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Education Reforms And Measures In Correcting The Negative Attitude Of Youths Towards Agriculture

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Abstract

Functional youth activity and organization in schools as a result of reforms can help develop positive interaction and learning among student in agriculture while in school. It will broaden their thoughts and help them to take to agricultural pursuits later in life. This study examined educational reforms and measures in correcting the negative attitude of youths towards agriculture.

Two research questions to understand the various agricultural programmes that youths engage in the school and, the measures in correcting the irrelative attitude towards agriculture were asked. One hypothesis to test for the significant difference in the mean responses of the agricultural science teachers and agricultural science students on the measures in correcting the negative attitude of youths towards agricultural in schools also guided the study. Questionnaire was used to collect relevant information from 15 school principals, 34 agricultural science teachers, randomly selected from a total population of the respondents in ogun state. Mean, standard deviation and t-test were used for the analysis. Recommendations were made based on the findings of the study. The findings from the study revealed that educational reforms on youths activities could be effectively utilized to expose students to good teaching methods; that students need real life situations to enable them develop skills/ attitudes, abilities etc; and youth activities, could serve as a means of national development through field trips and excursions. Based on the findings, recommendations like the training of enough and competent teachers, the regular use of instructional aids, role playing, and allocation of regular period of lesson on the time table for the subject were suggested.

Introduction

No nation can develop to its highest potentials when the people especially the youths are occupied full-time in meeting based needs of survival- clothing/ shelter, conducive environment, security and most importantly, food. The youths constitute the largest workforce in the labour sector and efforts must be made to ensure that they do not develop negative attitude towards agriculture in and out of the school environment. This becomes imperative if we recognize the fact that agriculture supports considerably the economy of most African nations. The youths in every nation serve as a focal point or point of reference in all plans on capacity building to unlock the potentials of people, by the creation of an entrepreneurial culture by which to generate wealth to address joblessness and poverty, ignorance, disease and backwardness. The awareness and interest of our youths in agriculture must be created right from their schooling days through active participation in youth programmes. When agriculture flourishes in life, all other pursuits are in full vigour. Agriculture is all embracing and it touches all areas of human endeavors. Youths must be endeared to this life supporting discipline.

This can be best achieved by creating awareness and interest in agriculture and its bread fields early enough in the life of the youths. The curriculum of the subject at the junior and senior schools is designed to bring about a total change in the pattern of agriculture and also initiate a formal agriculture education. The junior secondary school (jss) curriculum is aimed at preparing the students in both academic and vocational aspect of agriculture by through a well managed school garden for practical training in agriculture by qualified teachers while the senior secondary school is comprehensive with the curriculum designed to broaden the students' knowledge and outlook, through featuring of instructions across the broad spectrum of agriculture. one of the important objectives of agriculture Education is to provide young people with a sound knowledge of the basic principles and techniques of agriculture and the motivation with which they can translate the knowledge into real improvement to meet occupational needs of the youths. Sadly enough, the youths have varied perception of agriculture in the various secondary schools. One of these is their regard of agriculture as a low remunerative and dirty profession which anyone without any special skill and can venture into. Secondly, to them it does not require any special training to fill the soil and plant crops. The inclusion of agriculture as a core subject in the present (universal basic education) scheme is a laudable

approach in the correction of the negative attitude of youths to the subject as all will be exposed to nine years of the rudiments of agriculture in a formal setting. Various reforms geared towards the overall productivity in the country can best be achieved through the youths from our formal institutions. When more youths take to farming through the education in agriculture they have acquired, this will bring about indirect influence for change on the part of local farmers and other employers of labour. The success of young ones would constitute a factor in convincing the older farmers to accept and adopt improved practices in food productive. (Ojo, 1982).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the Education Reforms and the measures in correcting the negative attitude of youths towards agriculture in schools.

Research Questions

1. What are the agricultural programmes that youths engage in the school ?
2. What are the measures in correcting the negative attitude of youths towards agriculture in school ?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the agricultural science teachers and agriculture science students on the measures in correcting the negative attitude of youths towards agriculture in schools.

Respondents	Existence of Youth Programmes in Schools	Percentage of Response
Principles (N=15)	15 (Yes)	100%
Agricultural Science Teacher (N=34)	0 (No) 30 (Yes)	0% 88.23%
Agricultural Science Students (N=228)	4 (No) 190 (Yes) 38 (No)	11.76% 83.33% 16.66%

Table 2: Measures That can Correct Negative Attitude of youths Towards Agriculture in Schools

SN	Strategies	X_1 Means of Principals	SD_1	X_2 Means of Agric. Teachers	SD_2	X_3 Means of Agric. Students	SD_3	Grand Mean	Grand SD	Remark
1.	Negative attitude of youths towards agriculture in schools could be corrected by: Creative awareness through meaningful programmes for students and others.	3.45	0.83	3.50	0.52	3.18	0.96	3.38	0.87	Agree
2.	Training, motivation and encouraging students in broad-fields of agric.	3.60	0.50	3.17	0.75	3.14	0.83	3.30	0.69	Agree
3.	Reducing the drudgery that students put in during practicals with the use of farm machinery.	3.13	0.91	3.41	0.82	3.22	0.88	3.25	0.87	Agree
4.	Making students partake in farm programmes and activities at will.	3.26	0.79	3.17	0.71	3.09	0.89	3.17	0.79	Agree

The remarks above are based on grand mean and a cut-off point of 3.00 on a four point scale. The above table shows that the three groups of respondents agreed with the items except 6 and 12 as measures to correct negative attitude of youths towards agriculture. The students and principals did not believe that some activities could change the attitude of students towards the school farm practicals as being different from the school punishment. Also, the three groups of respondents did not see the farm as an ideal laboratory and teaching center obviously because of the work and drudgery involved on the school farm

Tables 4: Strategies Through Which Attitudes of Youths Towards Agriculture Can Be Corrected

SN	\bar{X}_1 Means Of Agric. Teachers	\bar{X}_2 Means Of Agric. Students	SD1	SD2	t-crit	t-ratio t-cal	Decision
1.	3.50	3.18	0.82	0.96	1.645	0.48	Accept H_0
2.	3.17	3.14	0.75	0.83	1.645	0.19	Accept H_0
3.	3.41	3.22	0.82	0.88	1.645	1.12	Accept H_0
4.	3.17	3.09	0.71	0.89	1.645	0.51	Accept H_0
5.	3.26	3.19	0.82	0.87	1.645	0.42	Accept H_0
6.	3.26	2.54	1.02	1.04	1.645	3.88	Reject H_0

7.	as being different from school punishment. Encouraging meaningful incentives and remuneration to students yearly through farm products etc.	3.41	0.78	3.45	0.74	1.645	-0.25	Accept H_0
8.	Role playing in sales and marketing of farm products vegetables, fruits, animal products etc.	3.41	0.55	3.14	0.93	1.645	1.90	Reject H_0
9.	Organising workshops, seminars, visits for students and exposures on various facets of agriculture.	3.41	0.85	3.37	0.82	1.645	0.24	Accept H_0
10.	Exposing students to brief and interesting maintenance repair works on simple farm tools, sprayers, tractors etc.	3.23	0.85	3.19	0.87	1.645	0.24	Accept H_0
11.	Giving part of farm products or proceeds from sales to students once a while to further arouse their interests.	3.02	0.99	3.42	0.80	1.645	-2.215	Accept H_0
12.	Using farm as an ideal laboratory and teaching centers regularly.	2.70	1.08	2.80	1.04	1.645	-0.525	Accept H_0

The null hypothesis for the items on table 4 was tested, using the t-test at $P < 0.05$ and 260 degree of freedom. The calculated value for two of the items i.e 6 and 8 (3.88 and 1.90) are higher than the critical values and this indicates that there is a significant difference in the mean rating of the two groups of respondents, while the calculated t value for the other items are less than the critical value and this indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of the two groups of respondents. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected for the 2 and upheld for the remaining 8 items.

Summary Of Findings

From the results of analysis of the data, the following major findings were made:

1. That your activities as a result of educational reforms could be effectively utilized to expose students to good teaching aids and materials that are not existing in various respective schools.
2. That students need real life situations when being taught so that they can develop skills, attitudes, abilities, etc and good mastery of agricultural science unlike being taught in abstractions to develop interest in agricultural science.
3. That youths could be successfully used as a rallying point for youth development in all areas of our national endeavours e.g through field trips, excursions, seminars, agricultural shows, etc if well planned.
4. That agricultural science is being reared by students because of the poor perception and the image and that students perform better in youth activities that do not take place on the farm.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Youth activities should be used as a more meaningful rallying point for youths through field trips, excursions, visits, seminars, agricultural shows etc so that they can be more motivated on the subject and have more awareness and better perception and good image of agricultural science.
2. The government a federal and state levels should embark on the training of enough teachers to effectively teach agricultural science at the secondary school level. The curriculum of schools at different levels of our educational system must adequately stress the roles of the youths in schools.
3. The teaching of agricultural science in senior secondary schools should be with respective teaching aids and instructional materials and the idea of

teaching in abstractions should be discouraged. This will further arouse their interest in the subject.

4. Agricultural practical lessons should be properly accommodated on the time-table of schools. A situation where students are exposed to limited time on the farm should be discouraged.

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