



Institutional Support for Youth Agribusiness Cooperative Development and Management in Nigeria: The Oyo State Example

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both author designed the instrument (questionnaire) for data collection, perform the statistical analysis. Author FOI wrote the protocol and the first draft of the manuscript. Author JHK managed the analysis of the study and proof reading and literature searches. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the institutional support for youth agribusiness cooperative development and management in Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study described the socio-economic characteristics of the youth, measures their perception towards agribusiness, and identified the constraints militating against youth participation in cooperative agribusiness enterprises. The study employed a multi-stage sampling technique to select 6 youth cooperative groups (aggregating to 175 individuals); 36 youths; and 4 institutions across 6 LGAs in two agricultural zones of the State. Majority (55.6%) of the respondents belong to producer organization and earned an annual income of equal to or less than ₦100,000 (about \$476USD) (58.1%). Also, majority (86.1) of the respondents participate in community development activities. Various benefits were indicated by the respondents as being gained from cooperative membership. Such benefits include access to credit (51.1%), access to group assets (34%), and financial assistance by the group (14.9%).

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Majority of the respondents (52.8%) did not receive any training. Oyo State Agricultural Development Programme (OYSADEP) was indicated as the agency which provided training for 74% of those who indicated to have been trained. Majority 63.9%, 58.3%, and 55.6% of the respondents indicated the need for training in cassava value addition, marketing strategies, agribusiness management respectively. Drudgery (100%), inadequate capital (97.2%), and low return on investment (88.9%) were rated highest among the constraints. It is recommended that regular training should be provided for the cooperatives by the agencies responsible. Also, adequate drudgery-reducing infrastructure should be provided by the Government while product buy-back should be instituted by the Government in order to stabilize agribusiness activities among the cooperatives.

Keywords: Youth; agribusiness; cooperative; cooperative management; Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, in an era when many people feel powerless to change their lives, cooperatives represent a strong, vibrant, and viable economic alternative. Cooperatives are formed to meet peoples' mutual needs. They are based on the powerful idea that together, a group of people can achieve goals that none of them could achieve alone. Cooperative according to [1] is one of the most effective vehicle for efficient mobilization of production resources and accelerated rural development. The importance arises from the fact that the small-scale individual capacity of the peasants production, cannot cope with technological and capital demands of modernized agriculture.

Cooperatives could be a significant force in empowering rural communities, farmers, women and micro entrepreneurs throughout Nigeria. • It was estimated that in 2010, there were 82,460 cooperative groups with over 1.4 million members in 605 local government areas in Nigeria. However, there is little systematic data available on cooperatives [2]. Cooperative is under Ministry of Commerce and Industry at the State level, some are domiciled in the State Ministry of Agriculture but every state has a department for cooperative with a director that is empowered by law to register cooperatives at the State level.

The agricultural cooperatives have been there over the years to play this role of drastic structural change in agriculture towards achieving food security and also the socio-economic upliftment of the farmers. [3] noted that the original impetus for the organization of cooperatives in Nigeria came from agriculture, or more precisely, from the marketing of cash crops for export. Since then cooperative development has taken different forms and dimension.

According to [4], emphasis in cooperative development is now on multipurpose agricultural cooperative for food production and marketing. Agricultural cooperative society has been touted as the appropriate vehicle for harnessing and pooling the resources of millions of small holder farmer producers together to enjoy the benefit of large scale production [5]. Cooperatives are economic enterprises founded by and belong entirely to the members. These enterprises are created in order to render the best possible service at the lowest possible cost to their members. Cooperative stands over two legs, in order to be solid and sustained [6]. Agricultural cooperative play a critical function in fulfilling its members' needs. Supply cooperatives, for example, make various products available to its members, while marketing cooperatives act as a marketing body for farmers to sell their products. Some cooperatives combine both these activities while others provide additional services such as custom harvesting of crops. The cooperative structure and its function are limited only by the needs of its members and the commonality of their goals. The [7] was emphatic that cooperatives could make the needed impact in food security efforts through mobilizing farmers. This clearly places a fundamental role on youth cooperatives. However, this role cannot be achieved without adequate institutional support (aimed at developing and managing the capacity of the cooperatives) from the public institutions.

Youth has been defined severally by scholars from various regions. For instance the way Nigerians view youth is quite different from other nations. According to [8], youth is seen as a relational concept. This refers to the social processes whereby age is socially constructed, institutionalised and controlled in historically and culturally specific ways. Globally, youth is described as the period in an individual's life and this runs between the end of childhood and entry

into the world of work [9]. Youth is seen as a universal stage of development. According to the 2001 National Youth Policy [10], the youth comprises all young persons of ages 18 to 35, who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The New Nigerian Agricultural Policy 2001 [11] placed the role of mobilizing farmers for accelerated agricultural and rural development on the Local Governments in Nigeria. According to the policy, this role is expected to be performed through cooperative organizations.

Youth constitute the major resource base for any country that wants to embark on any meaningful agricultural and rural development [12,10,13-16] enumerated special qualities possessed by the youth to include innovative proneness. In the rural sector, youths provide opportunities for generating farming entrepreneurs and other rural professions. They also enjoy earlier and greater involvement in work roles, and have opportunity of becoming economically independent earlier than their urban counterparts [17,18]. [19,20] noted that the youths who have the energy to take up agricultural production do not believe or have the knowledge that agricultural production can really be a profitable venture. The current challenges in development are so demanding that only the participation of people who are energetic, creative, innovative, productive and committed who could bring development, should they all be mobilized [21-23]. These attributes which are critical to growth and development are substantially discernable in the youth. Tapping the energy and resourcefulness of the youth, and harnessing them for growth and development was a major resolve of the Nigerian Government [10]. Hence, the kind of support that youth are exposed to or have access to will determine the nation's overall development.

The institutional support required by the youth agribusiness cooperative include technical skill in the various agricultural enterprises – crop production, livestock, fisheries, agro-processing and lot others. They also need skill to form and effectively manage cooperatives to function well in achieving the aims for which the cooperatives have been set. Linkage with much needed input, credit, market is essential for the success of any agribusiness cooperative. Most of the youth agribusiness cooperatives in Nigeria are commodity or enterprise-based. Management of such cooperative require regular training in order to ensure steady growth and development required for any meaningful contribution to the society.

The vision of the Nigerian Government was to empower the youth to fully realize their potentialities and contribute to the overall development of the country. A cardinal objective of the 2001 National youth policy was to ensure that all youths are given equal opportunities and guided to reach their full potentials. The policy aimed at developing the entrepreneurial skill through training by strengthening the capacity of the existing institutions that provide such skill. However, the institutional support required for the development and management of youth agribusiness cooperative in Nigeria is grossly inadequate. Against this background, the objective of this study was to assess the institutional support for youth agribusiness cooperative development and management in Oyo State, Nigeria. This specific objectives were to:

- i. identify the socio-economic characteristics of the youth;
- ii. assess the perception of youth towards agribusiness;
- iii. examine the training needs of the youth cooperative in agribusiness management;
- iv. identify current institutional support for cooperative development and management, and
- v. identify the constraints militating against youth participation in cooperative agribusiness enterprises.

Cooperative organizations in Nigeria are segmented various levels. The focus of this study was the community based societies which are legally registered only if they have at least 10 members.

2. METHODOLOGY

Oyo State came into being in August 31, 1991 when the state creation excised the present Osun State from the old Oyo State. It covers a land area of 27,000 square kilometers and made up of 33 Local Government Areas and divided into four agricultural zones of Ibadan/Ibarapa, Oyo, Ogbomoso and Saki zones. Oyo State is located on latitude 07°23'17.9"N and longitude 03°53'30.9"E [24].

A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select 6 youth cooperative groups; 36 individual youth; and 4 institutions. First, Oyo State was purposively selected being the Zonal headquarters of the South-west zone. Secondly, two agricultural zones were randomly selected

out of the four zones in the State. The zones selected were Oyo and Ibadan/Ibarapa zones. Thirdly, three LGAs were purposively selected from each Zone based on concentration of youth cooperatives. They were Ido, Ibarapa East, and Ibarapa Central (from Ibadan/Ibarapa Zone), and Oyo East, Oyo West, and Atiba (from Oyo Zone). Fourthly, two villages were purposively selected from each LGA based on proximity and accessibility of farmers for primary data collection. Fifthly, one youth cooperative was randomly selected from each of the community. The sixth and final stage was the random selection of three individual respondents, in a male-female ratio of 2:1 from each youth association/cooperative. Table 1 summarizes the sampling procedure and the sample size.

Four institutions were purposively selected based on their involvement in youth cooperative activities in the State. The institutions were:

1. Oyo State Agricultural Development Programme (OYSADEP)

2. Oyo State Ministry of Trade and Cooperatives
3. Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC)
4. Oyo State Agency for Youth Development

Field survey was conducted to collect data using combination of survey methods and instruments. Checklist was used on the cooperative group in a focus group discussion. Individual farmers were interviewed using pretested, structured interview schedule. Structured and pretested questionnaire was used to elicit relevant information from the institutions.

Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics such as the mean and percentages. Farmers' perception of agribusiness was measured using Likert-type scale. Based on the researcher's observation of farmers' practices, literature reviewed and consultation with extension administrators and field workers, twenty-two declarative statements consisting of both positive and negative items were drawn for testing

Table 1. Socio-economic characteristics of youth (n=36)

Variables	Frequency	Percent (%)	Mean
Age (years)			39.5
20 – 29	4	11.1	
30 – 39	22	61.1	
40 – 49	7	19.4	
50 – 59	3	8.3	
Gender			
Male	35	97.2	
Female	1	2.8	
Household size			6
1 – 3	1	2.8	
4 – 6	15	41.7	
7 – 9	13	36.1	
10 and above	2	5.6	
Years in cooperative			8
1 – 10	27	75.0	
11 – 20	7	19.4	
Above 20	2	5.6	
Marital status			
Single	3	8.3	
Married	33	91.7	
Level of education			
None	2	5.6	
Primary	8	22.2	
Secondary	19	52.8	
Tertiary	7	19.4	
Annual income (₦) (\$1 = ₦210)			126,574.58 (about \$602)
≤ 100,000	19	52.8	
101,000 – 200,000	10	27.8	
201,000 – 300,000	4	11.1	
301,000 – 400,000	1	2.7	
401,000 – 500,000	2	5.6	

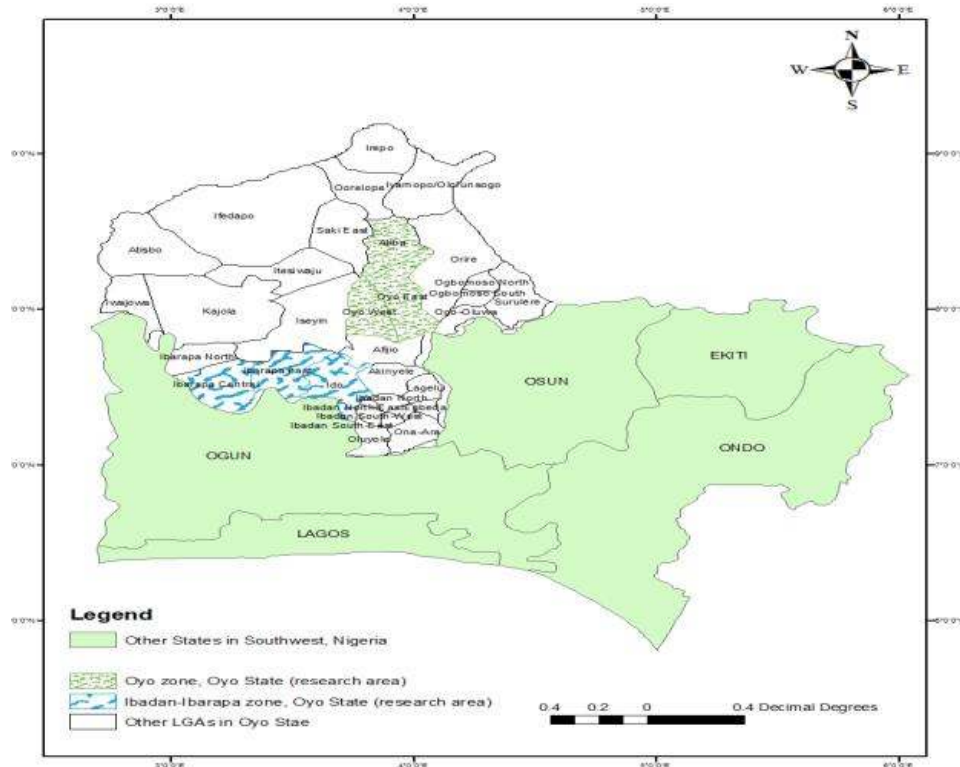


Fig. 1. Map of South-west zone showing the study state and LGAs

the construct of interest. They were structured in a five-point scale of Strongly Agreed (SA); Agreed (A); Undecided (U); Disagreed (D); Strongly Disagreed (SD). The statements gave respondents the opportunity to say at which level they were or were not convinced about the agribusiness. Positive statements were scored 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for SA, A, U, D and SD respectively; and negative statements were scored 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 for SA, A, U, D and SD respectively. Total perception score was computed for each respondent as the addition of the scores for all the statements.

The mean for each of the items was obtained by multiplying the point scale by the number of respondents in each point scale. Furthermore, perception score was obtained by adding the scores of each respondent for each of the items. The score obtained for each respondent was further dichotomised into low and high perception based on the mean score in each case. Finally, a weighted mean average was computed to measure the total perception of respondents for all the items. Items with weighted mean average of less than 3 (which is the cutoff point) was regarded as having low perception.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Socio-economic Characteristics of the Youths

Table 1 presents the socio-economic characteristics of the youth. Most of the respondents were male (97.2%), married (91.7%), aged between 30 and 39 years (61.1%), and had at least secondary school education (72.2%). Only 2.8% of the respondents had less than four household size. However, the mean years spent in cooperative (Mean=8) indicates that respondents had fairly long years of cooperative participation. Most (52.8%) of the respondents had an annual income of ₦100,000 (about \$476) and less.

The findings reveal that majority of the youth were in their productive age, where their energies could be harnessed and utilized for productive venture in agriculture especially cooperative management. Thus, it could be concluded that the youths in Oyo State were full of life and vigour and can contribute their efforts; physically, mentally and otherwise to efficiently manage agribusiness cooperative in Oyo State. Similarly, their relatively young age may make

them receptive to new innovations unlike of the older ones who usually expect the maintenance of status quo.

The study reveals that 97.2percent of the respondents were male, while only 2.8 percent were female (Table 1). According to [25], gender is no barrier to active involvement in agribusiness activities. However, [26] observed that it is generally believed that males are often more energetic and could readily be available for managing cooperative agribusiness. The low percentage of the female youth participating in cassava production could be attributed to the fact that females in the study area usually involved in several other activities outside farming like food vendors, hair dressing, tailoring and petty trading.

Ogunbameru [27] noted that education will likely enhance the adoption of modern farm technologies by youth and thereby sustaining a virile farming population. Similarly, [28] posits that education is an important socio-economic factor that influences a farmer's decision because of its influence on the farmer's awareness, perception, reception and the adoption of innovation that can bring about increase in production. Since a high percentage of the youths were educated, their education is expected to enhance the management of cooperative agribusiness in the study area.

That the respondents had low household size is understandable because they are youths and since they have latent energy, participation in cooperative agribusiness will increase and food security is assured.

3.2 Cooperative Characteristics

Results in Table 2 revealed that respondents were engaged in various types of cooperatives. However, producer cooperative recorded the highest (38.9%). Only 2.8% of the respondents belong to marketing organization. This finding implies that most youth are engaged in just production thereby suggesting that other value chains are neglected. Furthermore, majority (86.1) of the respondents participate in community development activities. Building of community hall, and road rehabilitation/maintenance were the most frequent development activities which majority (96.8%) of the respondents participated in doing. Various benefits were indicated by the respondents as being gained from cooperative membership. Such benefits include access to credit (63.9%),

financial assistance (58.3%), and access to inputs (55.6%).

Cooperatives reduce the level of poverty by making loans more accessible to lower income consumers. Cooperative members have been able to expand their businesses, increase their profit margins and accumulate some savings in their accounts as a result of co-operative assistance [2].

Cooperative societies are useful for providing easy access to "cash" in a convenient manner. Members do not have to provide collateral for loans as demanded by banks. Loan processing is quick, and usually available within one or two weeks. Bank processing can take up to six months whereas consumers often need quick loans.

Cooperative societies have historically been active in the Western part of the country, hence awareness is high with active participation. It has contributed immensely to the economy of Nigeria for the viable ones because high cooperative boomed. Some groups practice a welfare contribution of ₦50 per meeting, this is used as gift (in form of cash) for members' social functions. Membership fee was ₦2,000 (about \$9.5). Apart from members contributions', other means of generating income include buying of commodities in bulk and retailing, offering of rental services, purchase of buses for commercial purposes, fines for late coming and disciplinary actions. No cooperative administration training is organized for members but seminars on skills such as soap making, baking, bead/hat making are organized by cooperative societies as well as the State Department of cooperatives.

3.3 Training in Agribusiness Received by Youth Cooperatives

Results in Table 3 indicate that respondents received various types of training. Improved crop production techniques was the type of training received by majority (80.6%) of those who received training. Linkage with extension agency explains this result. Hence, the training indicated herein were not formal intensive training expected by the cooperative. It is important that cooperative members received regular intensive training of various types targeted at improving their enterprise with the aim of enhancing their contribution to nation's food production. OYSADEP was indicated by 77.4% of the respondents as the institution which conducted

Table 2. Types of cooperative, benefits gained, and participation in community development (n=36)

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Types of cooperative engaged in		
Marketing Organization/Group	1	2.8
Multi-purpose Cooperative Society	8	22.2
Multipurpose Cooperative	10	27.8
Processing Organization/Group	3	8.3
Producer Organization/Group	14	38.9
Benefits gained from cooperative*		
Access to credit	23	63.9
Access to farmland	1	2.8
Access to financial assistance	21	58.3
Access to production inputs	20	55.6
Access to modern processing equipment	1	2.8
Access to portable water	1	2.8
Access to subsidy	2	5.6
Access to training	3	8.3
Participation in community development		
Participate in community development	31	86.1
Do not participate community development	5	13.9
Community development activities* (n=31)		
Building community hall/toilet	30	96.8
Construction/maintenance of community hospital	14	45.2
Group assistance	28	90.3
Road Rehabilitation/maintenance	30	96.8

*Multiple responses indicated

training for respondents. This implies that other institutions were not really on ground as expected.

3.4 Training Needs of Youths

Majority (63.9%, 58.3%), and 55.6%) of the respondents indicated the need for training in agribusiness management, crop production (including the entire value chain and use of agrochemicals respectively (Table 4). Training and re-training is very crucial to the attainment of the noble aims of agribusiness cooperative. This training must be based on the clientele. The slow pace of moving agriculture from the shackle of peasantry to a commercial-oriented type could be explained by farmers' poor knowledge of agribusiness management.

3.5 Constraints Militating against Youth Participation in Agribusiness Enterprise

Myriads of constraints militate against farmers' participation in agribusiness enterprise in the study area (Table 5). Inadequate knowledge in agribusiness management (100%), and inadequate capital (100%) were rated highest among the constraints. Drudgery, and poor pricing of agricultural produce were both rated by majority (97.2%) of the respondents as

constraints. This result indicates that these constraints were very major.

A further consideration of the major problems enables us to appreciate the synergy of the items resulting in the naming of the major problem. Lack of commitment can be defined as organizational or individual lapses. Under this major problem, poor organization, unavailability of labour, and lack of cooperation are inherently built in the organization or individual and could be ameliorated through training or management of individuals. Lack of commitment is an endemic issue in management of project/programmes [29]. According to [30], one of the problems of agricultural development projects is lack of sustained commitment by stakeholders in term of funding, support and supervision which may result into the project not been fiscally empowered, resulting in project failure.

3.6 Suggested Ways of Addressing the Constraints Militating against Participation in Agribusiness Enterprise

According to the results presented in Table 6, various suggestions to the constraints were proffered by the respondents. They include provision of credit/loan (97.2%), provision of modern labour-saving agricultural devices

(91.6%), and improved market situation and pricing (61.1%).

3.7 Youths' Perception of Agribusiness

Youth perception of agribusiness was generally high with weighted mean average of 3.2 (Table 7). This result indicates a hope for agriculture in Nigeria. However, respondents' perception of the adequacy of physical structure (M = 2.1), availability of credit (M = 2.3), satisfaction in marketing of agricultural produce (M = 2.2), and

timeliness of extension services were very low (M = 2.2). For extension services to be perceived available and useful but not timely might be an indication of the high EA: Farm family ratio which resulted from the dwindling number of VEAs across the nation ADPs. NAERLS-led annual agricultural performance survey confirms this ugly trend. A high respondents' perception of drudgery, risk in agribusiness, capital intensive nature of agribusiness, and low return on investment means that agribusiness production and marketing is discouraging.

Table 3. Training in agribusiness received by respondents

Whether respondent received training in agribusiness (n=36)	Frequency	Percent
Do not receive training	5	13.9
Received training	31	86.1
Types of training received by respondents* (n=31)		
Agribusiness management	4	12.9
Improved crop production techniques	25	80.6
Cassava utilization	13	41.9
Techniques for agrochemical application	3	9.7
Soyabean processing	4	12.9
Weed control	15	48.4
Introduction of new varieties	5	16.1
Honey bee production	1	3.2
Group management	3	9.7
Livestock production	2	6.5
Marketing strategies	2	6.5
Institution that conducted the training* (n=31)		
OYSADEP	24	77.4
West African cotton	1	3.2
USAID	6	19.4
FADAMA	5	16.1
IITA	7	22.5
FCA	4	12.9
Year in which training was conducted* (n=31)		
2008	2	11.8
2009	3	
2011	3	17.7
2012	8	35.3
2013	11	41.2
2014	14	41.2

**Multiple responses indicated*

Table 4. Training needs of respondents* (n=36)

Training needs	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Agribusiness management	23	63.9	1 st
Crop production, management, processing and marketing	21	58.3	2 nd
Application techniques for agrochemicals	20	55.6	3 rd
Pest management	19	52.8	4 th
Training on record keeping	18	50	5 th
Group formation and management	17	47.2	6 th
Financial/Loan management	15	41.7	7 th
Minor livestock production	12	33.3	8 th
Value addition for farm produce	8	22.2	9 th
Artificial insemination/Breeding	3	8.3	10 th
Poultry keeping	1	2.8	11 th

**Multiple responses indicated*

Table 5. Constraints militating against participation in agribusiness enterprise* (n=36)

Constraints	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Inadequate capital	36	100	1 st
Inadequate knowledge on agribusiness	36	100	1 st
Drudgery	35	97.2	2 nd
Poor market situation	35	97.2	2 nd
High cost of Inputs	33	91.7	3 rd
Lack of commitment	30	83.3	4 th
High risk involved	32	81.9	5 th
Inadequate of modern agricultural facilities	23	63.9	6 th
Inadequate social amenities	8	22.2	7 th
Erratic weather	5	13.8	8 th
Inadequate land	5	13.8	8 th

**Multiple responses indicated*

Table 6. Suggested ways of addressing the constraints militating against participation in agribusiness enterprise * (n=36)

Suggestions	Frequency	Percent
Improved land tenure	9	25
Improved market situation and pricing	22	61.1
Provision of credit/loan	35	97.2
Provision of modern labour-saving devices/facilities	35	97.2
Roads construction	1	2.8
Training on agribusiness	36	100
Subsidized farming inputs	33	91.7
Re-orientation of youth	30	83.3
Training and empowerment	5	13.8

**Multiple responses indicated*

Table 7. Respondents' perception of agribusiness (n=36)

Items	Perception rating					Weighted Sum	Weighted mean
	SA	A	U	D	SD		
There is pride in the business of agriculture	19 (52.8)	16 (44.4)	0	0	0	159	4.4**
Agricultural business is profitable	10 (27.8)	19 (52.8)	3 (8.3)	0	1 (2.8)	136	3.8**
Agricultural business is market driven	3 (8.3)	19 (52.8)	7 (19.4)	3 (8.3)	0	118	3.3**
There is adequate physical infrastructure (such as roads) for agricultural business	0	5 (13.9)	3 (8.3)	22 (61.1)	2 (5.6)	75	2.1*
Marketing of agricultural produce is satisfactory	0	8 (22.2)	4 (11.1)	15 (41.7)	4 (11.1)	78	2.2*
Marketing of processed agricultural products is satisfactory	0	8 (22.2)	3 (8.3)	18 (50)	3 (8.3)	80	2.2*
Extension services for agricultural business are available	8 (22.2)	24 (66.7)	0	3 (8.3)	0	142	3.9**
Extension services for agricultural business are useful	6 (16.7)	26 (72.2)	1 (2.8)	1 (2.8)	0	139	3.9**
Extension services for agricultural business are timely	0	8 (22.2)	4 (11.1)	15 (41.7)	4 (11.1)	78	2.2*
Credit for agricultural business is available	1 (2.8)	7 (19.4)	6 (16.7)	14 (38.9)	5 (13.9)	84	2.3*
Credit for agricultural business is timely	1 (2.8)	5 (13.9)	6 (16.7)	16 (44.4)	4 (11.1)	79	2.2*
Agricultural inputs are available	6 (16.7)	18 (50)	2 (5.6)	4 (11.1)	3 (8.3)	119	3.3**
Agricultural inputs are timely	6 (16.7)	20 (55.6)	2 (5.6)	3 (8.3)	3 (8.3)	125	3.5**
Agricultural inputs are of good quality	7 (19.4)	20 (55.6)	3 (8.3)	2 (5.6)	2 (5.6)	130	3.6**
It generates Employment	13	17 (47.2)	3 (8.3)	1 (2.8)	0	144	4.0**
It is associated with drudgery	5 (13.9)	22 (61.1)	2 (5.6)	4 (11.1)	0	127	3.5**
It is very risky	7 (19.4)	24 (66.7)	1 (2.8)	2 (5.6)	0	138	3.8**
It is capital intensive	5 (13.9)	28 (77.8)	0	1 (2.8)	0	139	3.9**
It has a long gestation period	9 (25)	13 (36.1)	5 (13.9)	6 (16.7)	1 (2.8)	125	3.5**
It requires low initial capital	0	9 (25)	3 (8.3)	19 (52.8)	3 (8.3)	86	2.4*
It has low return on investment.	2 (5.6)	16 (44.4)	3 (8.3)	6 (16.7)	7 (19.4)	102	2.8*
Weighted mean sum							119.2
Weighted mean average							3.2**

*Figures in parenthesis are percentages, SA = Strongly Agreed, A = Agreed, U = Undecided, D = Disagreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed, *Low perception, **High perception*

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that youths are engaged in various cooperative agribusinesses. Youths have high favourable perception of agribusiness and contribute to the household consumption, yet they are poorly trained and lack adequate institutional support to transform their businesses. Worst still, youths are confronted with lots of constraints which militate against their participation in cooperative agribusiness.

This study recommended that agencies interested in involving youths in agricultural development should put policies in place using the identified nature of youth's involvement in agriculture determined by the study to ensure youth involvement in agricultural development. Secondly, the community based non-formal rural youths agricultural education programmes could serve as veritable foci for successful agricultural education to empower youths to take their rightful place in agricultural development. While the major problems inhibiting youth participation in agricultural activities identified in the study should be ameliorated using appropriate policy options, for instance engendering commitment by government through appropriate legislative appropriation and budgetary commitment, ensures that appropriate logistic in form of credit is provided and ensuring that land is made available to youth agricultural activities through relevant legislation and policy implementation.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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