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Agricultural Entrepreneurship Awareness: Paving The Way for Agricultural Diversification in Nigeria

^{1*} Esheya, S. E., ¹ Ogbonna, S. I., ² Idenyi E. O., & ³ Obazi S. A.

^{1*} Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, National Open University of Nigeria,
Corresponding author: Email sesheya@noun.edu.ng

¹ Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, National Open University of Nigeria,
Email: sogbonna@noun.edu.ng

² Department of Agricultural Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Alex Ekwueme Federal
University, Ndufu-Alike Ikwo, Email: edwin.idenyi@funai.edu.ng

³ Department of Agricultural Extension, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Email: sunday.obazi@unn.edu.ng

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relevance of agricultural entrepreneurship awareness in boosting agricultural diversification in Nigeria. Four states were purposively selected from each geopolitical zone, five local government areas were chosen from each state and ten respondents were randomly chosen from each LGA. Thus, a sample size of one thousand two hundred (1,200) respondents were used for the study. Three specific objectives were set for the study while relevant data were gathered with the aid of a structure questionnaire. Descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean and a 3-point Likert rating scale were used for data analysis and interpretation. Findings show that value addition to farm produce (mean = 2.6), agricultural processing and packaging (mean= 2.5), organic farming and sustainable agriculture (mean= 2.6), and agricultural technology startups (mean= 2.6) were popular types of agricultural entrepreneurship in the study area. Limited access to credit and financing, lack of basic utilities, lack of access to agricultural information, low bargaining power, susceptibility to abrupt economic shocks, official corruption in the agricultural sector and existence of market-related hazards were the challenges facing agricultural entrepreneurship in the study area. The results further revealed that agricultural entrepreneurship is important in agricultural diversification, production of agricultural inputs, agricultural value chain, preservation-processing-packaging of farm produce, production-leasing of agricultural equipment, maintaining industrial growth, reducing rural-to-urban migration and generation of job opportunities. Thus, government should establish training centres in favour of agricultural entrepreneurs for acquisition of relevant skills in the different areas of the agricultural industry.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Awareness, Opportunities, Challenges, Agricultural diversification

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Agribusiness establishment in agricultural and related industries is referred to as "agriculture entrepreneurship," which is comparable to "entrepreneurship in agriculture" (Alsos, Ljunggren and Pettersen, 2003). The creation of a new economic entity with the goal of expanding in the face of risk

and uncertainty in the agricultural sector is another definition of agricultural entrepreneurship. Agriculture entrepreneurs who innovate, find markets, and meet needs in novel ways are encouraged by this relationship between business and agriculture (Barbieri and Mahoney, 2009). An entrepreneur is a person who manages a company to expand it and has



the managerial and leadership abilities required to accomplish those objectives. The production and commercialization of various agricultural inputs and products are associated with agriculture entrepreneurship. Agriculture entrepreneurship boosts farmers' incomes and aids in the development and selling of a variety of agricultural products (Agri-Studoc, 2024). The profitable fusion of entrepreneurship and agriculture, known as agricultural entrepreneurship, transforms farms into agribusiness. It entails examining and comprehending the tactics used by agricultural entrepreneurs, especially in reaction to the institutional modifications as well as the technical and economic upheavals that the agricultural sector is facing (Foued, et al., 2020). High levels of risk and unpredictability are hallmarks of the agricultural sector, which is also characterized by a variety of restructuring strategies such as downstream concentration, vertical integration, and acquisitions. According to Ituma and Esheya (2024), agricultural entrepreneurship seems to be a tactic for adjusting to globalization and changes in state policy. According to Condor (2019), agricultural entrepreneurship is the capacity of farmers to modify or forsake traditional farming practices and move into new agricultural phases that present new difficulties, such as free markets, sustainability, and digital technologies. In the agricultural sector, entrepreneurship entails implementing one or more tactics to help farmers adjust to the new difficulties facing the sector. Conventional agricultural intensification, diversification, integration, specialization, and reorientation are some of these tactics. Agricultural entrepreneurs are cooperative, management-trained, creative risk-takers who can adjust to change and see agricultural entrepreneurship as intentional and as a way to seize an opportunity. The creation of a new economic entity with the goal of expanding in the face of risk and uncertainty in the agricultural sector is another way to define agriculture entrepreneurship. An entrepreneur is a person who manages a company to expand it and has the managerial and leadership abilities required to accomplish those objectives. The production and commercialization of various agricultural inputs and products are associated with agriculture entrepreneurship. Farmers can increase their revenue and offer a variety of agricultural products with the use of agricultural entrepreneurship (Muhammad, Esheya, and Ibrahim, 2023). The successful union of entrepreneurship and agriculture is known as agricultural entrepreneurship. It also entails applying entrepreneurship concepts to decision-making in agro-based and agricultural enterprises. An individual who manages their agricultural business at their own financial risk is known as an agricultural entrepreneur. Thus, agricultural entrepreneurship has two primary goals. Maximizing profit is the primary goal, and reducing

the risk of financial loss related to agribusiness operations is the second (Muchineripi and Muzari, 2022). Farms are seen as businesses by agricultural entrepreneurs. They view their farms as a way to make money. They have a strong commitment to their farming industry and are prepared to take measured chances in order to increase farm profits and business expansion (Kahan, 2012). A person who produces for the market is an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur is a driven and innovative leader who is constantly searching for ways to enhance and grow his company. According to Charles (2008), an entrepreneur takes calculated risks and is accountable for both gains and losses.

In the opinion of Ihugba, Odii, and Njoku (2013), an entrepreneur is an inventor. Using the abilities and initiative required to foresee demands and introduce innovative ideas to the market, he seeks for better, more profitable, and more efficient ways to accomplish tasks. He also looks for new ideas, products, services, and businesses that are important to any economy. He is a person who starts and/or invests in one or more enterprises, taking on the majority of the risks and reaping the most of the returns. A person who combines resources like labor, materials, and other assets, introduces changes, innovations, and new orders for profitable and fulfilling goals, is considered an entrepreneur by economists. In summary, when certain economic conditions are most favorable, entrepreneurship and economic growth will occur (Ifeanyi and Okechukwu, 2014). Entrepreneurship and agribusiness, which encompasses all economic activities involving the distribution and/or transformation of raw materials from the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, can be linked in the context of agriculture. The final products of these businesses may be utilized for agro-allide enterprises and agricultural purposes. A collection of farm management and business operations that include food production and the distribution of agricultural goods both domestically and internationally are referred to as agricultural business (Olatomide and Omowumi, 2015).

The entrepreneurial method used in agriculture or related fields is known as "agricultural entrepreneurship." It involves the process of implementing innovative agricultural practices, procedures, and methodologies in order to increase productivity and financial gains. According to FAO (2010), by embracing new and creative concepts in agriculture, entrepreneurs transform into innovators who propel changes in the rural economy by taking chances, coming up with novel approaches, and seizing untapped market opportunities. The potential for agricultural entrepreneurship to boost rural economies is enormous. However, it is not an easy road to follow due to issues including a lack of government policy, a lack of entrepreneurial culture, inadequate institutional support, insufficient



infrastructure development, and a lack of public awareness (Banful, Nkonya, and Oboh, 2010). Notwithstanding these limitations, Verma et al. (2018) went on to say that there are a lot of opportunities for the growth of entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector. The main areas of opportunity are agricultural inputs, farming technology and procedures, processing agricultural product, and other agro-allied industries such as horticulture, poultry, dairy development, and so on. Diversification, value addition, organic farming, high-tech agriculture, precision farming, and marketing are examples of activities that contribute to sustainable value addition (Sodangi, Butswat, and Shani, 2021).

In addition to improving rural residents' quality of life, decreasing poverty, raising incomes, and closing the gap between population growth and food production, agricultural entrepreneurship has the potential to boost the country's economy by making it more competitive internationally. A deeper theoretical knowledge of entrepreneurship in agriculture is still required, notwithstanding the rise in the quantity and variety of publications. Contextualizing empirical applications to the unique features of agriculture, applying theoretical techniques and concepts from the field of entrepreneurship, and adopting a dynamic analytical approach to the entrepreneurial process in agriculture are all part of this. Therefore, the specific goals of this study were to determine the respondents' degree of awareness on the types, difficulties, and importance of agricultural entrepreneurship in promoting Nigeria's economic development.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Nigeria is a nation on Africa's western coast. Nigeria shares borders with Niger Republic to the north, Chad and Cameroon to the east, the Atlantic Ocean's Gulf of Guinea to the south, and Benin to the west. Nigeria's terrain is primarily composed of plains in the north and south, with hills and plateaus in the middle. The

Niger-Benue, Lake Chad, and Gulf of Guinea basins are Nigeria's three main drainage basins (NPC, 2006). Nigeria's topography is varied, having dry and humid equatorial climates. The most varied aspect of Nigeria, though, is its populace. The nation is home to speakers of hundreds of languages, including English, Tiv, Igbo, Fula, Hausa, Edo, Ibibio, and Yoruba (Esheya, 2025).

Large reserves of natural gas and petroleum are among the nation's many natural resources. Abuja, located in the Federal Capital Territory, was established by order in 1976 and serves as the country's capital. The nation's top commercial and industrial metropolis is still Lagos, the former capital (Ogbonna, Esheya, and Nwandu, 2024). Nigeria, the most populous Black nation in the world, is situated between Benin and Cameroon on Africa's west coast and borders the North Atlantic Ocean. The total area of Nigeria is 356,668 square miles (923,7770 square kilometers). The country is separated into six geopolitical zones and consists of 36 states plus the Capital Territory of Abuja (Anthony and Toyin, 2025).

- **North Central** (also known as **Middle Belt**): Consisting of **Benue**, **Kogi**, **Kwara**, **Nasarawa**, **Niger**, and **Plateau** States, as well as the **Federal Capital Territory**.
- **North East**: Consisting of **Adamawa**, **Bauchi**, **Borno**, **Gombe**, **Taraba**, and **Yobe** States.
- **North West**: Consisting of **Jigawa**, **Kaduna**, **Kano**, **Katsina**, **Kebbi**, **Sokoto**, and **Zamfara** States.
- **South East**: Consisting of **Abia**, **Anambra**, **Ebonyi**, **Enugu**, and **Imo** States.
- **South South** (also known as **Niger Delta region**): Consisting of **Akwa Ibom**, **Bayelsa**, **Cross River**, **Delta**, **Edo**, and **Rivers** States.
- **South West**: Consisting of **Ekiti**, **Lagos**, **Ogun**, **Ondo**, **Osun**, and **Oyo** States.

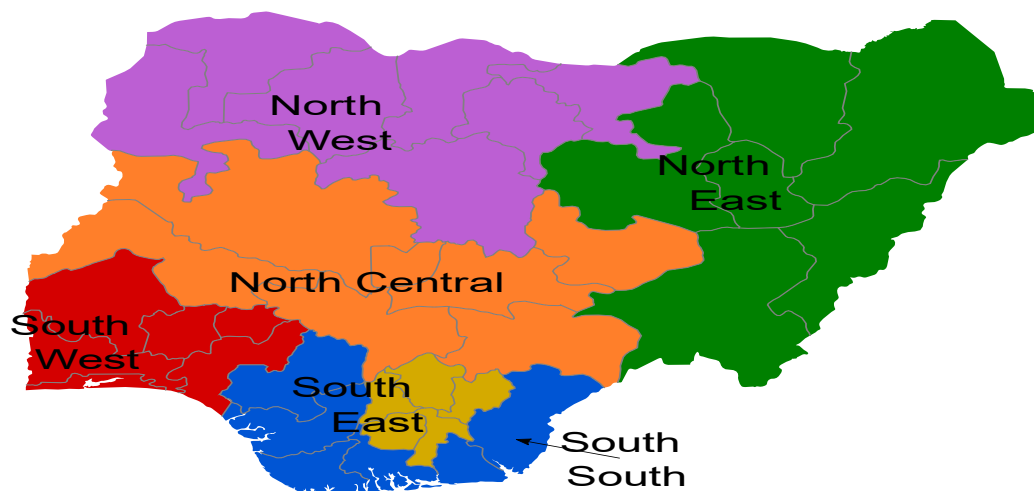


Figure 1: Map of Nigeria Showing Political Zones

Purposively, data from 24 states: four from each of the six geopolitical zones were gathered for this study. The justification for using purposive sampling in this study is to enable the selection of participants who are most relevant to the research question; ensuring the collected data is rich and directly pertinent to the specific objectives of this research. Ten responders were chosen at random from each of the five local government areas (LGAs) in each state. As a result, 1,200 respondents made up the sample size for this investigation. Using a 3-point Likert rating scale, with High Awareness (HA) = 3, Low Awareness (LA) = 2, and No Awareness (NA) = 1, the respondents' perceived level of knowledge regarding the types, difficulties, and significance of agricultural entrepreneurship in economic development in the study area was evaluated. The study's results were interpreted using the respondents' mean scores from the 3-point rating scale. Only variables having a mean score of 2.5 or above were deemed significant and acceptable under the decision rule.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Types of Agricultural Entrepreneurship

The distribution of respondents by degree of knowledge of the various forms of agricultural entrepreneurship that exist in Nigeria is displayed in Table 1. According to the results, the first variable taken into account, value addition to farm produce, had (mean = 2.6), indicating relevance. The process of turning basic agricultural products into higher-value goods, such as turning cassava into garri, yam into yam flour, soy beans, groundnuts, seasoning seeds into vegetable oil and animal feed, and pig into bacon, is known as value addition to farm produce. Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) (2013) asserts that value addition strategies improve the transportation and storage of changed agricultural goods for better use at a later time. Other significant variables included agricultural processing and packaging (mean= 2.5), organic farming and sustainable agriculture (mean= 2.6), and agricultural technology startups (mean= 2.6). Developing and implementing technological solutions for agricultural problems is the focus of agricultural technology, or agri-tech. In order to maximize crop yields, resource use, and overall farm efficiency, agri-tech entrepreneurs create and apply cutting-edge agricultural technologies such as drones, IoT-based solutions, precision farming, and data analytics.

By encouraging soil health, biodiversity, and eco-friendly farming techniques, entrepreneurs are meeting the growing demand for agricultural products that are produced ethically and sustainably (Agri-Studoc, 2024). Using ecologically friendly farming practices is a component of sustainable agriculture. This aims to maintain or increase yields while reducing the adverse environmental effects of

farming. Crop rotation, cover crops, conservation agriculture, organic farming, and agroforestry are some examples of these methods. These assist sustainable agriculture, preserve natural resources, and advance ecological balance. Individuals, companies, and even the government may innovate, adapt, and prosper in the agricultural sector with the aid of these entrepreneurship skills (Inyang, Esheya, and Udoh, 2023). Agro-processing, which is the conversion of raw agricultural products into things with added value, is one activity that agricultural entrepreneurs may do. This could entail processes like canning, preserving, or turning agricultural produce into packaged food items (Narendran and Ranganathan, 2015). Other factors with negligible mean scores included aquaponics farming (mean = 1.8), specialty crop farming (mean = 2.0), agricultural consultancy services (mean = 1.7), management of farm enterprises (mean = 2.4), sales and marketing of farm produce (mean = 1.8), and agricultural tourism (mean = 1.9). This implies that these forms of agricultural entrepreneurship were not yet well-liked in the research region.

Overseeing daily farm activities, such as budgeting, labor management, and crop and animal management, is known as farm management. This is to guarantee the professional execution of cultural activities in the farm enterprise's crops division. This implies that in order to achieve maximum productivity, land preparation, planting, weeding, manuring, etc., are closely supervised and completed on schedule and expertly (Uneze, 2013). While specialty crop farming entrepreneurs concentrate on cultivating high-value, niche crops like organic vegetables, exotic fruits, or herbs, farm produce sales and marketing involves advertising and selling agricultural products to agents, middlemen, or retailers for business, or even directly to consumers. Because they satisfy certain customer tastes, these specialty crops frequently have a greater market value (Zahra and Wright, 2011).

Agricultural consultant services, on the other hand, involve giving farmers professional guidance on business strategy, crop management, animal rearing and maintaining, and best practices. a rare practice in the field of study (Esheya, 2025). Hydroponics, which grows plants without soil, and aquaculture, which raises fish, are combined in aquaponics farming, a sustainable agricultural technique. Aquaponics entrepreneurs design integrated systems in which fish waste feeds plants and the plants filter the water for the fish. This strategy can be applied at several dimensions, ranging from small-scale urban settings to bigger commercial enterprises, and it permits the efficient use of resources (Kahan, 2012). Agricultural tourism entrepreneurs allow the public to visit their farms for leisure and education, according to Muzari (2022). Activities like pick-your-own food, farm



excursions, and agricultural workshops may fall under this category. In addition to bringing in extra cash for the farm, agritourism helps consumers connect with the place where their food comes from.

Regretfully, Nigeria still lacks these great forms of agricultural entrepreneurship (Ituma and Esheya, 2024).

Table1: Awareness Level on Types of Agricultural Entrepreneurship

| Variables | High Awareness | Low Awareness | No Awareness | Obs | Mean | Std. dev. | Min | Max |
|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|-----|----------|-----------|-----|-----|
| Value addition to farm produce | 95 | 66 | 14 | 175 | 2.642857 | 0.641069 | 1 | 3 |
| Management of farm enterprises | 95 | 55 | 24 | 174 | 2.408046 | 0.721386 | 1 | 3 |
| Farm produce sales and marketing | 12 | 120 | 45 | 177 | 1.813559 | 0.5375 | 1 | 3 |
| Specialized crop farming | 42 | 96 | 37 | 175 | 2.028571 | 0.673203 | 1 | 3 |
| Agricultural consultancy services | 9 | 115 | 50 | 174 | 1.764368 | 0.534038 | 1 | 3 |
| Agricultural technology startups | 95 | 69 | 10 | 174 | 2.588506 | 0.605739 | 1 | 3 |
| Organic farming and sustainable agriculture | 120 | 43 | 7 | 170 | 2.664706 | 0.554104 | 1 | 3 |
| Agricultural processing and packaging | 100 | 55 | 23 | 178 | 2.642584 | 0.711849 | 1 | 3 |
| Aquaponics Farming | 7 | 132 | 39 | 178 | 1.820225 | 0.476849 | 1 | 3 |
| Agricultural tourism | 0 | 15 | 160 | 175 | 1.914286 | 0.280745 | 1 | 2 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

3.2 Challenges of Agricultural Entrepreneurship

A substantial mean score of (mean = 2.7) was found for limited access to credit and financing in Table 2. This suggests that the study area faces a significant issue with this characteristic. One of the main issues facing businesses, particularly in light of the recession, is the lack of suitable financing available to agricultural entrepreneurs, according to Hamber (2024). Among the main challenges faced by entrepreneurs are the low purchasing power of rural consumers, which results in inadequate sales volume; a lack of funding to launch a business; decreased profitability as a result of competition; and low prices for goods and services. It will cost money to transform a farm for domestic use into one focused on the market. It can be necessary to increase output, add processing, hire transportation to reach to market, or replace equipment. All these need funding. The farmer can assess his own resources first, but he will need credit if he does not have enough money. Regrettably, banking institutions' exorbitant borrowing rates and lack of collateral terrify would-be agricultural entrepreneurs. The development of potential agricultural businesses has been impeded by this one aspect alone (Akenbor and Esheya, 2023).

Another significant aspect in the research area is the lack of basic utilities (of (mean = 2.8). The epileptic power supply has made doing business in Nigeria more expensive, which has been a blow to the country's economy and business environment. The cost of production has gone up due to the alternate power source. The country's substandard roads and poor road network have made it harder to connect states, and the cost of shipping commodities is high.

Agricultural output is wasted as a result of inadequate storage facilities. The development of agricultural entrepreneurship in Nigeria has been hindered by the insurgency, which has scared off potential enterprises (Ihugba, Odii, and Njoku, 2013). A major obstacle is the lack of access to agricultural information (mean = 2.7), as productive and healthy enterprises require a variety of information. According to Foued et al. (2020), information offered by extension and support services, including non-governmental organizations, primarily concentrates on production technology rather than prices, contacts, market opportunities, or company management. FAO (2010) states that market information systems for agriculture are starting to appear in many developing nations; however, many of these are hard to reach and do not deliver the information quickly or affordably. Information must be arranged, presented, and conveyed in a way that benefits agricultural business owners. This is not usually how information is presented. Presentation, communication, and content are all crucial. Farmers can get the information they need to succeed as business owners through learning groups, radio, posters, and booklets (Olatomide and Omowumi, 2015).

The findings in Table 2 further demonstrate that Nigerian agricultural entrepreneurship is greatly impacted by low bargaining power (mean = 2.7). Due to their often-low individual production levels, small-scale entrepreneurial farmers frequently have little negotiating power with suppliers. They may be forced to pay more for equipment and inputs due to a lack of bargaining power (Condor, 2019). In the marketplace, negotiating power is no different. Small-scale farmers



frequently have to accept lower pricing for their produce since they have less negotiating leverage. They would have a better chance of determining market prices for their items if they had more negotiating power (Ifeanyi and Okechukwu, 2014). Additionally, the mean scores for susceptibility to abrupt economic shocks (mean =2.7) were significant. Emerging Nigerian agricultural entrepreneurs are frequently at risk from abrupt shifts in the economy, such as crop failure or surprisingly low yields; adjustments to input and product prices; market relocations; shifts in interest rates; the addition of fees for services; and new markets (Barbieri and Mahoney, 2009). For the farm business, these adjustments could mean the difference between profit and loss. There is a serious chance that farmers won't be able to bounce back from these shocks. Strengthening the agricultural business's asset base or lowering its risk exposure are important ways to address such issues (Anho, 2014).

One of the biggest obstacles to agricultural entrepreneurship in Nigeria has been found to be official corruption in the agricultural sector (mean =2.7). It is difficult to start and operate agricultural businesses in the nation because smooth operations require lubricated hands (Banful, Nkonya, and Oboh, 2010). Government funding and assistance for the

growth of agricultural entrepreneurship frequently fail to reach the intended recipients, which has a detrimental impact on their ability to obtain financing, grants, subsidies, empowerment, and capacity building (Amusa, Anugwo, and Esheya, 2017). Because they operate in a hazardous environment, agricultural entrepreneurs are significantly impacted by the existence of market-related hazards (mean=2.5). When they produce only for the market, the hazards rise. Alsos, Ljunggren, and Pettersen (2003) state that these farmers must make tough decisions, especially regarding the markets they should serve. If the global market prices for one or two products decline, concentrating solely on producing them for the global market may have fatal consequences. Producing for the local market instead of riskier export crops is a logical and entrepreneurial decision for many small-scale farmers (Charles, 2008). Even yet, there are hazards involved with producing for the local market. Local marketplaces are frequently oversupplied, which lowers pricing and, hence, profitability. The most sensible course of action for other small-scale farmers is to cultivate first for their own consumption and later for the market (Esheya, 2022).

Table 2: Awareness Level on Perceived Challenges of Agricultural Entrepreneurship

| Challenges | High Awareness | Low Awareness | No Awareness | Obs | Mean | Std. dev. | Min | Max |
|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|-----|----------|-----------|-----|-----|
| Poor access to finance and credit | 95 | 74 | 0 | 169 | 2.56213 | 0.497599 | 2 | 3 |
| Absence of basic amenities | 144 | 31 | 0 | 175 | 2.822857 | 0.382885 | 2 | 3 |
| Poor access to agricultural information | 155 | 15 | 0 | 170 | 2.911765 | 0.284475 | 2 | 3 |
| Inappropriate government agricultural policies and programmes | 11 | 121 | 44 | 176 | 1.8125 | 0.528137 | 1 | 3 |
| Unavailability of agricultural extension services | 63 | 95 | 15 | 173 | 2.277457 | 0.613236 | 1 | 3 |
| Poor bargaining power | 108 | 52 | 16 | 176 | 2.522727 | 0.658609 | 1 | 3 |
| Absence of appropriate agricultural technology | 10 | 108 | 55 | 173 | 1.739884 | 0.556645 | 1 | 3 |
| Susceptibility to sudden economic shocks | 151 | 15 | 2 | 168 | 2.886905 | 0.353352 | 1 | 3 |
| Official corruption in the agriculture sector | 134 | 36 | 0 | 170 | 2.788235 | 0.409766 | 2 | 3 |
| Existence of market related risks | 114 | 28 | 20 | 162 | 2.580247 | 0.70251 | 1 | 3 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

3.3 Relevance of Agricultural Entrepreneurship

The respondents' distribution by degree of awareness regarding the importance of agricultural entrepreneurship in Nigeria is displayed in Table 3. One of the important potential that agricultural entrepreneurship offers is agricultural diversification (mean =2.7). Changes in cropping patterns from traditionally planted less profitable crops to more profitable crops like oilseeds, pulses, fodder crops,

horticulture, medicinal and aromatic plants, floriculture, etc. are all part of agriculture's diversification. Small-scale agro-based businesses, livestock operations, and fishing operations are also included (Fick, 2002). According to Sharma, Tiwari, and Sharma (2010), diversification improves profitability, job possibilities, and resource efficiency. Because farmers can launch their own businesses producing seeds, organic fertilizer, and pesticides, the

production of agricultural inputs (mean =2.7) is highly relevant. Farm inputs must be readily available, reasonably priced, easily accessible, and of high quality and quantity in order for agriculture to thrive. Agrochemicals, fertilizers, and seeds are necessary to raise farmers' incomes and productivity in developing nation. By increasing productivity and, consequently, the profitability of agriculture through investments in productivity-enhancing agricultural inputs such fertilizers, improved seeds, and water control techniques, poverty can be reduced in Nigeria (FAO, 2010). This claim is supported by the substantial positive correlation between crop yields and fertilizer application.

Young people may also want to pursue a career in information and communication technology (ICT) services for agribusiness owners, which entails utilizing creative approaches to deliver agricultural data. ICT deployment has the ability to increase efficiency by making essential information, like weather, price, and pre- and post-harvest information, available online. Mobile phones and the networks that connect them are examples of ICT technologies that are now widely available, opening up new channels and giving farmers vital information on managing production systems, market access services, and financial inclusion.

Table 3 shows that the agricultural value chain (mean = 2.7) also had a substantial value. makers of agricultural inputs, farmers, dealers in agricultural products, makers of agricultural machinery and implements, and distributors and distributors of agricultural products (including exports) make up agriculture. Agriculture is made possible by input manufacturers and traders (Uloh, Esheya, and Muhammad, 2024). Improved seeds, technology, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and other items are sold to farmers by input manufacturers and dealers. Agricultural machinery, tools, and implements used on farms are also sold by them. Crop and livestock products are produced by farmers. Agricultural produce dealers purchase and sell agricultural goods; they store and/or transport them in the proper conditions for later delivery to wholesalers, merchants, or the end user at the appropriate time and location (Omogo, Esheya, and Umeh, 2023). Agricultural processors prepare agricultural products for industrial use as well as for consumption by humans and/or animals. For instance, cassava is processed to make starch, garri, flour, and animal feed, whereas palm fruits are processed to make animal feed, palm oil, and palm kernel oil.

Farm equipment, including harvesters, trimmers, dryers, pruning machines, and hydraulic parts, is designed and produced by agricultural manufacturers. Logistics are the main emphasis of agricultural

distributors and exporters, who stock farm products and distribute them to wholesalers, retailers, or consumers across the country or for export (Hamber, 2024).

In agricultural entrepreneurship, the preservation, processing, and packaging of farm produce (mean =2.8) is a significant variable. Consumer preferences are significantly shifting in favor of processed foods. A significant amount of Nigerian agricultural produce is wasted because there are insufficient facilities for food processing, transportation, and storage and warehousing. Through effective management and marketing strategies, agricultural entrepreneurs enhance the value of agricultural products (Bridge, O'Neil, and Cromie, 2003).

Primary, secondary, and tertiary processing of agricultural goods are all included in agricultural processing (Esheya and Awolumate, 2025). Purifying raw materials by eliminating extraneous objects and immature grains, followed by grading them into distinct lots or transforming them into a form appropriate for later processing, is the focus of primary processing. Tertiary processing is just turning secondarily processed materials into ready-to-eat form, whereas secondary processing involves turning primary processed raw materials into a product that is fit for food uses or consumption after cooking, roasting, or frying (Esheya and Anagah, 2025). Another important component of agricultural entrepreneurship is the production and leasing of agricultural equipment (mean = 2.8). Many drudgeries are involved in Nigeria's current farming technologies (Ubokudom, Esheya, and Udioko, 2021). Farmers must use agricultural equipment, such as tractors and processing and packing machines, to get over the tedium. This need gives agricultural entrepreneurs the chance to produce, buy, sell, or rent agricultural equipment to Nigerian farmers. Additional agricultural tools include seeding equipment, fertilizer applicators, weeding and crop harvesting instruments, sprayers, and planting equipment (Ituma and Esheya, 2024). Purchasing agricultural equipment can be costly, particularly for young people. Under these conditions, young people can look for work as leasing brokers, facilitating transactions between leasing corporations and farmers (Mittal, 2015). Entrepreneurship in agriculture also has a role in maintaining industrial growth (mean =2.8), reducing rural-to-urban migration (mean =2.8), and generating job possibilities (mean =2.8). Therefore, it can serve as a primary solution to this complexity, reducing the strain on agriculture, creating jobs for young people in rural areas, reducing rural-to-urban migration, increasing national income, maintaining industrial development in rural areas, and relieving pressure on urban cities (Bridge, O'Neil, and Cromie, 2003). Entrepreneurship in agriculture is urgently needed for increased production and profitability in light of the



rising rates of unemployment and poverty in rural regions (Adamu, Esheya, and Tanko, 2021).

Table 3: Awareness Level on Perceived Relevance of Agricultural Entrepreneurship

| Relevance | High Awareness | Low Awareness | No Awareness | Obs | Mean | Std. dev. | Min | Max |
|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|-----|----------|-----------|-----|-----|
| Agricultural diversification | 132 | 36 | 0 | 168 | 2.785714 | 0.411553 | 2 | 3 |
| Production of agricultural inputs | 130 | 26 | 12 | 168 | 2.702381 | 0.594984 | 1 | 3 |
| Agricultural value chain | 130 | 38 | 0 | 168 | 2.77381 | 0.419615 | 2 | 3 |
| Dealing in agricultural produce | 0 | 153 | 19 | 172 | 1.889535 | 0.314384 | 1 | 2 |
| Farm produce preservation, processing and packaging | 156 | 19 | 0 | 175 | 2.891429 | 0.311993 | 2 | 3 |
| Manufacturing and leasing agricultural equipment | 156 | 13 | 6 | 175 | 2.857143 | 0.438313 | 1 | 3 |
| Reducing the burden of agriculture | 156 | 19 | 0 | 175 | 2.891429 | 0.311993 | 2 | 3 |
| Sustenance of industrial development | 156 | 19 | 0 | 175 | 2.891429 | 0.311993 | 2 | 3 |
| Curbing rural to urban migration | 156 | 13 | 6 | 175 | 2.857143 | 0.438313 | 1 | 3 |
| Creation of employment opportunities | 156 | 19 | 0 | 175 | 2.891429 | 0.311993 | 2 | 3 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

By fusing creative agribusiness tactics with sustainable farming methods, agricultural entrepreneurship turns conventional farms into vibrant agricultural and associated businesses. The issue of unemployment, particularly among the rural population, has been a persistent challenge for Nigeria. Regretfully, the nation has not adequately addressed this issue. It is widely acknowledged that in order to promote economic growth and job possibilities in all societies, entrepreneurship is an essential component. These entrepreneurs bridge the gap between agriculture and market demands by concentrating on a variety of initiatives, including agro-processing, agro-technology firms, and specialty crops. Human and animal life and existence depend on the production and distribution of food, which is made possible by agricultural enterprise. Opportunities for value addition in agricultural products have the ability to not only alleviate unemployment but also advance the nation's development goal in a more sustainable way by striking a balance between the need for growth and

the nation's natural advantages. The need for targeted support and awareness to foster a thriving agricultural entrepreneurial ecosystem is highlighted by the challenges that persist despite the overwhelming relevance of agricultural entrepreneurship. These challenges include poor access to finance and credit, lack of basic amenities, poor access to agricultural information, poor bargaining power, vulnerability to sudden economic shocks, official corruption in the agriculture sector, and the existence of market-related risks.

The following suggestions were made in light of the study's findings:

- Government bears the obligation of resolving these issues and creating an atmosphere that encourages agricultural entrepreneurship as a vital tactic for economic expansion and advancement.
- Government should create a patent law that benefits agricultural entrepreneurs and promotes Nigerian-made goods. It should also increase significant investments in rural infrastructure, particularly rural roads, to enable agricultural investors to easily sell their goods in cities and markets.

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