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Animal-agriculture Based Entrepreneurship: Descriptive Norms, Perceived Economic Viability and Behavioural Intention among Final Year Agriculture Related Students in Ibadan, Nigeria

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Abstract: Agriculture and entrepreneurship are tools of salvaging poverty, especially among agriculturally educated youths. This study therefore investigated descriptive norms, perceived economic viability and behavioural intention regarding animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship among final year agriculture related students in Ibadan, Nigeria. Four hundred and twenty one copies of randomly administered questionnaires yielded data whose analysis reveal that a little above half of the respondents have 'serious' behavioural intention to engage animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship. Marital status, institutional category and discipline affiliation had significant effects on this behavioural intention ($p<0.05$) while gender did not ($p>0.05$). Age and descriptive norms are significantly related to this behavioural intention, but perceived economic viability is the best predictor of same ($p<0.01$). Being married, a college rather than a university student as well as being in animal-related discipline are associated with greater behavioural intention to engage in animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship.

Key words: Animal-agriculture, entrepreneurship, behavioural intention, descriptive norms, perceived economic viability

INTRODUCTION

A precedent global commitment towards the tackling of major world challenges produced the eight millennium development goals, of which eradicating poverty is top on the list. In a similar vein, Nigerian agricultural educational policies and its attendant objectives point towards self-sufficiency in food production for consumption and provision of raw materials for agro-based industries (NPE, 2004). Further, creation of employment opportunities is noticeable in Nigerian Government policy (Awogbenle and Iwuamadi, 2010). These contentions point to increasing global and regional inclination towards welfarism. However, sustainable agriculture development, which is potent against poverty and hunger, requires involvedness with entrepreneurship and youth participation. Entrepreneurship has been viewed as seeking investment opportunities (Suleiman, 2006) and entrepreneurial education is at tool of eradicating graduate unemployment (Akpomi, 2009). Indeed, entrepreneurship can be taught (Williams, 1983; Farley, 2000) and this education is a panacea for socio-economic challenges (Dickson *et al*., 2008; Garba, 2010). Yet, unemployment thrives among young graduates such that "life after school has turned difficult for many of the recipients of higher education, making education for sustainable future a mirage" (Amali, 2007). The problem of youth participation in agriculture is a lingering one. The repeatedly reported average age of Nigerian farmers is 45-60 years (Akoroda, 2009). There is the danger that Nigeria might face near extinction of the farming population resulting from incapacitation of her farmers by age or death (Mama, 1991) and Nigeria is a youth economy (Oviawe, 2010). Only 3% of those who were trained in agricultural institution take to agriculture after leaving school (Igbon, 2004). Regrettably, food importation has increased (Okeke, 2004). Aptly, vocationalizing agriculture is clamored (Egun, 2009). All the same, how far are youths, especially the agriculture-educationally advantaged, ready to embrace the culture of agro-entrepreneurship? Despite the importance of this question to stakeholders, at least as a tool of assessment,

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an encouragement or otherwise, much is not known about it. A lot of factors, including political, cognitive or psychological, socio-economic and religious are bound to influence such embracement. Yet, there is a dearth of research into youth entrepreneurship in the African context (Chigunta *et al*., 2005; Schoof, 2006). This study is therefore concerned about the influence of certain socio-economic, some socio-demographic, institutional category and disciplinary affiliation on animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship among final-year agriculture related students in Ibadan, Nigeria. Animal-agricultural is of a greater relevance because animal protein appears to be of greater problem with regards to the typical Nigerian diet (Odunsi *et al*., 2007).

METHODS

Design, instrument, population and sampling: This work is a cross-sectional survey which targeted final year agriculture-related students in Ibadan. Hence, the study took place in Ibadan, Nigeria. Final year (HND II AND 5OOL) students are surely more reflective of influences of training experiences. Semi-structured questionnaires were used in data collection, between January and June, 2010. Agriculture related teaching institutions in Ibadan are four. They are listed below along with the total number of their final year students (2009/2010 academic session):

Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, University of Ibadan	266
Federal College of Forestry, Ibadan	59
Federal College of Agriculture	81
Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology	117
Total	523

At 95% confidence level, with a confidence interval of 1.96, the required sample size is 433. Departments of these various institutions were fourteen and they served as sampling units where nine were randomly selected. Lists of students from these nine departments were obtained, combined and used as sampling frame from where 433 respondents were drawn. A few students could not be identified, available and willing ones replaced such students. On the whole, 421 questionnaires were retrieved and utilized in preliminary analysis (scoring of responses) while six were discarded due to large amount of missing data. Eventually, 415 questionnaires were utilized in data analysis.

Variables and measures: Behavioural intention with regards animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship (BIAABE) is the dependent variable of this study. It is defined as future intention to engage in poultry, snail and fish production. Descriptive norm (DN), i.e., perceived prevalence of Animal-Agriculture Based Entrepreneurship (AABE) as well as Perceived Economic Viability (PEV) of AABE is appositely considered as worthy independent variables that explain and predict this behavioural intention. Descriptive norm is a variable in the theory of normative social behaviour (Rimal and Real, 2005). The rationale behind using perceived economic viability as a predictor of this sort of behavioural intention is due to its perceptiveness, as profit making is central to entrepreneurship. Gender, age and marital status are the independent socio-demographic characteristics that are also expected to influence BIAABE. In Africa, agricultural work is generally the domain of males. However, animal production such as poultry, snail and fish production is generally regarded as women's work. Further, the proliferation of women in all fields of human endeavour makes it rather difficult to specify expectations about the influence of gender on BIAABE. Age and marital status are expected to influence BIAABE. Although the age and marital status of final year students is not expected to vary considerably, older students and the married are expected to exhibit greater BIAABE. This is because increasing age and marriage comes with a lot of familial and/or financial responsibility, making the urge to engage in entrepreneurship stronger. Institutional category is the type of institution that a respondent attends, i.e. whether it is a university or a college. The foci of these two institutions are not necessarily congruent, making it apt to expect significant differences in their BIAABE. Discipline affiliation has to do with the affinity of respondent's course of study. The content of each discipline's curriculum is bound to predispose certain preferences.

Behavioural Intention with Regards Animal-Agriculture Based Entrepreneurship (BIAABE), Descriptive Norm of Animal-Agriculture Based Entrepreneurship (DNAABE) as well as Perceived Economic Viability of Animal-Agriculture Based Entrepreneurship (PEVAABE) were measured with 13, 9 and 12-item rating scales respectively. Responses to each item were rated 1 to 4. A reliability analysis of these items after a pilot study among forty non-final year students of Federal College of Forestry, Ibadan yielded Crobach alpha values of 0.885, 0.789 and 0.753, respectively. Items were scored such that higher score imply better behavioural intention, descriptive norm and perceived economic viability. Possible scores are 13-52, 9-36 and 12-48 for the scales of behavioural intention, descriptive norm and perceived economic viability, respectively. Gender, marital status and institutional category were nominally assessed by requiring respondents to simply tick as it applied to them. Respondents were to state their

age and course of study. In order to assess discipline affiliation, those who are studying animal science, fisheries management, animal production and health as well as wild life management were categorized as being in animal-related discipline. Those studying forestry technology, horticulture and landscape technology as well as agronomy were regarded as being in plant-related discipline. Those studying agricultural extension and agricultural economics were regarded as neutral.

Data analysis: The profile of respondents was assessed with simple percentile analysis. The index of BIAABE, DNAABE, and PEVAABE were computed for each respondent by simply aggregating the scores accorded their items. One sample Kolmogorov Smirnov test (for normalcy) was used to test whether the data deviate significantly from normal distributions. This shows that these distributions were not significantly different from normal distributions ($p>0.05$). On the basis of the mean of data distribution, behavioural intention was univariately assessed by categorizing the data into two. A descriptive analysis of the scale items was also performed. One way ANOVA was used to assess significant differences in the means across sub-groups of discipline affiliation. t-test was used to test this difference between gender, marital status and institutional category sub groups. Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was used to assess the homogeneity of variance across sub-groups of independent, categorical variables, as a prerequisite to the validity of significant differences. Eta and eta^2 were used as measures of effect sizes when significant differences were detected. Pearson's correlation coefficient (*r*), multiple R, multiple coefficient of determination (R^2) and beta coefficient (β) were used to elaborate the relationship between and among behavioural intention, descriptive norm, perceived economic viability and age. All data analyses were accomplished with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 15.0, 2006, SPSS, Inc, Chicago, IL).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of respondents: A good majority of respondents are males (66.5%), reflecting a preponderance of males in the target population. An overwhelming majority of respondents are expectedly single (85.8%). A noticeable percentage is married (13.7%), while none of the respondents was neither divorced nor widowed. Respondents who attend college are 72%, while those studying in the University are 26%. Respondents whose discipline is animal-related are 48.2%, plant-related are 19.0% while 16.4% are neutral in terms of discipline. Another 16.4% of respondents did not indicate their course of study, making it difficult to specify their affiliation in terms of discipline. This percentage is noteworthy, and the evasion is probably to avoid divulging identity on the part of respondents. The mean age of respondents is 25.9 (SD = 3.57, Min. = 16, Max. = 47). Table 1 displays some demographic profiles of respondents.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents

	Frequency	%
Gender		
Males	276	66.5
Females	139	33.5
Missing	0	0
Marital Status		
Single	356	85.8
Married	57	13.7
Divorced	0	0
Widowed	0	0
Missing	2	0.5
Institutional Category		
College	299	72.0
University	116	28.0
Missing	0	0
Discipline Affiliation		
Animal-related	200	48.2
Plant-related	79	19.0
Neutral	68	16.4
Missing	68	16.4

Distribution of behavioural intention with regards to animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship (BIAABE): The mean behavioural intention score, 36.47 (SD = 7.79) arbitrarily differentiated respondents in terms of seriousness of intention and otherwise as 54.7% scored above the mean while 45.3% scored below the mean. This is rather paradoxical. The seriousness of the intention of more than half of respondents to engage in animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship is a cause to be optimistic about the future of agro-entrepreneurship in the study area. However, the percentage of those with 'unserious' intention is rather large, implying that a lot still has to be done, if agro-entrepreneurship is to thrive in this target population.

Descriptive analysis of scale items: The descriptive analysis of items in the scale of behavioural intention shows that the intention to engage in poultry production ranked 1st, while intention to engage in fish production ranked 2nd to 4th. Intention to engage in poultry production also ranked 5th to 7th. The differences in the means of the scores accorded these items ranked 1st to 7th are also negligible. However, items assessing the intention to engage in snail production ranked lowest (8th to 13th). The means of the scores of snail pertaining items are also much lower when compare with other items. These shows that the intentions to engage in fish and poultry production are much preferred than snail production in the target population.

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of scale items

Scale	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Rank	Scale alpha
Behavioural intention with regards to animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship					0.885
I will engage in poultry production in future	1.00	4.00	3.2887	1st	
I will take it a point of duty to start my own snailery business in time to come	1.00	4.00	2.5052	9th	
I will take on poultry production as a vocation	1.00	4.00	2.8854	7th	
I will proudly establish my own snail producing outfit	1.00	4.00	2.4688	10th	
I intend to make a career out of poultry production	1.00	4.00	3.0876	5th	
I will engage in fish production in future	1.00	4.00	3.1959	3rd	
I will take it a point of duty to start my own fishery business in time to come	1.00	4.00	3.2021	2nd	
I will take on fish production as a vocation	1.00	4.00	2.9005	6th	
I will proudly establish my own fish producing outfit	1.00	4.00	3.1927	4th	
I will engage in snail production in future	1.00	4.00	2.4293	11th	
I will take it a point of duty to start my own snailery business in time to come	1.00	4.00	2.4136	12th	
I will take on snailery production as a vocation	1.00	4.00	2.3866	13th	
I will proudly establish my own snail producing outfit	1.00	4.00	2.5619	8th	
Descriptive norms of animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship					0.789
Lots of people engage in poultry production these days	1.00	4.00	3.3041	2nd	
People who engage in fish production these days are many	1.00	4.00	3.1598	5th	
I know lots of people who engage in snail production these days	1.00	4.00	2.3608	8th	
Poultry production is very popular	1.00	4.00	3.6701	1st	
Fish production is very common	2.00	4.00	2.2591	3rd	
There is a widespread production of snails	1.00	4.00	2.2216	9th	
These days, many people rely on poultry production to make ends meet	1.00	4.00	3.2031	4th	
Many people rely on fish production to fend for themselves	1.00	4.00	2.9171	6th	
Many people engage in snail production to make money	1.00	4.00	2.5000	7th	
Perceived economic viability of animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship					0.753
Poultry production is very profitable	1.00	4.00	3.5825	2nd	
Fish production makes financial sense	2.00	4.00	3.4794	4th	
Snail production is very profitable	1.00	4.00	3.0777	8th	
Poultry production is a gainful activity	2.00	4.00	3.5000	3rd	
Fish production is a gainful employment	2.00	4.00	3.3802	6th	
Snail production is a lucrative employment	1.00	4.00	2.9016	10th	
Poultry production is more gainful than most other productive adventures	1.00	4.00	3.1719	7th	
Fish production is extra lucrative than most other businesses	1.00	4.00	3.0471	9th	
Snail production is more profitable than most other businesses	1.00	4.00	2.4715	12th	
With poultry production, one can achieve financial success in life	1.00	4.00	3.6198	1st	
With fish production, one can adequately make ends meet	2.00	4.00	3.4278	5th	
Through snail production, one can attain financial heights in life	1.00	4.00	2.7887	11th	

All items are positive. Responses were 'not true at all', 'hardly true', 'moderately true' and 'exactly true'

The descriptive item analysis of the scale of descriptive norm is quite similar to that of behavioural intention. The perceived prevalence of poultry production ranked highest. Poultry production and fish production ranked between 1st and 6th of 9 items. This shows that snail production is generally not perceived to be as popular as fish and poultry production.

The descriptive item analysis of the scale of perceived economic viability shows that poultry production is perceived to be most economically viable. Items assessing economic viability of poultry production ranked between 1st and 3rd of 12 items. The 4th to 6th positions were accorded to fish production. Interestingly, the item that purported that poultry production is more gainful than most other productive adventures ranked 7th, while the item contending that fish production is extra lucrative than most other businesses ranked 9th. This succinctly shows that while respondents tended to agree that poultry and fish production are economically viable, they do not necessarily agree that they are more profitable than most other businesses. The means of the items assessing economic viability of snail production ranked 8th to 12th. This suggests that perceived economic viability of snail production is low, at least when compared with that of poultry and fish production. The summary of this descriptive analysis is presented in Table 2.

Influence of gender, marital status, institutional category and discipline affiliation on behavioural intention with regards animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship: The analysis of the influence gender on behavioural intention shows that females have better intention to engage in AABE (mean = 36.56, SD = 7.61) than males (mean = 36.34, SD = 7.90). However, this difference was insignificant ($p>0.05$). This insignificance corroborates the contention of Kourilsky and Walstad (1998), who asserted that there are many matches between both gender with respect to their knowledge of and opinions about entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, the means and standard deviations above trivially show that animal production such as poultry, snail and fish

Table 3: Behavioural intention with regards animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship by gender, marital status, institutional category and discipline affiliation

	Levene's test for homogeneity of variances		ANOVA		t-test for equality of means		Robust test for equality of means (Brown-Forsythe's test)			
	Levene's statistic	Sig.	F	Sig.	t	Sig.	statistic	Sig.	Eta	Eta^2
Gender	0.796	0.373	-	-	- 0.146	0.884	0.022	0.882	-	-
Marital status	1.659	0.198	-	-	- 5.186	0.000	37.675	0.000	0.255	0.065
Intitutional category	9.772	0.022	-	-	6.538	0.000	32.724	0.000	0.315	0.099
Discipline affiliation	1.159	0.315	15.542	0.000	-	-	13.258	0.000	0.286	0.082

production is probably women's work. The analysis of the influence of marital status on behavioural intention shows that married respondents have better intention (mean = 41.9, SD = 6.15) than singles (mean = 35.68, SD = 7.76). This difference was significant ($p<0.05$). The result of Levene's test point to the validity of this significant difference ($p>0.05$). This shows that marital status has a main effect on behavioural intention to engage in AABE. The extent of this effect as assessed with eta is 0.255, while eta^2 is 0.065. Hence, about 6.5% of the variation in this behavioural intention is accounted by marital status. These findings are quite intuitive, pointing to the rationale that marriage engenders greater readiness to be enterprising. The analysis of the influence of institutional category on behavioural intention shows that respondents attending college have better intention to engage in AABE (mean = 37.96, SD = 6.77) than those attending university (mean = 32.37, SD = 9.01). This difference is significant ($p<0.05$). However, the result of Levene's test threatens the validity of this significant difference ($p<0.05$), but the result of Brown-Forsythe's test uphold group differences ($p<0.05$). Hence, respondent's institutional category has a main effect on their behavioural intention to engage in AABE. The extent of this effect as examined with eta is 0.315. Eta^2 is 0.099. Therefore about 9.9% of the variation in behavioural intention is accounted by institutional category. This finding is not unusual. College education is usually more practically oriented when compared with university's. The assessment of the influence of discipline affiliation on behavioural intention shows that respondents in animal-related discipline have the best intention (mean = 38.54, SD = 7.08). When considering means alone, those in neutral discipline have better behavioural intention (mean = 34.98) while respondents in plant-related discipline had the worst behavioural intention to engage in AABE (mean = 33. 51). However, when standard deviations are considered, respondents in plant related discipline have better behavioural intention (SD = 7.41) while those who are neutral are worst (SD = 8.47). These differences are significant ($p<0.05$). Since means are the tools of ANOVA, it is apt to contend that respondents in animal-related discipline have significantly better intention. The result of Levene's test signifies the validity of this significant difference ($p>0.05$). This shows that discipline affiliation has a main effect on behavioural intention to engage in AABE. The extent of this effect as assessed with eta is 0.286. Eta^2 is 0.082. This indicates that about 8.2% of the variation in behavioural intention is explained by discipline affiliation. This finding is congruent with expectation since respondents in animal-related discipline are supposedly more exposed to animal-related knowledge and experiences. It also point to the validity of the assertion that if greater animal-agriculture entrepreneurship is desired, students in other disciplines should be exposed to animal-related knowledge and experiences. The summary of results obtained in the analysis of the influence of gender, marital status, institutional category and discipline affiliation on behavioural intention with regards animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship is presented in Table 3.

Analysis of the relationship between and among behavioural intention, descriptive norms, perceived economic viability with regards animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship as well as age: The assessment of the relationship between behavioural intention and descriptive norm yielded a Pearson's *r* of 0.354, a Partial *r* of 0.108, a R^2 Change of 0.007 and a standardized β of 0.100 ($p<0.01$). A similar assessment between behavioural intention and perceived economic viability yielded a Pearson's *r* of 0.565, a Partial *r* of 0.467, a R^2 Change of 0.320 and a standardized β of 0.491 ($p<0.01$). Further, the assessment of the relationship between behavioural intention and age yielded a Pearson's *r* of 0.259, a Partial *r* of 0.235, a R^2 Change of 0.036 and a standardized β of 0.194 ($p<0.01$). These finding show that perceived economic viability is the best predictor, and explains the greatest variance in behavioural intention. Perceived economic viability is simply very good at explaining the behavioural intention in question. This finding is intuitive. Since socio-economic challenges are pivotal in driving youth entrepreneurship in developing countries, economic viability is important. Age is a better predictor when compared with descriptive norm.

Table 4: Relationship between and among behavioural intention, descriptive norms, perceived economic viability with regards animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship as well as age

Relationship between variables		Relationship among variables	
	Behavioural intention with regards animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship	Model: Behavioural intention with regards animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship and Descriptive norms of animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship	
Descriptive norms of animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship	Pearson's r = 0.354** Partial r = 0.108** R^2 change = 0.007** β = 0.100**		R = 0.603** R^2 = 0.363** Adjusted R^2 = 0.358**
Perceived economic viability of animal -agriculture based entrepreneurship	Pearson's r = 0.565** Partial r = 0.467** R^2 change = 0.320** β = 0.491**	Perceived economic viability of animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship	
Age	Pearson's r = 0.259** Partial r = 0.235** R^2 change = 0.036** β = 0.194**	Age	

**: p<0.01

The multivariate analysis of behavioural intention on one hand and descriptive norms, perceived economic viability as well as age on the other yielded a multiple R of 0.603, R^2 of 0.363 and an adjusted R^2 of 0.358 ($p<0.001$). This shows that 35.8% of the variation in behavioural intention is accounted by descriptive norm, perceived economic viability and age. The use of descriptive norm, perceived economic viability and age as independent variables in this work is based on the inference that the constructs should significantly explain behavioural intention. Indeed, this expectation is vindicated. However, perceived economic viability is more vindicated as it has proved a very good predictor of behavioural intention. Table 4 displays the summary of results obtained in the assessment of the relationship between and among behavioural intention, descriptive norms, perceived economic viability with regards animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship as well as age.

CONCLUSION

There is the need to step up campaign to improve behavioural intention with regards to animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship. This is because a little less than half of the respondents, and by implication, the target population were arbitrarily found to possess unserious behavioural intention with regards to animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship. Yet, there is evidence that promoting entrepreneurship can solve the problem of unemployment (Owualah, 1999). Indeed, government at all levels needs to improve enabling environment in order that animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship may thrive and other positive attributes like poverty reduction and increased employment may follow. Specifically, variables of this enabling environment are those that promote profit maximization, like subsidization of feed ingredients, control of imports to protect home industries and ready market. These will improve economic viability of same, and in turn, its perception. The finding of this study has shown that perceived economic viability is singularly most powerful in predicting intention to engage in animal-agriculture based entrepreneurship. Further, when more youths take up this entrepreneurship, descriptive norms, i.e. perceived prevalence will also improve and this in turn will improve further entry into the world of entrepreneurship. Descriptive norm has also been found to be significantly and positively related to behavioural intention.

The campaign for greater entrepreneurship needs to target singles, university students and students in plant related discipline as they have been found to exhibit significantly poorer behavioural intention. Younger youths also need to be included, as age was found to be positively related to behavioural intention.

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