FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN RURAL FARMING IN OVIA NORTH EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

AND EXTENSION SERVICES

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY

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A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS AND EXTENSION SERVICES, FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY EDO STATE, NIGERIA. IN PARTIAL FUFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A BACHELOR DEGREE (B.AGRIC) (OPTION; AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS AND EXTENSION SERVICES)

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was carried out by Ehinomen Osoata (Miss) with Matriculation Number (AGR1500056) of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension Services, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Benin, Nigeria.

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Project Supervisor	Head of Department
DATE:	DATE:

DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to GOD ALMIGHTY who has being my only source of strength, my confidant, my hope, my peace during the storms, my provider, my joy and my everything, without him there will be no me.

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ABSTRACT

The study analyzed the Factors influencing youth participation in rural farming in Edo state, Nigeria. Specifically, it examined the socio-economic characteristics of youth in the study area; examined the pull factors influencing youth participation in farming; evaluated the push factors influencing youth participation in farming; identified strategies that can be developed to encourage youth participation in farming. Data was collected using a purposive sampling technique to sample 100 respondents from Oredo L.G.A in the study area. Data collected were analyzed with logit t-test and Pearson correlation analysis and described with descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage,mean and standard deviation for appropriate variables. Findings from the study showed that majority (53.0%) were female. Youth participation in the study area was mainly dominated by the single class (65.0%). The youths mainly had secondary education (45.0%). The findings also show that a large proportion of youths (76.0%) owned land while (20.0%) of youths leased land and (4.0%) rent land. A higher proportion of price of fertilizer (63.0%) was indicated while a lower price of fertilizer (37.0%) was also indicated. The major constraints affecting youth participation in farming are bad roads (mean = 4.25), lack of technical skills and knowledge (mean = 4.03), limited access to markets particularly in remote areas (mean = 4.03), limited access to markets particularly in remote areas (mean = 4.02), land tenure (mean = 3.99), and lack of finance to start or expand farms (mean = 3.81). Age, marital status, gender, educational qualification, land tenure, access to ICT, price of fertilizer significantly determined their participation in rural farming.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Agriculture is the foundation of human civilization and is the mainstay of the local economy, providing employment for a large percentage of the population (FAO, 2021). Like many other regions in Nigeria and around the world, the youth population in Edo state are faced with the decision of whether or not to participate in farming as a livelihood option (Ohiokha, I. O., & Erhabor, P.O. 2021). However, in recent years, there has been a decline in the number of young people who are actively engaged in agriculture, leading to concerns about the future of the sector. This is particularly true in Edo state, where many young people are leaving the rural areas in search of better opportunities in the cities. To understand why young people are turning away from agriculture, it is important to consider the factors that are "pulling" them towards other opportunities, as well as the factors that are "pushing" them towards farming. In Edo state, there are a variety of factors that influence youth participation in agriculture, including economic opportunities, availability of land, traditional knowledge and skills, lack of job opportunities, rural-urban migration, etc. The youths are essential to the success of the agricultural sector in the area as they represent a significant proportion of the workforce (FAO, 2021).

In the context of agriculture, Pull factors are positive and desirable factors that motivate individuals to engage in agricultural activities (Yusuf & Oyewole 2018). Some of the pull

factors that influence youth participation in agriculture include: availability of arable land, government support through provision of subsidies for inputs, training and extension services, cultivation of diverse crops, use of technology in farming, use of modern farming techniques and practices, economic opportunities, etc.

Push factors on the other hand are negative and undesirable factors that discourage or force individuals to leave their land and seek better opportunities elsewhere (Akinsanmi *et al.* 2021). Some of the push factors that can discourage youth participation in agriculture include: limited access to credit to start or expand their farms, limited access to markets particularly in remote areas, lack of technical skills and knowledge needed to engage in modern farming practices, perception of agriculture as a low-prestige occupation, low returns on investment in farming, lack of access to finance to start or sustain a farming business.

By creating an enabling environment that supports youth participation in agriculture and addressing the pull and push factors that affect them, it may be possible to reverse the trend of declining youth engagement in agriculture and create new opportunities for economic growth and development in Edo state. Therefore, the pull and push factors affecting youth participation in general are multifaceted. Addressing the push factors and enhancing the pull factors could encourage more young people to participate in agriculture, leading to increased food security and economic development in Edo state. This can be achieved through targeted policies and programs that address the specific challenges faced by young farmers in Edo state.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The current average age of a Nigerian farmer is around 55 years and by 2030 it is expected to rise to around 75 years (Akpan 2010 and Akpabio 2012). The situation is worsened by the fact that by 2030, an estimated 50% more people will migrate to urban areas. It is doubtful if the present crop of ageing farmer can produced enough food to feed the anticipating population of 230 million people in 2030.Every year thousands of graduates are turn out from various educational institutions into the already congested labor market. Nigerian streets are littered with youth hawkers who ordinarily would have found gainful employment in some enterprises. The indirect effect of increase youth unemployment has hindered the rapid growth of our economy. However, many analysts believed that agricultural sector is naturally endowed with enormous potentials to absorb unemployed and surplus labour from other sectors of the economy (Akpan, 2010). Nigeria has vast natural resource potentials in the agricultural sector that could sufficiently engross the surplus or idle labour in her economy. The evergreen rainforest in the south and the rich savanna soil in the north as well as the rich water bodies that aligned the coastal states are capable of providing inexhaustible job opportunities for the idle and unemployed youth if these resources are harnessed appropriately in the country. Edo state, like many other states in Nigeria, is facing a decline in agricultural productivity due to a lack of youth participation in farming activities (Afolayan,A. O, Olumuyiwa, F. O., & Olusola, J. O. 2020). The decision of youth to participate in agricultural production has a lot to do with

the cultural, political, environmental and economic situation of a society. They are vulnerable to change either positive or negative. Hence, it becomes pertinent to identify those decision variables that could model the pull and push factors influencing youth participation in agriculture. The study provided answers to the following research questions

1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of youths in Ovia North East Local Government Area?
2. What are the pull factors influencing youth participation in farming in Ovia North East Local Government Area?
3. What are the push factors influencing youth participation in farming in Ovia North East Local Government Area?
4. What strategies can be developed to encourage youth participation in farming in Ovia North East Local Government Area?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to determine the pull and push factors influencing youth participation in farming in Ovia North East Local Government Area, Edo state, Nigeria. However,in order to achieve this, specific objectives were:

i. describe the socio-economic characteristics of youths in Edo state;
ii. identify the pull factors influencing youth participation in farming;
iii. assess the push factors influencing youth participation in farming;
iv. determine the strategies that can be developed to encourage youth participation in farming.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Most studies on youth in Nigeria have been on production. Nnadi and Akwiwu (2008) examined determinants of youths‟ participation in agricultural production in Imo state, Nigeria. Data were generated from the three agricultural zones in the state. The empirical result revealed that, age, education, marital status, parent income, parent occupation, household size and youth dependent ratio were significant factors influencing youth participation in agricultural activities. Onemolease and Alakpa (2009) studied determinants of adoption decisions of rural youths in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. They used 332 youth farmers sampled from 4 states in the region. Results showed that, contact with extension agents, income and gender were important determinants of young farmers‟ adoption of crop-related technologies. Also, Daudu *et al.,* (2009) investigated the role of youths in agricultural development in Makurdi Local Government area (LGA) of Benue State. This study showed how pull and push factors play a great role in youth participation in farming and how strategies can be developed to promote youth engagement in agricultural activities. Donye *et al.,* (2012) analyzed youth‟s involvement in yam production in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria. Most of the reviewed literature did not analyze specifically the push and pull factors influencing youth participation in Oredo LGA in Edo State.

The study also addressed food security, and Edo state has the potential to be a significant contributor to food production. The findings that were gotten from the study was beneficial to the entire socio-economic profile of youths in the study area and it was helpful to policy

makers, extension workers and various governmental and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). Essentially, the study hopefully added to the available literatures, useful for academic research and other related research topics.

1.5 Hypotheses of the study

The hypotheses was stated in the null forms as given below;

1. Socio-economic characteristics of respondents did not significantly affect their participation in faming
2. There was no significant relationship between pull and push factors and youth participation in farming.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Youth Participation in Agriculture

Youth participation in Agriculture refers to the active participation and engagement of young individuals, typically between the ages of 15 and 35, in various agricultural activities, including but not limited to farming, livestock raising, agribusiness, and related aspects of the agricultural sector. These young people play a critical role in shaping the future of agriculture and rural development through their contributions to food production, income generation, innovation, and the overall sustainability of agricultural practices. Youth involvement in agriculture is vital for addressing global food security and sustainability challenges. Their energy, innovation, and willingness to adopt modern farming practices can enhance agricultural productivity (FAO, 2013).

Young people may actively engage in crop cultivation, tending to orchards, or managing livestock. They contribute to the production of food and other agricultural products. Many young individuals are drawn to the agribusiness sector, which includes activities like food processing, marketing, distribution, and agricultural equipment and input supply. They may run small businesses related to agriculture.Youth bring fresh perspectives and technological savvy to agriculture. They often adopt modern farming techniques, digital tools, and innovations to increase productivity and efficiency. (ASI, 2013)

Young farmers are increasingly conscious of sustainable agricultural practices. They may implement organic farming, conservation farming methods, and environmentally friendly

approaches to protect natural resources. Some young people become agricultural entrepreneurs by establishing startups related to agriculture, such as agritourism ventures, organic produce markets, or specialized agricultural services. Youth may add value to agricultural products through processing, packaging, and branding, thereby increasing the profitability of their agricultural endeavors. The involvement of youth in agriculture contributes to the overall development of rural areas. They create employment opportunities, stimulate local economies, and enhance food security. Young farmers and agribusiness entrepreneurs seek market access both locally and globally. They explore diverse marketing channels to sell their products and gain a competitive edge. Some young individuals engage in advocating for policies that support youth in agriculture, such as improved access to land, credit, and education. Continuous learning and skills development are crucial for youth in agriculture. They may undergo training programs and acquire knowledge in areas like modern farming techniques, finance, and marketing.

In summary, youth in agriculture represent a dynamic and diverse group of individuals who play a pivotal role in the agricultural sector's development and sustainability. Their contributions range from traditional farming practices to innovative entrepreneurship, all aimed at addressing global food security challenges, promoting rural development, and driving agricultural progress. Thus, this study identified the factors that influence youth participation in farming and introduced new and better opportunities to improve involvement by youths in agriculture in Edo state.

2.2 Pull Factors

Pull factors influencing youth participation in farming are positive aspects or incentives that attract young individuals to engage in agricultural activities. Given the aging farming population in many regions, encouraging youth involvement in agriculture is vital for the sustainability of the agricultural sector.

2.2.1 Access to Land and Financial Services

Having secure land ownership or tenure arrangements can be a strong pull factor for potential farmers. When individuals have confidence in their land rights, they are more likely to invest in long-term agricultural activities (Deininger,K,2003). Access to affordable land, either through government initiatives, land reform programs, or cooperative arrangements, can lower the barriers to entry for new

farmers, making agriculture more attractive (World Bank, 2010). Land redistribution policies that aim to address land inequality can encourage youth and marginalized groups to get involved in farming. These policies redistribute land to those who may not have had access previously (Jayne et al 2018). Access to credit and loans for agricultural purposes can be a significant pull factor. It enables farmers to invest in seeds, equipment, and technology. Microfinance institutions and agricultural credit programs cater to this need (Rios et al 2019). Financial services that allow farmers to save and insure their crops or livestock can reduce the risks associated with farming, making it a more appealing option. Crop insurance, for example, can protect farmers from losses due to adverse weather conditions (Gine et al 2019). Specialized agricultural financial institutions or programs that

understand the unique financial needs of farmers can make it easier for individuals to enter farming. These institutions often offer tailored financial products (AGRA, 2016). Financial services coupled with training and support can empower farmers to make informed financial decisions and improve their farming practices. This holistic approach can attract and retain young farmers (FAO, 2016).

2.2.2 Access to Knowledge, education and information.

Knowledge about modern and sustainable farming techniques, including crop rotation, pest control, and soil management, can be a significant pull factor. Access to agricultural extension services, online resources, and agricultural publications provides valuable information for farmers (Blackie et al, 2020). Access to market information, such as current prices, demand trends, and market access opportunities, empowers farmers to make informed decisions about crop selection and timing of sales. Market information helps increase the profitability of farming (Minten et al, 2010). Knowledge about climate patterns and weather forecasts is crucial for planning planting and harvesting times. Access to weather data and climate information services can reduce risks associated with weather variability(Patt et al,2009). Formal and informal agricultural education and training programs equip aspiring farmers with essential skills and knowledge. Agricultural colleges, vocational training centers, and workshops can attract individuals to pursue farming as a profession (Khanal et al, 2017). Quality rural education can foster an interest in farming from an early age. Access to good schools in rural areas can ensure that young people are well-prepared to engage in agriculture(Singh et al, 2020).

Access to ICT tools, including mobile phones and the internet, can provide farmers with real-time information, weather updates, and market prices. Mobile apps and text message services are examples of how technology enhances access to information in agriculture (Qiang et al, 2011). Online platforms, such as agricultural websites, forums, and social media groups, serve as valuable sources of information exchange and knowledge sharing among farmers. These platforms connect farmers to a global agricultural community.

2.3 Push factors

Push factors influencing youth participation in farming refer to the conditions, circumstances, or factors that discourage or drive young individuals away from pursuing a career or engagement in agricultural activities. These factors essentially "push" youth away from the agricultural sector, making it less attractive or feasible as a livelihood choice for them. Push factors can include various economic, social, environmental, and personal challenges that hinder young people from becoming involved in farming.

2.3.1 Limited access to financial services

Access to finance is essential for young farmers to invest in land, seeds, machinery, and other inputs required for farming. Without sufficient capital, they may struggle to start or expand their farming ventures, limited access to credit is a significant barrier for youth in agriculture (IFPRI, 2019). Farming involves inherent risks, including weather-related challenges and market fluctuations. Financial services such as insurance can help mitigate these risks. However, youth with limited access to insurance may be hesitant to engage in farming due to the fear of losing their investments (FAO, 2019). Access to finance can

facilitate youth participation in agricultural value chains by helping them transport and store their produce, access markets, and engage in value-added activities. Without this access, they may find it challenging to reach broader markets (USAID, 2020). Successful farming often requires long-term planning and investment. Limited access to financial services may lead to short-term thinking or subsistence farming, as youth struggle to secure funds for future investments in their agricultural enterprises (ILO, 2019).

2.3.2 Lack of technical skills in modern farming

Modern agriculture relies on advanced techniques and technologies, such as precision farming and data-driven decision-making. Youth lacking technical skills may struggle to adopt these practices, resulting in lower agricultural productivity (IJABE, 2019). Technical skills are essential for optimizing the use of resources like water, fertilizers, and pesticides. Without these skills, youth farmers may overuse resources or apply them ineffectively, leading to increased production costs and environmental harm (FAO, 2018). Modern farming often involves meeting specific quality standards and compliance requirements to access lucrative markets. Youth lacking technical skills may struggle to meet these standards, limiting their market opportunities. A report by the World Bank emphasizes the importance of skills development in meeting market demands (World Bank, 2016). Technical skills enable farmers to better manage risks related to pests, diseases, and adverse weather conditions. Youth lacking these skills may be more vulnerable to crop losses and income instability. A publication by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) discusses the role of skills in agricultural risk management (FAO, 2019). In conclusion, the lack of technical skills in modern farming hinders youth participation by

limiting their ability to adopt efficient, sustainable, and market-oriented farming practices. Addressing this challenge requires investment in agricultural education, vocational training, and extension services to equip young farmers with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in contemporary agriculture (FAO, 2017).

2.4 Rural Farming

Rural farming in Nigeria refers to agricultural activities conducted in rural areas or non-urban regions of the country. These areas are characterized by lower population densities, limited access to urban amenities and infrastructure, and a predominant reliance on agriculture for livelihoods. Rural farming in Nigeria encompasses various agricultural practices, including crop cultivation, livestock rearing, and agro-processing, and plays a crucial role in the country's food security, employment generation, and economic development. Rural farming serves as the economic foundation for many rural communities in Nigeria. It involves the cultivation of crops such as cassava, maize, yam, rice, and various vegetables, as well as livestock rearing, which includes poultry, cattle, goats, and sheep. Rural farming is a major source of employment, particularly for youth and women. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in Nigeria, agriculture provides employment for over 70% of the country's labor force, with the majority engaged in rural farming activities (NBS, "Nigeria Labour Force Statistics - Q4 2020"). Rural farming contributes significantly to food production in Nigeria. It plays a crucial role in meeting the dietary needs of the population by producing staple foods and cash crops. This is particularly important given Nigeria's large and growing population (FAO, "Nigeria"). For many rural households, farming is a primary source of income. It allows them to earn

money from selling crops and livestock products, providing economic stability and reducing poverty in rural areas (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Nigeria). Rural farming in Nigeria faces various challenges, including limited access to modern farming techniques, inadequate infrastructure, and issues related to land tenure and access to credit. These challenges can hinder productivity and income growth (World Bank, "Nigeria Agriculture"). The Nigerian government, through the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), has implemented various initiatives and programs aimed at promoting rural farming. These include efforts to improve access to agricultural inputs, credit, and training (FMARD, Nigeria). Sustainable rural farming practices are essential for long-term food security and environmental conservation. There is a growing emphasis on adopting sustainable and climate-resilient farming methods in Nigeria (FAO, "Sustainable Agriculture"). In summary, rural farming in Nigeria is a cornerstone of the country's agriculture sector and rural livelihoods. It contributes significantly to food production, job creation, and income generation. However, addressing challenges and promoting sustainable farming practices is crucial for the sector's continued growth and its ability to meet the food and economic needs of the Nigerian population.

2.4.1 Types of Rural farming

Rural farming encompasses various types of agricultural activities depending on the region, climate, and available resources. Here are some common types of rural farming:

Subsistence farming: is characterized by small-scale agricultural activities primarily focused on producing enough food to meet the needs of the farmer's family. This type of farming aims at self-sufficiency and typically involves a variety of crops and livestock.

Commercial farming: involves the cultivation of crops and raising of livestock for profit. Farmers in this category sell their agricultural products in local, national, or international markets, aiming to generate income.

Crop farming: Crop farming centers on the cultivation of crops, including cereals (e.g., rice, wheat), legumes, vegetables, and cash crops (e.g., cotton, coffee). These crops are primarily grown for food, fiber or for sale.

Livestock farming on raising animals for various products, such as meat, milk, eggs, and wool. Common livestock includes cattle, sheep, goats, poultry, and pigs.

Mixed farming: combines both crop cultivation and livestock rearing on the same farm. This integrated approach provides diversification of income sources and efficient resource utilization.

Agroforestry: integrates trees or woody plants with agricultural crops or livestock. It promotes sustainability, biodiversity, and multiple income sources.

Intensive farming: aims to maximize production on a limited land area by using high inputs of labor, capital, and technology. It often leads to high yields but can raise environmental concerns.

Extensive farming: covers large land areas with relatively low inputs per unit of land. It's often used for grazing livestock or cultivating crops with low input requirements.

2.5 Youth Empowerment Programme

A youth empowerment program in rural farming is a targeted initiative designed to engage, educate, train, and support young individuals living in rural areas, equipping them with the skills, resources, and opportunities needed to actively participate in agricultural activities and related enterprises. These programs aim to empower youth by providing them with the knowledge and tools required to make informed decisions, increase their agricultural productivity, generate income, and contribute to the sustainable development of rural communities. Youth empowerment programs in rural farming often include elements such as agricultural training, access to financial services, mentorship, and the promotion of entrepreneurship to encourage young people to take an active role in agriculture and agribusiness ventures. These initiatives contribute to poverty reduction, food security, and the revitalization of rural economies.Key components of a youth empowerment program in rural farming may include:

Agricultural Training: Providing young individuals with practical training in modern farming techniques, crop and livestock management, and sustainable agricultural practices.

Access to Resources: Facilitating access to land, seeds, fertilizers, and agricultural equipment, which are often barriers for youth entering farming.

Financial Support: Offering financial services such as grants, loans, or savings and credit associations to help young farmers invest in their agricultural ventures.

Market Linkages: Connecting youth with market opportunities and value chains to ensure that their agricultural products have access to profitable markets.

Entrepreneurship Development: Promoting entrepreneurial skills among youth to encourage them to start and manage agricultural enterprises effectively.

Access to Information and Technology: Providing access to information and technology tools that can help youth make informed decisions and stay updated on agricultural practices.

Community Engagement: Encouraging young people to actively participate in community development and agricultural cooperatives, fostering a sense of ownership and belonging.

Gender Inclusivity: Ensuring that young women have equal access to empowerment programs and addressing gender-specific challenges they may face in rural farming.

These programs recognize the potential of youth as a valuable resource in rural development, aiming to harness their energy, creativity, and innovative spirit to drive positive changes in the agricultural sector while improving their own livelihoods and contributing to the overall well-being of rural communities.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Area and Scope of Study

Edo state is located within the South-South geo-political region of Nigeria and lies roughly between longitudes 06° 4᾽ and 06° 43᾽ EAST and Latitudes 05° 44᾽ and 07° 34᾽ NORTH of the equator. It has boundaries with Kogi state in the North, Delta in the South, Ondo state in the West and Kogi and Anambra state in the East (Edo State Nigeria, 2015). It occupies a total land area of 17,802km^2 with a population of 3,218,332 (NPC 2006). The state is made up of four (4) major ethnic groups namely; The Binis, Esan, Owan and Etsako. Edo state is an agrarian state with oil palm, cassava, rubber, rice, maize, cocoa, plantain, pineapple, as major crops cultivated. The vegetation of the state is characterized by swamps along the coast to evergreen forest and savannah in the North. It experiences a tropical climate with the major seasons wet and dry. Annual rainfall ranges from 2300-2700mm concentrated in two peaks, July and September usually separated by a dry break in august. The agricultural system is predominantly small farm holdings. The people are predominantly farmers, growing various food crops in virtually all the areas of the local government. Finished products like palm oil, palm wine, baskets, brooms and chairs are sold in the various markets. Banana fruits are also found in all parts of the local government and are farmed in large quantities. Others include citrus fruit, guinea corn, maize, soybeans, millet, beniseed, pepper, groundnuts, rice and cassava which are exported in form of the finished goods e.g. such garri, to neighbouring state.

The administrative capital is Benin City and it is comprised of eighteen (18) local Government Area. The eighteen (18) local government areas is delineated by the State Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) into three agro ecological zones. They are Edo Central, Edo North and Edo South. The Edo central is divided into five blocks as follows: Esan Central, Esan West, Esan North-East, Esan South-East and Igueben Local Government Areas (LGAs). The Edo North Comprises 6 blocks, namely: Owan West, Akoko-Edo, Etsako West, Etsako East, Owan East and Etsako Central LGAs. The Edo South consists of seven (7) blocks namely, Oredo, Ovia south West, Ovia North East, Ikpoba-Okha, Egor, Uhunmwode and Orhionwon LGAs.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for the study will be youths Ovia Local Government Area in Edo State.

3.3 Sampling techniques

Alternatively, purposive sampling techniques was used to sample all the communities in the LGA. A list of youth will be generated at each communities while the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula was used to determine the sample size that is representative of the population. This formula is explained below:

- $S = X^2NP\ (1-P)/\ d^2\ (N-1) + X^2P(1-P)$

Where:

S = required sample size

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for one degree of freedom at the desired confidence level

N = the population size

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .05, however, 0.10 will be adopted for this study since this would provide a good representative sample size)

d^2 = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05).

3.4 Data Collection

Primary data was collected using questionnaire and interview schedule. The secondary data was collected from articles, journals, universities, government parastatals and ADP bulletins.

3.5 Measurement of Variables

Section A: Variables are as follows:

DEC = Youth decision to participate in farming (dummy; 1 for yes and 0 for no)

AGE = Age of youth farmer (years)

GEN = Gender of the farmer (1=Male, 0 otherwise)

EDU = Formal educational (years)

MAR = Marital status of a youth farmer (1 for married and 0 otherwise)

SOC = Membership of social group (number of years)

ICT = Access to ICT (Number of times youth farmer browse in a week)

LAO = Land tenure (dummy; 1 for owned land and 0 otherwise)

NSO = Number of non-farm occupations

PPF = Perceived price of fertilizer (dummy; 1 for high and 0 for normal)

AAP = Youth access to state owned agricultural programme(s) (Number of programmes accessed)

Section B: the respondents indicated the pull factors affecting their level of participation in farming: This was measured from a list of identified pull factors using a five (5) likert type rating scale of strongly disagree = 5, Disagree = 4, Neutral = 3, Agree = 2 and Strongly Agree = 1 as used by. A mean score of 3.0 and above was taken to mean that the pull factor is high based on the effect on their participation while a mean score of less than 3.0 was taken to mean low.

Section C: The respondents indicated the push factors affecting their level of participation in farming : This was measured from a list of identified push factors using a five (5) likert type rating scale of strongly disagree = 5, Disagree = 4, Neutral = 3, Agree = 2 and Strongly Agree = 1 as used by a mean score of 3.0 and above was taken to mean that the push factor is high based on the effect of their participation while a mean score of less than 3.0 was taken to mean low.

Section D: The respondents indicated the strategies that can be developed to encourage youth participation in farming. This was measured from a list of identified strategies using a five (5) likert type rating scale of education and training = 5, resources = 4, market opportunities = 3, entrepreneurship = 2, diversification = 1.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics used includes frequency counts, percentages and mean scores. The inferential statistics used include logit, t –test and Pearson correlation analyses.

Analytical Techniques

Objective 1: to describe the socio-economic characteristics of agriculture professionals. This was achieved using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages.

Objective 2: This was analysed using mean scores

Objective 3: This was analysed using mean scores

3.5 Test of Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was stated in a null form.

Hypothesis One

H_{o1}: There was no significant relationship between the socio economic characteristics of youth and their participation in agriculture. This was achieved by testing the t-values generated from the logit regression analysis of the socio-economic variables (X1- X6) and their participation in the study area. It was scored as; High=1 and Low=0.

The logit regression is given as:

$$Pr(Y=1/XI) = Ln\left[\frac{Yi}{1-Yi}\right] = a + biXi + \ldots\ldots + bnXn + U \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots..(1)$$

Where:

Ln = Natural log

Pr(Y=1/Xi) = Probability of Y (level of participation) occurring, given that X1-Xn have occurred

a = The coefficient of the constant term

bi-bn = The coefficient of the independent variables(age, sex, household size e.t.c)

Xi-Xn = The independent variable

U = Error term

The mathematical expression of the model is explicitly specified as:

$Y_i=b_o+biX_i+b_2X_2+b_3X_3+b_4X_4+b_5X_5+b_6X_6+b_7X_7+b_8X_8+b_9X_9+ U$……..(2)

Where:

Yi = level of participation (high=1, low=0)

$\bar{x}_1$ = Age (number of years)

$\bar{x}_2$ = Household size (number of persons living and feeding from same pot)

$\bar{x}_3$ = Education (primary education=1, secondary education=2, tertiary education=3)

$\bar{x}_4$ = Access to ICT (Number of times youth farmer browse in a week) (years)

$\bar{x}_5$ = Membership of social group (number of years)

$\bar{x}_6$ = Land tenure (dummy; 1 for owned land and 0 otherwise

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of findings from the data by conducting analysis, interpretation of data as well as the discussion of findings in lines with documented facts in literature based on the study objectives.

4.1 Socio-economic characteristics

4.1.1 Age

This study was targeted at the youths in the study area and the results from Table 1 observed two age groups of the respondents sampled and interview for this study. They are age groups of youths between the ages of 15 to 24 years and 25 to 30 years. The mean age of the respondents was approximately 25 years where majority (59.0%) was found within the age bracket of 15 to 24 years and 41.0% were within the age range of 25 to 30. These age groups are in their active ages and will be able to engage in laborious agricultural activities. In most cases, farming activities are laborious, energy consuming and time consuming and these make the young suitable for these work category (Udensi et al, 2013).

4.1.2 Sex

Result in Table 1 showed that about 53.0% of the respondents were female while only 47.0% were male. This shows that female respondents dominated in the study. This could only means that there were more female in the sampled respondents than male.

4.1.3 Marital Status

Furthermore, results in Table 1 show that 30.0% of the sampled respondents were married, while majority (65.0%) were single and only 3.0% and 2.0% were divorced and separated, respectively. This means that most of the respondents were unmarried. This could be linked to the fact that the study was targeted at youths between ages 15 to 30 years and these ages are usually single or courting but not married. Hence, they will be more committed to work than family related issues and will be good fit for farming activities (Elise, Brain, Allison, Richburg, Smith, and Lerman, 2012).

4.1.4 Educational qualification

Based on the findings from the study, it was observed that 4.0% of the respondents had no formal education, 10.0% had primary education, 45.0% had up to secondary education, 39.0% were still student of tertiary institutions and only 2.0% had HND degrees. This means that only very few (4.0%) of the respondents were not education while majority (96.0%) had between primary to post tertiary education. This is an encouraging factor for the respondents to participate in farming as they will be articulate enough to make use of modern agricultural technologies in farming activities to enhance productivity. Through education people can gain access to resources, credits, contribute to decision making, gain control over their lives, gain self-respect and improve on their societal values and image (Nyerere, 2016).

4.1.5 Membership of Social Group

Furthermore, result from Table 1 showed respondents membership to social groups. The result showed that majority (50.0%) of the respondents had been members of social groups for a year to 4 years, 48.0% had been members of social groups for 5 to 7 years, while only 2.0% of the respondents had been members of a social for 8 to 10 years. This means that respondents belong to social groups and being members of social groups is associated with business networking and marketing, cooperative working relationships, advocacy for special interests and problems, educational programs, and more (Filley, 2019). Hence, this is a good fit to hence their participation in farming.

4.1.6 Access to ICT

Observation from Table 1 showed that only 11% of the total respondents in the study area identified they had access to ICT. While 5.0% of the respondents use ICT 2 to 6 times in a month, 6% of the respondents use ICT 7 to 10 times in a month.

4.1.7 Land tenure

Result from Table 1 also showed observation for land tenure among respondents in the study area. Majority (76.0%) of the respondents indicated ownership of the land used of farming activities, 20.0% of the respondents indicated that the land they use for farming activities were leased to them, while 4% of the respondents indicated that they rented their land. This means that respondents had land in their possession and are actively involved in agricultural activities. Availability of agricultural land is associated with stability,

possibility of regular income and satisfaction of supporting the crucial sector of farming (Business News, 2023).

4.1.8 Price of fertilizer and Participation in nion-farm operations

Based on the result in Table 1, observation showed that 63.0% of the respondents indicated the price of fertilizer to be high, while only 37.0% indicated that the price of fertilizer is relatively low. The result also showed that only 39.0% of the total respondents indicated that they participated in non-farm operations. This means that majority (61.0%) were active farmers.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics

Age group	**Freq., n = 100**	**%**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
15-24	59	59.0	25.29	5.09
25-30	41	41.0		
Gender				
Male	47	47.0		
Female	53	53.0		
Marital Status				
Single	65	65.0		
Married	30	30.0		
Divorced	3	3.0		
Separated	2	2.0		
Educational qualification				
No formal education	4	4.0		
Primary education	10	10.0		
Secondary education	45	45.0		
Student	39	39.0		
HND	2	2.0		
Membership of Social Group				
1-4yrs	50	50.0		
5-7yrs	48	48.0		

8-10 yrs	2	2.0		
Access to ICT	11	11.0		
How often/month				
2-6times	5	5.0		
7-10 times	6	6.0		
Land tenure				
Owned land	76	76.0		
Leased land	20	20.0		
Rent	4	4.0		
Price of fertilizer				
High	63	63.0		
Low	37	37.0		
Participation in non-farm operations	39	39.0		

Source: Field survey, 2023.

4.2 Pull Factors that influences youth participation in Farming

Table 2 indicates that a mean of above 3.0 was used as the benchmark for the significant pull factors that influenced youth participation in farming in the area. Specifically, it was observed that availability of arable land (Mean = 3.38), use of modern farming techniques (Mean = 3.20), good modern farming techniques (Mean = 3.20), safety of modern farming techniques (Mean = 3.74), affordability of modern farming techniques (Mean = 3.53), all had above a benchmark of 3.0 out of a total of 10.0. They were therefore, adjudged to be significant factors which implies that the pull factors inflinfluenced youth participation in farming.

Table 2: Pull factors

Pull factors	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Availability of arable land	3.38	1.73
Government support through provision of subsidies for inputs, training and extension services	2.59	1.54
Access to markets and value chains	2.71	1.27
Cultivation of diverse crops	2.71	1.27
Use of modern farming techniques	3.20	1.60
Availability of modern farming techniques	2.89	1.50
Presence of modern farming techniques	2.70	1.40
Good modern farming techniques	3.20	1.60
Safety of modern farming techniques	3.74	0.97
Affordability of modern farming techniques	3.53	1.14

Source: Field survey, 2023.

*Mean > 3.0 = Significant factors

4.3 Push Factors that influences youth participation in Farming

Results in Table 3 show that all the identified push factors that influenced youth participation in farming were found to be significant with a mean of above 3.0 that was used as the benchmark. Specifically, it was observed that lack of finance to start or expand farms (Mean = 3.81), lack of technical skills and knowledge (Mean = 4.03), perception of agriculture as a low prestige occupation (Mean = 3.53), limited access to markets particularly in remote areas (Mean = 4.02), migration and displacement (Mean = 3.22), land tenure (Mean = 3.99), lack of machines (Mean = 3.48), high cost (Mean = 3.74), bad road (Mean = 4.25), lack of technical (Mean = 3.73), all had above a benchmark of 3.0 out of a total of 10.0. They were therefore, adjudged to be significant factors which implies that the push factors influences youth participation in farming to a large extent.

Table 3: Push factors

Push factors	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Lack of finance to start or expand farms	3.81	1.29
Lack of technical skills and knowledge	4.03	0.70
Perception of agriculture as a low prestige occupation	3.53	1.51
Limited access to markets particularly in remote areas	4.02	0.70
Migration and displacement	3.22	1.32
land tenure	3.99	0.72
lack of machines	3.48	0.88
high cost	3.74	1.12
bad road	4.25	0.85
lack of technical	3.73	1.67

Source: Field survey, 2023.

*Mean > 3.0 = Significant factors

4.4 Constraints affecting the involvement of youth participation in farming.

Results in Table 4 showed responses of respondents on the constraints affecting the involvement of youth participation in farming. The results also showed responses of the respondents on gender based constraints affecting the involvement of youth participation in farming. 74% of the respondents indicated that they had face gender biases and stereotypes that undervalued their contributions in farming, while 74% of the respondents indicated that they were included in decision-making processes related to farming at household and community level. This means that respondents will be able to make positive contribution to enhance their productivity in farming.

The result also showed responses of the respondents on institutional support and policy constraints affecting the involvement of youth participation in farming. 67% of the respondents identified that they had barriers and limitations in accessing institutional support for farming activities, only 12% of the respondents indicated that they had received adequate support from government institutions and agricultural agencies therefore majority (88%) of the respondents had not received support from government and agricultural agencies. This could have the level of food production because government aids are major enhancers to improve food production.

Table 4: Constraints

Land Access:	**Freq**	**%**
Do you have access to agricultural land for farming?	74	74
Have you faced any difficulties in acquiring or leasing land for farming purposes?	74	74
Financial Constraints:		
Do you face challenges in accessing credit or financial services for agricultural activities?	26	26
Are there any specific financial limitations that hinder your ability to invest in farming, such as lack of capital or resources?	74	74
Have you encountered difficulties in accessing agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers, or machinery, due to financial constraints?	50	50
Access to Information and Knowledge:		
Do you have access to agricultural extension services and technical information?	48	48
Are you aware of new farming techniques, technologies, and best practices relevant to your farming activities?	48	48
Gender-Based Constraints:		
Do you face any gender biases or stereotypes that undervalue your contributions to farming?	74	74
Are you included in decision-making processes related to farming at the household or community level?	74	74
Infrastructure and Market Access:		
Are there challenges related to rural infrastructure, such as roads, irrigation systems, or storage facilities that affect your farming activities?	48	48
Do you face difficulties in accessing markets or selling your agricultural produce?	48	48
Are there limitations in post-harvest management facilities or technologies that impact your farming operations?	48	48
Do you have access to time-saving technologies or labor-saving devices that could alleviate some of these constraints?	74	74
Climate Change and Environmental Factors:		
Have you experienced any climate change impacts, such as extreme weather condition, that affect your crop yields or productivity?	26	26
Are there specific environmental factors that pose challenges to your arable crop farming activities?	50	50
Institutional Support and Policy Frameworks:		

Are there any barriers or limitations in accessing institutional support for your farming activities?	67	67
Have you received adequate support from government institutions or agricultural agencies?	12	12
Social Support Networks:		
Do you have access to networks or platforms where you can share knowledge and experiences with other youth farmers?	48	48

Source: Field survey, 2023.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The youths are essential to the success of the agricultural sector as they represent a significant proportion of the workforce. Agriculture in the other hand is the foundation of human civilization and is the mainstay of the local economy, providing employment for a large percentage of the population. However, in recent years, there has been a decline in the number of young people who are actively engaged in agriculture, leading to concerns about the future of the sector. Pull factors are positive and desirable factors that motivate individuals to engage in agricultural activities and push factors are negative and undesirable factors that discourage or force individuals to leave their land and seek better opportunities elsewhere. Creating an enabling environment that supports youth participation in agriculture and addressing the pull and push factors that affect them, may possibly reverse the trend of declining youth engagement in agriculture. Hence, this study was conducted to fill this gap of independently assessing the pull and push factors influencing youth participation in farming. Thus, this study was conducted to generally assess the pull and push factors influencing youth participation in farming in Ovia North East Local Government Area, Edo state, Nigeria. Specifically, it was done to describe the socio-economic characteristics of youths in Edo state, identify the pull factors influencing youth participation in farming, assess the push factors influencing youth participation in farming and determine the strategies that can be developed to encourage youth participation in farming.

Scientifically recognized sampling procedure was used to select 100 respondents with the use of validated structured questionnaire and interview schedule while data collected were analyzed with frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation while Logit Regression Analysis was used to analyze the hypotheses of the study.

Some of the results showed that the study was targeted at the youths between the ages of 15 to 30 with a mean age of 25 years. These age groups are in their active ages and will be able to engage in laborious agricultural activities. Female respondents dominated the study. Most of the respondents were unmarried. This could be linked to the fact that the study was targeted at youths and they will be more committed to work than family issues. Respondents were educated with only few without formal education. Therefore, the youth will be articulate enough to make use of modern agricultural technologies in farming activities to enhance productivity. All respondents belong to social groups and being members of social groups is associated with business networking, marketing and cooperative working relationships. Majority of the respondents had no access to ICT. Respondents had access to land for farming activities and majority owned the land they cultivate. Most respondents perceived high price in cost of fertilizers. Furthermore, availability of arable land, use of modern farming techniques, good modern farming techniques, safety of modern farming techniques and affordability of modern farming techniques, were significant pull factors influencing the participation of youth in farming and all had above a benchmark of 3.0, therefore, they were adjudged to be significant pull factors. All identified push factors influencing the participation of youth in farming had above the mean benchmark of 3.0 and were adjudged to be significant push factors.

Constraints to the participation of youth in farming include constraints to land access, financial constraints, inaccessibility of information, poor market and infrastructure, gender biases, climate change impacts and lack of support from government and agricultural institutions.

5.2 Conclusion

The study established that the youths had access to land and are actively involved in farming activities. However, they encountered numerous constraints which continue to diminish their interest and involvement in agricultural activities.

Also, the study established some pull factors which are positive and desirable factors that motivate individuals to engage in agricultural activities. They include availability of arable land, use of modern farming techniques, good modern farming techniques, safety of modern farming techniques and affordability of modern farming techniques.

Push factors which are negative and undesirable factors that discourage individuals to from engaging in agricultural activities were also established. They included lack of finance to start or expand farms, lack of technical skills and knowledge, perception of agriculture as a low prestige occupation, limited access to markets particularly in remote areas, migration and displacement, land tenure, lack of machines, high cost, bad road and lack of technical knowhow.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. All respondents belonged to a social group, therefore social groups should come up with ideas and decisions to tackle the numerous constraints affecting their interest and involvement in agricultural activities.
2. Government and Agricultural institutions should provide funds and incentives for young people in farming activities to encourage them to be more involved in farming activities.

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APPENDIX

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS AND EXTENSION SERVICES,

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE,

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

EDO STATE

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a final year student of the above named Department. I am conducting research on **FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN FARMING IN OVIA NORTH EAST, EDO STATE, NIGERIA**. I would like you to kindly answer the following questions as correctly as possible, as your honest and sincere response will aid the validity of this study. This research is strictly for academic purposes only and will be treated that way.

Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

Osoata Ehinomen

Please Tick (√) the appropriate option and provide answer in the blank space

SECTION A: Socio-Economic Characteristics

1. Youth decision to participate in farming: a. Yes( ) b. No( )

2. Age group: ……. in years

3. Gender: a. Male ( ) b. Female ( )

4. Marital Status: a. Single ( ) b. Married ( ) c. Divorced ( ) d. Separated ( )

5. Educational qualification: a. No formal education ( ) b. Primary education ( ) c. Secondary education ( ) d. Others specify:_____

6. Membership of Social Group: yes [ ]; no [ ]

7. Number of years of experience in social group:……

8. Access to land: yes [ ]; no [ ]

9. Type of land tenure: a. inheritance [ ]; outright purchase [ ]; Lease [ ]; others, specify…….

10. Do own a farm? Yes [ ]; No [ ]

11. Crops grown: Arable [ ]; Tree crop {]; Both [ ]

12. Farm size in hectare: ……..

13. Farming experience: ……..

Section B: **Pull Factors that influences youth participation in Farming**

Please indicate the following pull factors based on their influence on your decision to participate in arable crop farming. Use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 indicates "Strongly disagree" and 5 indicates "Strongly agree."

S/No	**Pull Factors**	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Availability of land					
2.	Government supports through provision of subsidies for inputs, training and extension services					
3.	Access to markets and value chains					
4.	Cultivation of diverse crops					
5.	Use of modern farming techniques					
6.	Availability of technologies in farming					
7.	Presence of ICT in marketing					
8.	Good public transportation systems					

9.	Safety and low crime rates					
10.	Affordable housing options					

Section C: Push Factors that influences arable youth participation in Farming

Please indicate the following push factors based on their impact on your decision to participate in arable crop farming. Use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 indicates "Strongly disagree" and 5 indicates "Strongly agree".

S/No	**Push Factors**	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Lack of finance to start or expand farms					
2.	Lack of technical skills and knowledge					
3.	Perception of agriculture as a low prestige occupation					
4.	Limited access to markets particularly in remote areas					
5.	Migration and displacement					
6.	Land tenure					
7.	Lack of machines					
8.	High cost of inputs					
9.	Bad road network					
10.	Lack of technical know how					

Section D: Constraints affecting the involvement of youth participation in farming.

Are you currently facing any constraints or challenges that hinder your participation in farming? If yes, please specify.

S/No		**Yes**	**No**
1.	**Land Access:**		
	Do you have access to agricultural land for farming?		
	Have you faced any difficulties in acquiring or leasing land for farming purposes?		

2.	**Financial Constraints:**		
	Do you face challenges in accessing credit or financial services for agricultural activities?		
	Are there any specific financial limitations that hinder your ability to invest in farming, such as lack of capital or resources?		
	Have you encountered difficulties in accessing agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers, or machinery, due to financial constraints?		
3.	**Access to Information and Knowledge:**		
	Do you have access to agricultural extension services and technical information?		
	Are you aware of new farming techniques, technologies, and best practices relevant to your farming activities?		
4.	**Gender-Based Constraints:**		
	Do you face any gender biases or stereotypes that undervalue your contributions to farming?		
	Are you included in decision-making processes related to farming at the household or community level?		
5.	**Infrastructure and Market Access:**		
	Are there challenges related to rural infrastructure, such as roads, irrigation systems, or storage facilities that affect your farming activities?		
	Do you face difficulties in accessing markets or selling your agricultural produce?		
	Are there limitations in post-harvest management facilities or technologies that impact your farming operations?		
	Do you have access to time-saving technologies or labor-saving devices that could alleviate some of these constraints?		
7.	**Climate Change and Environmental Factors:**		
	Have you experienced any climate change impacts, such as extreme weather condition, that affect your crop yields or productivity?		
	Are there specific environmental factors that pose challenges to your arable crop farming activities?		

8.	**Institutional Support and Policy Frameworks:**		
	Are there any barriers or limitations in accessing institutional support for your farming activities?		
	Have you received adequate support from government institutions or agricultural agencies?		
9.	**Social Support Networks:**		
	Do you have access to networks or platforms where you can share knowledge and experiences with other youth farmers?		