

**AGRIPRENEURSHIP: A PANACEA FOR FOOD INSECURITY, UNEMPLOYMENT
AND INSECURITY: A STUDY OF EDO STATE, NIGERIA.**

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Abstract

Agriculture sector was the main stay of Nigeria in the glory days, hence the need for agripreneurship which has the capacity to reduce food scarcity, insecurity and unemployment in the state and nation in general. The study was guided by three research objectives. The survey design was adopted. The sample size is one thousand five hundred (1500) Edolites who were selected through multistage random sampling technique. Questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents and validated by colleagues. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistic. The ordinary least square (OLS) regression analysis was used. The result revealed that agripreneurship has a positive impact on food security, general security and employment, thus making agripreneurship a panacea for the current food insecurity, general insecurity and unemployment ravaging the state and nation. The government should secure the state by stopping the criminal activities of bandits in the villages and activate agripreneurship culture among agriculturists in the state and nation in general to solve the triple challenge facing the state and country at large.

Key words: Agriculture, Agripreneurship, Entrepreneurship, Food, Insecurity, Unemployment,

Introduction

The Nigerian economy revolves around the agriculture sector, which is essential to generating income, ensuring food security, reducing poverty, creating jobs, lowering overall insecurity, and improving the standard of living of Nigerians. In Nigeria, issues with unemployment, food insecurity, and general insecurity have spread to both rural and urban areas in certain states, posing a socioeconomic challenge to the country's population. To address these issues and provide greater economic prospects, food security, employment, and stability for rural households, it is imperative that the agricultural industry, or agripreneurship, to be embraced. Agripreneurship, or simply "entrepreneurship in agriculture," is the process through which agriculturists develop the willpower, creativity, and innovation to take calculated risks and are constantly on the lookout for methods to grow and enhance their agricultural enterprise (Sacho, 2018). Agripreneurship, which transforms agriculturists into agribusinessmen and women, is the lucrative union of agriculture and enterprise. It refers to the formation of agribusiness in the agricultural and allied sectors and is synonymous with entrepreneurship in agriculture. A concept exclusive to agriculture that is derived from broader entrepreneurship is called agripreneurship. The idea refers to a dynamic process that uses agriculture to produce incremental prosperity. People who take significant risks about equity, time, and career devotion in order to add value to certain goods or services are the ones that create riches. An agripreneur who obtains and allocates the required expertise and resources in agriculture must in some way infuse value into the product or service, regardless of whether it is new or distinctive (Nwibo, et al 2016).

Agripreneurs are innovators who drive economic change by generating novel concepts and devising fresh approaches to many aspects of agriculture's production, marketing, and input supply. To recognize and take advantage of opportunities in agriculture, agripreneurs need to possess excellent administrative and organizational abilities as well as being proactive, curious, driven, tenacious, visionary, honest, and honest with integrity. Although rural households are involved in agribusiness, there has not been a complete acceptance of its potential and growth. Using entrepreneurial skills in agriculture reduces poverty, increases food security, creates jobs, lessens rural-urban migration, reduces japa syndrome and general insecurity among rural households and, consequently, in urban areas and cities, making the nation's economy more productive. However, the full extent of all these benefits is still in its early stages because agriculturists, and particularly young people, have not fully tapped into or taken advantage of agribusiness or agripreneurship in the agricultural sector.

Statement of Research Problem

Agriculture and allied sectors are regarded as the backbone of the Nigerian economy contributing to the economic development of the country (in the average of 60% in 1960s, 48.8% in 70s, 22.2% in 80s, 34% in 90, 41.3% in 2000, 32.9% in 2010 and 19.65 in 2014 to GDP, Eze & Chinedu-Eze, 2016, and average 25% from 2015 to 2020 and have been on a continuous fall from first quarter of 2021 to last quarter of 2023 except in first and second quarters of 2022 (Statista, 2024) in terms of supplying raw materials, and generating demand for a wide range of industrial products such as fertilizers, insecticides, agricultural tools, and a wide range of consumer goods. On the other hand, a redesign of agricultural activities is required due to the numerous issues that agriculture is experiencing, such as the growing number of rural

youths who are migrating to metropolitan regions, Japa syndrome, insecurity brought on by herders, etc. Thus, switching from subsistence agriculture to agripreneurship is a creative way to rethink agriculture and make it more alluring and lucrative. Agripreneurship can help achieve a number of objectives, including general security, generating money, reducing poverty, and creating jobs. Given that Edo State is in the fortunate position of having a large percentage of its land arable and much of it under cultivated, as well as the fact that approximately 75% of the state's land is relatively fertile and receives sufficient rainfall for agriculture, this study believes it is appropriate to investigate agripreneurship as a cure-all for the triple challenges (food, insecurity, and unemployment) facing the state and nation in general

Research Objectives

The main aim of the study was to examine the effect of agripreneurship on food insecurity, general insecurity and unemployment. Specifically, the objectives were:

- i. Determine the effect of agripreneurship on food security.
- ii. Determine the effect of agripreneurship on general security.
- iii. Determine the effect of agripreneurship on employment generation.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significance level.

- i. Agripreneurship has no significant effect on food security.
- ii. Agripreneurship has no significant effect on general security.
- iii. Agripreneurship has no significant effect on employment generation.

Conceptual Definitions

Agripreneurship

A novel idea in international agriculture, agripreneurship aims to turn agriculture from a mostly subsistence industry into a competitive business (Nwankwo et al., 2021). Agripreneurship is the application of entrepreneurial concepts and methods to the agricultural industry. An agripreneur is described as "a business owner who is self-employed and seeks to create wealth within the agricultural industry," according to Aleke et al. (2011), cited in Otache (2020). An agribusiness entrepreneur is a person who finds profitable business opportunities in agriculture, acquires resources, starts the firm, and oversees it (Carr, 2016). In brief, an agribusiness owner is a person who operates an agricultural business (Bose, 2013; Nagalakshmi & Sudhakar, 2013). Agricultural entrepreneurs or agripreneurial farmers are other names for agripreneurs. Similar to entrepreneurs, agripreneurs possess self-assurance, creativity, inventiveness, initiative, independence, determination, and diligence (Nwibo et al., 2016). Since agribusiness and entrepreneurship are its foundations, the terms "agripreneurship" and "entrepreneurship in agriculture" are used interchangeably. Agripreneurship, according to Ogunbanwo and Babalola (2021, p. 1614), is a phrase used to describe agribusiness establishment in the agricultural and related sectors and is synonymous with entrepreneurship in agriculture.

Food Insecurity

The inability of people and households to obtain a sufficient, secure, and nourishing source of food—including the inability to grow or buy food—is known as food insecurity. Over time, they are also unable to meet their nutritional needs because they do not have access to money resources. However, the availability and accessibility of food are measured in terms of food security. The availability, consumption, and stability of food in terms of quantity, quality, and continuity over time and space are all included in food security. It acknowledges that nutritional needs and tastes vary among individuals. In the end, food security refers to always having access to enough healthy, safe food for an active life. A basic human right and necessity is having access to enough nutritious food. "When all people at all times have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient safe, nutritious foods that meet their dietary needs and preferences for an active and healthy life," is how the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2023) defines food security. A nation with a stable food supply will draw investors, who will boost the country's economic growth and development. As employers of labour, these investors will improve people's lives by lowering unemployment, insecurity, poverty, and hunger (Masara, 2019).

Insecurity

There are several meanings associated with the term "insecurity," including: lack of protection, risk, hazard, uncertainty, and absence of safety. Insecurity is defined as "the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection," according to Beland (2009), cited in Okonkwo, et al., (2015). It alludes to little or nonexistent safety from harm. Achumba et al. (2013) provided two definitions of insecurity. First, danger is the state of being vulnerable to harm or injury, and insecurity is the state of being open to risk or the threat of danger. Being exposed to risk or experiencing worry, which is a vaguely uncomfortable emotion felt in expectation of some calamity, is the second definition of insecurity. These definitions of insecurity highlight a crucial point: people who experience insecurity are not only unsure of what might happen or oblivious of it when it does, but they are also more susceptible to threats and hazards when they manifest.

Unemployment

When a person is eager and able to work but does not have a paid job, they are considered unemployed. It is a state in which an individual actively looks for work but is not successful in doing so. The percentage of unemployed persons in the labor force is known as the unemployment rate. As a result, determining who is employed is necessary to calculate the unemployment rate. Those who are employed or jobless are included in the labour force. Determining the number of individuals who are employed or jobless requires both counting the number of people who have employment or not and making practical decisions, such as how much paid work a person must perform to be considered employed. (Reserve Bank of Australia).

Agripreneurship and Employment Generation

Since agriculture currently employs the largest share of labour in the nation and there are few sustainable opportunities outside of it, there is a need to develop entrepreneurship in this sector to create jobs, increase productivity, and grow the economy in Nigeria due to the rising rates of unemployment and poverty and the limited opportunities for economic growth in other sectors. A wide range of advantages will result from applying and practicing entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector, including higher productivity, the formation of new agribusiness businesses that will create jobs, innovations in the delivery of goods and services, and wealth gains (Birwa

et al 2014). In the areas of improved nutrition, food security in the economy, and a decline in the poverty index, agribusiness can support social and economic growth. Furthermore, it will result in the economy and income bases becoming more diverse, creating jobs and chances for entrepreneurship (Uche & Familusi, 2018)

Agripreneurship and Food Security

Since agriculture is the primary source of the world's food supply, farmers play a significant role in food security. Families and individuals can obtain vital vitamins and minerals as well as the nutrients they need for good health through agripreneurship. Additionally, it oversees giving rural residents job opportunities so they can become independent and financially stable. Additionally, by protecting natural resources and minimizing the use of chemicals that may be harmful to human health and consequently have an impact on businesses, the agricultural industry will contribute to the maintenance of a healthy environment. Through agricultural business, it is possible to ensure sustainable production of food and other products, thereby reducing malnutrition and improving the quality of life for all people worldwide. The role of agripreneurship in ensuring food security is significant. The business of growing crops, managing soil, raising livestock, and other activities related to food security is also known as agribusiness.

Agripreneurship and Insecurity

The FAO (2023) states that agriculture continues to be the backbone of the Nigerian economy, supporting millions of jobs, creating income for most Nigerians, and lowering levels of insecurity. As more young people pursue a career in agriculture, there will be less chance of them committing crimes and other social vices, which will lessen insecurity. Because agribusiness offers jobs and food security, most young people will have less time for crime and other illicit activity.

Theoretical Framework

The foundation of this research is August Comte's structural functionalism hypothesis (1857). According to the idea of structural functionalism, there are several structures in human society, including social, political, economic, religious, and educational ones. These structures cooperate in a mutually reinforcing way to foster stability and solidarity. As a result, changes in one area of society always affect other areas as well. Every institution in a society has a responsibility to support its growth, stability, and order. Any malfunction in one of society's components or its institutions affects the other components. This holds true for situations including agribusiness, food security, overall insecurity, and unemployment. Food insecurity can result from unemployment, and general insecurity can result from food insecurity. However, agricultural enterprises, or agripreneurship, can result in employment, food security, and overall security for the state and the country, all of which will eventually spur growth and development on a national scale.

Empirical Review

A comprehensive study of agripreneurship as a cure-all for food security in Tanzania was conducted by Kazungu and Kumburu in 2023. By presenting the state of the art on agripreneurship and food security in Tanzania, research themes and recent advancements on the two concepts, highlighting gaps in the literature and practical applications of the concepts, and demonstrating how agripreneurship addresses food insecurity in Tanzania, the study closes the

knowledge gap. The themes of agripreneurship and food security were examined in 61 papers that were obtained from the Scopus, Google Scholar, and Web of Science databases. The study showed that by guaranteeing food availability, affordability, and accessibility, agripreneurship practices can be a solution to food security.

In Ondo State, Nigeria, Alabi (2019) investigated enterprise growth as a countermeasure to insecurity. The study looked at how the growth of entrepreneurship affected the degree of insecurity in Nigeria's Ondo State. One hundred twenty-five individuals completed a self-administered structured questionnaire as part of a purposive sampling procedure. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to facilitate the application of inferential statistics in the data analysis process. Specifically, the linear regression method was employed to ascertain the impact of the independent variable, entrepreneurship development, on the dependent variable, crime rate. The outcome demonstrated that the degree of insecurity in Ondo State, Nigeria, is significantly impacted by the development of entrepreneurship. Additionally, the study showed that entrepreneurship development programs offer a model for the effective and efficient utilization of entrepreneurial opportunities which can predict and improved national security, accounting for 60% of the variance in the reduction of insecurity in the state.

Also, Uche and Familusi (2018) investigated the adoption of agripreneurship as a mitigating solution to unemployment in Nigeria. The study, which was primarily a review, concentrated on the use of agribusiness to raise farmer income bases, productivity, and job development. The study was taken into consideration because a sizable portion of Nigeria's population works in agriculture, and the growth of agribusiness and agripreneurship will help to assure food security, reduce the country's high rate of unemployment, and stimulate the economy. The analysis did point out that this alternative is limited in several ways, including infrastructure, finance availability, and experience. Agripreneurship guarantees a healthy diet and food security, lowers the poverty index, and advances social and economic growth. It will also result in a diversification of the economy and income streams, generating jobs and business opportunities.

Methodology

This study adopted the survey design. The target population for the study consisted of all Edolites. The sample size is one thousand five (1500) respondents randomly selected for the study. The multistage stratified sampling technique was used to determine the sample size of the study. First, Edo state is divided into three based on senatorial district (Edo South, Edo North, and Edo central). Secondly, from each senatorial district, five hundred (500) Edolites were randomly selected, thus making a total of one thousand five hundred (1500) Edolites for the study.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The study used content validity in the determination of the validity of the instrument. For the reliability of the instrument, thirty (30) respondents were chosen and were determined using the cronbach alpha statistic which yielded coefficients of 0.83(83%) for agripreneurship, 0.76(76%) for food security, 0.81(81%) for general security and 0.75(75%) for employment. This meant that the instrument was reliable.

Method of data Collection and Analysis

The source of data was primary source through a questionnaire designed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of five (4) sections. Section A covers the biodata of the respondents while

sections B and E covered questions on the objectives of the study. Sections B to E were designed using four Likert formats (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree). The researcher employed descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentage for the bio-data profile of the respondents while Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression analysis was used to determine the effect of agriprenurship on food security, insecurity, and unemployment.

Model Specification

This study adapts Ogunleye, et al (2015), and Alabi (2019, pp 321) model which stated model $NS = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 X_1 + \epsilon_t$(i)

Where, NS= National Security, X_1 = Entrepreneurship Development, α_0 = Intercept, α_1 = Regression Coefficient, ϵ = Stochastic error term

Thus

$SE = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Agrp + u_t$ (ii)

$FS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Agrp + v_t$ (iii)

$EMP = \Omega_0 + \Omega_1 Agrp + z_t$(iv)

Where *SE* is security, *FS* is food security, *EMP* is employment and agrp is agriprenurship.

α_1, β_1 and Ω_1 are coefficients and > 0 . Equations ii to iv are the models for the study.

Result presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

One thousand five hundred (1500) questionnaires were distributed and one thousand four hundred and seventy-nine (1479) were duly completed and retrieved back after careful monitoring and supervision. This represented 98.6% response rate.

Table 1 : bio-data result

s/n	Variable	Frequency	Percentage	
1	Age:	< 30	133	9.0
		31-40	196	13.3
		41-50	474	32.0
		51-60	335	22.7
		>60	340	23.0
2	Education:	PSLC	81	5.5
		SSCE	136	9.2
		OND/NCE	324	21.9
		HND/First degree	519	35.1
		Masters & above	336	22.7
		Not fill	83	5.5
3	Gender	Male	920	62.2
		Female	559	37.8

Source: *Researchers' Computation 2024*

For age, the result revealed that below 30 years had a frequency of one hundred and thirty three (133) representing 9%, 31-40 years had one hundred ninety six (196) representing 13.3%, 41-50 years had four hundred and seventy four (47) representing 32%, 51-60 years had three hundred and thirty five (335) representing 22.7% and above 60 years had three hundred and forty (34) representing 23%. This meant that there were more respondents within the age range of 41-50 years in the survey.

For education, the result revealed that eighty-one (81) representing 5.5% were primary six leaving certificate (PSLC) education holders, one hundred and thirty-six (136) representing 9.2% were secondary education holders, three hundred and twenty-four (324) representing 21.9% were

OND/NCE holders. Five hundred and nineteen Sixty-one (519) representing 35.1% were HND/First degree holders, three hundred and thirty ix (336) representing 22.7% were masters and above holders and eighty-three (83) representing 5.5% were unfilled. This revealed that most of the respondents were HND/First degree holders within the period of the study.

For gender, the result revealed that male has a frequency of nine hundred and twenty representing 62.2% and female has a frequency of five hundred and ninety-nine (599) representing 37.8%. This meant that they are more male respondents in the study.

Analysis of the Objectives and Hypotheses

$$SE = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Agrp + u_t$$

$$SE = 3.049325 + 0.115695 Agrp$$

$$P\text{-value: } (0.000) \quad (0.0052)$$

$$R\text{-square } 0.72 \text{ (72\%)} \quad R\text{-bar-Square } 0.71 \text{ (71\%)}$$

$$\text{Prob(F-statistic)} \quad 0.000046$$

$$\text{Durbin-Watson stat} \quad 2.023381$$

The result revealed that agripreneurship accounts for 72% variation or dynamics in general security. And this is endorsed by the R-bar square of 71%. Also, the result revealed that agripreneurship influences general security in Edo State because the f(p-value) is less than 0.005. The result also revealed that there is absence of serial correlation in the equation because the DW statistic is approximately 2. From the result, a unit increase in agripreneurship will increase general security by approximately 12%. This means that with agribusiness, can significantly reduce insecurity in Edo State by 12%, because the p-value is less than 0.05.

$$FS = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Agrp + u_t$$

$$FS = 3.272818 + 0.144476 Agrp$$

$$P\text{-value : } (0.000) \quad (0.0052)$$

$$R\text{-square } 0.75 \text{ (75\%)} \quad R\text{-bar-Square } 0.73 \text{ (73\%)}$$

$$\text{Prob(F-statistic)} \quad 0.000046$$

$$\text{DW stat} \quad 1.820130$$

The result revealed that agripreneurship accounts for 75% variation or dynamics in food security. And this is endorsed by the R-bar square of 73%. Also, the result revealed that agripreneurship influences general security in Edo State because the f(p-value) is less than 0.005. The result also revealed that there is absence of serial correlation in the equation because the DW statistic is approximately 2. From the result, a unit increase in agripreneurship will increase food security by approximately 14%. This means that with agribusiness, can significantly reduce food insecurity in Edo State by 14%, because the p-value is less than 0.05.

$$EMP = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Agrp + u_t$$

$$EMP = 3.037864 + 0.097053 Agrp$$

$$P\text{-value : } (0.000) \quad (0.0203)$$

$$R\text{-square } 0.72 \text{ (72\%)} \quad R\text{-bar-Square } 0.71 \text{ (71\%)}$$

$$\text{Prob(F-statistic)} \quad 0.002584$$

$$\text{DW stat} \quad 2.013947$$

The result revealed that agripreneurship accounts for 72% variation or dynamics in employment. And this is endorsed by the R-bar square of 71%. Also, the result revealed that agripreneurship significantly influences employment in Edo State because the f(p-value) is less than 0.005. The result also revealed that there is absence of serial correlation in the equation because the DW

statistic is approximately 2. From the result, a unit increase in agribusiness will increase employment by approximately 10%. This means that with agribusiness has the potential to significantly reduce unemployment in Edo State 10%, because the p-value is less than 0.05.

Discussion of Findings

The study has empirically investigated agribusiness: a panacea for food insecurity, unemployment, and insecurity: a study of Edo state, Nigeria. From the study it was clearly established that with agribusiness or agribusiness Edo State can solve the problem of food insecurity, unemployment among the youth and general insecurity in the state and beyond. This is in consonance with the study by Kazungu and Kumburu (2023) who studied agribusiness as a cure-all for food security in Tanzania and showed that by guaranteeing food availability, affordability, and accessibility, agribusiness practices can be a solution to food security in the country. Also, the study is still in line with Alabi (2019) investigated entrepreneurial growth as a countermeasure to insecurity and showed that entrepreneurship development programs and the effective and efficient utilization of entrepreneurial opportunities can account for and predict 60% of the variance in the reduction of insecurity in Ondo state. Lastly, the study is in line with Uche and Familusi (2018) who investigated the adoption of agribusiness as a mitigating solution to unemployment in Nigeria and found that agribusiness guarantees a healthy diet and food security, lowers the poverty index, and advances social and economic growth. It will also result in a diversification of the economy and income streams, generating jobs and business opportunities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Currently agricultural activities in Edo state is at stand still occasioned by insecurity caused by Fulani herdsmen, and inadequate infrastructure in the villages, thus causing food insecurity, unemployment and general insecurity in the state and nation in general. With blessed human (youth population) and natural resources (land), Edo state with strategic agribusiness policies and programmes married with safety of the agricultural lands will take the state to enviable height, thus generating employment, food security etc and generate more revenue for the state and nation, in general. Based on the study, the researcher recommends that the state government should try and stop the criminal activities of Fulani bandits in the villages in-order to encourage agriculture business. Secondly, the government should activate the agribusiness among agriculturists in-order to solve the triple challenges of food insecurity, unemployment, and general insecurity in the state. Lastly, government should help agribusinessmen and women in the state with soft loans and establish processing and storage units where all the produce are collected, processed, and stored for future use, thus reducing wastage occasioned by lack of processing and storage facilities in the state and beyond.

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