



Integrating Agricultural Education And Business Education For Agripreneurial Skill Development Among Students In Colleges Of Education In Anambra State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the integration of agricultural and business education for agripreneurial skill development among students in Colleges of Education in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study was driven by the disconnect between agricultural production knowledge and business competencies required for successful agribusiness practice. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population consisted of 1,350 lecturers and final-year students, from which a sample of 270 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a validated instrument titled Agripreneurial Skill Development Questionnaire (ASDQ), with a reliability coefficient of 0.82 (Cronbach Alpha). Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that the integration of agricultural and business education is implemented to a moderate extent but significantly enhances students' agripreneurial skills, including farm management, financial literacy, marketing, innovation, and decision-making. However, inadequate funding, shortage of qualified lecturers, poor infrastructure, weak industry linkage, and outdated curriculum were identified as major constraints. The hypothesis test showed a significant difference between lecturers' and students' perceptions of integration. The study concludes that effective integration of agricultural and business education is essential for strengthening agripreneurial capacity, promoting selfreliance, and enhancing sustainable economic development.

Keywords: agricultural education, business education, colleges of education agripreneurial, skill development.

Introduction

Education plays a fundamental role in national development by equipping individuals with knowledge, skills, and competencies required for productive engagement in society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). In Nigeria, Colleges of Education are established to train middle-level manpower, particularly teachers, who are expected to possess both theoretical understanding and practical skills. However, the increasing rate of unemployment among graduates has raised concerns about the effectiveness of the educational system in preparing students for the labour market (World Bank, 2020). Agricultural education is designed to equip learners with competencies in crop production, animal husbandry, and sustainable agricultural practices. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2021), agriculture remains a major source of employment and livelihood in developing countries. Despite its importance, agricultural education in many tertiary institutions is largely theoretical, limiting students' ability to translate knowledge into productive

ventures (Osuala, 2010).

Business education, on the other hand, focuses on the development of entrepreneurial, managerial, and financial skills necessary for economic participation. Igbo and Aboh (2017) emphasized that business education prepares individuals for self-reliance by equipping them with competencies in accounting, marketing, and decision-making. When effectively integrated with agricultural education, it promotes agripreneurship the application of business principles to agricultural production and value chain activities (Adebayo & Okorie, 2019). The integration of agriculture and business education is therefore essential for producing graduates who are not only skilled in agricultural production but also capable of managing agribusiness enterprises. However, in Colleges of Education in Anambra State, both disciplines are taught in isolation, limiting students' ability to develop holistic competencies required for agripreneurship. Existing studies have largely focused on either agricultural education or business education independently, with little attention given to their integration. This gap in literature and practice necessitates the present study.

Statement of the Problem

Graduate unemployment in Nigeria has continued to increase despite the expansion of tertiary education and the introduction of entrepreneurship education programmes. Many graduates, particularly those from vocational and technical disciplines, lack the practical and entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment. This situation is evident among agricultural education students who, despite acquiring knowledge in agricultural production, often lack the business competencies necessary to transform their skills into profitable enterprises. Similarly, students in business education programmes acquire knowledge in accounting, marketing, and management but may lack the technical skills required for agricultural production. The separation of agricultural and business education in Colleges of Education has therefore created a gap in skill acquisition, where students are unable to integrate production and enterprise competencies effectively.

In addition, instructional approaches in many institutions emphasize theoretical knowledge rather than practical and interdisciplinary learning. Challenges such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, shortage of qualified lecturers, and outdated curricula further limit effective integration of agricultural and business education (UNESCO, 2019; World Bank, 2020).

Although previous studies have highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship education, there is limited empirical evidence on the integration of agriculture educators and business education for agripreneurial skill development, particularly in Colleges of Education in Anambra State. This gap underscores the need for this study, which seeks to examine the extent of integration, the skills developed, and the challenges hindering effective implementation.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. determine the extent to which agricultural education and business education are integrated for agripreneurial skill development among lecturers and students in Colleges of Education in Anambra State, Nigeria;
2. identify the agripreneurial skills acquired by students through the integration of agricultural education and business education in Colleges of Education in Anambra State;
3. examine the challenges affecting the effective integration of agricultural education and business education and proffer possible solutions for enhancing agripreneurial skill development among students in Colleges of Education in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the extent of integration of agricultural and business education for agripreneurial skill development among lecturers and students in Colleges of Education in Anambra State?
2. What are the agripreneurial skills acquired by students through the integration of agricultural and business education in Colleges of Education in Anambra State?
3. What challenges affect the effective integration of agricultural and business education, and what possible solutions can enhance agripreneurial skill development among students in Colleges of Education in Anambra State?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent of integration of agricultural and business education for agripreneurial skill development in Colleges of Education in Anambra State.

Agricultural education is a vital component of vocational education aimed at equipping learners with practical knowledge and skills in farming and agricultural production. FAO (2021) noted that agriculture is central to economic development and food security. However, Osuala (2010) observed that agricultural education in Nigeria remains largely theoretical, limiting students' exposure to practical agribusiness opportunities. It is a structured vocational and academic discipline designed to equip learners with knowledge, practical competencies, and entrepreneurial attitudes necessary for effective participation in agricultural production and agribusiness systems. It includes training in crop production, animal husbandry, soil science, agricultural economics, farm management, and sustainable agricultural systems. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2021), agricultural education plays a central role in achieving food security, poverty reduction, and rural development, particularly in developing economies where agriculture remains a major source of livelihood.

The integration of agricultural education and business education refers to the deliberate combination of agricultural production knowledge with entrepreneurial and managerial competencies to produce graduates capable of managing agribusiness enterprises effectively. The integration of agricultural and business education involves combining both disciplines to produce graduates who are competent in both technical and managerial aspects of agribusiness. FAO (2021) emphasized that modern agriculture requires both production and business skills

Adebayo and Okorie (2020) define agripreneurship as the application of entrepreneurial principles to agricultural production and value-chain activities. Successful agripreneurs therefore require both technical and business competencies. Agripreneurial skill development involves the acquisition of skills that enable individuals to combine agricultural production with business management. Adebayo and Okorie (2019) defined agripreneurship as the integration of agriculture and entrepreneurship for value creation. UNESCO (2019) stressed the need for vocational education to incorporate entrepreneurial skills to remain relevant.

UNESCO (2022) emphasizes that integrated vocational education enhances employability and self-reliance. Integration may involve curriculum redesign, interdisciplinary teaching, and practical agribusiness training such as budgeting, marketing, and value-chain analysis. However, integration remains weak due to curriculum fragmentation, poor interdepartmental collaboration, and inadequate lecturer preparation (World Bank, 2020). The integration of agricultural and business education is highly significant because it bridges the gap between production-oriented knowledge and enterprise-oriented competencies required for sustainable economic development. In modern economies, agriculture is no longer limited to subsistence farming but has evolved into a commercial and value-driven enterprise system.

Agripreneurial skill development refers to the acquisition of integrated competencies in agricultural production and entrepreneurship required for establishing and managing agricultural enterprises. These include farm management, marketing, financial literacy, innovation, record keeping, and decision-making. FAO (2022) emphasizes that agripreneurial skills are essential for transforming agriculture into a profitable sector. Adebayo and Okorie (2021) found that agripreneurship education improves youth employment outcomes. However, skill development is limited by inadequate practical training and weak exposure to real-world business environments. UNESCO (2021) stresses the importance of experiential learning.

However, several challenges hinder effective integration. UNESCO (2019) and World Bank (2020) identified inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, shortage of qualified interdisciplinary lecturers, outdated curriculum, poor infrastructure, and weak industry collaboration (World Bank, 2020; UNESCO, 2022) and shortage of qualified lecturers as major constraints. The study is anchored on Human Capital Theory (Nworgu, 2015), which emphasizes skill acquisition for productivity. Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964) explains education as investment in productivity. Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984) emphasizes learning through experience and practice.

Adebayo and Okorie (2021) found agripreneurship improves employability. Okolocha and Nwadiani (2018) reported weak practical implementation. UNESCO (2022) and World Bank (2020) highlight skill mismatch in vocational systems. Despite these studies, there is limited empirical research focusing on the integration of agricultural education and business education in Colleges of Education in Anambra State, creating a gap this study seeks to fill. Such gaps include: Lack of integrated studies, Limited focus on Colleges of Education in Anambra State, Insufficient analysis of specific agripreneurial skills, Limited lecturer–student comparative studies and absence of integration effectiveness models.

The study is anchored on Human Capital Theory and Experiential Learning Theory, both of which provide a strong foundation for understanding agripreneurial skill development through the integration of agricultural and business education. Human Capital Theory, as propounded by Becker (1964), views education as an investment that enhances individuals' productivity, efficiency, and economic value. The theory posits that the acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills increases an individual's capacity to contribute meaningfully to economic development. Within the context of this study, the integration of agricultural and business education represents a strategic form of human capital development, where students acquire both technical agricultural competencies and entrepreneurial capabilities. This dual skill acquisition is essential for agripreneurship, which requires not only production knowledge but also managerial and financial expertise. As noted by Nworgu (2015), educational systems that emphasize skill-based learning are more effective in preparing learners for self-reliance and employment generation. Therefore, the theory justifies the need for an interdisciplinary approach to education that equips students with holistic competencies for agribusiness success.

Empirical studies provide evidence supporting the integration of agricultural and business education as a means of enhancing agripreneurial skill development, although many of these studies have not been sufficiently elaborated in earlier discussions. For instance, Adebayo and Okorie (2019) investigated the role of agripreneurship in youth empowerment in Nigeria and found that students exposed to both agricultural training and entrepreneurial education demonstrated higher levels of innovation, business planning ability, and income-generation potential. Their study emphasized that the combination of production and business skills significantly improves the capacity of graduates to establish and sustain agribusiness ventures. This finding supports the argument of the present study that integration enhances practical skill acquisition beyond theoretical knowledge.

Similarly, Okolocha and Nwadiani (2018) examined entrepreneurship education in Nigerian tertiary institutions and reported that although students acquire theoretical business knowledge, many lack practical exposure required for real-world application. The study attributed this gap to weak collaboration between academic institutions and industry, as well as the absence of interdisciplinary teaching approaches. This aligns with the findings of the current study, which identified limited practical exposure and weak institutional collaboration as major constraints to effective integration.

Furthermore, experiential learning opportunities, which are critical for agripreneurial skill development, are often constrained by inadequate facilities and weak industry linkages. UNESCO (2022) stresses that effective TVET systems must incorporate work-based learning, industry partnerships, and innovation-driven teaching approaches to enhance employability outcomes. However, many Colleges of Education in Anambra State still face challenges in implementing these strategies effectively.

In addition, the growing importance of digital technologies in agriculture and business requires that students acquire competencies in areas such as digital marketing, data-driven farming, and financial technology. The World Bank (2021) notes that digital skills are increasingly essential for participation in modern agribusiness value chains. However, limited access to ICT infrastructure in many Colleges of Education constrains the integration of such competencies into teaching and learning processes.

Therefore, Colleges of Education in Anambra State provide a highly relevant context for examining the integration of agricultural and business education for agripreneurial skill development. Understanding how these institutions can effectively combine technical and entrepreneurial training is essential for improving graduate employability, promoting self-reliance, and supporting sustainable economic development.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in two Colleges of Education in Anambra State. The population comprised 1,350 respondents, including lecturers and final-year students from agricultural education and business education departments. A sample of 270 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled Agripreneurial Skill Development Questionnaire (ASDQ). The instrument was validated by experts, and reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha (0.82). Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, while t-test was used for hypothesis testing.

Results and Data Presentation

Table 1: Respondents' mean ratings and standard deviations on the extent to which agricultural and business education are integrated for agripreneurial skill development among lecturers and students in Colleges of Education in Anambra State, Nigeria
N= 270

S/N	Item Statement	Lecturers Mean	Students Mean	SD	Remark
1	Agricultural and business education courses are included in developing agripreneurial skills	2.81	2.74	0.76	moderate
2	Students are taught agribusiness planning	2.65	2.58	0.81	Moderate
3	Entrepreneurship is linked to farm practice	2.70	2.62	0.79	Moderate
4	Business education supports agricultural training	2.77	2.69	0.74	Moderate
5	Joint teaching exists between departments	2.40	2.35	0.88	Low
6	Students engage in practical agribusiness projects	2.68	2.60	0.80	Moderate
7	Curriculum integrates both disciplines effectively	2.55	2.48	0.83	Moderate
8	ICT supports integration of both fields	2.73	2.66	0.77	Moderate

Grand Total = 2.63 (Moderate Extent)

Source: Researchers' Field Survey (2026)

Table 1 show that the integration of agricultural and business education in Colleges of Education in Anambra State helps in developing agripreneurial skills at a moderate level, with a grand mean of 2.63. Most items, such as agribusiness planning, entrepreneurship linkage, and ICT support, recorded moderate ratings, indicating partial implementation. However, joint teaching between departments recorded a low mean (2.40 and 2.35), suggesting weak interdisciplinary collaboration. This implies that although integration exists, it is not yet systematic or deeply institutionalized

Table 2: Respondents' mean ratings and standard deviations on the agripreneurial skills acquired by students through the integration of agricultural and business education in Colleges of Education in Anambra State
N= 270

S/N	Item Statement	Lecturers Mean	Students Mean	SD	Remark
1	Farm management skills	3.10	3.05	0.68	High
2	Financial literacy skills	3.20	3.12	0.65	High
3	Marketing of farm produce	3.05	2.98	0.71	High
4	Record keeping skills	3.15	3.08	0.69	High
5	Innovation and creativity	3.22	3.16	0.63	High
6	Decision-making skills	3.18	3.10	0.67	High
7	Value chain management	2.95	2.90	0.74	Moderate
	Business planning skills	3.25	3.18	0.61	High
Grand Total				3.12	High

Source: Researchers' field survey (2026)

Table 2 indicates that students acquire high-level agripreneurial skills, with a grand mean of 3.12. Skills such as farm management skills, financial literacy, innovation, business planning, and decision-making recorded high mean scores, reflecting strong competency development. However, value chain management recorded a moderate mean, suggesting limited exposure in that area. Overall, the results imply that integration, even at a moderate level, significantly contributes to skill acquisition.

Table 3: Respondents' mean ratings and standard deviations on the challenges affecting the effective integration of agricultural and business education and possible solutions for enhancing agripreneurial skill development among students in Colleges of Education in Anambra State N= 270

S/N	Item Statement	Lecturers Mean	Students Mean	SD	Remark
1	Inadequate funding	3.40	3.35	0.58	Serious
2	Lack of qualified lecturers	3.25	3.18	0.64	Serious
3	Poor infrastructure	3.35	3.30	0.60	Serious
4	Outdated curriculum	3.10	3.05	0.70	Serious
5	Lack of practical exposure	3.30	3.25	0.62	Serious
6	Poor ICT integration	3.05	2.98	0.73	Moderate
7	Weak institutional collaboration	3.22	3.15	0.66	Serious
8	Limited industry linkage	3.18	3.12	0.68	Serious
9	Increased funding for practical and interdisciplinary training	3.45	3.38	0.57	Highly Required
11	Recruitment and training of interdisciplinary lecturers	3.32	3.25	0.63	Highly Required
12	Curriculum redesign to integrate agribusiness concepts	3.28	3.20	0.65	Highly Required
13	Strengthening school–industry partnerships	3.30	3.22	0.61	Highly Required
14	Establishment of agribusiness incubation centres and ICT integration	3.36	3.28	0.59	Highly Required
Grand mean (challenges)				3.23	Serious
Grand mean (way forward)				3.42	Highly Required

Source: Researchers' field survey (2026)

The results in the Table 4 indicate that the challenges affecting the integration of agricultural and business education are serious, with a grand mean of 3.23. Key constraints such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, lack of qualified lecturers, and insufficient practical exposure were highly rated, confirming systemic weaknesses in programme implementation. These findings suggest that institutional and policy-level deficiencies significantly hinder effective interdisciplinary education.

On the other hand, the “way forward” items recorded a high grand mean of 3.34, indicating strong agreement among respondents on the strategies required to address these challenges. Measures such as increased funding, curriculum redesign, recruitment of interdisciplinary lecturers, and improved industry collaboration were rated as highly necessary. This implies that stakeholders are not only aware of the challenges but also have a clear understanding of actionable solutions.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent of integration of agricultural and business education for agripreneurial skill development in Colleges of Education in Anambra State.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of lecturers and students

N= 270

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Lecturers	90	3.05	0.72	268	2.87	1.96	significant
Students	180	2.96	0.75				

Result: $t\text{-cal} (2.87) > t\text{-crit} (1.96)$, $\alpha = 0.05$

Decision: Reject null hypothesis

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value (2.87) is greater than the critical value (1.96), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates a significant difference between lecturers' and students' perceptions of integration. Lecturers reported a slightly higher mean than students, suggesting differences in experience, expectations, or exposure. This finding implies that stakeholders perceive integration differently within the institutions.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that the integration of agricultural education and business education is implemented at a moderate level, indicating partial but insufficient coordination between the two disciplines. This supports the earlier observation by Osuala (2010) that vocational education in Nigeria is often fragmented, with weak linkage between theoretical instruction and practical application. Similarly, the World Bank (2020) emphasized that lack of interdisciplinary collaboration limits the effectiveness of skill-based education in developing economies.

Despite the moderate level of integration, the study found that students possess high agripreneurial skills, particularly in financial literacy, innovation, and business planning. This suggests that even limited

integration can yield meaningful outcomes when supported by relevant instructional strategies. This aligns with Adebayo and Okorie (2019), who noted that agripreneurship thrives when learners are exposed to both agricultural and entrepreneurial competencies. UNESCO (2022) also affirmed that integrated vocational training enhances employability and innovation capacity.

The findings relating to challenges and way forward reveal a critical dual reality within the system. While the integration of agricultural and business education faces serious structural barriers, there is also a strong consensus on practical strategies for improvement. The identification of inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and outdated curriculum aligns with UNESCO (2019), which emphasized that resource constraints are major impediments to effective vocational education delivery.

More importantly, the inclusion of the way forward in the analysis highlights that policy and institutional reforms are both necessary and achievable. The strong support for curriculum redesign and interdisciplinary teaching reinforces the argument of the World Bank (2020) that education systems must evolve toward integrated, skills-based frameworks. Similarly, the emphasis on industry linkage supports Okolocha and Nwadiani (2018), who argued that collaboration with industry enhances practical learning and employability outcomes.

The high ratings for establishing agribusiness incubation centres and ICT integration further suggest a shift toward innovation-driven education. This is consistent with UNESCO (2022), which advocates for modern, technology-driven vocational systems that promote entrepreneurship and self-reliance. Therefore, the way forward is not merely theoretical but represents a strategic roadmap for transforming agripreneurial education.

The hypothesis test revealed a significant difference between lecturers and students, indicating variation in perception. This may be attributed to differences in professional experience and expectations. While lecturers may assess integration from a curriculum and policy perspective, students may evaluate it based on practical exposure and learning outcomes. This finding aligns with experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984), which emphasizes that learning experiences shape individual perceptions differently.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that while integration contributes positively to skill development, its effectiveness is constrained by systemic challenges that must be addressed for optimal outcomes.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the integration of agricultural and business education is a critical approach to developing agripreneurial skills among students in Colleges of Education in Anambra State. Although the level of integration is moderate, it has significantly contributed to the development of essential competencies such as financial literacy, farm management, innovation, and business planning. This demonstrates that combining agricultural knowledge with business education enhances students' capacity to translate production skills into viable agribusiness ventures. The findings affirm that interdisciplinary

education is necessary for preparing graduates who are not only technically skilled in agriculture but also capable of managing and sustaining profitable enterprises.

Despite these gains, the effectiveness of integration is limited by several systemic challenges, including inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, outdated curriculum, shortage of interdisciplinary lecturers, and weak collaboration with industry. These constraints hinder practical learning and reduce the overall impact of agricultural and business education on skill development. However, the strong agreement on improvement strategies—such as curriculum redesign, increased funding, lecturer capacity building, and strengthened industry partnerships—indicates that sustainable solutions are achievable. Therefore, enhancing the integration of agricultural and business education requires deliberate institutional reforms and policy support. Strengthening these areas will improve students' readiness for agribusiness, reduce graduate unemployment, and promote sustainable economic development through the production of competent and self-reliant agripreneurs.

Recommendations

1. The curriculum of Colleges of Education should be comprehensively redesigned to ensure full integration of agricultural and business education through interdisciplinary courses and practical modules.
2. There should be strong collaboration between institutions and agribusiness industries to enhance students' practical exposure and experiential learning.
3. Colleges of Education should establish functional agripreneurship development centres to bridge the gap between theory and practice.
4. Government should prioritize increased funding specifically targeted at practical and integrated agricultural-business education programmes.
5. Institutions should recruit and continuously train lecturers with combined expertise in agriculture and business education.
6. Colleges should establish agribusiness incubation centres and integrate ICT tools to enhance innovation, practical learning, and enterprise development.

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