

ASSESSMENT OF YOUTH TRAINING SCHOOL IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA: A Case Study of Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School, Ilesha, Osun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

In a bid to boost agricultural productivity at the national level to cater for the ever-increasing Nigerian population as well as make the marketable surplus available for the international market, many stakeholders including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been involved in the scaling up of the agricultural sector at all levels. However, there is a dearth of empirical studies on the assessment of their involvement in the sector, particularly in terms of research and innovation. Therefore, this study assesses the involvement of non-governmental organisations in agricultural extension services in Osun State using Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School (LFATS) as a case study. Primary data was collected through the use of a structured questionnaire. A two-stage sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. In the first stage, Ilesa West LGA where LFATS is located was purposively selected. The second stage involved a simple random sampling of graduands from LFATS between 2018 and 2022. The study adopted various analytical techniques including ordinary least squares and correlation to analyse the data. Based on findings, it was recommended that Government and NGOs should organize more agricultural production and processing trainings at a larger scale so as to accommodate more people especially females and farmer's cooperative association should be established for easier access to financial aids, marketing information and inputs from government and non-governmental organizations through poverty alleviation agencies for improved productivity and sustainability.

Keywords: LFATS, YTS, SDGs, SAT

Introduction

Nigeria with over 60 percent of its population being between the age of 18 and 35 years old, youth unemployment in Nigeria has over the years continued to pose a serious threat to the nation's economic development (Ogunmodede et al., 2020; Muogob and John-Akamelu, 2018; Akande, 2014). As a result, the government and other key stakeholders must implement urgent necessary policies and intervention programs. In recent years, one of the many programs used to reduce youth unemployment and its

negative consequences has been directed toward agriculture as a viable area for generating long-term employment for many teenagers and young adults. (Yami et al., 2019).

In Nigeria, agriculture remains the backbone of the economy, accounting for 22.35% of the total Gross Domestic Product (FAO, 2021). The sector currently accounts for over 30% of employment opportunities in Nigeria (World Bank, 2020). Leveraging on this, efforts have been made by the Nigerian government and development partners to promote “agripreneurship”, a term coined out of agriculture and entrepreneurship (Bairwa et al., 2014), among the young population. These initiatives are reflected in the several agricultural training programmes aimed at equipping young individuals with the necessary skills for agricpreneurship (Awogonle and Iwuamadi, 2010).

The responsibility for providing agricultural training has been largely that of the government. However, providing agricultural training to farmers is costly and challenging because of several reasons (Nakasone and Torero, 2016). All the same, public agricultural training programmes provide advice, information, and other support services to farmers to enable them to improve the productivity of their crop and animal production and thereby increasing their farm and non-farm incomes. However, due to the low quality of service provision through ADPs, in the last 25 years, agricultural training has been provided by a variety of government and non-governmental organisations with varying objectives. For example, government organisations work toward national policy goals. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the other hand are usually guided by the welfare of the farm families. Despite the differences in their goals and approaches, all these entities seek to achieve their objectives by sharing knowledge to influence the decisions and practices of large numbers of rural farm households (Adebayo, 2004).

There is mounting evidence that agricultural training provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) plays a significant role in nation-building, particularly in development initiatives to improve the quality of lives of rural farmers. When they can work well together with government agencies, they can mutually reinforce each other's work and accomplish what none of them can do alone.

Definition of Terms

NGOs: as used in the study refers to non-profit organization that operates independently of any government

LFATS: as used in the study refers to non-profit organization known as Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School

Participants: as used in the study refers to youths and farmers (ex-trainee) who benefited from agricultural trainings provided by Leventis foundation agriculture training school

Involvement: As used in the study refers to an act or instance of being included, or of including someone or something in an action, process, group etc.

Agricultural Services: As used in the study provides technical aids and trainings to farmers on any agricultural issues

Statement of the Problem.

The level of involvement of non-government organizations (NGOs), using the case study of Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School in agricultural training services is not well documented, despite studies on the roles agricultural services plays on agricultural development in Nigeria. It can be clearly stated that the rate at which non-government organizations (NGOs) are involved in agricultural services is actually not good enough, but they are rather found engaging in other activities other than that of agriculture. Various researches conducted on the contribution of agricultural extension services to agricultural development in the country suggest that non-government contribution to agricultural services is not commendable.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to assess Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School's involvement in agricultural services in Osun State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. identify the activities performed by LFATS in agricultural training
- ii. identify the knowledge imparted by LFATS on the trained farmers
- iii. determine benefits farmers derived from LFATS Training
- iv. ascertain the constraints affecting LFATS's involvement in agricultural services in the study area.

Hypotheses for the study

In line with the research objectives, the following null hypothesis will be tested.

Ho₁: socio-economic characteristics of participants of LFATS do not affect the activities performed by Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the constraint faced by LFATS and the activities performed by Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School in agricultural trainings.

Social Attribution Theory

The theory suggests that human behavior is influenced by the situations, and which can be internal attributes or external attributes. When considering the internal attribution, the reason behind the variation in the human behavior, it is associated with the personal and internal characteristics. The two key elements theory relates with the internal attributions are perceived behavior control and personal norms. Perceived behavior control is referred to the individual's perception of ease of difficulty to perform as task of personal capability (Weiner, 2010).

2.2 Conceptual Framework for the Study

The conceptual framework for assessment of youth training school (LFATS) is shown in figure 1.

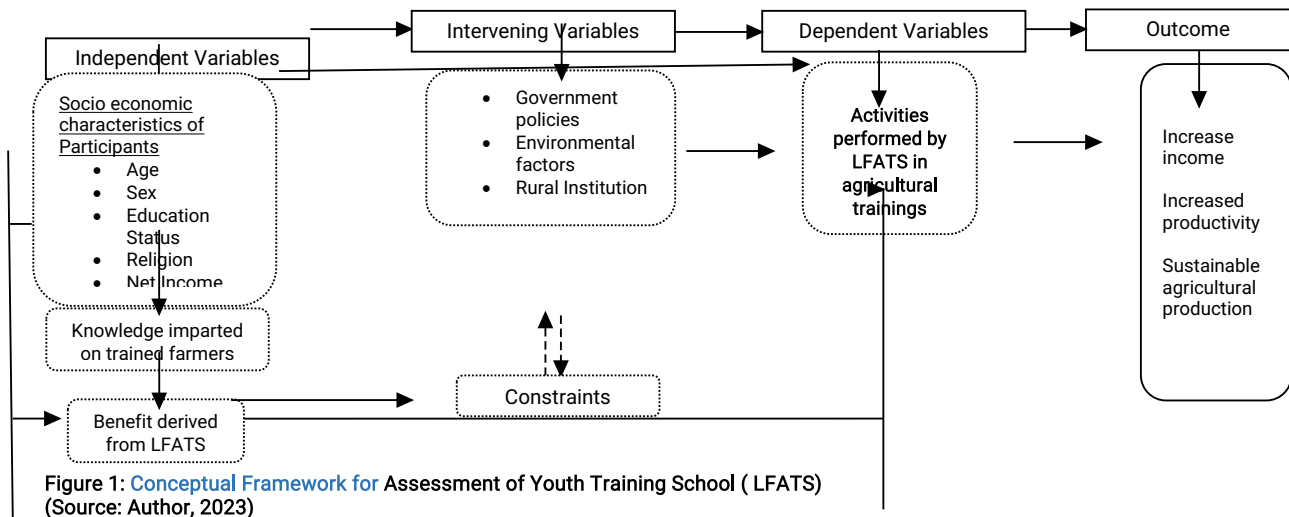


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Assessment of Youth Training School (LFATS)
(Source: Author, 2023)

The conceptual framework for the study is divided into three basic segments as shown in figure 1 which are described as independent, dependent and intervening variables that may affect the interactions between these variables. According to the diagram, the linkage between the variables of interest and the research topic which is involvement of Leventis foundation agricultural training school in agricultural trainings in Osun State is described. The agricultural training imparted by Leventis is clearly spelt. The benefits farmers derived from Leventis foundation agricultural trainings such as Source of livelihood helps to make informed decision, Access to market information, Increased farm productivity, Improved standard of living and Sustainable agricultural production.

In this framework, the arrows explain the relationship between the independent variables, intervening variable and dependent variables.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Osun State, Nigeria. The state is located in the South West of Nigeria (figure 1). The state is situated in the tropical rain forest zone. It covers an area of approximately 14,875sq km and lies between latitude 7o 30'10"11 N and longitude 4o 30' 01"11 E. The state is divided into thirty Local Government Areas (LGAs), one of which being Ilesa West LGA, where participants of the Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School (LFATS) reside. The Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School is located in Ilesa, Osun State, and has around 236 hectares of arable farmland.

Figure 2: Map Showing the Study Area



Source: Survey, 2023

Population of the Study

The population of the study is made up of 1124 participants who are beneficiaries and have been trained by Leventis Agricultural Foundation Training School in Osun State for

the past eleven years (year 2012 to 2022).

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

A two (2) stage sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. In the first stage, Ilesa West LGA where LFATS is located was purposively selected. A list of participants (trainees) who have been trained by LFATS between the year 2012 and 2022 was gotten from Leventis Foundation Agricultural School, Ilesa and serves as sampling frame. The second stage involves a simple random sampling method which was used to select the respondents from the list gotten from LFATS. Out of a total of one thousand one hundred and twenty four (1124) participants who were trained between 2012 and 2022, 20% of these participants was randomly selected across the selected years; 21 respondents from year 2012, 25 respondents from year 2013, 18 respondents from year 2014, 21 respondents from year 2015, 19 respondents from year 2016, 21 respondents from year 2017, 24 respondents from year 2018, 19 respondents from year 2019, 15 respondents from year 2020, 19 respondents from year 2021, and 22 respondents from year 2022. Thus the sample size comprises of two hundred and twenty four (224) respondents. The summary of the sampling procedure is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Selected LGA	Populations of Participants by year		20% of Participants
Ilesa West LGA	2012	103	21
	2013	124	25
	2014	92	18
	2015	105	21
	2016	97	19
	2017	107	21
	2018	119	24
	2019	97	19
	2020	75	15
	2021	95	19
	2022	110	22
Total	1124	224	

Source: Researcher, 2023

Data Analysis

Data from the field survey was subjected to descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Descriptive statistics of simple frequency distribution, percentages and mean score was used to reveal the results of findings from all the objectives of the study. Multiple Regression analysis and Paired t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The data analysis was carried out as shown on Table 2.

Table 2: Analytical tool used for the study

S/N	Objectives/hypotheses	Analytical tools used
1	Objective 1,2,3,4 and 5	Descriptive statistics of Frequency counts,

2	Hypothesis 1	Percentages and mean
3	Hypothesis 2	Multiple Regression Paired T-Test

Source: Researcher, 2023

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The presentation and analysis were based on the data collected from the respondents through interview schedule. The responses were presented and analysed using frequency counts, percentages, means, standard deviation, multiple regression and paired T-Test.

Activities Performed by Leventis in Agricultural Trainings

Result of the activities engaged by Leventis in agricultural trainings in the study area. The results are presented in Table 3 as follows:

Table 3: Activities Performed by Leventis in Agricultural Trainings

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
LFATS create awareness to youths and farmers on new and improved technologies	189	84.4
LFATS mobilize youth and farmers for programmes	219	97.8
LFATS disseminate information on modern farming practices	216	96.4
LFATS conduct capacity development for youth and farmers on modern farming practices	217	96.9
LFATS Inform youths and farmers on agricultural related problem	207	92.4
LFATS provide farm inputs to youths and farmers	143	63.8

Source: Survey (2023)

Table 3 shows the activities performed by Leventis in agricultural trainings. Majority of the respondent (97.8%) ascertain that Leventis mobilize youth and farmers for programmes followed by conducting capacity development for youth and farmers on modern farming practices (96.9%), then disseminate information on modern farming practices (96.4). the least activities engaged by respondent according to the respondent is that Leventis provide farm inputs to farmers.

Respondent Based on level of knowledge imparted in training by LFATS

The result shows that knowledge imparted on respondent on crop production, livestock production and agricultural engineering services according to their mean score. In crop production, knowledge was imparted on marketing of crops after harvesting with a mean score of 3.58, followed by ploughing (MS=3.57) and appropriate weeding frequency (MS=3.56).

Benefits derived from Trainings by LFATS

This section presents result of the benefits derived from trainings by Leventis Agricultural Trainings School in the study area. The results are presented in Table 4 as follows:

Table 4: Benefits derived from LFATS Trainings

Benefits	SD	D	A	SA	Score	Mean	Rank
Improved standard of living	6 (2.6)	12 (5.2)	39 (16.9)	167 (72.3)	815	3.64	1 st
Increased yield	6 (2.7)	2 (0.9)	78 (34.8)	138 (61.6)	796	3.55	2 nd
High market value for farm produce	0(0)	0(0)	105(45.5)	114(49.4)	776	3.46	3 rd
High overall productivity	8 (3.6)	6(2.7)	91(40.6)	119(53.1)	769	3.43	4 th
Reduced disease and pest infestation	5 (2.2)	5 (2.2)	102 (45.5)	112 (50.0)	769	3.43	4 th
Increase in income	5(2.2)	0(0)	114(49.4)	105(45.5)	767	3.42	5 th
Improved market linkage	5 (2.2)	5 (2.2)	113 (48.9)	101 (43.7)	758	3.38	6 th
Increase farm size	7 (3.1)	6 (2.7)	118 (52.7)	93 (41.5)	745	3.33	7 th
More job opportunities	6 (2.6)	11 (4.8)	109 (47.2)	98 (42.4)	747	3.33	7 th
Interpersonal relationship	6(2.7)	5(2.2)	124(55.4)	89(39.7)	744	3.32	8 th
Access to trainings	5 (2.2)	11 (4.9)	124 (55.4)	84 (37.5)	738	3.29	9 th
Introduction of new technologies	5 (2.2)	12 (5.4)	96 (42.9)	111 (49.6)	735	3.28	10 th
Collaboration	9(4.0)	23(10.3)	91(40.6)	101(45.1)	732	3.27	11 th
Exposure	11(4.9)	12(5.4)	110(49.1)	91(40.6)	729	3.25	12 th
Increased bank savings	7 (3.0)	51 (22.1)	104 (45.0)	62 (26.8)	669	2.99	13 th
Access to credit facility	30 (13.4)	128 (57.1)	37 (16.5)	29 (12.9)	513	2.29	14 th

*SD=Strongly Disagree *D=Disagree A= Agree *SA= Strongly Agree *MS=Mean Score

(Source: Survey, 2023.)

Results presented in Table 5 reveals the benefits from Leventis trainings among participants in the study area. A reasonable high proportion of the respondents strongly agreed that the training improve the standard of living (MS=3.64). Another perceived ranking second is that it increased yield of the youth who are farmers (MS=3.55) while the benefit that was ranked this that the trainings from Leventis give their farm produce a high market value (MS=3.46). The least benefit derived from agricultural training from Leventis is that it gives them access to credit facilities (MS=2.29).

Constraints faced from Trainings by LFATS

This section presents result of the constraints faced from trainings by Leventis Agricultural Trainings School in the study area. The results are presented in Table 5 as follows:

Table 5: Constraints to Involvement in Agricultural Trainings by Leventis

***VS= Very Severe *S=Severe *LS=Less Severe *N=Not a Challenge *MS=Mean Score**

Constraints	NC	LS	S	VS	Score	Mean	Rank
High transportation cost	57 (25.4)	35 (15.6)	71 (31.7)	61 (27.2)	584	2.61	1 st
Inadequate credit and finance	61 (27.2)	67 (29.9)	35 (15.6)	61 (27.2)	544	2.43	2 nd
Lack of willingness	81 (36.2)	32 (14.3)	65 (29.0)	46 (20.5)	524	2.34	3 rd
Insufficient farm labour	58(25.9)	86(38.4)	36(16.1)	44(19.6)	514	2.29	4 th
Gaps in the development processes between reach & requirement of services	95 (42.4)	50 (22.3)	66 (29.5)	13 (5.8)	445	1.99	5 th
Poor road network	122 (54.5)	48 (21.4)	41 (18.3)	13 (5.8)	393	1.75	6 th
Requirements for application	150(67.0)	16 (7.1)	27 (12.1)	31 (13.8)	387	1.73	7 th
Problem of communication	143 (63.8)	33 (14.7)	34 (15.2)	14 (6.3)	367	1.64	8 th
Lack of standard in production of training materials	161 (71.9)	18 (8.0)	33 (14.7)	12 (5.4)	344	1.54	9 th
Poor coordination of training	155 (69.2)	38 (17.0)	13 (5.8)	18 (8.0)	342	1.53	10 th
Poor condition of training environment	163 (72.8)	16 (7.1)	34 (15.2)	11 (4.9)	341	1.52	11 th
Proximity to living environment	163 (72.8)	22 (9.8)	28 (12.5)	11 (4.9)	335	1.50	12 th
Lack of awareness among people	169 (75.8)	19 (8.5)	30 (13.5)	5 (2.2)	317	1.42	13 th
Exorbitant fee charge	168 (75.0)	25 (11.2)	26 (11.6)	5 (2.2)	316	1.41	14 th

(Source: Survey, 2023.)

Table 5 lists the constraints faced by agricultural training participants in descending order of severity. According to the respondents, the most severe constraint is the high cost of transportation (M.S=2.61). Inadequate credit and finances (M.S=2.43) were rated second and third, respectively. Exorbitant fee charge was ranked as the least important restraint, with a mean score of 1.41, followed by people's lack of awareness (MS=1.42) and proximity to living environment (MS=1.50).

Results of Tested Hypotheses

Hypothesis one

Socio-economic characteristics of respondents do not affect the activities performed Leventis agricultural training school. This was tested using multiple regression analysis.

Table 6: result of Multiple Regressions of Activities Performed by Leventis

	Unstandardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	5.907	0.586	10.075	0.000
Age of respondents	0.017	0.016	1.051	0.294
Marital status	0.146	0.115	1.272	0.205
Gender	0.112	0.134	0.838	0.403
Education attainment	0.026	0.090	0.289	0.773
Household Size	-0.026	0.031	-0.822	0.412
Years of Experience	-0.020	0.027	-0.758	0.449
Years of membership	-0.009	0.025	-0.356	0.723
Annual income	3.770E-008	0.000	0.610	0.542

$R^2=0.143$

The Multiple Regression Analysis of Leventis's actions in agricultural instruction is shown in Table 11. The coefficient of (R2) value of 0.143 suggests that socioeconomic characteristics explain approximately 14% of the variation. Although the R2 is low, it has been suggested that research attempting to forecast human behavior often have low R2 values because humans are more difficult to anticipate than physical systems (Frost, 2013). If R2 values are low, it is possible to draw crucial conclusions about how changes in predictor values are connected with changes in response values. As shown in Table 13, age (0.294), marital status (0.205), gender (0.403), education (0.773), household size (0.412), year of experience (0.449) and annual income (0.542) had a positive not significant effect on the dependent variable

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between constraints and the activities performed by Leventis in agricultural trainings. This was tested using Paired T-Test.

Table 8: Result of T-Test of the Differences between Constraints and activities engaged by Leventis in Agricultural Trainings

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Activities Performed	6.68	0.735	223	-28.31	0.000	S
Constraints	25.62	10.02				

*** Significant at $p<0.05$.**

Table 12 revealed a significant difference (P=0.000) between the constraints faced by Leventis throughout training and the activities performed by Leventis. As a result, we

reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant difference between the constraints and the activities done by Leventis Agricultural Training School.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study assessed the knowledge imparted by youth training school (Leventis foundation) in Osun State, Nigeria. Primary data were collected by means of well-structured questionnaire while the secondary data were gotten from journals, international network (internet), library and newspapers. Descriptive statistics, multiple regression and t-test were used in analyzing the data. Findings of the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents revealed that participants had a mean age of 33.50 with (65.6%) of them falling within the range of 31-40 years of age. Majority of the participants were married (65.9%) and 36.0% of them were Muslims and (64.0%) were Christians. 70.8% of the respondents had secondary education. 45.5% of the respondents had household size of 5-7 members. (82.6%) of the respondents had agriculture as their primary occupation. (73.7%) of the respondents were members of association and (26.3%) does not belong to any association. Majority of the respondents (45.8%) had cooperatives as their source of capital and majority of the respondents had annual income greater than #250,000 (69.7%). Mobilizing youth and farmers for programmes, conducting capacity development for youth and farmers on modern farming practices, disseminating information on modern farming practices, informing youths and farmers on agricultural related problem, creating awareness to youths and farmers on new and improved technologies and providing farm inputs to youths and farmers were activities that LFATS performed, in agricultural trainings and they were ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th using their percentages respectively. The respondents agree that the major training imparted in crop production is marketing of crop after harvesting, in livestock production is proper vaccination and in agricultural engineering services is maintenance of farm tools and machineries. The study also shows that crop production, livestock production and agricultural engineering services are knowledge imparted by participants of LFATS's training and they were rank 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th respectively. Majority of the respondents strongly agree that improved standard of living, increase yield and high market value for farm produce benefits derived from trainings from LFATS and are ranked 1st to 3rd respectively. Participants indicated (14) severe constraints faced in trainings by LFATS. This include; high transportation cost, inadequate credit and finance, lack of willingness, insufficient farm labour, gaps in the development processes between reach & requirement of services, poor road network and requirements for application were ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th respectively.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the major activities performed by Leventis is mobilizing youth and farmers for programmes as well as the major trainings focused by Leventis is crop and livestock production. The need to arrest unemployment through the various agricultural programmes cannot be overemphasized. The study also concluded that LFATS participants possessed high knowledge and skills in many agricultural enterprises embarked upon after the empowerment programme. Thus, Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training School, Osun State, Nigeria is playing a critical role in bringing about economic stability in the country through entrepreneurial empowerment. The centre is involved in upgrading the economic performance in the agricultural sector.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made; The government and non-governmental organizations should organize more agricultural production and processing trainings at a larger scale so as to accommodate more people especially females. Establishment of farmer's cooperative association for easily accessing financial aids, marketing information and inputs from government and non-governmental organizations through poverty alleviation agencies.

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