

Fund Sourcing Strategies to Boost the Status of In-School Youth Organization Programmes and Activities in Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the fund sourcing strategies that can be adopted to boost the status of in-school youth organization programmes and activities in secondary schools, in Ekiti and Ondo States, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was used; while a purposive sampling method was considered most appropriate for use in the study; the technique involves the use of 608 teachers of agricultural science and administrators who responded to the questionnaire. Mean, standard deviation, ranking order and chi-square statistics were used to analyze the data. Emerging from the study are the 14 sources of funds and financing in-school youth organizations in agriculture. There was a relationship in the mean responses between the agencies and means of identifying and sourcing for funds and finance for the organization at $P < 0.05$ level of significance. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended, among others, that government, private sectors, school authorities, non-governmental organizations and well-to-do Nigerians in diaspora should participate in funding and financing youth organization programmes and activities in agriculture in Nigeria for national and socio-economic development. Students studying agricultural science should be involved in enterprise development activities to generate funds for re-investment and savings.

Keywords: financing agricultural activities, youth organizations, and agricultural education programmes.

INTRODUCTION

Improvement in agricultural production and activities at any point, level or form hinges on adequate funding and financing. Agricultural financing involves the different ways and means by which a farmer or an agricultural organization obtains the entire necessary fund required in order to carry out agricultural productivity. According to Ekong (2000), financing agricultural activities and production process involves the provision of money as cash input and the supply of the needed material inputs in the equivalent of the cash requirement to boost production processes. Adequate funding or finance provided for investment in agriculture serves as the capital, or money provided when and where required. It may be in the short, medium or long term to finance agricultural education programmes such as in-school youth organizations in agriculture.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Johnson (1982), described financing as consisting of assets resulting from past human efforts that are available to earn future income. In agricultural production, capital assets are either produced on the farm or acquired through purchase and are utilized or to be utilized in production processes. Finance supplied in agriculture would go a long way to reinforce productivity of other factors of production such as land, labour and the managerial skills. In specific terms, adequate finance supply is associated with:

- Ensuring continuous provision of agricultural business at viable level.
- Facilitating increased productivity for smooth consumption
- Promoting financing of agricultural production technologies
- Ensuring improvement of a farm capital base for smooth running of the farm
- Ensuring acquisition of inputs when required
- Enabling the farmer exploit the advantages of available market opportunities
- Makes for continuity and sustainability of agricultural production and activities

Shortage of finance could negatively affect agricultural production. Johnson held that shortage of finance has been one of the factors that limit agricultural production and profit anywhere and at any point in time. Johnson added that if the supply of finance is too little, it might not be able to support the development of sufficient labour for work for profit expectations. Even if finance were available, if not well managed, the result would still be poor production and output. Therefore production in agriculture and success of agricultural programme or activities are usually governed essentially by investment of capital and the efficient management of the invested finance to induce other factors of production to function effectively. Finance can be meaningful in agriculture to the extent in which it is invested to generate income above the investment and also to a large extent satisfy the consumption

needs of the operators. Investment is the placing of money in cash or material form to secure income or profit. Investment in school youth organization programmes in agricultural production results in efficient production cycle. Production cycle in this case is the linkage processes of investment in agricultural production processes to generate goods, services and income for consumption, savings or re-investment into the production line to ensure continuity and to increase youths interest and skill development in production oriented agricultural careers.

According to Olaitan (1996) the funding needs of vocational technical education programmes such as in-school youth organization in agriculture, is different from those of general education. One of the principles of vocational technical education is that "there is a minimum level of funding below which vocational education programmes cannot be effective and should not be attempted". Ogbazi (1985) and Olaitan, (1991) recommended that all in-school youth organizations should be adequately funded; so that they can perform effectively. In-school youth organization in agriculture is an integral phase of instruction in agricultural education in secondary schools. It is an intra-curricular part of agricultural education programmes that it constitutes one of the most effective devices for teaching through participating experience, its activities complements the total programmes of instruction in agriculture, in the classroom.

Phipps (1980) and Ogbazi (1985) described as in-school youth organization in agriculture as a school sponsored, professional association in which students of agriculture are encouraged to learn by doing, develop desirable skills and interest in agriculture as a career. Describing an in-school youth organization in agriculture, Famiwole and Okorie (1997) asserted that students are encouraged not only to learn in an in-school youth organization, but to exercise initiative and promote originality. Students in the organization also learn to accept responsibilities. The activities of in-school youth organization provides more opportunities for many types of learning that otherwise would not be possible. Okorie and Nkajimeje (1987), reported that interesting and stimulating skill development activities are not yet part of the instruction packages in agriculture in Nigeria secondary schools. He suggested the inclusion and funding of different agricultural activities and programmes that can develop students interest in agriculture. He also advocated a complete vocationalisation of agriculture at the secondary school level so as to involve more youths in production agriculture.

According to Okorie and Nkajimeje, a large number of youths are idle, unskilled and unemployable because they lack marketable or saleable skills with

which they can be employed or establish a job. They are usually found roaming the street in cities. Table 1 shows an estimated number of youths in Nigeria that needs attention (Obayan 2002, in Isuku 2008).

Table 1: Population of youths requiring attention in Nigeria

S/N	Groups	Estimated Number	% of Nigeria's Total Population
1.	Children aged 0-6years	15million	17%
2.	Primary school children including nomadic schools	24million	25%
3.	Junior secondary school children	5million	4%
4.	Illiterate adults (48% of Nigerian 80million adults)	39.6million	33%
5.	Out of school youths	15million	17%
	Total	98.6million	80%

Adapted from (Obanya 2002, in Isuku 2008)

In-school youth organization in agriculture encourages the upgrade of youths, knowledge, skills, and attitude so as to improve their productivity and on the job performance. In specific terms the programmes will affect the life of Nigerian youths in the school, directly and indirectly if well funded and financed. (Isuku, 2008). According to Isuku, functional in-school youth educational programmes in secondary school requires adequate facilities and funding. The World Bank (2005) revealed that access to finance gives the organisation the means to increase and diversity their productive activities. The thrust of this paper therefore is to determine the various sources of funding and financing in-school youth organization programmes in agriculture secondary schools?.

Research Question

This research question was posed to guide the conduct of the study.

- (i) What are the sources of funding and financing to in-school youth organization programmes in agriculture in secondary schools?

Hypothesis

This hypothesis was tested in the study.

H₀: There is no significant relationship in the scores of respondents i.e. (principals, teachers of agriculture, Board for Vocational and Technical Education, (BVTE) the Ministry of Education and Agriculture officials, students, community and employers) on the responsibilities of various agencies to be involved in the funding of in-school youth organization in agriculture in secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was a survey research method. The study covered Ondo and Ekiti States,

Nigeria, made up of thirty four (34) Local Government Areas. The population for this study consisted of 470 teachers who were teaching agricultural science in the 350 secondary schools in Ondo and Ekiti States, 200 principals of the schools offering agricultural science and 60 officials of the Ministry of Education, directly in-charge of secondary schools agricultural science programmes. Also, included were 10 officials of the Board for Vocational Technical Education and 30 officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and ADP who were knowledgeable in youth programmes in agriculture. The total population for this study was 770. The purposive sampling technique was employed to determine the sample used; meaning that all the 770 teachers of agriculture, principals and ministry officials in the population were used for the study.

Instrument for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was used for collecting data for this study. The questionnaires was meant for the administrator, that is, officials of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture/ADP, Board for Vocational Technical Education, principals with background in agriculture Head of Agricultural Science Department. teachers of agriculture and students. The questionnaires have 14 items. The respondents were requested to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the items in the questionnaire and rank the sources of funding and financing of in-school youth organization

programmes in agriculture. The study made use of face and content validation. Respondent’s opinions were subjected to reliability analysis using Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation Co-efficient. The correlation co-efficient (r) ranged from 0.83 to 0.98.

Method of Data Collection

To facilitate the administration of the instrument, the questionnaires were administered on the respondents by personal contact. In view of the geographical study area, three research assistants were employed to personally administer the questionnaire by hand on the respondents and collect backed after completion. Out of the 770 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, 608 copies were returned and dully completed representing a 78.96 percent return rate. Data collected for this study were scored using the Likert type scale of five point rating, in which 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree. All the options were scored in the same direction. Frequency distribution, means and ranking order were employed to answer the only research question, Chi-square was used to test the hypothesis in the study at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 1:

What are the sources of funding and finance to in-school youth organization programmes in agriculture in secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean ranking of sources of fund and financing to the organization

S/N	Sources of funds and finance should include	Teachers of Agric. N=335		Administrators N=273		Remarks
		\bar{X}	Ranking	\bar{X}	Ranking	
a.	Ministry of Education	4.58	3	4.61	4	Agree
b.	Ministry of Agriculture (Agric input supply company)	4.61	2	4.65	3	Agree
c.	Ministry of Youth/National Development Council	4.53	5	4.37	7	Agree
d.	Board for Vocational Technical Education	4.54	4	4.59	5	Agree
e.	Special grant from Fed/State/Local governments	4.73	1	4.92	1	Agree
f.	Donors/Foundations	4.26	9	4.87	2	Agree
g.	Philanthropies	4.02	10	4.19	10	Agree
h.	Agric-Business men/women	4.48	7	4.41	6	Agree
i.	Farmers congress	3.92	11	3.97	11	Agree
j.	Advisory councils	3.74	12	3.73	12	Agree
k.	International Donors	4.51	6	4.27	9	Agree
l.	Communities	3.64	13	3.67	13	Agree
m.	Students activities	3.57	14	3.61	14	Agree
n.	Non-governmental organization	4.44	8	4.32	8	agree

Mean Ranking = 5 4 3 2 1
 High ←————→ Low

The result from Table 2 indicates that the mean of the respondent’s opinions are above the cut-off point of 3.49 for all the 14 items in the table. The teachers of agricultural science/education and administrators ranked special grants from the Federal, State and Local governments (X4. 73; X=4.92) as the major source of funds and finances for the organization. Students activities was ranked least (X=3.57; X=3.61) as a source of fund and financing of the organization; even though the respondents agreed that

it is an essential source of fund and financing for the organization.

Hypothesis 1

There is no relationship in the scores of the respondents (Principals, Teachers of Agriculture, Board of Vocational Technical Education (DVTE), Ministry officials, students, community and employers) on the responsibilities of various agencies to be involved in an in-school youth organization in agriculture in secondary schools.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that all the 14 sources of funds and financing to in-school youth organization in agriculture were accepted by teachers of agricultural science/education, and administrators as being need and relevant. This finding is in consonance with those of Isuku (2008) and Abimbade (2008) who found out that there is need for more innovative and pragmatic fund sourcing strategies to finance agricultural and vocational education programmes in schools and colleges. Earlier, the National Policy on Education (2004) stipulated that government welcomes the participation of voluntary agencies in the funding of education in Nigeria. This is because the human capital formation built by the educator sector is a reservoir from where the different organizations and establishments draw their skilled labour source. Hence, the need for voluntary agencies, non-governmental organizations and Nigerian in diaspora to be involved in the financing of youth empowerment and skill development programmes of the in-school youth organization in agriculture. This could be done according to Adebeyeje and Afolabi (1991) through direct provision of funds, infrastructural materials, working tools and equipment to schools for agricultural activities.

The findings of the hypothesis revealed a relationship in the mean response between the teachers, administrators agencies and means of identifying and sourcing for funds and finance for the organization. This finding agrees with Adebeyeje and Afolabi (1991) that a joint effort of all and sundry is required to finance and fund youth oriented agricultural programmes in Nigeria so that the country can achieve its youth empowerment goals through skill development and interest creating activities.

The possible reasons for the finding of this study might be due to the moribund nature of the Young Farmers Club which is no more able to stimulate student's interest and encourage skill development in students studying agriculture in secondary schools. It may also be due to the needed eagerness for curriculum innovation in agricultural science in secondary schools to allow for learning by doing and experiential education through the interest stimulating activities of in-school youth organizations in agriculture that requires government attention and strong financial support.

CONCLUSION

In-school youth organization is an agricultural education programme with potential for engineering interesting and stimulating skill development activities necessary for improving the entire socio-economic status of Nigerian youths if well funded and fully implemented. The successful implementation of the programme of the organisation

to a large extent, is dependent on the ability of government, parents, successful agro based individuals, foundations, philanthropist and the students to mobilize the needed quantum of the financial requirements for implementing the laudable programmes of in-school youth organizations in agriculture.

All hands must be on deck to fund and finance the different entrepreneurial and saleable skill development activities of the organization by providing adequate facilities and resources to allow youths in schools to learn by doing, accept responsibilities and develop desirable skills and interest in agriculture as a career. There is the need for innovative and pragmatic fund sourcing strategies to boost the financial status of professional youth organization programmes and activities in Nigeria, for national development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the findings of this study, the following are recommended.

1. Measures/policies should be evolved at national, state and local government levels to finance in-school youth organization programmes, for youth empowerment, through the school.
2. Bodies like Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Education Trust Fund (ETF), National Youth Organisation should be sensitized to contribute to youth development in agriculture through the different programmes of the organization
3. The private sector should also be sensitized to get actively involved in the funding and financing of in-school youth organization programmes in agriculture.
4. Non-Governmental Organization (NGOS) and the entire community should be mobilized and sensitized to contribute to the successful implementation of the programmes of the organization.
5. The school authorities, class teachers and the parents teachers association should also join hands with the agric teachers in identifying the immediate and future needs of the organization so as to achieve the objectives of the organization in schools.
6. Well to do Nigerian, philanthropist and Nigerian in diaspora should be encouraged to provide or complement government efforts to finance and fund in school youth organizations in Nigeria.
7. The students should be made to be involved in productive activities through enterprise development activities to generate fund for re-investment and saving.
8. Proceeds from students farms and activities should be re-ploughed back for development and improvement purpose.

The Ministries of Education and Agriculture officials should come together and work cooperatively with agricultural teachers to source for fund for the organization

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Table 3: Chi-square (X) relationship between ministries/agencies and means of identifying and sourcing for fund and financing for the organization

Agencies/ groups of individuals agencies	Non governmental organization		Grant from government		Donors		Foundations		Philanthropies		Agric business men		Churches		Community			Total	X' value	Remarks	
	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E					
Ministry of Education	3	12.00	18	6.04	6	6.04	4	2.51	8	12.32	7	7.37	3	6.82	5	4.18	11	2.59	65		
BVTE	6	6.50	5	3.25	2	3.25	2	1.35	4	6.63	6	3.97	2	3.67	3	4.94	8	1.39	35		
Ministry of Agriculture	2	4.64	4	2.32	2	2.32	2	0.96	2	4.74	5	2.83	2	2.62	3	3.53	3	0.99	25	194.6	Reject
Member of the Organisation	11	9.29	2	4.64	5	4.64	2	1.93	6	9.48	4	5.67	8	5.25	10	7.06	2	1.99	50		
Principals/VP /HOD	37	35.89	26	17.94	21	17.94	14	7.45	27	36.59	35	21.91	18	20.27	12	27.27	3	7.69	193		
Teachers of Agric. Science	98	85.55	22	42.77	41	42.77	08	17.77	110	87.22	37	52.22	54	18.33	84	65	6	18.33	460		
Total	154		77		77		32		157		94		87		117			33	828		

X Cal 194.58 > X table (43.77)

Critical table value P < 0.05, df 40 = 43.77

Results from Table 3 shows that the calculated X (194.58) is greater than the critical X (43.77) at P < 0.05 level of significance, df = 40.

Hypothesis of no relationship is rejected. A deduction from this table shows that, there is relationship between the agencies and means of identifying for fund and finance for the organization.