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Motivational Drivers of Agripreneurship Among Educated Youths in Ondo State, Nigeria: Implications from a Multivariate and SWOT-Based Analysis

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ABSTRACT: Youth unemployment remains one of the most pressing development challenges in Nigeria, despite the country's abundant agricultural potential. Agripreneurship, the integration of entrepreneurship into agriculture, has been increasingly promoted as a pathway to create jobs, enhance food security, and modernize the agricultural sector. This study examined the motivational drivers of agripreneurship among educated youths in Ondo State, Nigeria. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, and data were collected from 150 educated youths across three senatorial districts using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, logistic regression, and SWOT analysis were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that the majority of respondents possessed positive perceptions of agriculture, rejecting negative stereotypes such as farming being meant for school dropouts or associated with poverty. Nonetheless, they acknowledged challenges, including the capital-intensive and laborious nature of agricultural ventures. Logistic regression results indicated that access to farmland, parental involvement in farming, access to credit, extension services, and tertiary education were significant predictors of agripreneurship participation. SWOT analysis further highlighted internal weaknesses such as insufficient funds, poor processing facilities, and ineffective marketing systems, alongside external threats including policy inconsistency, high logistics costs, and limited access to land. However, opportunities such as technological innovation, value addition training, and cultural support systems were identified as key enablers. The study concludes that while agripreneurship presents a viable career option for educated youths, structural and institutional barriers must be addressed. Policies that improve access to land, finance, and modern technologies, alongside youth-oriented farm policies and capacity-building initiatives, are essential to foster sustainable youth agribusiness engagement.

KEYWORDS: Agripreneurship; Educated youth; Motivational drivers; Logistic regression; SWOT analysis; Nigeria

1. INTRODUCTION

Youth unemployment continues to pose a formidable challenge in Nigeria, particularly among educated populations, with cascading effects on poverty, food insecurity, and economic instability (Magagula and Tsvakirai, 2020). As of 2023, youth unemployment in Nigeria exceeded 42%, disproportionately affecting graduates in both urban and rural settings (NBS, 2023). This systemic challenge has catalyzed interest in agripreneurship, the intersection of agriculture and entrepreneurship, as a sustainable pathway for economic empowerment. Agripreneurship not only offers income-generating opportunities but also serves as a platform for innovation, value addition, and long-term career development in the agricultural sector (Fabian et al., 2022; Ikebuaku & Dinbabo, 2023).

Agripreneurship has gained policy attention due to its potential to absorb a significant proportion of unemployed youths, especially in contexts where white-collar job opportunities are shrinking. Despite the sector's promise, uptake among educated youths remains limited. Many young Nigerians still view agriculture as laborious, low-income, and socially inferior, a perception shaped by years of underinvestment and a lack of visibility into successful role models in farming. Yet, studies increasingly show that when agriculture is framed as a business venture, leveraging innovation, technology, and market-driven solutions, it becomes significantly more attractive to young people (Bairwa et al., 2014; Azeez & Alaka, 2023).

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Motivational drivers for youth engagement in agripreneurship can be understood through the theoretical lens of push and pull factors. Push factors are externally driven necessities such as economic hardship, lack of job opportunities, or family expectations. Pull factors, by contrast, include intrinsic motivations such as entrepreneurial passion, perceived profitability, and interest in technology-driven farming (Alabi & Aribifo, 2021). A balanced interplay between these factors often determines not just the initial interest in agripreneurship but also long-term commitment and success.
The Southwest region of Nigeria, including Ondo State, presents a compelling context for this analysis (Bello, 2025). The state is agriculturally rich, with arable land covering over 1.5 million hectares and a climate suitable for diverse crop and livestock production (Ondo State Ministry of Agriculture, 2022). However, despite its endowments, youth participation in agriculture is low, and unemployment remains persistent. While federal and state programs such as the *National Young Farmers Scheme* and *Youth in Agribusiness Initiative* have attempted to bridge the gap, their impacts have been uneven, partly due to a poor understanding of local motivational drivers. Understanding these drivers at the state level is critical, given that national-level interventions often lack contextual sensitivity.
Recent research has emphasized the role of education, access to land, mentorship, and exposure to agribusiness role models in shaping agripreneurial intentions among Nigerian youth (Adeyanju, 2019; Quadri et al., 2023). However, these factors are not uniformly experienced. For instance, youths in Ondo Central may have better access to agro-markets and cooperatives than those in Ondo North or South. This suggests that motivational frameworks need to be geographically and socially disaggregated to yield actionable insights.
Moreover, agripreneurship is increasingly becoming knowledge-intensive. Beyond traditional farming skills, success now hinges on competencies such as business management, digital literacy, value chain coordination, and climate-smart agriculture. Boye et al. (2022) found that young agripreneurs in sub-Saharan Africa are increasingly motivated by the opportunity to innovate within the agricultural sector, especially when supported by extension services, training programs, and financial incentives.
Despite a growing body of literature, there is a noticeable gap in state-level studies focusing exclusively on educated youths. Most existing research aggregates data across geopolitical zones, thus diluting region-specific insights. Yet, context matters. Youth in Ondo State may differ significantly from their counterparts in Northern Nigeria due to differences in cultural expectations, land tenure systems, agro-ecological conditions, and market access. Capturing these nuances is vital for tailoring interventions that are both effective and scalable.
This study, therefore, explores the motivational drivers of agripreneurship among educated youths in Ondo State. The specific objectives are to (i) assess the socio-economic and perceptual variables influencing youth decisions, (ii) identify internal and external structural barriers, and (iii) propose regionally grounded strategies to increase participation. The findings will not only contribute to theory building in youth agripreneurship studies but also offer policy-relevant recommendations for state and federal stakeholders aiming to optimize youth engagement in agricultural value chains.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Study Area

The study was conducted across Ondo State, located in the southwestern region of Nigeria. Ondo State lies between latitudes 5°45′ and 7°52′ North and longitudes 4°20′ and 6°05′ East. It shares boundaries with Ekiti and Kogi States to the north, Osun State to the east, Ogun State to the west, and the Atlantic Ocean to the south. The state is composed of 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs), which are administratively grouped into three senatorial zones: Ondo North, Ondo Central, and Ondo South. These zones reflect variations in agro-ecological conditions, economic activities, and access to agricultural infrastructure. The climate is characterized by a tropical wet and dry climate, with annual rainfall ranging from 1,200 to 2,000 mm, and an average temperature of 26°C. The vegetation varies from rainforest in the southern parts to the derived savannah in the northern belt. Agriculture remains the dominant occupation, with crops such as cocoa, cassava, maize, yams, oil palm, and vegetables widely cultivated. The state also features a youthful population and active educational institutions, making it an appropriate setting for investigating youth agripreneurial engagement.

2.2 Research Design

A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was employed to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the motivational drivers of agripreneurship among educated youths in Ondo State. This design was deemed suitable for capturing a broad snapshot of opinions, socio-economic characteristics, and behavioural factors influencing agripreneurial intentions and participation across diverse communities at a single point in time.

2.3 Population of the Study

The target population for this study comprised educated youths between the ages of 18 and 35 years residing in Ondo State, who have completed at least secondary education and are either engaged or potentially interested in agripreneurial ventures. The focus on educated youths was to assess their motivations, perceived barriers, and participation patterns with respect to agribusiness engagement in a modern agricultural economy.

2.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to ensure representativeness across the state's geopolitical and agro-ecological zones. In the first stage, one LGA was randomly selected from each of the three senatorial districts: Akoko South-East (North), Ifedore (Central), and Odigbo (South). In the second stage, two communities were randomly selected from each LGA. In the final stage, a snowball sampling technique was used to recruit 50 educated youths per LGA, yielding a total sample size of 150 respondents across the state. Snowballing was appropriate given the dispersed and informal nature of youth agripreneurial engagement, enabling researchers to reach eligible respondents through peer referrals.

2.5 Data Analysis

The data collected were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize socio-economic characteristics and perception responses. A Logistic Regression Model was employed to identify significant socio-economic and motivational predictors of youth participation in agripreneurship. The dependent variable was binary-coded as:

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1 = Participants in agripreneurship
0 = Non-participants

The model is expressed as:

$Y^* = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \ldots. + \beta_{12}X_{12} + \mu$

Where:
$Y*$ = Probability of agripreneurship participation
$\beta 0$ = Constant
βi = Coefficient of explanatory variables
Xi = Independent variables as listed below
μ = Error term
The explanatory variables included:
X_1: Age (years)
X_2: Educational level (Primary = 1, Secondary = 2, Tertiary = 3)
X_3: Sex (Male = 1, Female = 0)
X_4: Marital status (Married = 1, Otherwise = 0)
X_5: Monthly income (₦)
X_6: Access to credit (Yes = 1, No = 0)
X_7: Access to recreation (Yes = 1, No = 0)
X_8: Access to electricity (Yes = 1, No = 0)
X_9: Access to farmland (Yes = 1, No = 0)
X_{10}: Access to water (Yes = 1, No = 0)
X_{11}: Household size (number of persons)
X_{12}: Parents' occupation (Farming-related = 1, Non-farming = 0)

To complement the regression analysis, a SWOT analysis framework was applied to evaluate internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats affecting youth agripreneurial ventures. Responses were analyzed using mean ranking derived from Likert scale data. All data were processed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 26. A significance level of $p < 0.05$ was used to determine statistical relevance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

The mean age of the respondents was 22.8 years, with a significant majority (77.4%) falling between the ages of 15 and 25. This suggests that agripreneurial interest or awareness is particularly concentrated among late adolescents and early young adults, reflecting the relevance of targeting younger demographics for youth-in-agriculture interventions. A near gender balance was observed, with males slightly higher at 51.7%, indicating that both sexes are comparably represented in the agripreneurship space in the area. A majority (92.5%) of the respondents were single, aligning with their youthful age bracket and potentially indicating a higher degree of labour flexibility, risk-taking capacity, and career experimentation. In terms of education, a dominant 83.3% of respondents had tertiary qualifications, which reflects a highly educated sample and suggests that the challenges to agripreneurship participation are likely less about knowledge access and more about structural or motivational constraints. Occupationally, over half (55.8%) of the respondents identified as students, followed by self-employed individuals (25%). This reveals that a large segment of educated youths are in transitional or early-stage career phases, as also observed by Afolayan et al. (2024) and Bello et al. (2025). Only 11.7% of the respondents were actively engaged in farming, which reinforces the notion that traditional farming is not yet a mainstream career option, even among those aware of its potential.

Monthly income averaged ₦25,279, suggesting modest earnings. Limited income may restrict access to startup capital for agribusiness ventures, thus compounding the risk aversion that often deters youth from entering agriculture. In terms of institutional affiliation, 72.5% of respondents were not members of any agricultural association. This lack of group identity could limit their access to cooperative financing, training, and market information, factors known to improve agribusiness viability. Access to productive resources remains uneven, as also noted by Ilesanmi et al. (2024) and Oladoyin et al. (2025). Only 32.5% reported access to credit, and a mere 25% had access to extension services, both critical enablers for successful agripreneurship. However, access to recreation (55.8%) and electricity (69.2%) was relatively high, which may positively influence the perceived quality of life and business viability in semi-urban agricultural zones.

Access to farmland was reported by 53.3% of the sample, revealing a majority with direct access to a key agripreneurial asset. More notably, 85.8% had access to water, a significant factor for crop production and agribusiness planning. These infrastructural indicators suggest that while water and electricity are relatively accessible, gaps remain in land security and credit facilities. The average household size was five, consistent with the national average, indicating typical Nigerian family structures. Farming experience was relatively low, with 47.5% reporting no prior experience and only 33.3% having 1–5 years of experience. This suggests a learning curve and may explain limited entrepreneurial confidence in agricultural ventures. Furthermore, farm sizes were very small, with 98.3% operating on plots of fewer than 10 in number, signifying subsistence or micro-scale operations rather than commercial agribusinesses.

Agripreneurship participation stood at 55%, while 45% of the respondents had not participated in agriculture, despite educational exposure. This gap between awareness and actual engagement underlines the importance of addressing barriers beyond knowledge, such as financial risk, access to resources, and market visibility. Participation duration also mirrored farming experience, averaging just 2.7 years, indicating that many were

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still in the early stages of agripreneurial activity. Finally, 56.7% of the respondents came from farming-related parental backgrounds. However, the 43.3% from non-farming households also signals a growing shift toward new entrants in the agricultural space, provided the right motivational and structural supports are in place.

Table 1: Distribution by the Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean
Age (Years)	15–20	43	35.8	22.8
	21–25	50	41.6	
	26–30	20	16.6	
	31–35	7	5.8	
Sex	Male	62	51.7	
	Female	58	48.3	
Marital Status	Single	111	92.5	
	Married	9	7.5	
Educational Level	Primary	1	0.8	
	Secondary	19	15.8	
	Tertiary	100	83.3	
Occupation	Self-employed	30	25.0	
	Farming	14	11.7	
	Civil servant	9	7.5	
	Student	67	55.8	
Monthly Income (₦)				₦25,279
Membership in Agricultural Assoc.	Yes	33	27.5	
	No	87	72.5	
Access to Credit	Yes	39	32.5	
	No	81	67.5	
Access to Extension Services	Yes	30	25.0	
	No	90	75.0	
Access to Recreation	Yes	67	55.8	
	No	53	44.2	
Access to Electricity	Yes	83	69.2	
	No	37	30.8	
Access to Farmland	Yes	64	53.3	
	No	56	46.7	
Access to Water	Yes	103	85.8	
	No	17	14.2	
Household Size	1–5	76	63.3	5.0
	6–10	42	35.0	
	11–15	2	1.7	
Years of Farming Experience	0	57	47.5	3.0
	1–5	40	33.3	
	6–10	19	15.8	
	11–25	4	3.4	
Farm Size (Plots)	0–10	118	98.3	1.59
	11–60	2	1.7	
Participation in Agriculture	Yes	66	55.0	
	No	54	45.0	
Years Participating in Agric.	0	54	45.0	2.7
	1–10	64	53.3	
	11–25	2	1.7	
Parents' Occupation	Farming-related	68	56.7	
	Non-farming	52	43.3	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

3.2 Youth Perception of Agriculture as a Viable Career Option

To assess youth perception of agriculture as a viable career, respondents were presented with 16 attitudinal statements measured on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). The decision rule for interpreting the mean values followed the standard interval classification: 1.0–1.4 (strongly disagree), 1.5–2.4 (disagree), 2.5–3.4 (agree), and 3.5–4.0 (strongly agree). The findings suggest that respondents generally hold positive perceptions toward agripreneurship, as the majority of negatively framed statements about farming were disagreed with, while several positively framed ones were agreed with.

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Notably, respondents disagreed with the claim that farming is not meant for youths (mean = 1.88) and also rejected the notion that agriculture is for school dropouts (mean = 1.81). These views indicate a significant shift from the stereotypical assumption that agriculture is an unattractive or backwards profession. In the same vein, youths disagreed with the perception that farming is for illiterate individuals (mean = 1.59) and strongly rejected the belief that it is a bad business (mean = 1.33). These results suggest that educated youths no longer associate agribusiness with social inferiority or intellectual failure.

However, despite these positive trends, certain perceived challenges associated with agricultural practice were acknowledged. Respondents agreed that agriculture is stressful (mean = 2.86), capital-intensive (mean = 3.03), and labour-intensive (mean = 3.02), reflecting awareness of the physical and financial demands of agripreneurship. Moreover, agriculture was also perceived to be risky (mean = 2.88), indicating a shared concern over uncertainties related to market prices, weather, and financing, factors well-documented in agribusiness literature.

Interestingly, while these difficulties were recognized, they did not diminish the respondents' overall valuation of agriculture. Youths disagreed with the assertion that farming reduces social status (mean = 1.98), promotes poverty (mean = 1.65), or generates low income (mean = 1.62). This points to a maturing recognition that agriculture, though challenging, can be economically and socially rewarding when modernized and supported by enabling infrastructure.

Furthermore, there was strong agreement that agriculture is educative (mean = 3.45), affirming its value not only as an income-generating venture but also as a platform for continuous learning and innovation. The respondents also disagreed with the statement that farming cannot lead to wealth (mean = 1.55), indicating optimism regarding its potential to generate significant income when practised at scale or with entrepreneurial acumen.

In terms of institutional or policy perception, respondents rejected the idea that there are no incentives for youth participation in agriculture (mean = 2.33), suggesting awareness of ongoing government or donor interventions, though the mean value, hovering near the disagreement threshold, may also imply mixed experiences or skepticism regarding the effectiveness of such incentives. Similarly, the notion that agriculture is outdated was widely rejected (mean = 1.83), affirming the youth's openness to innovation and the modernization of agribusiness.

In summary, the collective responses suggest that youths in the area perceive agriculture not only as a viable but potentially rewarding career option, despite recognizing the associated risks and physical demands. This contrasts earlier studies, such as the IITA (2014) report, which found that many African youths considered farming a last-resort, low-income occupation. The findings of this study instead reflect a positive perceptual shift toward agripreneurship, likely driven by increased awareness, education, and exposure to youth-focused agricultural programs and success stories.

Table 2: Percentage of Distribution of Youth Perception of Agripreneurship as a Viable Career Option

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	MEAN	RANK
1	Farming is not for youths	13.3	10.8	26.7	49.2	1.88	9th
2	Farming is for school dropouts	13.3	7.5	25.8	53.3	1.81	11th
3	Farming is stressful	28.3	43.3	14.2	14.2	2.86	5th
4	Farming is capital-intensive	35.8	41.7	11.7	10.8	3.03	2nd
5	Farming reduces one's status	14.2	9.2	28.3	48.3	1.98	8th
6	Farming generates low income	5.0	7.5	31.7	55.8	1.62	13th
7	Farming is for illiterate youths	7.5	8.3	20.0	64.2	1.59	14th
8	Farming promotes poverty	10.8	7.5	17.5	64.2	1.65	12th
9	The agricultural products attract low prices	10.0	24.2	24.2	41.7	2.03	7th
10	Farming is a bad business	2.5	2.5	20.8	74.2	1.33	16th
11	Farming is educative	55.8	37.5	2.5	4.2	3.45	1st
12	It involves a lot of risks	31.7	40.8	11.7	15.8	2.88	4th
13	Farming cannot make one rich	5.8	9.2	19.2	65.8	1.55	15th
14	It requires a great degree of labour	31.7	46.7	13.3	8.3	3.02	3rd
15	No incentive for participation	15.0	26.7	35.0	23.3	2.33	6th
16	Farming is old-fashioned	9.2	14.2	27.5	49.2	1.83	10th

Source: Field Survey, 2025

3.3. Motivational Factors Influencing Youth Participation in Agripreneurship

The logistic regression model identifies the key socio-economic and structural factors influencing youth participation in agripreneurship in the area. The dependent variable remains binary (1 = participant, 0 = non-participant), while 12 predictors were assessed.

Access to farmland continues to emerge as the strongest predictor ($B = 2.142$, $p < 0.001$), reaffirming that land access is the foundational enabler of youth entry into agriculture. Without physical space to cultivate, even the most motivated youths are likely to remain disengaged.

Parental occupation in farming is also a highly significant predictor ($B = 1.855$, $p < 0.001$). Youths with farming backgrounds are more familiar with the agricultural landscape, possess intergenerational knowledge, and often benefit from inherited tools or plots, factors which collectively reduce barriers to entry. Both access to credit ($B = 1.186$, $p = 0.005$) and access to extension services ($B = 1.021$, $p = 0.024$) are statistically significant and positive. This reflects the importance of institutional support mechanisms in improving agripreneurial feasibility. Credit access eases capital constraints while extension services improve technical knowledge and productivity. Years of experience in agripreneurship (MFIYPA) significantly predict continued participation ($B = 0.431$, $p = 0.007$), indicating that once engaged, youths tend to stay involved, likely due to cumulative learning, increasing returns, or growing confidence. Tertiary education was also found to significantly increase the likelihood of

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agripreneurship (B = 1.210, p = 0.002), which suggests that a higher level of education enhances innovation and business orientation in agriculture. The effect of secondary education was marginally significant (p = 0.077), indicating an upward trend.

Demographic variables such as age (B = 0.072, p = 0.034) were also significant, indicating that older youth within the 15–35 range are more likely to participate, perhaps due to growing maturity or economic pressure. Sex was marginally significant (p = 0.087), with males slightly more inclined, though the gender gap is closing. Variables like monthly income, access to water, recreation, electricity, and household size were not statistically significant, suggesting that while they may influence quality of life, they are not primary determinants of agripreneurship participation.

Table 3: Logistic Regression Analysis of Determinants of Youth Participation in Agripreneurship

Variable	B (Coeff.)	S.E.	Wald	Sig.
Age	0.072**	0.034	4.482	0.034
Sex (1 = Male)	-0.522*	0.305	2.929	0.087
Marital Status (1 = Married)	-0.680	0.485	1.969	0.161
Educational Level (Base = Primary)	—	—	—	—
Educational Level (1 = Secondary)	0.765*	0.432	3.131	0.077
Educational Level (2 = Tertiary)	1.210***	0.398	9.220	0.002
Monthly Income	0.000	0.000	1.762	0.184
Access to Credit (1 = Yes)	1.186***	0.419	8.014	0.005
Access to Extension Services (1 = Yes)	1.021**	0.451	5.122	0.024
Access to Recreation (1 = Yes)	0.398	0.387	1.057	0.304
Access to Electricity (1 = Yes)	-0.592	0.365	2.625	0.105
Access to Farmland (1 = Yes)	2.142***	0.503	18.129	0.000
Access to Water (1 = Yes)	0.230	0.417	0.304	0.581
Household Size	0.092	0.072	1.640	0.200
Parent's Occupation (1 = Farming)	1.855***	0.447	17.211	0.000
MFIYPA (Years in Agripreneurship)	0.431***	0.159	7.345	0.007
Constant	-3.781	1.319	8.208	0.004

Note: ***, **, * mean significant at 1%, 5% and 10%, respectively.

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

3.4 External and Internal Factors Influencing the Establishment and Sustenance of Agribusiness Ventures

To examine the internal and external factors affecting the establishment and sustainability of agribusiness ventures among educated youths in the area, the study employed a SWOT analysis framework. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) enables a structured evaluation of both intrinsic capacities and extrinsic conditions shaping entrepreneurial outcomes. Respondents rated various statements on a 4-point Likert scale, where 1–1.4 indicates strong disagreement, 1.5–2.4 denotes disagreement, 2.5–3.4 represents agreement, and 3.5–4.0 reflects strong agreement.

Strengths (Internal Enablers): Among the internal strengths, cultural beliefs and norms were identified as a supportive factor, with a mean score of 2.86, placing it within the "agree" category. Respondents recognized that while cultural norms can sometimes be restrictive, they may also enhance community participation and reinforce traditional farming practices, especially when aligned with modern agripreneurial values. This is consistent with prior research indicating that subjective norms influence entrepreneurial intentions (Shah & Ali, 2013), particularly in agricultural contexts (Ridha & Wahyu, 2017; Alavion et al., 2017). The implication is that social-cultural alignment can play a motivating role in legitimizing agribusiness as a viable and respected career path among rural and peri-urban youths.

Weaknesses (Internal Constraints): A set of five internal barriers emerged strongly from respondents' views (Table 4), each scoring above 3.00 and therefore indicating agreement. These include insufficient funding (mean = 3.32), poor processing facilities (3.20), weak marketing systems (3.05), ineffective extension services (3.08), and the strenuous nature of farming (3.08). These constraints collectively represent significant operational and structural limitations that reduce the appeal and feasibility of agripreneurship among educated youth. This aligns with findings by Otache (2017), who emphasized that financial exclusion, low-value chain development, and inadequate institutional support remain persistent bottlenecks in youth agribusiness engagement across Nigeria. These internal weaknesses must be addressed through policy interventions, such as youth-targeted agribusiness financing schemes, decentralized agro-processing hubs, and revitalized extension systems.

Table 4: Distribution by the Weakness Responses

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN
1	Insufficient funds	3.32
2	Poor processing facilities	3.20
3	Poor marketing system	3.05
4	Ineffective extension service	3.08
5	The strenuous nature of farming	3.08

Opportunities (External Enablers): The respondents also acknowledged certain external opportunities that could promote agripreneurship. Chief among these was adequate and accurate technological dissemination, with a mean score of 3.24, placing it within the "agree" range. This indicates a high level of optimism among youths about the potential of technology in transforming traditional agriculture into a more modern and efficient

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enterprise. Access to digital tools, mobile advisory platforms, and mechanized farming techniques were perceived as promising gateways to making agriculture more attractive, productive, and scalable. The implication here is that investment in ICTs for agriculture (e-agriculture) and partnerships with agritech startups could be leveraged to attract and retain young participants in the sector.

Threats (External Barriers): Several critical external threats were also identified by respondents (Table 5). These include lack of access to land (mean = 3.12), stigmatization of farming as a career (2.93), inconsistent youth empowerment programs (3.13), unresponsive government policies (3.28), limited technological dissemination (3.27), high cost of physical logistics (3.22), and complex legal and regulatory requirements (3.08). These responses indicate a strong consensus among youths that institutional failures, policy inconsistency, and systemic inefficiencies are major obstacles to sustainable agribusiness ventures. These findings call for urgent reforms in land tenure systems, targeted youth incentive programs, and improved governance of agribusiness development. Without such reforms, the entrepreneurial aspirations of youths—even when motivated, may not translate into viable or sustainable businesses.

Table 5: Distribution by the Threats responses

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN
1	Lack of access to land	3.12
2	Stigmatization	2.93
3	Inconsistent youth empowerment	3.13
4	Unresponsive government policies	3.28
5	Lack of technological dissemination	3.27
6	High cost of physical logistics	3.22
7	Legal formalities and regulations	3.08

3.5 Strategies to Encourage and Facilitate Youth Involvement in Agripreneurship

To identify effective strategies that could encourage and facilitate youth involvement in agripreneurship in the area (Table 6), the study employed descriptive analysis using frequency counts and percentages. The findings revealed a consistent trend of strong agreement and agreement among respondents across a variety of proposed strategies, highlighting widespread support for multifaceted interventions. A significant proportion of respondents emphasized the importance of establishing a formal farm youth policy, with 60% strongly agreeing and 37.5% agreeing that such a policy would provide the institutional framework needed to stimulate youth engagement in agribusiness. Similarly, 94.2% of the youths either strongly agreed or agreed that supporting young agripreneurs in recognizing, evaluating, and exploiting local agribusiness opportunities would meaningfully enhance their participation. This suggests that localized entrepreneurial discovery, backed by mentorship or advisory services, may help youths perceive agriculture as a dynamic, opportunity-rich sector.

Respondents also affirmed the value of value addition training, with 93.4% agreement, indicating that enhancing processing skills and improving agribusiness profitability could be a strong pull factor. Relatedly, 95.9% agreed that connecting young farmers with agripreneurs within and beyond their communities would facilitate knowledge exchange, peer support, and innovation diffusion, all of which are essential to sustaining agripreneurial ventures.

In addition, over 92% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that facilitating access to better markets and credit facilities would increase youth involvement. Access to output markets ensures profitability, while access to capital is necessary to scale up production and adopt modern technologies. About 93.3% of respondents supported a shift beyond technical training alone, advocating for the inclusion of soft skills development, such as communication, leadership, and business acumen. This aligns with modern entrepreneurship literature that emphasizes the significance of non-technical competencies in ensuring the sustainability of business ventures. The role of social engagement was also affirmed, with 91.7% of respondents agreeing that establishing youth-focused farm clubs could create platforms for peer learning, innovation sharing, and skill development. Likewise, 95.8% supported the use of media to showcase success stories of young agripreneurs as a way to challenge negative stereotypes and inspire replication.

The results further highlighted the importance of a holistic training approach, with 91.7% agreement, showing a preference for integrated curricula that blend technical, financial, and soft-skills training. In the same vein, 93.3% supported a value chain approach that introduces youths to diverse career pathways across input supply, production, processing, marketing, and services within agriculture. This broadened scope may increase interest and help demystify traditional conceptions of farming as solely manual labour. Furthermore, 95% of respondents indicated that access to financing and capital was vital to removing entry barriers. Finally, 93.3% supported the idea of fostering community buy-in through awareness creation and the strategic use of role models, which could reshape social norms and increase legitimacy for youth agripreneurship in rural areas.

Table 6: Strategies to employ to encourage and facilitate youth involvement in Agripreneurship

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1	Establishing Farm Youth Policy	72 (60.0%)	45 (37.5%)	3 (2.5%)	None
2	Helping agripreneurs recognize, evaluate, and exploit the agripreneurship opportunities available within their communities	66 (55.0%)	47 (39.2%)	4 (3.3%)	3 (2.5%)
3	Training farmers in value addition to increase efficiency and profits	71 (59.2%)	41 (34.2%)	3 (2.5%)	5 (4.2%)
4	Connect farmers to other agripreneurs within and outside their communities	74 (61.7%)	41 (34.2%)	4 (3.3%)	1 (0.8%)

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5	Helping young agripreneur access better markets and potential sources of credit	73 (60.8%)	38 (31.7%)	6 (5.0%)	3 (2.5%)
6	Going beyond technical skills to develop 'soft' skills such as communication, leadership and business skills	64 (53.3%)	48 (40.0%)	6 (5.0%)	2 (1.7%)
7	Establishing farm youth clubs to serves as a platform for youth to discuss issues related to farming, farm enterprises and skill development	63 (52.5%)	47 (39.2%)	9 (7.5%)	1 (0.8%)
8	Use of media to discuss success stories of the innovative young farmers/agripreneurs including those youth who have successfully launched agripreneurship ventures in different places.	70 (58.3%)	45 (37.5%)	5 (4.2%)	None
9	Provision of holistic approach to training to enable young entrants into agripreneur develop both technical and soft skills	51 (42.5%)	59 (49.2%)	8 (6.7%)	2 (1.7%)
10	Taking value chain approach (Showing young people that there are a variety of jobs in and around the agricultural sector and exposing them to these careers helps them to imagine more options for themselves)	60 (50.0%)	52 (43.3%)	7 (5.8%)	1 (0.8%)
11	Facilitation of access to financing and capital	59 (49.2%)	55 (45.8%)	5 (4.2%)	1 (0.8%)
12	Fostering community buy-in through awareness creation among key stakeholder and exposing the young entrants to successful role model	60 (50.0%)	52 (43.3%)	3 (2.5%)	5 (4.2%)

Note: SA=Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree
Source: *Field Survey, 2025.*

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has demonstrated that agripreneurship is widely perceived as a viable and attractive career path among educated youths in Ondo State, Nigeria. The findings reveal that the majority of respondents reject longstanding negative stereotypes surrounding agriculture, such as its association with poverty, illiteracy, or social decline—and instead recognize the sector's potential for income generation, personal development, and national food security. Furthermore, intrinsic factors such as access to farmland and parental background in farming emerged as significant motivational drivers, shaping youths' willingness to engage in agricultural entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, the study also uncovered persistent structural and institutional barriers that hinder full participation in agribusiness ventures. These include insufficient financial capital, poor marketing infrastructure, inadequate extension services, and limited access to productive land. These findings were further validated by the SWOT analysis, which revealed that while opportunities, such as technology adoption and community-based cultural support, are present, they are often overshadowed by more systemic threats and weaknesses. Without targeted intervention, these constraints may continue to limit the transformative potential of youth-led agribusiness initiatives.

The implication is clear: while the motivation and entrepreneurial intent exist, the surrounding ecosystem requires urgent restructuring and support. A multi-pronged approach involving policy, education, finance, and infrastructure is therefore essential to enable and sustain youth participation in agripreneurship. In light of the study's findings, the following actionable recommendations are proposed to encourage and support youth involvement in agripreneurship in Ondo State and beyond:

1. Government agencies, traditional institutions, and local authorities should collaborate to improve access to cultivable land for youth agripreneurs through leasing schemes, community allocations, or land banks.
2. Targeted reorientation programmes should be implemented to reshape youth perceptions of agriculture by highlighting diverse value chains and modern agribusiness models. Exposure to role models and successful ventures can further enhance this process.
3. A dedicated farm youth policy should be formulated to provide institutional backing for agripreneurship development. This policy should address issues such as access to credit, training, mentorship, and land, while also integrating agribusiness into national youth empowerment agendas.
4. Investment in mechanization, smart farming tools, and ICT-based agricultural services is critical to reducing the drudgery associated with traditional farming practices. This will not only improve productivity but also enhance the appeal of agriculture among educated and tech-savvy youths.

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