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Enhancing Youth Engagement in Agriculture for Entrepreneurial Growth and Food Security in South-south and South-east, Nigeria.

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Abstract

The study assessed youth participation in Agricultural activities in South-South and South-East entrepreneurial development centers. It defined the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, the level of youth participation in the program, the perceived effects of the activities on youths, and the factors that influence youth participation in the program. A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted in selecting a sample of 240 respondents, and data collection involved using a set of questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to the data analysis. The youths were, on average, 30 years old, and their level of education was indicated by the fact that 91.7% of respondents in the SEEDC had completed postsecondary education. The population was composed of 33.3% female respondents with a male preponderance of respondents. Most young individuals (50%) had no employment after one to two years. Seventy percent of the young people involved in Nature of Participation were full-time farmers, and around 58.3% of the population had experience ranging from zero to five years in entrepreneurship. The benchmark mean score of 2.50 and the overall mean score of 2.61 indicate that youth participated at a high level in the production of crops and livestock. Government programs on entrepreneurial culture frequently overlook youth, and the majority of young people are engaged in livestock production. The recipients who were able to get loans were similarly remarkable. The study therefore recommends, improve access to finances and resources, youth should be supported by loans so they can engage in agricultural activities and youngsters are urged to develop agricultural enterprises as a means of augmenting their household income.

Keywords: *Agricultural activities, Entrepreneurial Development, Youth, Participation.*

Introduction

The unique characteristics of Nigeria's labor market and the demand on the government to accommodate the growing army of youths were some of the elements taken into consideration when the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) introduced the ideas of the Entrepreneurship Development Center (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2015). The Entrepreneurial Development Center (EDC) promotes and develops capable and fruitful initiatives in the field of small firms using a person-centered and demand-driven approach. The project's arming strategies and certification program are intended to encourage young Nigerians to consider micro, small, and medium-sized businesses as alternate career possibilities. To lower unemployment and increase the value added to the country's economy, it aims to mainstream youth participation in the economic activities of their local communities (Akanbi, 2015; Nyong, *et al*.,2023); African Leadership Forum, 2015). Once more, the apex bank realized that developing strategies to involve the mass of unemployed youth in economic activities and finding skilled labor were two major obstacles to overcome in the nation's efforts to become the economic center of Africa by 2020. These influenced the Central Bank of Nigeria's decision to create one EDC in each of the six geopolitical zones, actively developing, bolstering, and completing the work of other government institutions (African Leadership Forum, 2015).

The CBN-South-South, Nigeria, and Cross River is run and administered by the Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) with a specific focus on addressing the issue of rising youth unemployment and its impact on the country's political stability, social cohesion, and economic growth. CBN-EDC aims to develop a new generation of youth entrepreneurs who will contribute

positively to the national economy. In addition to creating a higher value addition for the country's economy, the project is intended to offer training, strategies, and certification programs that would help young Nigerians accept micro, small, and medium-sized businesses as alternative employment options. The search for the CBN's EDCs throughout the geopolitical zones was intended to foster youth entrepreneurship, provide them with tools, techniques, and frameworks for starting, managing, and growing their businesses, and connect them with financial institutions for start-up capital. Engaging in agricultural entrepreneurship can have a significant positive impact on youth development and empower them. Through these activities, youth unemployment and juvenile delinquencies are reduced as a result of giving young people work chances. Thus, it is crucial to support young people who are interested in agricultural entrepreneurship. In addition to opening up job prospects, youth involvement in agricultural entrepreneurial activities will boost food production and, to a significant part, close the gap between community demand and supply of food (NDE, 2003). The process by which people realize that owning a business is a realistic alternative or option is known as entrepreneurship. Create business concepts, understand the steps involved in becoming an entrepreneur, and start and grow a company. Adepeju (2009) defines youth entrepreneurship as the application of enterprise qualities such as initiative, creativity, innovation, and risk-taking into the workplace, either through self-employment or employment in small, start-up businesses, employing the right skills to succeed there.

The idea behind this study was that a lot of young individuals aren't using their full potential. Furthermore, the majority of jobless individuals in specific Nigerian geopolitical regions are young adults, with some holding graduate degrees. Therefore, it is evident that the agricultural entrepreneurial sector held the most promise for broadening the economy and giving young people a platform to Strategic entrepreneurship skills are thought to increase agricultural productivity. A life improvement, the United Nations Development Report (1998), which is cited in Emerole (2015), states that when a family gains economic independence and entrepreneurial spirit, it can experience various dimensions of human development, including self-fulfillment, self-respect, and a sense of belonging to the community. Thus, entrepreneurship in agriculture can accelerate a person's social and psychological development within society and translate into growth and development within the national economy. In addition to being a major driver of economic expansion in emerging nations, agricultural entrepreneurship also plays a significant role in reducing poverty and advancing family values.

Without affecting other definitions by Member States, youth is defined as individuals who are between the ages of 15 and 24 (UN, 2012). This age group comprises young adults (20–24) and teenagers (15–19). The nation's definition of youth may not always apply to this age range. These frequently depend on things like the ability to vote, the right to own land, the termination of compulsory education, and the ability to participate in national service. According to some definitions, a country's notion of youth begins at age seven, and others place a maximum age restriction of 39 (Onuekwusi, 2005). The National Research Council (NRC, 2010) estimates that 2% of the population is employed as agricultural entrepreneurs; this percentage is falling annually as a result of many farms becoming urbanized, which has led to the exclusion of many young people from agriculture-related businesses. These same young people will be the leaders of tomorrow, influencing governmental policies that affect farming businesses. Several unfavorable headlines about agriculture have also been brought about by the expansion of agricultural activities, including an increase in livestock output and biodiversity loss. Numerous agricultural education programs, like EDCs, were created as a way to teach society and educate young people about the value of agricultural entrepreneurship (Emerole and others (2015).

It has also been noted that youths have been involved in Nigeria's overall agricultural development process due to the enormous contribution of agriculture to the economy, but to what extent have loans been given to youths for effective utilization in agricultural entrepreneurial development in the study area? Youth have been identified as constituting the major resource base for any country that wishes to embark on any meaningful agricultural and rural development projects (Onuekwusi, 2005).

By giving youth insight into the tools, techniques, and framework for functional areas of agricultural business enterprises, such as production, marketing, personnel,

and finance, EDC has played a crucial role in the development of youth in the area of entrepreneurial spirit. It also creates employment opportunities for youth in modern civilization, agriculture-related entrepreneurship has been seen as a potential driver of national economic growth (Chell, 2007); Nyong, *et al*.,2023) yet, in emerging economies, it is still seen as a relatively new phenomenon (Emerole, 2015). To boost production, youth in the South-South and South-East designated EDCs must utilize all of their skills to be resilient to hard conditions that have caused environmental changes to slow down their yield (Chegin, et; al., 2011). The goal of Abia State's Revolutionize Agriculture strategy was to guarantee food security for all residents, yet Abia State and Cross River continue to fall behind in terms of the unemployment rate for young people. In the interim, several studies have been conducted in certain Development Programs in the chosen As a result, it is necessary to fill the program's direct impact gap on young people's engagement in agricultural entrepreneurship. The goal of the study is to evaluate youth participation in the chosen EDC program, the South-South and South-East Agricultural Entrepreneurial Development Center in Nigeria, in light of research showing that youth who participate in these programs gain more knowledge. The study aimed to address the following research objectives to do this; what are the socio-economic characteristics of respondents in the study areas; what is the level of Youth Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities in EDC; what are the perceived effects of the activities on youths in the Study Area; and what are factors Influencing Youth Participation in the Agricultural Activities of the programme.

Hypothesis of the study

Ho_1: Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths has no significant influence on Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC in the study area.

METHODOLOGY : Study Area

The study was carried out in South-south and South-east agro-ecological zones of Nigeria. The region of the nation, despite being a relatively tiny region, offers the "OIL," or the backbone of the economy. The region also contributes other important resources in equal measure, and there are enormous investment opportunities in agriculture and tourism (NPC, 2006). The majority religion in the state is Christianity, despite the presence of other African religious beliefs. Along with some farmers, hunters, traders, blacksmiths, and fishers, the population is made up of civil servants. The region lies between 4° 57' N and 8° 19' E and longitude 7º30᾽00᾽᾽E and latitude 5º25᾽00᾽᾽ (National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, 2017). The zone is rich in resources, including limestone, clay, coal, glass sand, palm products, timber, maize, cassava, yam, and natural gas. Its environment is suitable for raising livestock including sheep, fish, goats, and poultry as well as a wide range of food crops and tree crops like cassava, yam, and kola nut. Indigenous people in the State primarily work in agriculture, with some being involved in agricultural produce marketing (Ifenkwe, 2007).

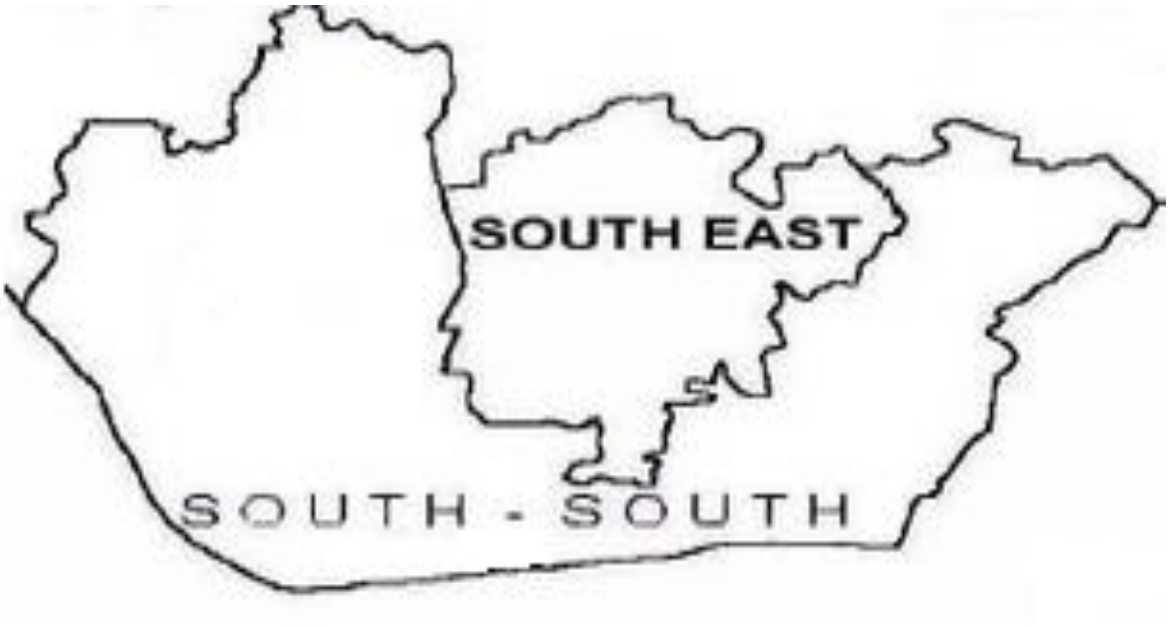

Fig. 1: Map of South-South and South-East Showing the EDC's Centre.

Data Collection : Data for this study were generated from primary source through the administration of questionnaire, and use of oral interview schedule. Furthermore, likert type measuring scale was developed to elicit information from the respondents, especially for realizing objective 2, 3, and 4 of the study.

Sample and Sampling Technique : A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select youth entrepreneurs used in this study. The first stage was the purposive selection of Eleven (11) states that make-up South-south and South-east agro-ecological zones of Nigeria: based on youth participation in Agricultural activities in South-South and South-East entrepreneurial development centers. Purposive selection of Ten (10) major agricultural zones, youth entrepreneurs are been done in the areas which makes it a total of one hundred and ten (110) respondents which forms the second stage. In the third stage a random selection of six youth entrepreneurs. Purposive selection of six (6) youth entrepreneurs in the fourth stage from the selected zones, also in the fifth stage random selection of 64 youth entrepreneurs who participated in the program. Thus, a sample size of 240 youth participants in Agricultural activities in South-South and South-East entrepreneurial development centers.

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

HYPOTHESIS 1:

Ho_1: Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths has no significant influence on Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC in the study area were tested using regression analysis. The model is specified:

$Y = a + b_1 X_1 \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots + b_{12}X_{12} + e$

Where

Y	=	level of Youth participation (mean score)
$X - X_n$	=	Socio-economic characteristic of Youths
X_1	=	Age(Years),
X_2	=	Employment Status (employed = 1, otherwise = 0)
X_3	=	Entrepreneurial Experience (Years),
X_4	=	Sex (Male = 1, Female = 0),
X_5	=	Level of Education (years).
X_6	=	Marital Status (Single = 0, Married = 1),
X_7	=	Occupation (Farming =1, Otherwise = 0).

e = error term.

Results and Discussion: Respondents' socio-economic characteristics: The South-South Entrepreneurial Development Center had 50% of its respondents between the ages of 16 and 25; the South-East Entrepreneurial Development Center had 49.2% of its respondents between the ages of 26 and 30. The report goes on to demonstrate that the South-South EDC had a higher young participation rate in agricultural entrepreneurship than the South-East. For the Youths, thirty was the average age. What this means is that most respondents (16–25 years old) have 50% for South-South EDC, whereas (49.2%) fall into the 26–30-year-old South-East EDC age group. This suggests that the respondents are still in their youth and are highly productive. The Youth in Nigeria, as defined by the National Youth Development Policy (2001), is defined as all young people between the ages of 18 and 35.

The results also indicate that a higher proportion of participants (91.7%) completed their tertiary education in the South-East zone of the Entrepreneurial Development Center, compared to 43.3% who completed their studies in the South-South Entrepreneurial Development Center. This suggests that it won't be too difficult for the participants to comprehend and use the modern agricultural innovations and technologies in the training center. This is significant because it will probably increase the number of young people participating in the South-East and South-South Entrepreneurial Development Centers' entrepreneurial activities. The primary underlying cause of youth unemployment is frequently attributed to the caliber and applicability of education. People with only an elementary education had the highest unemployment rate in 2010 in 25 out of 27 wealthy nations.

According to (Maunder, 1978; William, 1978; Okoye, 1990; Ijere, 1989; Boserup, 1970) referenced in Odhiambo, (2001), Nyong, *et al*.,2023), the majority of respondents in the South-South EDC were married (65%), while 33.3% were similarly married in the South-East zone. Youths play an important role in family agricultural and social development activities. Depending on their marital status and other circumstances, they engage in a variety of livelihood activities, from off-farm pursuits like petty trading, hunting, welding, carpentry, and tailoring to farm-related ones like farming, farming labor, and fishing. Regarding gender, the results also indicate that in the South-East, 33.3% of participants in the EDC Program were women, while in the Southeast, 50% of participants were women and 50% were men. According to the results, more men are participating in the South-East EDC Program than in the South-South EDC Program. Additionally, it was noted that 49.2% of the participants considered trade to be their primary occupation. This suggests that the most common activity in the research area is trading. Seventy-seven percent of the teenagers in the study areas had not had a job for more than five years. The program's primary goal was to reduce the rate to specifically address the issue of rising youth unemployment and its danger to social cohesion, political stability, and economic growth, Nyong, and Nweze,, 2012).Improved agricultural production skills are often correlated with entrepreneurial experience. The findings demonstrate that young people involved in South-East Entrepreneurial Development in the study area have an average of 0 to 5 years of entrepreneurial experience, with 58.3% of them having that experience. This indicates that the youths are not recent arrivals to the agricultural entrepreneurial activities in the study area.

70% of the youths who participated in Nature of Participation were full-time farmers. It is expected that farmers, or youth, will increase productivity; however, to withstand harsh conditions that have caused their yield to be delayed due to environmental changes, they must utilize all of their skills (Chegini and Khoshtinat, 2011). Degree of involvement 74.2% of the respondents. The youth's engagement in agricultural entrepreneurship is truly remarkable. However, as noted by Odebode (2000), Nyong, and Nweze,, 2012) several factors work against the youth's ability to effectively participate in development. These factors include the low income of farm families, the fact that these young people typically have very low levels of functional literacy, and the fact that they are frequently required to work as family or casual laborers from a very young age. Young people are also largely unemployed during the dry season or farm slack periods, and they work long hours during the busy or peak season. These are additional variables or restraints that prevent youth from engaging in agricultural entrepreneurship.

Ascertain the Level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities in South-South Edc and South-East Edc: The Distribution of Mean Score for the Level of Participation in Agricultural

Entrepreneurial Activities of South-South EDC were Presented in Table 2. The overall mean score was 2.64 and Bench mark means score (decision cut point) was 2.50. The result shown that youths in South-South EDC expressed positive towards 3 statements out of the 5 statements on ascertaining the level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities in South-South EDC. Specifically, the following statements elicited high level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial for South-South EDC: Agriculture Forestry ($\bar{x}$= 2.54); Livestock production ($\bar{x}$= 2.62); Crop production ($\bar{x}$= 3.39).

However, the youths disagreed with 2 statements out of 5 statements on Ascertain the level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities in South-South EDC. Specifically, the following statements elicited low level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial for South-South EDC: Beverage production($\bar{x}$= 2.44) and Agro allied($\bar{x}$= 2.23); These findings shows that the majority of the youths have high level of Participation in "Crop production" "Livestock production" and "Agriculture Forestry". These indicate that in line with Chell, (2007) Entrepreneurship in Agriculture has been regarded as a viable engine for the country's economic growth in the contemporary society. It is thus clear that the Agricultural Entrepreneurial sector had the most potential for diversifying the economy and providing a platform for young people to use a lot of their skills (Adepeju, 2009). The Distribution of Mean Score for the Level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities of South-East EDC were Presented in Table 2.

The Overall mean score was 2.61 and Bench mark mean score (decision cut point) was 2.50. The finding shows that youths in South-East EDC expressed high level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial for South-east EDC towards 2 statements out of the 5 statements on Ascertain the level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities in South-East EDC. Specifically, the following statements elicited high level of Participation from the youths: Livestock production ($\bar{x}$= 2.77); Crop production ($\bar{x}$= 3.44).

However, the youths disagreed with 3statements out of 5 statements on Ascertain the level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities in South-East EDC. Specifically, the following statements elicited low level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial for South-east EDC: Agriculture Forestry ($\bar{x}$= 2.39); Beverage production($\bar{x}$= 2.32); Agro allied($\bar{x}$= 2.15). These findings show that the majority of the youths have unfavourable (negative) attitude toward Ascertaining the level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities in South-East EDC. These indicate that the youths may not probably understand the importance of Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities in the study area.

Assess the Perceived Effects of the activities on Youth for South-South and South-East Edc. : The distribution of the mean score of the perception of youths in the program of South-South EDC, are presented in the table 3. The table shows the perceived effects of the activities on youths in South-south EDC, regarded as perceived effects is high towards 4 statements out of the 10 statements that youth's perceived as an effects of the activities on youths in the program. Specifically, the following statements elicited regarded as perceived effects is high on youths in the program; Eradicate extreme Poverty and hunger ($\bar{x}$= 2.80); Growth in rural income and standard of living($\bar{x}$= 2.60); Increase in production, Marketing, Personnel management and finance ($\bar{x}$= 2.58); Obtain loans for their business ($\bar{x}$= 2.58). However, the perceived effects of the activities on youth in SSEDC regarded perceived effect is low are in the following statements: Be self-employed/start new business ($\bar{x}$= 1.20); Employment opportunities ($\bar{x}$= 1.61); Expand existing business ($\bar{x}$= 1.41); Generate business ideas ($\bar{x}$= 1.21); Improvement in rural standard of living ($\bar{x}$= 1.19); Produce bankable business plans ($\bar{x}$= 2.00).

These findings shown that the majority of the perceived effects of the activities on youth in South-South EDC in this study, specific issues which regarded as perceived effects is high include the following "Obtain loans for their business" and "Eradicate extreme Poverty and hunger". These indicate that in conformity with CBN, (2015) Directives, the total of beneficiaries that accessed loans was equally impressive as the program capture 2350 people. The breakdown shows that 100518 and 927 people benefited from loans offered by the Centre in Maiduguri, Markurdi and Calabar respectively. Accordingly, this project strategy was redesigned to target school leavers, tertiary institutions graduates and owners of existing businesses. Youths in the program will achieved the aim when these loans are made available for their respective enterprisesand the

rate of poverty and hunger will reduce in South-south EDC's in Nigeria.

The distribution of the mean score of the perception of youths in the program of South-East EDC, are presented in the table 3. 3. The table shows that the perceived effects of the activities on youths in South-East EDC, regarded as perceived effects is high towards the program, and shows no statement out of the 10 statements that youth's perceived as an effects of the activities on youths in the program. However, the perceived effects of the activities on youths in South-East EDC regarded perceived effects is low are in the following 10 statements out of the 10 statements.This indicate that loans has not made available to those in Agricultural Enterprises in South-East EDC but Youths in the program will achieved the aim when these loans are made available for their respective enterprises and the rate of poverty and hunger will reduce in south-East EDC's in Nigeria.

Ascertain factors Influencing Youth Participation in the Agricultural activities for South-South EDC and South-East EDC. : The distribution of the mean score of the Factors Influencing Youth Participation for South-South Entrepreneurial Development Centre, are presented in the table 4. The table shows that Factors Influencing Youth Participation for South-South Entrepreneurial Development Centre, regarded agreed towards 6 statements out of the 10 statements that Influencing Youth Participation in South-South Entrepreneurial Development Centre. Specifically, the following statements elicited as regarded agreed is high on youths in the program; Breakdown of family values and indiscipline, Competition($\bar{x}$= 2.63); Inadequate facilities and modern equipment for the youths($\bar{x}$= 2.72); Lack of good roads, Lack of Transportation ($\bar{x}$= 2.78); Land tenure system ($\bar{x}$= 2.52);Poor entrepreneurial culture and Poor knowledge based economy and low spirit of entrepreneurial, Poor plan and execution of processes of action ($\bar{x}$= 2.79); Poor market outlets, Poor storage facilities ($\bar{x}$= 2.56). However the following statements show that the factors influencing youth participation regarded as disagree, High price of inputs Inadequate facilities and modern equipment ($\bar{x}$= 2.06); Lack of capital, Low price for products ($\bar{x}$= 1.47); Lack of entrepreneurial teachers, materials and equipment, Inadequate training ($\bar{x}$= 2.46); Lack of government support, Political manipulation of youth organizations and Insensitivity of government to enterprise creation and expansion strategy ($\bar{x}$= 1.41).

These findings shows that the majority of the factors influencing youth participation in the agricultural activities in South-South Entrepreneurial Development Centre in this study are specific issues which regarded agreed include the following, 'Poor entrepreneurial culture and Poor knowledge based economy and low spirit of entrepreneurial, Poor plan and execution of processes of action' and 'Lack of good roads, Lack of Transportation'. These indicates that Government policies on entrepreneurial culture often by-pass the Youths, for example, in South-South EDC, although they constitute one-fourth of the population, Youths face numerous problems. Apart from absence of effective Youth development program, the agriculture extension services generally ignore them as stakeholders believed that such neglect is one major reason for many young peoples' low level of awareness of agriculture. Many Youths view farming as a tedious job Nyong, and Nweze,, 2012); (Dire, 2000).

In the United States, a study described the agricultural sector as the most hazardous Youth employment sector, with disproportionately high rates of schooling session repetitions, dropout, injuries, and death (Sakurai, 2005) . However, government attitude, low level of awareness and farm hazards are not the only factor influencing the Youths changing perception of agriculture. In Nigeria, it has been observed that a critical issue in the agricultural platform today is poor attitude of Youths towards farming. Youth disillusionment and endemic poverty/unemployment is high in most of our rural areas in spite of abundant supply of graduate of agriculture. A situation which left about 90 percent of the food supply task to aged non-literate farmers.

The distribution of the mean score of the Factors Influencing Youth Participation for South-East EDC, are presented in the table 4.

The table shows that Factors Influencing Youth Participation for South-east EDC, regarded agreed towards 1 statements out of the 10 statements that Influencing Youth Participation in South east EDC. Specifically, the statements elicited as regarded agreed is high on youths in the program; Poor market outlets, Poor storage facilities ($\bar{x}$= 2.55).However the following statements show that the factors influencing youth participation regarded as disagree, Breakdown of family values and indiscipline, Competition ($\bar{x}$= 2.14); Inadequate facilities and modern equipment for the youths ($\bar{x}$= 1.67); Lack of good roads, Lack of

Transportation ($\bar{x}$= 2.00); Land tenure system ($\bar{x}$= 2.13); Poor entrepreneurial culture and Poor knowledge based economy and low spirit of entrepreneurial, Poor plan and execution of processes of action ($\bar{x}$= 2.11); High price of inputs Inadequate facilities and modern equipment ($\bar{x}$= 1.92); Lack of capital, Low price for products ($\bar{x}$= 1.34); Lack of entrepreneurial teachers, materials and equipment, Inadequate training ($\bar{x}$= 2.10); Lack of government support, Political manipulation of youth organizations and Insensitivity of government to enterprise creation and expansion strategy ($\bar{x}$= 1.77). These findings shows that the majority of the factors influencing youth participation in the agricultural activities in SEEDC in this study is specific issues which regarded agreed Poor market outlets, Poor storage facilities.

Hypotheses

Ho_1: Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths has no significant influence on Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC in the study area.

The result of the regression analysis was used to test for the significant influence on Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC and Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths in the study area is presented in the table 5 below. The result of z- test showed that the mean response of the Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths for both SSEDC and SEEDC was 2.31 while the mean response of Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC, in the two selected zones were 2.61. There was significant difference (z = -8.41) in the mean score of Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths has no significant influence on Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC in the study areas at P≤ 0.05.This impliesthat south- south and south-east EDC'S has made available to youth all the various activities as regarding of training of youths in the program as stated mandate. It can also be seen from the program that funding to extent has not be disburse to the trained youths in south-east EDC And This has tremendously affect the activities of youth participation actively in the program.

The computed z-value of -7.57was less than tabulated z- value at 5% = 3.69 and at 1% = 11.26, we therefore reject the null hypothesis that "Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths has no significant influence on Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC in the study areas" and Accept the alternate hypothesis that "Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths has significant influence on Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC in the study areas". The study therefore concluded that youths more special in south-east EDC though undergoes training but funds has not been disbursed to them to start their various agricultural enterprises.

Conclusion : Given that the respondents' mean age was calculated and showed that they are young and highly productive, it may be concluded that the majority of them fell within the age range. The respondents' excellent level of education was demonstrated by the fact that 91.7% of respondents in the SEEDC had completed postsecondary education. In South-South EDC, the majority of respondents were married, and more men worked in agriculture than women did. Trading was identified to be the most relevant occupation in the South-South EDC.

Recommendation : It was consequently suggested that, given their strength and energy, young people without jobs in the Southeast should be supported by loans so they can engage in agricultural activities at the Entrepreneurial Development Center. It is advised that youths take use of agricultural enterprises to supplement their home income as a successful agricultural activity conducted by the Entrepreneurial Development Center in South-South and South-East Nigeria. To improve the quality of life for young people, entrepreneurial centers and other agencies must step up their efforts to provide amenities in remote areas. These will not only entice people to remain but also promote increased involvement in full-time farming, thus contributing to the improvement of the economy under the current democratic system. Participation in the South-South EDC was quite strong. Recommendations include a "high spirit of entrepreneurs" and a "good entrepreneurial culture." The youth of Nigeria who aspires to work in agriculture should have access to "good roads," "well-planned and executed action procedures," and other resources. When comparing South-South EDC to South-East EDC, the perceived impact of the program was higher.

Table 1. Respondents' socio- economic characteristics

Variables	F	P	F	P
Age (years)		SSEDC		SEEDC

16 – 25	60	50	10	9.1
26 – 30	31	25.8	56	49.2
31- 40	29	24.2	41	34.2
Education attainment				
No schooling	28	23.3	-	-
Primary	17	14.2	-	-
Secondary	23	19.2	10	8.3
Tertiary	52	43.3	11	91.7
Marital status				
Married	78	65	40	33.3
Single	42	35	49	40.8
Sex				
Male	60	50	80	66.7
Female	60	50	40	33.3
Major occupation				
Farming	30	25	21	17.5
Trading	59	49.2	20	15.8
Civil service	-	-	19	15.8
Farming/ trading	31	25.8	40	33.3
Unemployment status				
1 – 2	2	1.6	60	50
3 – 4	32	26.7	10	8.3
5 years above	86	71.7	9	7.5
Entrepreneurial Experience (yrs.)				
0 – 5 yrs.	-	-	70	58.3
6 – 10 yrs.	60	50	10	8.3
11 – 15 yrs.	60	50	10	8.3
Mean		2.50		1.33
Nature of Participation				
Part – time	30	25	60	50
Full – time	90	75	20	16.7
Mean		1.75		1.25
Level of Participation (Hrs.)				
1 – 3 hrs.	31	25.8	-	-
4 -6 hrs.	89	74.2	20	16.7
7 hrs. Above	-	-	10	8.3

Source: field survey, 2018.

Table 2: Present distribution of respondents according to the level of Participation in Agricultural Entrepreneurial Activities in South-South EDC.

S/N	Level of Participation	SSEDC Total score $\sum F\bar{x}$	Mean score $\bar{x}$	Std. Devi.	SEEDC Total score $\sum F\bar{x}$	Mean score $\bar{x}$	Std. Devi.
1	Agriculture Forestry	305	2.54**	1.59	310.4	2.58**	1.60
2	Livestock production	314	2.62**	1.61	332.2	2.77**	1.67

3	Beverage production	293	2.44*	1.56	279.5	2.32*	1.52
4	Crop production	407	3.39**	1.83	413	3.44**	1.84
5	Agro allied	268	2.23*	1.49	258	2.15*	1.46
Grand mean score			**2.64****			**2.61****	
Bench mark mean score			**2.50**			**2.50**	

Source: field survey, 2018.
* represent low level of Participation
** represent high level of Participation

Assess the Perceived Effects of the activities on Youth for South-South and South-East Edc.

Table 3. Perceived effects of the activities on youth for South-South and South-East edc.

S/N	Level of Participation	SSEDC Total score $\sum F\bar{x}$	Mean score $\bar{x}$	Std. Devi.	SEEDC Total score $\sum F\bar{x}$	Mean score $\bar{x}$	Std. Devi.
1	Be self-employed/start new business.	432	3.8**	417	3.48**	1.86	417
2	Employment opportunities.	452	3.77**	1.94	110	0.917*	0.96
3	Eradicate extreme Poverty and hunger.	264	2.2*	1.48	349	2.91**	1.71
4	Expand existing business.	288	2.4*	1.55	288	2.4*	1.55
5	Generate business ideas.	335	2.79**	1.67	303	2.53**	1.59
6	Growth in rural income and standard of living.	408	3.4**	1.84	317	2.64**	1.63
7	Improvement in rural standard of living.	361	3.00**	1.73	316	2.63**	1.62
8	Increase in production, Marketing, Personnel management and finance.	338	2.81**	1.68	311	2.59**	1.61
9	Obtain loans for their business.	362	3.02**	1.74	228	1.9*	1.38
10	Produce bankable business plans.	408	3.4**	1.84	298	2.48*	1.58
Overall mean score			**3.06****			**2.45**	
Bench mark mean score			**2.50**			**2.50**	

Source: field survey, 2018.
** Represent regarded as perceived effects is high
* Represent regarded perceived effects is low.

Table 4. Factors Influencing Youth Participation for South-South EDC and South-East.

S/N	Factors Influencing youth Participation	SSEDC Total score $\sum F\bar{x}$	Mean score $\bar{x}$	Std. Devi.	SEEDC Total score $\sum F\bar{x}$	Mean score $\bar{x}$	Std.Devi.
1	Breakdown of family values etc.	317	2.64**	1.63	208	1.73*	1.32
2	High price of inputs.	313	2.61**	1.62	186	1.55*	1.24
3	Inadequate facilities and modern etc.	252	2.1*	1.45	162	1.35*	1.16
4	Lack of capital, price for products.	183	1.53*	1.23	130	1.08*	1.04
5	Lack of entrepreneurial teachers, etc	295	2.46*	157.	204	1.7*	1.30
6	Lack of good roads, Transportation.	334	2.78**	1.67	192	1.6*	1.26
7	Lack of government support etc.	169	1.41*	1.19	173	1.44*	1.20
8	Land tenure system.	357	2.98**	1.72	183	1.53*	1.23
9	Poor entrepreneurial culture	379	3.16**	1.78	207	1.73*	1.31
10	Poor market outlets, storage facilities.	305	2.54**	1.59	219	1.83*	1.35
Grand mean score			**2.42***			**1.55**	
Bench mark mean score			**2.50**			**2.50**	

Source: field survey, 2018. ** Represent regarded agreed. * Represent regarded as disagree.

Table 5 Ho_1: Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths has no significant influence on Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC in the study area.

Variables	Mean	Std. Devi.	Std. Error mean	D.F	Z-values
Selected Socio-economic characteristic of Youths for both SSEDC and SEEDC.	**2.31**	2.36	0.56		
Youth Participation in agricultural activities of EDC in the Two selected zones.	**2.61**	2.60	0.82		
Difference	**-0.3**	-0.24	-0.26	119	-7.57

Source computed by the author from field survey data, 2018.
Tabulated value (2-tails) at 5% = 3.69 at 1% = 11.26.

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