspondingly, the level of youth participation in agricultural development is also very low. Specifically, more than two third of the youth do not participate in agricultural development. Generally, about three out of every five respondents do not participate in agriculture. The most identified reason given for the lack of participation is lack of incentives, followed by lack of finance and lack of land for farming. The finding revealed that the youth are less willing to engage in agriculture as their main occupation because they perceive it as providing low income and meant for the rural poor, the uneducated and unskilled. Further to the above, among the youth respondents, 75% confirmed that government do not assist the youth in agricultural production.

For the youth who participate in agriculture, most of them, 66% engaged in crop farming while only 16.5% respectively engaged in livestock and mixed farming. The study also found out that the instruments used by the youth are generally rudimentary implements, mostly hoes and cutlasses, 79.5%, diggers and shovels 21%. Remarkably, the youth do not make use of any modern agricultural tools like tractors, ploughs or harvesters. Uneducated people participate more in agriculture than those who are educated.

The youth who participate in agriculture mostly produce for consumption, 74% while only 21% are sold in the local market. The category of youth that mostly participate in agriculture was found to be the less educated and those who mostly live in the rural areas. The study also established that youth who do not participate in agriculture are more vulnerable to deviant activities. This was affirmed by 75% of the respondents. The situation in which most of the youth do not participate in agricultural production was found to have a negative effect on the realization of sustainable development in Nigeria and Africa.

5.1 Discussion of findings

The major theme of this study is youth engagement in agriculture and its implications for deviance. On this theme, the study found that preponderance of the youth respondents, 61% do not participate in any agricultural activity. This outcome is very significant because it implies that most of the farming activity is left in the hands of old people who are less energetic and impervious to modernization. This finding would also have negative implications for deviance in Enugu State and Nigeria. However, this finding is consistent with that of Cheteni (2016), Ahaibwe, Mbowa and Lwanga (2013) and Maïga, Christiaensen and Palacios-Lopez (2015) who maintained that there is decline in youth participation in agriculture. Cheteni (2016) in his study in Nkonkobe District Municipality, South Africa, reported that at least 60% of the youth were not participating in any agricultural activity. Also Ahaibwe et al. (2013) examined the challenges and prospects of youth engagement in agriculture in Uganda, using the 2005-06 and 2009-10 Uganda National Panel Survey Data. They define youth as the age group 18-30 years. The findings show that youth engagement dropped from 73.2% to 64.2% between 2005-06 and 2009-10 for the cohort aged 18-30years.

In addition, Maïga et al. (2015) estimated participation rates in agricultural labor for the youth using data from six countries: Ethiopia, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Uganda. Their findings show that the youth (16-35) have participation rates in agricultural

labor that ranges from 27.1% in Nigeria to 63.4% in Niger. This means that Nigerian youth have the lowest probability of working in agriculture among the seven countries studied, with only 27.1% probability bearing regional disparities. However, in northern Nigeria, the probability that the youth are working in agriculture is higher (36.5%) than the youth in southern Nigeria (17.8%).

Although access to land is fundamental to starting a farm, it is often difficult for young people to attain. Inheritance laws and customs in developing countries often make the transfer of land to young people problematic. This finding is consistent with that of Adekunle, Oladipo, Adisa and Fatoye (2009), Idoma and Muhammad (2013), Nwankwo (2014) and Bezu and Holden (2014) who maintained that land ownership is a major constraint when the youth consider venturing into agriculture. According to Idoma and Muhammad (2013) in their study on the effects of land tenure practices on agricultural output in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State Nigeria, land tenure practices have greatly constrained agricultural output of farmers in the area.

The study by Nwankwo (2014) on the analysis of the factors militating against youth participation in agriculture in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State showed that land tenure system, non-availability of capital, poor storage facilities, lack of social amenities, non-functional extension services to discharge the improved seeds and seedlings and drudgery in farming due to use of outdated implements, are the factors militating against youth participation in agriculture. Some of the above militating factors are in line with the disincentives to youth participation in agriculture that were identified in this study especially, use of rudimentary tools, lack of finance and lack of land for farming.

Education is important for sustainable agricultural growth and development. However, the findings from the study shows that greater percentage of the respondents (70%) indicated that less educated youth engage more in agriculture than more educated youth. This

outcome is in conformity with studies by Kimaro, Towo and Moshi (2015) in Kahe East ward in Moshi rural district, Tanzania which sought to find out the factors which influence rural youth participation in agriculture. The study found out that educational level is an important factor associated with rural youth participation in agricultural activities. The study found out that rural youth who attained higher education are less involved in agricultural activities. Therefore, with the level of education increasing among youth, their participation in agriculture decreases. This trend needs to change for the enhancement of agriculture.

The chi-square result showed that there was statistically significant relationship between lack of incentive and interest, educational level and none participation in agriculture and vulnerability to deviant activities.

5.2 Implication of findings to theory

The findings of the study confirm the adoption of the structural strain theory and Freire's (1973) empowerment theory as the analytical orientation for the study. The structural strain theory explains the existence of the identified constraints which discourages the youth from participating in agriculture. The lack of participation makes them to remain idle especially in the face of mass unemployment. This situation of dissonance can make the youth to be vulnerable to deviant/criminal activities. However, according to the empowerment theory, the lack of youth participation in agriculture is attributable to the deficit of resources, skills, incentives and other capabilities. Therefore, if lack of resources, skills, power to take decisions and other capabilities in the socio-cultural, political and economic life of the youth can be addressed, then it is possible to increase youth participation in agriculture. It posits that there is an urgent need to remove all visible constraints in order to promote youth interests in agriculture so as to avert their engaging in deviant activities. Engaging youth in agricultural production is key to ensuring the reduction of crime in Nigeria.

5.3 Conclusion

Youth constitute a potential formidable force in agricultural production. Meeting the needs of the youth for sustainable agriculture in the country must, as a matter of policy, consider the option that would facilitate and encourage their return to the farm in order to develop into new and modern farmers as well as improve the living conditions in the rural and urban areas. The result of the study showed that youth participation in agriculture is low. This is not good because of the implication it could have on deviance. When the youth are engaged in agriculture, they will not have the time to engage in deviant activities. On the reverse, when they are idle and unemployed, they can engage in deviant activities. Therefore, there is convincing rationale to conclude that much needs to be done to enhance youth active participation in agricultural production. The study revealed that though few youth are engaged in some agricultural activities in the area, most of them generally show unfavourable disposition to participating in agricultural activities. Youth engagement in agriculture is hindered by some cultural factors relating to land, religion, inheritance and institutional problems such as lack of government support, poor extension services, and lack of social and infrastructural facilities in the communities. In the light of the study results, Nigeria might be faced with an uneducated and ageing farming population sooner than later, if the current constraints faced by the youth in agriculture are not addressed. However, with targeted interventions, the youth can still be at the forefront of revitalizing the agricultural sector and the sector could be a potential source of gainful employment for the vast unemployed and under employed youth, thereby averting youth involvement in deviance.

5.4 **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

- There is need to invest in the youth, with more young people having access to resources, skills, land and capital for a decent livelihood in agriculture. Adequate

incentive in terms of soft loans, modern agricultural tools, fertilizers, modern crop varieties, pesticides and others should be made available to the youth, that will sustain them and prevent them from indulging in criminal activities.

- Many of the youths who migrate to the urban centers in search of the elusive greener pastures end up being jobless in the city. Many of them eventually become criminals in order to survive. Consequently, the youth should be given the necessary orientation/training in agricultural production, which should be backed up with production resources and services to enable them embark on agricultural activities in a sustainable manner.
- Government authorities should organize sensitization campaigns through workshops, youth forum, radio and television programs to sensitize the youth on the benefits to be derived from participating in agriculture. This would stimulate participation among the youth, including the highly educated who would then find farming as a very attractive and lucrative business venture. This will further engage the youth and discourage them from taking part in deviant activities.
- From all indications, youth participation in agricultural development will translate into reduction in crime, and engender sustainable national development. The youth are an important part of the society, who should be encouraged to channel their energies to national development by being positively engaged in agriculture, and discouraged from activities that could be detrimental to the development of the country. Therefore, every action taking towards youth participation in agriculture is an action towards crime reduction as well as promoting national development.

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