

## Motivational Mechanisms for Encouraging Youths to Study Agricultural Education in the Tertiary Institutions in Abia State

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**Abstract:** *The study assessed motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in tertiary institutions in Abia State. The study was guided by three specific purposes, three research questions and three hypotheses. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study comprised of 15 Agricultural Education Lecturers and 103 Agricultural Education Students from Michael Okpara university of Agriculture Umudike and National Teachers Training Institute. Simple random sampling was used to select 5 Agricultural Education lecturers and 25 Agricultural Education Students each from the institutions making a total population of 10 Agricultural Education lecturers and 50 Agricultural Education students. The instrument used for data collection was 22-item “Motivational Mechanisms for Encouraging Youths to Study Agricultural Education in The Tertiary Institutions” (MMEYSAE). The instrument was subjected to face validation by the three Experts. The reliability of the instruments was determined using Cronbach alpha statistic which yielded an overall reliability index of 0.83. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study among other things showed that the various factors that discourage students from agricultural education programs include lack of funds to establish agricultural enterprises and irrelevant outdated curriculum. Also, various intrinsic motivation factors like personal interest and self-concept can help to encourage youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions. Finally, extrinsic factors such as, provision of loans without collateral and provision of agricultural machines for commencement of commercial agriculture after graduation. Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that Government in collaboration with non-governmental organizations should find ways to provide extrinsic and extrinsic motivational mechanism for youths to study agricultural education.*

**Keywords:** Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, Intrinsic Motivation, Agricultural Education

### Introduction

Agriculture remains the foundation and base of the Nigerian economy in spite of the discovery of petroleum. This is because though crude petroleum oil has become the major source of foreign exchange for the country, agricultural sector still employs majority of the citizens as there is basically no household that is not involved in one form of agriculture or the other. The sector is a major source of livelihood for most citizens. The importance of the agricultural sector to the economy led to introduction of Agricultural

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Education in Nigerian Tertiary Institution System. The introduction of Agricultural Education in Nigeria educational system is necessary as it helps learners acquire knowledge and skills in agriculture which will improve the quantity and quality of agricultural production with a view to better the living standard of the people (Innocent-ene, Suleiman, and Sanni (2021).

Agricultural Education is defined as a course which is an occupational related training aimed at exposing, inculcating and developing knowledge, practical skills, competencies and attitudes. It provides the right type of skills and knowledge that will make individuals function effectively in any profession or job, and in agricultural related job or career (Emina, 2021). The enrolment of students in Agricultural Education in recent times has been dropping and this can be attributed to lack of motivation.

The word motivation originates from Greek word “movere” meaning to move. This has not given definite meaning to the term. This makes psychologist studying motivation to give attention to internal and external influences that might move a person into an act. A person who is energized or activated in order to pursue a certain goal or engage in an activity is therefore viewed as motivated while a person who has no interest to act is regarded unmotivated. Motivation is considered an internal or external momentum, reason, need, and activator, which causes a person to attain a particular purpose (Mofoluke and Helen, 2021). Motivation plays a crucial part in the efficiency of a class. Saito, et al. (2017), for instance, claim that motivation is one of the most crucial topics in today’s field of study as it concerns both how content is taught, and how students are learning. It also holds autonomous learning at its heart. This is in line with Ushioda (2014, p.31) who states that motivation is “a variable of importance in human learning, reflected in goals and directions pursued, levels of effort invested, depth of engagement, and degree of persistence in learning”. Motivation also refers to factors that activate, direct and sustain goal directed behavior. Motivation could either be intrinsic or extrinsic.

Intrinsic motivation, such as personal interest, self-concept of the individual and personal interest of the youth occurs when there is no obvious external reward behind an action (Abotsi, Dsane, Babah and Kwateng, 2020). Peter and Genevieve (2023) view motivation as the activity that is done out of the free choice of the individual. Intrinsically motivated behaviors are seen when there is no other apparent reward except the activity itself. Davis, Kwaah, Beccles, & Ayebi-Arthur (2019) defined intrinsic motivation as what people will do without external inducement. This type of motivation is directly linked with the natural instincts, urges and impulses of the organism. The individual, who is intrinsically or naturally motivated, perform an act because he/she finds interest within the activity. He/she is engaged in learning something because he/she derives pleasure in learning that thing. The activity carries its own reward and the individual take genuine interest in performing the activity not due to some outside motives and goals. When a student tries to read up on the role of mechanization in commercial agriculture because he or she derives pleasure in the knowing the link then we can say that he is intrinsically motivated. In these cases, the source of pleasure lies within the activities but when the motivation comes from external factors, such student is said to have extrinsic motivation.

According to Zianda and Willie (2021), extrinsic motivation in writing is the determination to perform and succeed for the sake of accomplishing a specific result or outcome in academic activities, for instance writing (Kirk, 2015). Extrinsic motivation is based on external rewards to the task of writing. It refers to the performance of writing activity in order to attain some separable outcome, or to achieve some instrumental ends. The individual does or learns something not for its own sake, but as a means of obtaining desired goals or getting some external reward. Working for a better grade or honor, learning a skill to earn the livelihood, receiving praise and blame, rewards and punishment etc. all belong to this category. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation strategies play roles in carrier decision and can help to compel students to choose agricultural education as a carrier choice.

Extrinsic motivation can drive a student to choose Agricultural Education even if they are not interested in it. For instance, a lot of students will delve into agricultural education, even if they do not like the career, knowing that the government will offer them soft loans to set up a commercial farm after they finish their undergraduate program (Peter and Genevieve, 2023). Also, research has shown that motivation can help to compel students in choosing a given career such as Agricultural education. This research indicated that Senior High School graduates choose Teacher Education Faculty (Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2012; Mukminin et al. 2017) for two main reasons (intrinsic, and extrinsic). Also, Lacey 2019 explained that multiple choice career in agriculture, family influence and job locations are some of the factors that motivate individuals to agricultural careers. Having observed the role of motivation (intrinsic, and extrinsic) in career choice, it becomes necessary to assess motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State.

### **Statement of Research problem**

Agricultural education is generally focused on producing seasoned skilled manpower that will shape and develop agricultural industries around the world. It also helps to educate students to acquire skills in agriculture for good employment into the agricultural sector. Despite the importance of Agricultural education, Amadi and Lazarus (2018) still observed that the number of students studying agricultural education in Nigerian tertiary institutions is dwindling and this they attributed to lack of motivation associated with undertaking the course in Nigerian Tertiary Education System. This lack of motivation is seen in agricultural students' inability to secure employment after graduation, poor societal perception of agricultural education graduates and tedious activities associated with agricultural education in many tertiary institutions. Peter and Genevieve (2023) further noted that the low enrolment of students into agricultural education will result to shortage of manpower manning the agricultural sector of Nigeria and which will affect food security adversely. Having observed the problem above, it becomes pertinent to undertake this study to assess motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to assess motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State

The Specific purpose include the following:

- i. identify the factors discouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State
- ii. determine the intrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State
- iii. examine the extrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study

1. What are the factors discouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State?
2. What are the intrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State?
3. What are the extrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State?

## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and Students with respect to factors discouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and students with respect to intrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and Students with respect to extrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State.

## **Methodology**

The study adopted survey research design. Tahmina Ferdous Tanny (2018) stated that survey design are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administers a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. In this procedure, the survey researcher collects quantitative, numbered data using questionnaires example one-on-one interview. Survey research design was suitable for the study because it made use of questionnaire for data collection from a group of respondents. The study was carried out in Abia State. Abia State is one of the South Eastern States where some higher institutions that offer Agricultural Education are domiciled. These higher institutions include Michael Okpara university of Agriculture Umudike and National Teachers Training Institute. These higher institutions have recorded dwindling population of admission seekers into the field of Agricultural Education. The population of the study comprised of 10 lecturers from Michael Okpara university of Agriculture Umudike and 5 lecturers from National Teachers Training Institute and 70 Agricultural Education Students from Michael Okpara university of Agriculture Umudike and 33 Agricultural Education Students from National Teachers Training Institute. Simple random sampling was used to select 25 Agricultural Education Students each from the institutions making a total population of 50 Agricultural Education students. All the agricultural education teachers in the population were also enlisted into the study. The instrument used for data collection was 23-item "Motivational Mechanisms for Encouraging Youths to Study Agricultural Education in The Tertiary Institutions" (MMEYSAE) developed by the researchers. The instrument was made up of 3 clusters and each cluster sought information on each research question. The instrument has 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The instrument was subjected to face validation by the three Experts. Two in Agricultural and Vocational Education Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike and one Expert from Measurement and Evaluation in Science Education Department of the same institution. The face-validation was based on criteria of clarity, suitability, and adequacy of the items for purpose of data collection. In establishing the reliability of the instrument, the researcher adopted the test-retest method. This was undertaken by administering the instrument to ten Agricultural Education in Alvan Ikoko College of Education, Imo State. The reliability of the instruments was determined using Cronbach alpha statistic which yielded an overall reliability index of 0.83. These indicated that the instrument was highly reliable for the data collection. The research instrument was administered on the respondents by the researchers and two trained research assistants through direct delivery method. Data collected with respect to the research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Mean values equal to or greater than 2.50 were accepted (needed) while items having mean values less than 2.50 were not accepted (not needed). t-test was used to test the three null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Null hypothesis was accepted if the calculated value of t (tcal) was less than the critical value (tcrit) but if the calculated value of t (tcal) was greater than the critical value of (tcrit) then the null hypothesis was rejected.

## Results

The results of the study are presented in tabular forms below in line with research questions and hypotheses. **Research Question 1:** What are the factors discouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Respondents on Factors Discouraging Youths to Study Agricultural Education in the Tertiary Institutions in Abia State**

<i>n = 65</i>				
S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1.	Inadequate funds to establish agricultural enterprises by agricultural education graduates after graduation	2.89	0.14	Accepted
2.	Lack of job opportunities for agricultural education graduates	2.73	0.11	Accepted
3.	Inadequate equipment and teaching infrastructure	3.22	0.22	Accepted
4.	Inadequate land for meaningful establishment of an agricultural enterprise	2.53	0.11	Accepted
5.	Problem of collaterals to obtain loans from banks to establish agricultural production enterprises	2.52	0.21	Accepted
6.	Demeaning attitude of the public to agricultural education graduates	2.91	0.32	Accepted
7.	Irrelevant and outdated curriculum	3.17	0.18	Accepted
<b>Cluster Mean/SD</b>		<b>2.87</b>	<b>0.19</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Source: Researchers' Field Result; 202, N= Sample Size,  $\bar{x}$  = Mean; SD = Standard deviation

Result presented in Table 1 reveal that the mean scores of all the 7 items range from 2.52 to 3.22 which are above 2.50 on 4-point scale. This implies that the respondents agreed that all of them are factors that discourages youths from study agricultural education in tertiary institution. More so, the standard deviation of all items ranged from 0.11 to .32, this reveals that their responses were close to the mean and to one another in degrees of responses. This suggests that the listed factors do discourage youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State. This position is clearly reflected by cluster mean value of 2.87 with standard deviation of 0.19 which is above the cut off mean for taking decision.

**Research Question 2:** What are the intrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State?

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Respondents on Intrinsic Motivational Mechanisms for Encouraging Youths to Study Agricultural Education in the Tertiary Institutions in Abia State**

<i>n = 65</i>				
S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	The personal Passion of individual	2.51	0.11	Accepted
2	Personal interest of youth	2.90	0,15	Accepted
3	Self-concept of the youth	2.93	0.23	Accepted
4	interpersonal-based orientation	2.76	0.55	Accepted
5	Emotional stability of the youth	2.86	0.66	Accepted
6	Cognitive Skill of individual in relation to agriculture	3.88	0.89	Accepted
7	Personal satisfaction	3.44	1.03	Accepted
8	Attitude of the youths	2.92	1.19	Accepted
9	Intellectual ability of the youth.	2.52	0.74	Accepted
<b>Cluster Mean/SD</b>		<b>2.97</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Source: Researchers' Field Result; 2023, N= Sample Size,  $\bar{x}$  = Mean; SD = Standard deviation

Result presented in Table 2 reveal that the mean scores of all the 9 items range from 2.51 to 3.88 which are above 2.50 on 4-point scale. More so, the standard deviation of all items ranged from 0.11 to 0.89, this reveals that their responses were close to the mean and to one another in degrees of responses. This indicates that respondents agreed to the listed intrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State.

**Research Question 3:** What are the extrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State?

**Table 3:** Mean and Standard Deviation scores of respondents on extrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State

N =				
S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	REMARK
1	Use of innovative techniques in teaching agricultural science.	2.80	0.88	Accepted
2	Mentoring agricultural education students by successful agricultural entrepreneurs to develop their skills, attitude and knowledge in agricultural production.	2.58	0.56	Accepted
3	Organizing regular seminars/conferences for agricultural education students on emerging areas in agriculture Quick/immediate absorption of agricultural education graduates in the agricultural sector	2.73	0.44	Accepted
4	Regular use of mechanization in farm, practice activities	2.80	0.08	Accepted
5	Introduction of technology into agricultural education	2.82	0.92	Accepted
6	Enlightening the students on the sources of loan to start a crop or animal farm business	2.64	0.88	Accepted
<b>Cluster Mean/SD</b>		<b>2.72</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Source: Researchers' Field Result; 2023, N= Sample Size,  $\bar{x}$  = Mean; SD = Standard deviation

Result presented in Table 3 reveal that the mean scores of all the 6 items range from 2.64 to 2.82 which are above 2.50 on 4-point scale. More so, the standard deviation of all items ranged from 0.08 to 0.92, this reveals that their responses were close to the mean and to one another in degrees of responses. This suggests that Agricultural Education students and teachers in Abia agree that the listed extrinsic factors can serve as motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State.

### Test of Hypothesis

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and Students with respect to factors discouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State

**Table 4: t-test Analysis of Agricultural Education Teachers and Students with respect to factors discouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State**

Respondent	Mean	SD	N	Df	<i>A</i>	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Students	2.81	0.19	50	58	0.05	0.21	1.68	Null Hypothesis is Accepted
Teachers	2.97	0.21	10					

Data in Table 4 showed a t-calculated value of 0.21 and the t-critical value of 1.68 at degree of freedom (df) of 58. Since the t-calculated value of 0.21 is less than t-critical value of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance, it implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of agricultural education teachers and students with respect to factors discouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State. Hence the null hypothesis was accepted

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and students with respect to intrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State

**Table 5 t-test Analysis of Agricultural Education Teachers and Students with respect to intrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State**

Respondent	Mean	SD	N	Df	<i>A</i>	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Students	3.12	0.63	50	58	0.05	0.19	1.68	Null Hypothesis is Accepted
Teachers	2.82	0.71	10					

Data in Table 5 showed a t-calculated value of 0.19 and the t-critical value of 1.68 at degree of freedom (df) of 58. Since the t-calculated value of 0.19 is less than t-critical value of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance, it implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and students with respect to intrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State. Hence the null hypothesis was accepted

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and Students with respect to extrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State

**Table 6: t- t-test Analysis of Agricultural Education Teachers and Students with respect to extrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State**

Respondent	Mean	SD	N	Df	<i>A</i>	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Students	2.91	0.88	50	58	0.05	0.16	1.68	Null Hypothesis is Accepted
Teachers	2.54	0.69	10					

Data in Table 6 showed a t-calculated value of 0.16 and the t-critical value of 1.68 at degree of freedom (df) of 58. Since the t-calculated value of 0.16 is less than t-critical value of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance, it implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and Students with respect to extrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State. Hence the null hypothesis was accepted

## **Discussion**

Discussion of the findings is organized in line with the research questions and hypotheses of the study respectively. The result of the study revealed that all the listed factors Inadequate funds to establish agricultural enterprises by agricultural education graduates after graduation, lack of job opportunities for agricultural education graduates, inadequate equipment and teaching infrastructure, inadequate land for meaningful establishment of an agricultural production enterprises, demeaning attitude of the public to agricultural education graduates discouraged youths in studying agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State as their mean values were above 2.50. The result agrees with the assertion of Ademu, Obe and Atsumbe (2018) as he noted that poor image of agricultural education graduates, lack of funds to establish agricultural enterprises by agricultural education graduates, Irrelevant and Outdated Curriculum and Lack of collaterals to obtain loans from banks to establish agricultural production enterprises among others as limiting factors for enrolment in agricultural education programme in Tertiary Institutions of Nigeria. The study is also in consonance with Haruna, Asogwa and Ezhim (2019) in their research on Challenges and enhancement of youth participation in agricultural education for sustainable food security where it was discovered that lack of modern technology and finance and inhibit youth participation in agricultural education for sustainable food security. Test of hypothesis showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of agricultural education teachers and students with respect to factors discouraging youths in studying agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State. Hence the null hypothesis was accepted.

Furthermore, the study revealed various intrinsic motivational mechanisms can be adopted to encourage youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State. The test of hypothesis showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and students with respect to intrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State. Hence the null hypothesis was accepted. The various intrinsic motivational mechanisms to encourage youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State included organizing of seminars, use of innovative teaching method, mentoring, improved agricultural curriculum, use of mechanization in teaching etc. The findings of this study are in line with that Ayebi-Arthur (2019) who observed that intrinsic motivational mechanisms encourage youths to take up carrier in agricultural education as the individual, who is intrinsically or naturally motivated, perform an act because he/she finds interest within the activity. Similar result was obtained by Lan, Onu and Aka (2019) and Nlebem, Okereke and Bashir (2020) as they reported that intrinsic mechanisms play indispensable roles in encouraging youths to take up carrier in agriculture.

Finally, the study found various extrinsic motivational mechanisms that can be adopted to encourage youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State. Some of such extrinsic motivational mechanisms as accepted by the students and teachers are provision of loans without collateral to agricultural education graduates, provision of agricultural machines for commencement of commercial agriculture after graduation, quick/immediate absorption of agricultural education graduates in the agricultural sector etc. The test of hypothesis showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Agricultural Education Teachers and Students with respect to extrinsic motivational mechanisms for encouraging youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State. Hence the null hypothesis was accepted. The findings of the study are in line with that of In line with that of Abotsi (2020) who noted that the extrinsic motivational factors are indispensable in encouraging youths in taking teaching carriers. The study is also in consonance with the research findings of Haruna et al., (2019) as they identified adoption of extrinsic motivational mechanism as strategy to encourage youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions



## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the various factors that discourage students from agricultural education programs include lack of funds to establish agricultural enterprises by agricultural education graduates, lack of job opportunities for agricultural education graduates, inadequate equipment and teaching infrastructure, inadequate land for meaningful establishment of an agricultural enterprise, etc. Finally, extrinsic factors such as provision of loans without collateral to agricultural education graduates, provision of agricultural machines for commencement of commercial agriculture after graduation can also help to encourage youths to study agricultural education in the tertiary institutions in Abia State.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should formulate policies that can stop the poor image attached to agricultural education graduates by making the youths and the public aware that agricultural education is not a programme for school dropouts, nonprofessionals or education for low achievers.
2. There is need for regular upgrading of the agricultural education curriculum to meet up with emerging trends in Agricultural education by curriculum developers.
3. Government and non-governmental organizations should provide extrinsic motivational mechanism for youths to study agricultural education in tertiary institutions in Abia State.

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