



## Attitude of Agricultural Science Students and their Parents toward Agricultural and Forestry Career in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this study was to assess secondary school students and their parents' attitude towards agriculture and forestry career and the relationship that exist between their attitudes. Multistage sample technique was used to sample one hundred and eighty (180) students for the study and through the students 180 parents were included. A validated questionnaire known as Students/parents' Attitude towards agricultural/Forestry career was used to collect data for this study (students' attitude  $r = 0.83$  and parents' attitude  $r=0.84$ ). Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) and Pearson  $r$  was used in data analysis. The results showed that students and their parents' attitude towards agriculture and forestry career were negative. In addition, there was a significant relationship between students' attitudes and parents' attitude towards agricultural and forestry career (Pearson  $r=209$ ). It is therefore recommended that there should be sensitization in schools both for the students and Parents Teachers association meetings to educate both the students and parents on importance and benefits of agricultural/forestry career.

**Keywords:** Attitude, Agriculture, Forestry, Students, Parents

### 1. Introduction

Agriculture and Forestry are important sectors for Nigerian economic development with high potentials for employment, food security, poverty reduction and environmental protection. Agriculture is the engine of growth for most developing countries and its development is one of the most effective ways to

alleviate hunger and poverty (Amungwa and Baye, 2014). In the same vein, forests provide important environmental services that contribute to the wellbeing and security of human; they are needed to maintain the atmosphere and its destruction is a major contributing factor resulting in rising level of carbon dioxide emission and global warming. To ensure sustenance of forest resources and its role for economic development and environmental protection, there is need to train professionals in the field of Forestry. It is imperative therefore to develop skilled human resources in order to sustain, diversify and realise the potentials of agriculture and forestry sectors. Hence, Agriculture and Forestry human resources development is a continuous process undertaken by educational sectors (especially tertiary institutions).

Training to become agriculture and forestry professionals generally requires a diploma certificate from technical and vocational institutions or a degree from the university. Agriculture and forestry education are offered in universities, technical and vocational training institutions in Nigeria. Despite all the issues addressed by agriculture and forestry education, students' enrolment into forestry and agriculture in Nigerian tertiary institutions are not encouraging (Alao (2010), Adebo & Sekumade, (2013)). Most students prefer other courses compare to agriculture and forestry courses but enrol in agricultural and forestry only when they are unable to undertake alternative courses or programs of study. This is supported by Appah and Tokede, (2020) that some students found in forestry department are there because they could not meet up to the cut off mark of

their chosen courses and they are pushed into Forestry courses. The poor enrolment in agriculture and forestry in schools is a major concern for agriculture and forestry sectors and this might make it unfavourable towards government efforts at improving agricultural and forestry sectors. However, considering strategic contributions of Agriculture and Forestry education in sustaining National development, there is need to encourage the younger generation to take up agriculture and forestry as a career.

Agricultural science is a compulsory subject in junior secondary education in Nigeria but optional at senior level, in that case students have the choice of deciding whether to offer the course or not. Majority of these students still regard agriculture as nonprofessional and less profitable livelihood option for young adults and sees any one returning to farming after university to be a failure (Okiror & Otabong, 2015). Forestry is not found anywhere in primary and secondary school curriculum, if at all it can only be as a topic in agriculture curriculum; it is only at tertiary education level that Forestry is known as a career. Based on the fact that forestry is not included as a subject both in primary and secondary school education, there is need to increase Forestry education literacy of the people and the need to inculcate awareness of forestry education and its importance; it will also improve students' enrolment and attitude towards Forestry education. In case of Forestry, there is no trace of Forestry as a subject in primary or secondary school curriculum in Nigeria despite the importance of forestry education. However, the average enrolment per year for Forestry and its related courses both at technical level and professional level calls for concern of all stakeholders involved in Forestry education institutions. (Alao, 2010)

There can be many reasons for poor enrolment in agriculture and forestry education, the attitudinal disposition towards agriculture among senior secondary school students can be one of the factors. Kotrlík (1987) found that parents were the dominant influence on a student's decision whether to enrol in agriculture classes when attending high school. Based on the fact that Forestry is not found anywhere in primary and secondary school curriculum, there is need to increase the Forestry education literacy of the citizen and the need to inculcate in students and their parents a positive attitude to Forestry education.

The theoretical basis of this study is based on Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) that a person's beliefs, feelings, or intentions (attitude) towards an object can

predict behaviour. The perceptions or beliefs and feelings towards agriculture and forestry can influence enrolment in agriculture and forestry. Thus, knowledge of students and their parents' attitude toward agriculture and forestry and educational programmes in agriculture and forestry will theoretically, provide an indication of their interest in taking up agriculture and forestry education.

### 1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the attitude of secondary students' and their parents towards agriculture and forestry education. The knowledge will create awareness and improve students' and their parents' attitudes towards agriculture and forestry education. It will also educate people on the importance of agriculture and forestry education. It is the hope of the researchers that this study will come out with suggestions and recommendations that will give rise to positive attitude towards agriculture and forestry education which will in turn improve students' enrolment in agriculture and forestry.

### 1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed:

What is the attitude of agricultural science students towards Agriculture/Forestry as a career?

What is the attitude of parents' of agricultural science students' towards forestry as a career?

Hypothesis

There is no significant correlation between agricultural science students' attitude and their parents' attitude towards Agriculture/forestry career.

## 2. Methodology

### *Research Design*

Descriptive and correlational survey was adopted for this study hence no variable is manipulated or controlled. The study was carried out in Ibadan North West Local Government Area (LGA) of Oyo state. The target population for this study comprised all public and private senior secondary school three (SSS 3) Students in Ibadan South West Local Government Area of Oyo State. The reason for this chosen population is because they form those students that chose Agricultural Science as subject for senior secondary certificate examination. Simple random sampling procedure was used to select the sample for this study. Six (6) public secondary schools were randomly selected. Thirty (30) students were randomly selected from each of the schools,

making a total of one hundred and eighty (180). 81(45%) female students and 99(55%) male students A structured questionnaire known as Students and their parents' Attitude towards agricultural/Forestry Education was used in collecting data. The questionnaire consisted of sections A and B. Section A consisted of respondents' demographic variables. Section B consisted of ten (10) items used to elicit information on respondents' attitude, measured on a four-point scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree). The instrument was subjected to face and content validity and empirical validities were ensured also. Lawshe Content Validity (CVI) was used to establish the content validity and the value obtained was 0.78 and 0.80 respectively. The internal consistency and reliability of the instrument in sections A and B were established using Cronbach Alpha to get the values of 0.83 and 0.84 respectively. The instruments were considered adequate for the

study. The instrument was then taken to the sampled senior secondary schools, each students chosen were given students' copy of the questionnaire to respond to. Face to face method was adopted to make sure that the students filled the questionnaire effectively. These students were also given the parents' copy of the questionnaire to give to one of their parents to fill, making a total of one hundred and eighty (180) parents' questionnaire with the instruction given to them by their class teachers, the students returned all the parents' questionnaire given to them to take home. The parents' that responded to the questionnaire were 113(62.8%) female and 67(37.2%) male. (Data collated were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) to answer research questions 1 and 2 while correlation method was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels.

### 3. Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the attitude of students towards Agriculture/Forestry career?

**Table 1:** Attitude of students towards Agriculture/Forestry Career

S/N	ITEMS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Students feel they choose agricultural science to enable them study agricultural/forestry courses after their secondary education	3(1.7%)	30(16.7%)	99(55.0%)	48(26.7%)
2	Students believe that there are no job opportunities in Forestry/Agriculture profession	55(30.6%)	40(22%)	57(31.7%)	28(15.6%)
3	Student believe joining Forestry/Agriculture profession will make them useful in the society	10(5.6%)	54(30.0%)	74(41.1%)	42(23.3%)
4	Students believe Forestry/Agriculture will give them prestigious status	33(18.3%)	30(16.7%)	74(41.1%)	42(23.3%)
5	Students believe Forestry/Agriculture will equip them to be self-reliant	32(17.8%)	68(37.8%)	61(33.9%)	19(10.5%)
6	Students feel Forestry/Agriculture Education will not provide them suitable jobs	68(37.8%)	33(18.3%)	55(30.6%)	24(13.3%)
7	Poor Societal Value placed on farming make students dislike the profession	84(46.7%)	33(18.3%)	24(13.3%)	39(21.7%)
8	Students believe Forestry/Agriculture is meant for those in Urban areas	15(8.3%)	30(16.7%)	89(49.4%)	46(25.6%)
9	Student believe that Forestry /Agriculture practices are tedious	16(8.9%)	61(33.9%)	83(46.1%)	20(11.1%)
10	Students prefer Forestry/Agriculture profession to other profession.	12(6.7%)	30(16.7%)	99(55.0%)	48(26.7%)

As shown in table 1, the findings of this study reflect students' negative attitude towards forestry/Agricultural education. For instance, only 18.3% of the students admitted they choose Agricultural Science to enable them offer Forestry/Agriculture Education in higher institutions (item 1). Over 60% of the students disagreed that Forestry/Agricultural education will make them useful in the society (Item 3), will give them prestigious status (4), such education is meant for those in rural area (item 8). Also 65% of the students agreed that poor societal value placed on farming make students dislike the profession (item 6) while only 23.4% of the students prefer Forestry/Agricultural profession to other profession (item 10).

**Research Question 2: What is the attitude of parents towards Agriculture/Forestry career?**

**Table 2:** Attitude of parents towards Agriculture/Forestry Career

ITEMS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Parents believe their wards offering agricultural science is to enable them study agricultural/forestry courses in university.	12(6.7%)	26(14.4%)	55(30.6%)	87(48.3%)
Parents believe that there are no job opportunities in Forestry/Agriculture profession	87(48.3%)	43(23.9%)	22(12.2%)	28(15.6%)
Parents believe their wards joining Forestry/Agriculture profession will make them useful in the society	18(10.0%)	38(21.1%)	48(26.7%)	76(42.2%)
Parents believe Forestry/Agriculture will give their wards prestigious status	34(18.9%)	40(22.2%)	43(23.9%)	63(35.0%)
Parents believe Forestry/Agriculture will equip their wards to be self-reliant	51(28.3%)	54(30.0%)	40(22.2%)	35(19.4%)
Parents feel Forestry/Agriculture Education will provide suitable jobs for their wards	19(10.6%)	39(21.7%)	58(32.2%)	64(35.6%)
Poor Societal Value placed on farming makes parents dislike the profession	45(25.0%)	30(16.7%)	34(18.9%)	71(39.4%)
Parents believe Forestry/Agriculture education is meant for those in Urban areas	54(30.0%)	34(18.9%)	43(23.9%)	49(27.2%)
Parents feel that agricultural/forestry practices will be tedious for their wards.	22(12.2%)	60(33.3%)	38(21.1%)	60(33.3%)
Parents prefer other Education to Forestry/Agriculture profession.	100(55.6%)	29(16.1%)	25(13.9%)	26(14.4%)

As shown in table 2, the findings of this study also reflect parents’ negative attitude towards forestry/Agricultural education. For instance, 78.9% of the parents disagreed that their wards will go for Forestry/Agriculture Education after their secondary education. The respondents also agreed that there are no job opportunities in Forestry/Agriculture profession (item 2), It will not make their wards useful in the society (item 3), it will not give them prestigious status (item 4). Although 58 % of the parents believe Forestry/Agriculture will equip their wards to be self-reliant (5%) and over 55% disagreed that agricultural/forestry practices will be tedious for their wards (item 9) yet over 70% of them prefer other Education to Forestry/Agriculture Education (item10).

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant correlation between students’ attitude and parents’ attitude towards Agriculture/Forestry as a career.

**Table 3:** Correlation between students’ attitude and parents’ attitude towards Agriculture/Forestry as a career.

Variables	N	MEAN	SD	Pearson r	Sig	Decision
Students’ attitude t	180	25.96	5.05			
Parents’ attitudes	180	25.64	5.08	209	.005	significant

**.. Correlation is significant at 0.05**

Table 3 shows that a significant positive relation existed between students’ attitude towards Agriculture/Forestry career and parents’ attitude towards Agriculture/Forestry career (Pearson r =.209; N = 180, P 0.05). The null hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between students’ attitude and parents’ attitude towards Agriculture/Forestry as a career is therefore rejected. This result implies that students’ attitude is dependent on parents’ attitude.

**4. Discussion on the findings**

The findings from the study revealed that students and parents’ responses were similar in majority of the

items. They both showed negative attitude towards Agriculture/Forestry as a career, the negative attitude could be attributed to their limited knowledge of what the career entails. This finding is supported by Baliyan and Nenty (2015) that motivational strategies should be used to improve students’ attitude towards agriculture. Their negative attitudes could be because of their misconceptions about the career which they showed in responding to items 2, 3, 4. This is in line with Adejoh, Edoke and Shaibu (2016)) that students attitudes towards agricultural science can be attributed to their misconceptions about the career opportunities in agriculture. The finding agrees with Appah and Tokede (2019) that many people are not

aware of what forestry education entails. The results also showed that students and their parents prefer other courses to agriculture/forestry which makes them disagree to the fact that they chose Agricultural Science to enable them offer Forestry/Agriculture Education in higher institution. This could be attributed to the fact that the students and their parents do not understand what Agriculture/Forestry education is all about and its prospects. This corroborates with Areo, Oyewale and Oyewumi (2019), that stressed the need for massive public enlightenment on forestry education and its prospects to improve students' attitude towards the career.

In this study also the proposition that there is no significant correlation between students' attitude and parents' attitude towards Agriculture/Forestry as a career was found to be false. In essence, students' attitude towards Agriculture/Forestry career is dependent on their parents' attitude towards Agriculture/Forestry career. This is an indication that students' attitude to Agriculture/Forestry career are influenced by their parents. This finding supported Osborne and Dyer (2000) that attitude of Agriscience students' towards agriculture is influenced by their parents' attitude to the career.

## 5. Conclusion

This study assessed the attitude of senior secondary students and their parents towards agricultural/forestry career. It is revealed that students and their parents showed negative attitude towards the profession, based on this study, a lot of factors contributed to the negative attitude of the students and their parents towards agricultural/forestry career, among them are job opportunities, poor Societal value placed on farming which makes parents dislike the profession, students used for this study are in urban area they see such career to be for those in rural areas. The study also revealed significant relationship between the students' attitude and parents' attitude towards agricultural/forestry career.

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