

Willingness of Neighborhood Urchins in Oyo State to Engage in Farm Estate Agricultural Initiative Adelakun O.E. and Adebayo I. A.

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ABSTRACT

Neighbourhood urchins are generally considered deviant youths who use extortion, exploitation, petty crimes and sometimes violent means to earn income. Unfortunately, they pose huge threats to societal peace. However, engaging them in empowerment programme such as Farm estate agricultural initiative can curb their atrocities and enhance communal peace. This study therefore explored the willingness of neighbourhood urchins to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment. Using a multi-stage sampling procedure, 113 neighbourhood urchins were sampled and data obtained with the aid of questionnaire and interview scheduled. Data were collected on respondents' socioeconomic characteristics, awareness, perception, preferred interest, willingness and perceived constraints. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, chi-square, spearman rho and PPMC. Neighbourhood urchins were mostly male (97.3%), had secondary education (47.8%), unemployed (58.4%) with average age of 23 years. Most (62.8%) of the neighbourhood urchins were **not** aware of the farm estate agricultural initiatives, had unfavourable perception (61.1%), were unwilling to be engaged (67%) and had low preference in farm estate activities (100%). Also, level of education (69%), level of exposure (59.3%), poverty (68.1%) and fear of adapting to new way of life (71.7%) were considered as severe constraints to participating in farm estate agricultural initiative. Age ($r=-0.298$, $p\leq 0.001$), household size ($r=-0.184$, $p\leq 0.051$), marital status ($\chi^2=15.875$, $p\leq 0.000$), educational background ($\chi^2=10.387$, $p\leq 0.016$), Awareness level ($\chi^2=7.480$, $p\leq 0.006$), poverty ($r=-0.307$, $p\leq 0.001$), Lack of parental care ($r=-0.462$, $p\leq 0.000$) and Peer pressure ($r=0.385$, $p\leq 0.000$), Lack of motivation of any kind ($r=-0.305$, $p\leq 0.001$) had significant relationship with respondents willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment. Neighbourhood urchins are unwilling to engage in farm estate agricultural initiatives for self-empowerment. Motivational incentives, adequate education and awareness can assist them in bringing about favourable perception and attitudinal change towards active participation.

Key words: Neighbourhood urchins, Agricultural initiative, Motivational incentives, Farm estate.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the nomenclature of neighborhood urchins is also known as *area boys* and can also mean *Touts*, *Alaayes*, *Agberos*, *Omo onile*. They are generally considered as deviant youths who use extortion, exploitation, petty crimes and sometimes violent means to earn income. They are loosely organized **gangs of street children and teenagers**, composed mostly of male, who operate on the streets of major cities of the country, including **Lagos, Ibadan, Onitsha, Aba, Umuahia, Akure, Ado-Ekiti and Enugu** (Ikuomola et al 2009). These group grew along with the emergence of a growing informal economy of street trading. Their activities range from persuasive request, extortion, drug abuse, violence and petty crime and have expanded into acting as security for businessmen and politicians, bouncers, or means to harass tenants, loan defaulters, or influence the electoral process. Drug abuse among them has been variously reported as the cause of delinquent behaviour and crime. All the atrocities have been attached with higher poverty level within the country. Thus, it has become a necessity to sensitize and engage them by empowering them with various means possible in order to enhance communal peace and national development. (Ikuomola et al 2009)

Empowerment with emphasis on the youth is a process where children and young people are encouraged to take charge of their lives. It helps them to address their situation and then take action in order to improve their access to resources and transform their consciousness through their beliefs, values, and attitudes. Youth empowerment aims to improve quality of life and is achieved through participation in youth empowerment programs and implementation of youth's rights should go beyond learning about formal rights and procedures to give birth to a concrete experience of rights. Over the years, Agricultural empowerment programmes is one of the most rampant and invested programmes to engage youth in livelihood activities that will help them take charge of their own life, contribute to food security and economic growth. (Golay et al, 2014).

Farm estate agricultural initiative remains one of the most powerful tools to end poverty, boost shared prosperity and enhance food security. Growth in the agriculture sector is **two to four times more effective** in raising incomes among the poorest compared to other sectors (World Bank, 2021). Analyses in 2016 found that **65 percent of poor working adults** made a living through agriculture (World Bank, 2021). Agriculture is also crucial to economic growth: in 2018, it accounted for 4 percent of global gross domestic product (GDP) and in some developing countries, **it can account for more than 25% of GDP** (World Bank, 2021).

Farm estate agricultural initiative has just been resuscitated under National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) to tackle unemployment and boost the national GDPs. by President Muhammadu Buhari resuscitated NALDA in June 2020. He amended the Act establishing it through the National Assembly to deliver on its mandate of developing the rural communities through agriculture, recover all its lands and farm estates across the country, harnessing the full potentials of the vast arable lands in Nigeria, empowering small holder and large-scale farmers and mechanize, support the drive for food and fiber security while assisting in diversifying the nation's economy, improving household incomes and enhancing revenue mobilization and generation nationwide (Nnabuike, 2021). NALDA kick-started its activities with animal husbandry programme, which included rabbitry and goat rearing in some pilot states. The Authority identified and recovered NALDA farm estates in Gombe, Borno, Adamawa, Taraba, Niger, Kebbi, Oyo, Imo, Katsina, Lagos, Ekiti, Delta, Bauchi, Yobe, Kaduna, Benue, Kogi, Osun, Anambra, Akwa Ibom and Abia States. NALDA also engaged in dry season farming of rice in some pilot States of Adamawa, Niger, Yobe, Taraba and Bauchi where farmers were trained on dry season farming which they were not used to. They also provided all the inputs required for farming ranging from tractors, boreholes, pumping machines, planters and transplanters, fertilizer and seeds. (Nnabuike, 2021).

The NALDA Integrated Farm Estate is designed with a complete production chain for food and livestock, an irrigation system so that farmers will have three production cycles in a year. The farm is divided into 80 hectares for crop production and 20 hectares for animal production, processing and packaging, with growing of feeds, which include recycling animal wastes as fertilizer for plants, and growing plants to feed the animals. The Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) said the Bank would work with NALDA to explore the potential of providing affordable and accessible finance to the beneficiaries under the agricultural scheme to scale up productivity. (Nnabuike, 2021).

The general objective of this study was to examine the willingness of Ibadan Neighbourhood urchins to take farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment. The specific objectives however, were to: describe the socioeconomic characteristics of the Neighbourhood urchins,

ascertain the awareness of neighbourhood urchins about Farm Estate Agricultural Initiative, examine the willingness of the neighbourhood urchins to engage in Farm Estate Agricultural Initiative and identify the perceived constraints of the neighbourhood urchins to engaging in Farm Estate Agricultural Initiative in the study area.

The hypotheses of the study were stated in null form as follows:

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between neighbourhood urchins' social economic characteristics and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between awareness of the neighbourhood urchins and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment.

H₀3: There is no significant relationship between perceived constraints of neighbourhood urchins and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment.

METHODOLOGY

The target population of this study comprised the neighbourhood urchins in Oyo State. Multi-stage random sampling techniques was used to select the neighbourhood urchins for the study. Oyo state has 33 Local governments, and Local governments in Ibadan was purposefully selected due to the prominence of neighborhood urchins. Ibadan Metropolis has 11 Local Government areas consisting of five urban local governments in the city and six semi-urban local governments in the less-city. The first stage involved purposive selection of five (5) Local Governments involving **Ibadan North, Ibadan North-East, Ibadan South-West, Egbeda and Ona Ara** due to the prominence of the neighbourhood urchins in those Local Governments. The second stage also include the purposive selection of some strategic locations of neighbourhood urchins within the selected Local Government which includes Corner Agbadagbudu, Oje (Ibadan North), Iyana Idi-Obi, Idi-Iroko (Ibadan North-East), Beere, Molete (Ibadan South-West), Oremeji Agugu, Idi-Osan (Egbeda), Babanla and Idi-Oro (Ona-Ara). This study randomly sampled one hundred and thirteen (113) Neighbourhood urchins.

The willingness of the neighbourhood urchins to engage in Farm estate agricultural initiative.

This was measured on a five-point scale of Strongly (SA), Agree, (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). by assigning score of 5,4,3,2,1 for positive statements, and 1,2,3,4,5 for negative statement respectively. Furthermore, mean of computed scores (40) was generated, then score equal and above mean was used to categorized the willing and score below mean was used to

categorized unwilling neighbourhood urchins. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, chi-square, spearman rho and PPMC

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic characteristics of the neighbourhood urchins

Sex: Result on sex in Table 1 reveals that majority (97.3%) of the neighbourhood urchins were males. This implies that there were more males' neighbourhood urchins than females in the study area. Although, there are unusual involvement of female. However, the high proportion of males among area boys could be attributed to factors such as gender socialization, where males are taught to be aggressive and violent by their parent or by societal influence, as well as the cultural expectation that men are supposed to be providers for their families. The lack of employment opportunities and poverty in Nigeria could also contribute to the phenomenon of area boys, as young men may resort to crime and violence in order to make a living. (Adeyemi et al., 2022). Many neighbourhood urchins are pushed into the streets due to poverty and lack of employment opportunities in their families (Adeyemi T.O., 2022). In societies where men are expected to be the primary breadwinners, boys may be more likely to be sent to work or engage in street activities to support their families financially.

Age: Result on age in Table 1 reveals that about 45.1% of neighbourhood urchins fell between 21-30 years with average age of 23±5.9 years. This study has some similarity with the findings of Ayodele et al, (2015) who reported that the age range of area boys was between 15-30 years old, with the majority falling between the ages of 20-25 years old. Although, it is expected that neighbourhood urchins will be majorly youth. Result obtained however, has revealed a worrisome trend as majority of the neighbourhood urchins were teenagers and young adults who are at their active and productive age full of vigour. This may imply that the community may be sitting on time bomb by neglecting the neighbourhood urchins as communal peace may be threatened at the long run.

Marital status: Results on marital status in Table 1 reveals that about 45.1% of the neighbourhood

urchins were single, 38.1% were married and 16.9% were separated. One of the most significant implications of having majority as single (marital status) among them is the lack of responsibility that comes with being a family man. In many Nigerian cultures, marriage is seen as a crucial step towards responsible adulthood, and men are expected to provide for their families and contribute to their communities. In line with the findings of Ezeilo (2015) however, area boys who remain unmarried often do not have these obligations and may instead prioritize their involvement in criminal activities or other forms of antisocial behaviour.

Religion status: The results in Table 1 shows that almost half (48.7%) of the neighbourhood urchins were Muslims, 32.7% were Christians, while only 18.6% engaged in traditional religion. Religion can influence a change of heart and can encourage the neighbourhood urchins to be meaningfully engaged. This revealed that no religion was exempted in these antisocial behaviour and thus religious organisation need to step up their persuasion to a changed lifestyle among the youths.

Educational background: Results on educational background in Table 1 shows that almost half (47.8%) of the neighbourhood urchins had secondary education, 37.2% had primary education and 15% had no formal education. In other words, 85% had formal education, which shows that they have potential to access information. This is expected to influence their perception and willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative. This is contrary to apriori expectations that such categories of persons will be uneducated

Employment status: Result on employment status in Table 1 indicates that more than half (58.4%) of the neighbourhood urchins were unemployed and 41.6% were employed. It is a known fact having majority of our vibrant youth unemployed pose threat on our societal peace and national development. To earn income, the unemployed youths move outwards towards a junction or intersection where they either don on outfits as union members of a road transport or engage in security related commerce that verges on extortion. (Olawale, 2008).

Table 1: Distribution of Neighborhood urchins Based on their Socio-economic characteristics

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Sex			
Male	110	97.3	
Female	3	2.7	
Age			
≤20 years	34	30	
20-30 years	60	53.1	23±5.9 years
>30 years	19	16.8	
Marital Status			
Single	51	45.1	
Married	43	38.1	
Seperated	19	16.8	

Educational background		
No formal education	17	15
Primary education	42	37.2
Secondary education	54	47.8
Employment Status		
Unemployed	66	58.4
Employed	47	41.6
Total	113	100.0

Source: Field survey 2023

Awareness of Neighbourhood urchins on farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Table 2 shows awareness of neighbourhood urchins on farm estate agricultural initiative. The result shows that majority (78.7%) of the neighbourhood urchins were aware of farm estate as a means that provide job opportunity, 89.4% were aware that one can earn a lot of money on the long run and 73.4% were aware that farm estate would increase food production and security. This reveals the fact that every aspect of agriculture

is a means that provide job opportunity and earn money, with proper planning and execution. Also, majority (55.8%) were not aware of farm estate as an ongoing programme, as a youth inclusive programme (59.3%) and that it is fully sponsored by government (80.5%). This finding has some similarities with the findings of Adesoji and Olugbire (2021) who examined the level of awareness among vulnerable youth in Ibadan and found that a significant portion of neighbourhood urchins lacked information about farm agricultural initiatives.

Table 2: Distribution of neighbourhood urchins based on their awareness on farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment in the study area

Awareness	Aware		Not sure		Not Aware		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Farm estate is an Agricultural Initiative programme	0	0.0	71	62.8	42	37.2	0.6283
Farm estate is an ongoing programme	0	0.0	50	44.2	63	55.8	0.4425
Farm estate is a youth inclusive programme	18	15.9	28	24.8	67	59.3	0.5664
Farm estate is an empowerment programme	0	0.0	59	52.2	54	47.8	0.5221
Farm estate is a self-sufficient programme	0	0.0	67	59.3	46	40.7	0.5929
Farm estate is a means that provide job opportunity	51	45.1	38	33.6	24	21.2	1.2389
Farm estate can earn you a lot of money on the long run	56	49.6	45	39.8	12	10.6	1.3894
Farm estate is a livelihood improvement programme	16	14.2	60	53.1	37	32.7	0.8142
Farm estate is fully sponsored by government	0	0.0	22	19.5	91	80.5	0.8142
Farm estate would increase agricultural investment	0	0.0	73	64.6	40	35.4	0.1947
Farm estate would Increase food production and ensure food security	65	57.5	18	15.9	30	26.5	1.3097
Farm estate do not require any fee for participation	0	0.0	54	47.8	59	4242	0.4779

Source: Field survey 2023

Level of awareness of neighbourhood urchins on farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Table 3 shows that majority (62.8%) of the neighbourhood urchins were not aware of farm

estate agricultural initiative. This implies that, a lot of the neighbourhood urchins will not fully understand the benefit of engaging in farm estate agricultural initiative due to their low level of awareness.

Table 3 Categorization of neighbourhood urchins based on their level of awareness on farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment in the study area

Awareness level	Awareness score groups	F	%
Not aware	0.0 – 9.4	71	62.8
Aware	9.5 – 14.0	42	37.2

NB: For awareness score; mean = 9.5, minimum score = 0 and maximum score = 14

Perceived constraints of Neighborhood urchins to participating in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

The perceived constraint of neighbourhood urchins to participating in farm estate agricultural initiative were investigated and results expressed in the Table 4 low level of education ranked 1st, low

level of exposure ranked 2nd, fear of adapting to new way of life ranked 3rd, poverty ranked 4th, unemployment ranked 5th. This implies that 1st to 5th ranked constraints were the major constraint limiting the engagement of neighbourhood urchins in farm estate agricultural initiative.

Table 4 Distribution of neighborhood urchins on perceived constraints to participating in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Perceived Constraints	Level of constraint						Mean	Rank
	Severe		Mild		Not a Constraint			
	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Level of education	78	69	25	22.1	10	8.8	1.6018	1 st
Level of exposure	67	59.3	46	40.7	0	0.0	1.5929	2 nd
Addiction to street life	52	46	31	27.4	30	26.5	1.1947	10 th
Unemployment	53	46.9	48	42.5	12	10.6	1.3628	5 th
Poverty	77	68.1	12	10.6	24	21.3	1.4690	4 th
Peer pressure	14	12.4	56	49.6	43	38.0	0.7434	15 th
Societal influence	32	28.3	46	40.7	35	31.0	0.9735	11 th
Strength	0	0.00	67	59.3	46	40.7	0.5929	16 th
Usual way of earning money in the street	18	15.9	51	45.2	44	38.9	0.7699	14 th
Believe that farming is a not profitable	36	31.9	32	28.3	45	39.8	0.9204	12 th
Lack of parental care	41	36.3	62	54.9	10	8.8	1.2743	7 th
Lack trust in government programmes	53	46.9	34	30.1	26	23.0	1.2389	8 th
Lack of motivation of any kind	35	31.0	66	58.4	12	10.6	1.2035	9 th
Fear of adapting to new way of life	81	71.7	16	14.2	16	14.2	1.5752	3 rd
Unwillingness to give up the street life	35	31.0	34	30.1	44	38.9	0.9204	12 th
Believe that street is providing all means of survival	28	24.8	32	28.3	53	46.9	0.7788	13 th
Fear of loosing street relevance and popularity	45	39.8	62	54.9	6	5.3	1.3451	6 th

Source: Field survey 2023

Willingness of neighborhood urchins to engage in Farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

The success of any agricultural initiative programme, including a farm estate, largely depends on the willingness of people to participate. Table 5 shows that more than 60% of the neighbourhood urchins agreed to the following statements on willingness to engage in Farm estate agricultural initiative: One would like to be engaged in a new day to day activity rather than street earnings (94.7%),

earning a living from farm estate agric initiative is a better option (65.5%), One would like to be engaged in Poultry farming. It is better than street earnings (66.4%). Also, the table shows that more than 50% of the neighbourhood urchins agreed to the following statements on perception of neighbourhood urchins on farm estate agricultural initiative: I cannot even imagine engaging in rabbit farming (61.1%), engaging in cattle farming is not my thing, I cannot do it (76.1%) and engaging in bee farming is not profitable than street earnings (62.8%)

Table 5 Distribution of Neighbourhood urchins on willingness to engage in Farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Statements	SA		A		U		D		SD		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
I would like to be engaged in a new day to day activities rather than street earnings	28	24.8	79	69.9	6	5.3	0	0	0	0.0	4.12
If need arises, changing environment wouldn't be an issue	0	0.0	36	31.9	0	0.0	77	68.1	0	0.0	2.64
Working on farm is not even an option	34	30.1	30	26.5	11	9.7	38	33.6	0	0.0	2.47
Earning a living from farm estate Agric initiative is a better option	0	0.0	74	65.5	14	12.4	25	22.1	0	0.0	3.43
Engaging in Crop farming is profitable, I would love to be engaged	0	0.0	58	51.3	36	31.9	19	16.8	0	0.0	3.35
I would like to be engaged in Poultry farming, It is better than street earnings.	16	14.2	75	66.4	22	19.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.95
I Would have loved to be engaged in fish farming but street earning is better.	0	0.0	51	45.1	16	14.2	46	40.7	0	0.0	2.96
I can not even imagine engaging in rabbit farming	0	0.0	69	61.1	44	38.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	2.39
Engaging in cattle farming is not my thing, I can not do it.	34	30.1	52	46.0	21	18.6	6	5.3	0	0.0	2.04
Engaging in Goat farming can improve my livelihood, I would love to be engaged.	0	0.0	16	14.2	18	15.9	57	50.4	22	19.5	2.25
Engaging in bee farming is not profitable than street earnings	0	0.0	71	62.8	28	24.8	14	12.4	0	0.0	2.50
Leaving the street earnings for farm estate initiative is not something I can even consider.	0	0.0	47	41.6	0	0.0	60	53.1	47	41.6	3.22
I would prefer farm estate initiative to street lifestyle because it is a good development and life changing initiative programme.	0	0.0	51	45.1	52	46.1	10	8.8	0	0.0	4.07

Source: Field survey 2023

Neighbourhood urchins' willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for Self-empowerment

Table 6 shows that majority (59.3%) of the neighbourhood urchins were unwilling to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative. As a result, this might be an implication from obtaining a higher percentage of unfavourable perception from majority of the neighbourhood urchins. In other

words, their level of participation in farm estate agricultural initiative was very low. The findings are not in tandem with the study of Olaniyan and Ojo (2017) on the willingness of youth to engage in agricultural production in Nigeria who found that many young people are willing to engage in agriculture if certain conditions are met, including access to land, finance, and technical knowledge.

Table 6: Categorization of Neighbourhood urchins based on their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Willingness	Willingness score groups	F	%
Unwilling	0.0 – 39	67	59.3
Willing	40 – 45	46	40.7

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Relationship between neighborhood urchins' social economic characteristics and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Table 7 shows that there was a significant association between respondents' willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative and their marital status ($\chi^2=15.875, p \leq 0.000$). This implies that married youths are more likely to have a stronger sense of responsibility to provide for their families, which motivates them to participate in agricultural activities. Also, Larger household sizes often correlate with increased financial responsibilities and economic pressures. Youth from larger households may prioritize income generation to support their families, leading to a higher

willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiatives (Adeyemi et al., 2022).

Also, there was a significant association between respondents' willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative and their educational background ($\chi^2=10.387, p \leq 0.016$). This implies that the higher their level of education, the favourable their perception towards engaging in farm estate agricultural initiative. In this response and in line with previous studies. A study by Ajayi et al. (2021) in Nigeria found that young people with higher levels of education were more likely to participate in agricultural activities, including farm estate projects.

Table 7 Result on Chi Square showing relationship between neighbourhood urchins' social economic characteristics and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Variables	χ^2	df	p
Sex	0.860	1	0.354
Marital Status	15.875	2	0.000**
Employment Status	2.578	1	0.108
Educational background	10.387	3	0.016**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Relationship between neighborhood urchins' other social economic characteristics and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment.

Table 8 shows that there was a significant relationship between neighborhood urchins willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment and their age ($r=-0.298, p \leq 0.001$). The study has shown that the older

they are, the better understanding they have about the potential benefits of engaging in agricultural activities. In line with previous findings, a study conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2018) found that younger individuals were less interested in agriculture, while older individuals were more likely to be interested in agricultural activities.

Table 9 Result on Pearson's Product moment correlation (PPMC) showing relationship between neighborhood urchins' other social economic characteristics and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Variables	r	p
Age	-0.298	0.001**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Relationship between awareness of the neighbourhood urchins and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Result on table 9 shows that there was a significant association between neighbourhood urchins' awareness level and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-

empowerment ($\chi^2 = 7.480, p \leq 0.006$). This implies that the extent to which the neighbourhood urchins are aware, will influence their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative. In other words, the lower their level of awareness, the more they are unwilling and the higher their level of awareness, the more they are willing.

Table 10: Result on Chi square showing relationship between awareness of the neighbourhood urchins and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Variables	χ^2	Contingency coefficient	df	p
Awareness level	7.480	0.249	1	0.006

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Relationship between perceived constraint factors of the neighbourhood urchins and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Table 11 shows that there was a significant relationship between the neighbourhood urchins' willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative and poverty level ($r = -0.307, p \leq 0.001$). In Nigeria, unemployment rates are high, and many young people are forced to engage in low-paying, informal jobs or to migrate to urban areas in search of better opportunities. However, some young people are also interested in agriculture, and with the right incentives and support, they can be encouraged to engage in farm estate agricultural initiatives. A study by the International Labor Organization (ILO) found that, young people who were living in poverty were more likely to engage in agricultural activities, as agriculture was seen as a way to earn a living and support their families (ILO, 2013).

of parental care ($r = -0.462, p \leq 0.000$), Parental care plays an essential role in shaping the attitudes and behaviours of young people, including their interest in agriculture. Children who grow up in homes where their parents or caregivers actively engage in agriculture are more likely to develop an interest in farming and are more likely to engage in agricultural activities as adults. However, children who grow up without adequate parental care or supervision may lack the motivation or skills necessary to pursue agricultural activities.

Also, there was a significant relationship between the neighbourhood urchins' willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative and lack

There was also a significant relationship between the neighbourhood urchins' willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative and peer pressure ($r = 0.385, p \leq 0.000$). Peer pressure can have both positive and negative effects on neighbourhood urchins' attitudes towards engaging in farm estate agricultural initiative, depending on the context and social norms of their peer group. Njunge et al., 2019 found that peer learning and support networks can help to increase knowledge sharing and promote positive attitudes towards agriculture among young people.

Table 11: Result on spearman rho analysis showing relationship between perceived constraints of the neighbourhood urchins and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment

Variables	rho	p
Level of education	0.077	0.420
level of exposure	0.130	0.168
Poverty	-0.307	0.001**
Strength	-0.086	0.363
Lack of parental care	-0.462	0.000**
Fear of adapting to new way of life	-0.463	0.627
Unemployment	-0.086	0.363
Peer pressure	0.385	0.000**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

CONCLUSION

Most of the neighbourhood urchins were male, were at their tender age and have agility for sustainable agricultural initiative programmes and that they were only aware of farm estate as a means that provide job opportunity and can earn a lot of money on the long run. But on the other hand, they were not aware of farm estate as an ongoing programme, as a youth inclusive programme and that it is fully sponsored by government. In other words, majority of the neighbourhood urchins were not aware of farm estate agricultural initiative. Neighbourhood urchins were unwilling to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative and they considered level of education, level of exposure, poverty and fear of adapting to new way of life as a severe constraint to participating in farm estate agricultural initiative for self-empowerment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is necessary to create adequate awareness and comprehensive education on farm estate agricultural initiative potential benefits to the neighbourhood urchins, so as to improve their knowledge and have a sustainable interest in its engagement. This may in turn bring about favourable perception and attitudinal change towards engaging in farm estate agricultural initiative. Motivational Incentives with tangible beneficial rewards and should be spelled out to encourage their participation and serious commitment. The neighbourhood urchins tend to get engaged when they have full understanding of their benefit at the short and long run. It will enhance favourable perception and their willingness to engage in farm estate agricultural initiative. It is important for policymakers and development practitioners to design appropriate interventions that address the unique needs and constraints of different groups based on their level of education. Policy that will also give neighbourhood a sense of inclusiveness, improve their level of education, level of exposure, poverty and take away their fear of adapting to new way of life.

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