# Major Factors Militating against Youths Participation in Agricultural Production in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

*This survey is carried out with primary aim of identifying the major factors militating against youth participation in Agricultural production in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State, Nigeria. The population of the study is made up of all the youths in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State out of which six clans, namely: Asaga, Amaekpu, Isigwu, Ndi Uduma Awoke, Akanu and Amangwu were randomly selected for the study. A sample of 194 youths were randomly sampled for the study. The research instrument used is structured questionnaire. A glossary review of literature and data collected show that those factors are, land tenure system, non-availability of capital, poor storage facilitates, lack of social amenities, non-functional extension services to discharge the improved seeds and seedlings to youths and drudgery in farming due to use of out-dated implements. Consequently, there is need to determine the potentials of youths in agricultural production in the State, the nature of these opportunities and the factors influencing them. The Government through Ministry of Agriculture should supply agriculture inputs such as fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides at appropriate time and at a subsidized price to encourage greater percentage of use.*

***Keywords:*** *Agriculture, Adoption, Extension, Youths, Development*

## INTRODUCTION

It is almost axiomatic or otherwise empirical to state that Agriculture has a very vital role if not central position in the economy of any country. For agriculture to play its all important role it must not be neglected or made occupation of the poor but should be accorded a prominent place in the national policy and development plans. Nigeria along with a host of other countries are described as less developed or developing economies and still have a rural economy with large proportions of their population still employed on the land. There is therefore the urgent need for strategies for raising rural income through agriculture from the stand point of renewable resources; it is vivid that Nigeria is still primarily an agriculture base country. This stand point is accepted by people who are not deceive by the recent contributions of non-renewable resources especially petroleum to the country's economy.

Mellow (1969) states that while development occurs, the population grows and per capita income vises, and to feed more people a better quality diet, agricultural production must increase. In agricultural extension, governments are facing a great challenge. They must decide on how the developing countries can increase agricultural inputs, outputs and productivity in order to raise income as well as increase the contribution of agriculture to national economic growth. For agriculture to stand up to the challenges of modern time, it must be modernized and made more productive. Most development plans often recognize

modernization of agriculture as one of the important but yet most difficult tasks. To gear Nigerian agriculture to the general rural and economic development of the country demands measures which will help the youths in rapid modernization of the agricultural sector. According to Okigbo (1974), Nigeria agriculture is still very traditional, completely indigenous and slowest growing for a major economic sector. It is plagued by several structures like rigid land tenure, traditional low capacity tools, near ritual cultural practices, extremely low level of production inputs and debilitating losses from diseases, pests and inadequate storage. For agricultural productivity to occur, the knowledge and skill of the farmers must keep increasing and challenging.

As farmers adopt more and more new methods their ideas change. They develop new and different attitudes towards agriculture, towards the natural world and towards themselves. Their increasing contacts and transactions with government agencies and merchants draw them into close acquaintance with the world beyond their villages. Nigerian agriculture has its base in millions of farm families operating small farms. Apart from the problems of physical environment (climate, soil, topography, vegetation etc.) our local agriculture is set formidable socio-economic problems which have always posed serious barriers to modernization. The major socio-economic barriers include:

1. The farmer's traditional concept about farming.
2. Poor tools and primitive farming techniques.
3. Use of poor quality farm inputs.
4. Illiteracy.
5. Lack of capital.
6. Unprogressive social customs especially land tenure systems.

The Youths today cannot be said to be conservative. They now want and desire changes in their knowledge, interests, attitudes and skills. A well organized plan is therefore very necessary to satisfy this desire through effective Agricultural Extension Service. Agricultural Extension Services are essentially the link between the agricultural research and Education centers in the country on one hand and the practicing farmers and to stimulate and encourage the Youths to adopt the latest information which will enable them to improve their methods and systems of production, management and marketing. The extension service is also responsible for ensuring that farmers and food producers' problems are brought to the attention of appropriate government and research departments (Okoro, 1985). Based on the findings of the foregoing, this study sets to isolate the major factors militating against youth participation in agricultural production in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State, Nigeria. Therefore, the major objectives, which the study intends to achieve are:

1. To identify the major factors that militates against youths' participation in agricultural production in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State.
2. To suggest possible solutions that will motivate the youths to participate actively in agricultural production.
3. To get useful information to be used by agricultural policy makers in planning for development of agriculture in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State in particular and the country at large.

**The state of Agricultural Production and Youth Participation in Nigeria**

How to obtain enough food regularly has been a constant problem in Nigeria, and this problem is increasing immensely and attracts attention only when it attains such catastrophic proportion as occasioned by drought, famine and malnutrition. We must go back to the land by adopting farming either as a business or a hubby. It is very necessary now to mobilize the country to agriculture if the nation is to attain self-sufficiency in food production or agricultural production. Programs must be initiated through Federal, State and Local Governments to orientate Nigerians, especially the Youths, to embark on farming. Unless this is done, the power that can save Nigeria from collapsing under the energy supplying effect of hunger and the deadly emaciating destructiveness of malnutrition is left much to be desired. All governments that have ruled Nigeria have in one form or the other pronounced agricultural development of the Country as the most important corner stone of Nigeria's development plan. Some have been attempted to aid agriculture so as the increase food production. Stubbornly, it seems, agricultural development has not taken the direction the governments wanted it to take.

Thus, some questions should be asked, if all governments in Nigeria had whole-heartedly put soul, mind and body into agriculture, and if the war against hunger was real, why then the hue and cry about scarcity of food now? It means that the bull has never been taken by the horn. Also, it is either the right things are not done at the right time or policies are only effective on paper but defective in reality. We have experienced in the recent past the "Otu Olu Obodo", Agricultural Credit and Subsidy Schemes, Poultry and Animal Production Schemes, Establishment of Agricultural Banks, and Loan Schemes, the Operation Feed the Nation, the Green Revolution, the Food for the People's Program, School to Land, Agricultural Development Scheme, River Basin, Accelerated Food Production. Do it yourself and River Basin Development Authority to mention but a few. All these aimed at stimulating and generating increased agricultural production in Nigeria for her to become self-sufficient in food, fiber, and raw materials for industries.

In spite of all these, with huge sums of money spent on them, the bell is ringing. There is little or no improvement. Why? Is the nation's farm extension and continuity development agency expanded enough to cover the entire country and reach all rural (youths) farmers with a concentrated educational effort on improving farm practices and farm yields? Are the areas having the greatest potential for increased production of a particular commodity aided? Do the planners of the programs seek public opinion/support in order to make implementation of policies easy? Despite frequent considerations of these programs at the expert level, practical actions have invariably lagged behind. This is because the uneducated farmers are conspicuously abandoned. They form presently the greater percentage of our produce. They should not be neglected because when new ideas are properly presented to them, the so-called uneducated youths are capable of learning. It is true that increased agricultural productivity by the participation of the youths in the rural areas depends primarily upon the acceptance of cultural and modern technological changes at the level of the un-educated rural farmers. Youths can participate higher in Agricultural production and achieve higher productivity on adoption of proven and locally

applicable scientific farming practices. These scientific practices should not be complicated as not to pose problem of application to the rural un-educated youths. To adopt and successfully use the improved farming techniques, rural youths must understand them, and to understand requires affective teaching by the Agricultural Extension Workers, the Government Agency responsible for promoting the adoption of new farming practices through educational procedures should be up and doing. Kelsey and Hearme (1963) agree that adoption is straight forward if the youths feel they want the new knowledge.

**Problems Confronting Agriculture and the Place of Agricultural Education**

***Number and Quality of Farmers:*** The bulk of food supply in the country lies in the hands of ageing and illiterate farmers whose number are on the decline. The young or the youth and the educated are no longer interested in farming or agriculture because they consider it to be job for the poor or less privileged.

***The Use of Outdated Tools:*** Majority of our farmers are still using crude implements such as hoes and cutlasses, this primitive implements require a lot of planting of energy and yet not as productive as mechanical instruments.

***Land Tenure System:*** In many areas, ownership of land is not clearly defined, but the land belongs to the family. Consequently, fertile land/soil may be left uncultivated and fragmentation of land may cause low productivity.

***Number and Quality of Extension Staff:*** Inadequate number of trained agricultural extension staff to educate the youths on the modern technology of farming is a major constraint in agriculture.

***Inadequate Financial Resources:*** Majority of farmers are poor and thus cannot afford to buy tractors and its accessories which makes agriculture easy and more productive.

***Inadequate Storage and Market Facilities:*** Marketing facilities are provided for export crop alone. If a farmer can easily market their product in local market their income will increase and they will invest more on agriculture, thus increasing their productivity.

***Poor Infrastructural Facilities:*** The Government (Federal, State and Local) should provide basic infrastructural facilities like electricity, pipe borne water, good roads and health facilities in the rural areas where farming are usually carried out.

***Lack of Incentives and Credit Facilities:*** Credit facilities are not provided adequately to satisfy farmers. The agricultural credit schemes are not effective because of stringent demand for security which is beyond the reach of the beginners in the farm business.

***Level of Rural Development:*** Lack of rural development encourages able-bodied men and women to migrate from the villages to the cities where there are better amenities such as pipe borne water, electricity and centers for recreation.

***Sociological and Psychological Effects:*** In West Africa, as in many other developing regions, peasant farmers are considered to occupy the lowest rank of society.

***Communication Network:*** The lack of adequate information media such as radio, cinema, and television also adversely affects agricultural productivity, as they could be

used to inform the farmer on timing and on methods of planting, distribution and prices and markets for his products.

Education is the bedrock, the point upon which all development rest. It is indispensable in agricultural development. Uguru (1981) describes agricultural education as "basic to the development of agriculture in any community". Also, Akinsanmi (1975) sees education as "a weapon of liberation from ignorance, poverty and disease and that any improvement in tropical agriculture must involve education for the youths". Farmer training is most effective when it is adapted to the needs of those who have both the means and incentive to farm (FAO, 1970). The youths who are farmers in communities can neither be said to have the means nor the incentive. They need current agricultural education as a means of government recognition and assistance as an incentive.

The solution must be found on education of the youths on useful research findings. According to Wilde (1995), agricultural research must be broadened to cover the study of all the factors which comprise the youths' acceptance of change. One of these factors relates to the feasibility of proposed changes. Does the youth command the additional input of labour and other factors of production that are required and if they cannot, can the government take the necessary action to put them at their disposal? A second factor relates to the profitability of the proposed innovation. In the eyes of the youths, will the benefits be sufficient considering the costs of the extra labor and other inputs involved, the troublesome nature of the adjustment of his working habits and the degree of risk inherent in the proposed benefits? A third and final sector relates to the proper approach within a certain social frame work to try whatever is judged by others to be his advantage.

According to Oluwasanmi (2000), the fear on the part of the youths that they may not benefit personally from responding to the incentive or adopting the innovation can also be a problem in a proposal to introduce change. These problems could be reduced considering the number of licensed buying agents and as Oluwasanmi indicates, developing the infrastructure. Okarimia (2005), in an earlier session emphasized the need for communities to feel that they are actively participating in the development process. Unfortunately, the rural sector is often neglected and does not reap the same benefits of economic development as other sectors. There is no aid of a domestic work corps that could be harnessed to improve the environment by constructing roads, running literacy programs, providing electricity. He said that, this makes the youths in running helter-skelter from rural to urban areas to settle down where they feel that there is comfort. The lack of capital which most innovations require constitutes the main reason for the youths not adopting change even if they are convinced of its value.

Two possible sources of capital are savings and credit. The potential savings but of the present low incomes are very limited. Contributing to Agricultural Research Priorities for Economic Development in Africa, Carl (1978) noted that it is not an over statement, however, to say that many "change agents" in African Nations are telling young farmers to adopt many farm practices without elementary knowledge on the profitability of alternative practices. Therefore, the researcher examines the needs of the youths, suggest solutions, and feed these solutions both to the youths via change agents. There is much relationship

between the extension workers and the research. According to Draw Max (1978) it is absolutely that an extension system be studied along with and parallel to the research endeavor so that the research can ultimately lead to the transformation of the habits and working habits of the youths in an entire region. Mosher (1966) sees an extension agents as a person who advises farm operators about ways in which they might increase the productivity of agriculture. The extension agent thus must be equipped to draw on research results, teach the farmers (youths) the knowledge and skills they need to apply the research findings successfully, help the youths locate farm supplies and equipment needed for the profitable to utilization of available farm credits, organize the youths into co-operatives and allowed them make their own arrangements as it will favour them. Mosher laments that the reverse is the case where the extension agent is no longer acting as an adviser, teacher, analyzer and organizer, there is no steady flow of information with respect to new technology, there is no steady flow of instructional materials that they can employ in teaching the youths on how to use the new technology and there is no in-service training and there is no aid of subject matter specialists who should be available for consultation on special technical problems.

There are many factors influencing agricultural productivity. Mosher (1966) identifies five essentials and accelerations of agricultural development. The essentials must be available to the youths if they are expected to participate effectively on agricultural productivity: Markets for farm products, constantly changing technology, local availability of supplies and equipment, production incentives for youths, transportation and his accelerators. Mosher listed as: education for development, production for development, and group action by youths. Mosher believes that these essentials depend so much on each other for their effectiveness. According to Mosher, a progressive rural structure is one that expedites the flow of goods, information and agricultural support services between the youths and the wider society and modern agriculture as one which is highly dynamic and highly flexible as well as increasingly productive, where the market and transport facilities provide efficient mobility of farm products, farm supplies and equipment, credit, information and people to and from all the farms of the Nation's agriculture.

Nwosu (2002) writing on the role of extension work in agricultural development goes on to say that "if agricultural production is to be high and efficient, Government should rise up to fight against those major factors that militates against the youths and carry the youths along with it. Nwosu further suggests that Government as an agent of change should bear the major responsibility in agricultural productivity, providing conditions conducive for the youths to change. Okwurume (2001) in his article "the prospects for accelerated domestic food production" in new Nigeria Newspaper of 24th October, 2001 laments that our agricultural research has been focused on export crops not usually used as food in this country. Our youths have little experience of research related to food crops and in particular cultivation of those crops. We need a lot of adaptation and development of appropriate varieties of planting materials, fertilizer and plant protection materials, like chemicals. A greater number of change agents – the agriculturalists who have direct contact with our youths are illiterates but need to be trained.

Ezenwa Vincent, in the Daily Star of June 12, 1979 says that Nigeria has a vast mine of agricultural information to be disseminated to the youths. But the nagging problem is with the treatment of this information and how to interpret and translate the tarrying confusing and complex technical jargons into an understandable language and experience, need and aspirations of the rural youths. Akporugo (1978) agrees that research institutions are obviously doing a beautiful job but asks how does that get down? According to him, most of their results and findings are published in prestigious academic journals which often are an exclusive preserve of an initiated few for purpose of giving adequate popularization to certain research work. Abboth and Makeham (1996) agree that tropical agriculture is backward because of low participation of youths, the reason is largely in a lack of education and technical knowledge, weakness in administration and related services, and inadequate management of financing, marketing and related enterprises.

Youths of today cannot be rightly described as conservative because they have not been made to see what is wrong in their practices. Ngoka cited in N.R.C.R.I. Newsletter of January, 1983 notes that traditional ways of farming are known to be die-hard all over the world. To motivate youths to change, they should be made conscious of the defect in the existing practice and be convinced of the need for the change and aroused to ask for it. Nwaogbo (1983) notes that "though most of the improved practices are being passed on the youths, yet there is the problem of little or non-adoption of these practices". Nwaogbo further says that "the problem of non-adoption cannot be blamed simply on communication gap. Improvement in communication between the youths and the source of information cannot close the gap unless the major problems of non-adoption are identified and solution found". Giving reasons for non-adoption Iwueke (2000) says that an extension worker that has prejudice against some youths in a community will lead to non-adoption of new research findings and no improvement on the part of the youths.

However, if the extension workers in Nigeria are able by their training to motivate the youths and to impart the knowledge required for change to take place and to prevent major factors that militates against them then a vibrant extension service will be achieved. When new techniques are being introduced, (control of plant diseases preparation of manure or silage, use of fertilizers, or farm implements), the youths should be able to understand the extension workers recommendations easily and to adopt them with minimum effort. According to Pfiffner and Sherwood (1987), youths are migrating from rural to urban areas because there is no established agricultural shopping centre in rural areas. There is no medical professional that provides the needed specialized services, leaving outpatient treatment to local doctors and nurses. He further declared that because of their low population density, rural youths also face cost and quality problems in obtaining health-care services locally, so those problems make the youths to think that residing in the urban areas are much better than residing in the rural areas. Obibuaku (1979) while critically analyzing the factors that influence agricultural production by the youths of Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State discovers the following:

i. The State Government made little or no assistance in providing credits and supporting inputs to agricultural production in Ohafia.

ii. The State Government made no financial allocation for the youths for agricultural production.
iii. The youths do not have enough land for productive agricultural in Ohafia.
iv. There were insufficient supply of farm tools and machinery for the youths for agricultural production.
v. The available farm tools were obsolete and made the practical farm operations difficult.

Tolman (1964) indicates that youths of today are generally not interested in farming as a career or in agricultural jobs as a future occupation. Farming has little status in the mind of youths of nowadays. Bulls (1964) says that in order to reduce the acute shortage of youths in agriculture, the youths should be organized and initiated into a club (such as young farmers club) as young farmers in the Eastern Nigeria. He said that organized youths are actively directed towards a beneficial purpose as an essential part of training which young people in any country should take part in. He observes that many of our youths even those from rural areas looked at farming with disdain especially after they have left school. Mark (1957) indicates that city born and reared youths seldom become farmers.

With increased industrial development, many farm boys and girls have moved from the villages to the cities. Some may later return to village when observed that all that glitter is not gold. Land tenure, which constitutes one of the factors that are militating against youth participation in agricultural production has been viewed by different categories of people. Brinkman and Smith (1998) indicates that a tract of land is defined geographically as a specific area of the earth's surface, its characteristics embrace all reasonably stable or predictably cycle attribute of the biosphere vertically above and below this areas, including those of the atmosphere, the soil and underlying geology, the plant and animal population and the result of past and present human activities to the extent that this attribute exert a significant influence on present and future uses of land by man.

Mbagwe (1979) finds that land concentration was characterized by a predominance of traditional agricultural land. Collective land tenure is a popular normative practice in most farming communities in Africa. FAO (1966) states that the collective ownership of land becomes unpopular in some rural area of developing countries, where individuals and groups have embarked on modern agricultural investment, a novelty that is incompatible with seasonal re-allocation of land. FAO (1981) says that the system of land tenure in rural communities is the system of rights and duties of the people with regards to the use of land. Olusanya (1981) says that the system of land tenure in any locality in Nigeria is often rooted in the prevailing tradition or custom and perhaps religious belief system of the people. This may also account to a large extent for the variations observed in the land tenure system from one part of the country to another. Ebbi (1997) says that gender division of farm activity means the distribution of roles involved in agricultural production among the participants according to sex status rather than operational capability to proper adoption of agricultural innovation and sustainability of agricultural development. Engel and Salomon (1993) indicate that gender division of farm operation, the substitution of female labour with that of male and vice-versa would constitute an offence against the norms and values of the people. Hence, Ebbi (2002) observes that some people dispense

with female labor in farm operation, when her physical condition is considered offensive to farm deity. In this regard, menstruation disqualifies a woman for farm operations in some Igbo traditional settings. In support of the above, Box (1990) writes that on the Western (Asaba) side of Nigeria, neither a menstruating nor pregnant women may enter the farm. The women must invoke the aid of a friend to dig her yam for her. Norse (1972) also writes that females are not considered as heirs in land inheritance issue. Therefore, while unmarried, the women work on the family land in the name of her father or male sibling. Kidd (1968) notes that the adoption of new ideas, techniques and innovations to improve farming or rural life has been found to depend largely on educational, economic and socio-cultural standard of the people.

## PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

This study adopts survey design. The population is made up of all the youths in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State out of which six clans, namely: Asaga, Amaekpu, Isigwu, Ndi Uduma Awoke, Akanu and Amangwu were randomly selected for the study. In these clans, a sample size of one hundred and ninety four participants was selected. The structured questionnaire with twenty items consisting of sections "A" (farmers characteristics) and "B" (farmers response to extension program) was the instrument used in collecting data. The use of frequency and simple percentage was adopted for the analysis of the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that 59.3 % of the youths consulted were less than 30 years of age, 26.8% fall within the age of 30 – 39 years, while 13.9% were 40 years and above. Thus, the age distribution of the youths in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State revealed that majority of the youths (59.3%) are within the range of less than 30 years. Table 2 represents the marital status of youths in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State. It reveals that 56.7% are single, 38.6 are married, 2.6% are divorced, and widow recorded 1.6 while widower is 0.5. This implies that greater proportion of the youths are single. Table 3 represents the educational level of youths. The study reveals that 7.2% of the participants have no formal education, 29.4% have primary education, secondary school dropout is 18.4%, completed secondary education is 10.8% while tertiary institution recorded 34.5% of the consulted population. This implies that greater proportion of the youths attended tertiary institution. The table 4 shows the distribution of youths by religion in Ohafia Local Government Area. The result is as follows: Christians recorded the highest percentage 87.1%, Islam 0.5, African traditional religion 10.3% and finally, none of the above had 2.1%. This implies that many of the youths are Christians. By looking at table 5, it could be seen that majority of the youths are students with percentage of 41.2%, followed by civil servant 25.8%, farming recorded 22.7%, trading had 5.7%, applicants had 4.6% of the consulted population. Table 6 shows that, out of the above listed items there is no way a youth will escape without obstruction, while trying to establish a farm of sufficient scope. Table 7 shows clearly that youths do not want to engage themselves in Agricultural work.

The percentage of those that like white collar jobs are higher with 65.5% of the consulted population and they are those that do not want to be farm labours, renters or partners. From table 8, it is revealed that the aged farmers cannot produce food that will be enough for the populace with the percentage of 3.6 since 10.3% of the youths consulted could not achieve anything. And it affects the food production in study area. Table 9 reveals that 14.4% of the respondents are working with modern farm tools and with adequate financial aid. But 85.6% being majority of the youths are still working with primitive tools without any financial aid. Therefore, it is proved that there is an attempt but it is not sufficient. Table 10 shows that 40.7% of the youths are in relationship with the extension workers while the highest percentage of 59.3% of the youths are not in close relationship with the extension workers because they believed that most of the extension workers are not well trained and educated. Therefore, it is proved that the extension workers are not willing to render their services to the youths because they are not well trained.

**Table 1:** Age Distribution of Youths

| **Age (Years)** | **Frequency N =194** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 30 years | 115 | 59.3 |
| 30 – 39 years | 52 | 26.8 |
| 40 years and above | 27 | 13.9 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100.0** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

**Table 2:** Distribution of Youths by Marital Status

| **Age (Years)** | **Frequency N =194** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Single | 110 | 56.7 |
| Married | 75 | 38.6 |
| Divorced | 5 | 2.6 |
| Widow | 3 | 1.6 |
| Widower | 1 | 0.5 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100.0** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

**Table 3:** Distribution of Youths by Education Qualification

| **Status** | **Frequency N=194** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| No formal Education | 14 | 7.2 |
| Primary Education | 57 | 29.4 |
| Secondary School Dropout | 35 | 18.0 |
| Completed Secondary Education | 21 | 10.8 |
| Tertiary Institution | 67 | 34.5 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100.0** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

**Table 4:** Distribution of Youths by Religion Status

| **Age (Years)** | **Frequency N=194** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Christians | 169 | 87.1 |
| Islamic | 1 | 0.5 |
| African Tradition | 20 | 10.3 |
| None of the above | 4 | 2.1 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100.0** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

**Table 5:** Distribution of Youths by Occupation Status

| **Age (Years)** | **Frequency N=194** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Student | 80 | 41.2 |
| Applicant | 9 | 4.6 |
| Civil Servant | 50 | 25.8 |
| Farming | 44 | 22.7 |
| Trading | 11 | 5.7 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100.0** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

**Table 6:** Is it possible for youths to obtain a farm of sufficient scope to be an economic unit?

| **Item** | **Frequency N=194** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| None availability of capital | 25 | 12.9 |
| None availability of land | 18 | 9.3 |
| Denigration of farming Business in the society | 4 | 2.1 |
| Youths that have receive Loan from the Government | 44 | 22.7 |
| Youths that didn't need loan | 9 | 4.7 |
| All of the above | 93 | 47.9 |
| None of the above | 22 | 11.3 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100.0** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

**Table 7:** Do the youths be satisfied in being a farm laborers, renters or partners? **Item**

| | **Frequency N=194** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Youths that likes farming. | 32 | 16.5 |
| Those that have Encountered problem. | 35 | 18.0 |
| Youths that likes white Jobs. | 127 | 65.5 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100.0** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

**Table 8:** Do you agree that low performance of the youths affects the food production in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State?

| **Item** | **Frequency N=194** | **Percentage (100%)** |
|---|---|---|
| High cost of food | 46 | 23.7 |
| Old people that are farmers | 7 | 3.6 |
| Youths that participates Actively in farming | 20 | 10.3 |
| Youths that does not Participate at all | 51 | 26.3 |
| People that are not Feeding properly | 52 | 26.8 |
| Income generated from Food production | 18 | 9.3 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100.0** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

**Table 9:**: Have there being attempts to provide modern farm implements and adequate working capital?

| **Item** | **Frequency N=194** | **Percentage (100%)** |
|---|---|---|
| Youths that is working with Modern farm tools with adequate financial aid from the Government | 28 | 14.4 |
| Youths that is working with Traditional tools and without Financial aid | 166 | 85.6 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100.0** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

**Table 10:** Are the extension workers willing to render their services effectively to the youths of Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State?

| Item | Frequency N=194 | Percentage (100%) |
|---|---|---|
| Youths that is close relationship with the Extension workers. | 79 | 40.7 |
| Youths that does not relate to Extension workers. | 115 | 59.3 |
| **Total** | **194** | **100** |

***Source:*** Field survey, 2013

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A survey was conducted to identify the major factors militating against youth participation in Agricultural production in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State. In conformity with the findings from the data analysis, it is not possible for the youths to obtain a farm sufficient scope to be an economic unit. The youths are not satisfied to be farm laborers, renters and partners. Low performance of the youths affects the food production in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State. There is an attempt to provide modern farm implements and working capital but are inadequate. The extension workers are not willing to render their services effectively to the youths because they are not educated and well trained. Hence, the following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study, if appropriate implemented shall help in solving the problems connected with the major factors militating against youth participation in agricultural production as well as help the youths in participating actively in agricultural production.

1. The Government and other financial agencies should be liberal in granting loans to the youths and allowing them sufficient time before paying back the loans.
2. Youth's organization example, young farmers club should be encouraged in order to obtain moral education and material assistance.
3. Government should provide land, capital, better storage facilities, social amenities, subsidy, etc. so that more youths will be interested in agricultural profession.
4. The number of agricultural workers from the government agencies and parastals should be increased and their efforts intensified so that they will be able to reach all youths and solve their problems.
5. The Government through Ministry of Agriculture should supply agriculture inputs such as fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides at appropriate time and at a subsidized price to encourage greater percentage of use.
6. There is the need for every well to do persons to support the youths in participating actively in agricultural production and to help them prevent those major factors that militates against their participation.

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