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## Students' Attitudes towards Choosing Agriculture as a Career: A Case of Bihawana Agricultural Secondary School in Dodoma Municipality, Tanzania.

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### Abstract

*This study explores the attitudes of students towards agriculture as a career, with a specific focus on Bihawana Agricultural Secondary School in Dodoma Municipal, Tanzania. Despite agriculture's crucial role in Tanzania's economy, there is a noticeable decline in youth interest in pursuing it as a career. The research seeks to understand the factors influencing students' views on agriculture, including personal preferences, societal perceptions, and the economic prospects associated with the field. Understanding their attitudes is crucial for addressing this issue and attracting more individuals to this field. This study employed a mixed-methods approach, including Questionnaires and interviews, to gather data from 60 students within Bihawana secondary school. Quantitative data were analysed by using SPSS computer software and "content analysis" technique was used to analyse qualitative data. The findings shows that, there is low percentage of students selected agriculture as their career path under their own interest, this gives an alarm on the need to invest more in agricultural schools and knowledge on the importance of agriculture in the country. Also it was found out that, most students choose agriculture as a career pass from home experience and due to lack of other employment. Moreover it was revealed that although several students at Bihawana Agricultural Secondary School acknowledge the significance of agriculture, some of them lack enthusiasm about it as a future career. Factors such as limited exposure to advanced agricultural practices, societal stigma, and the attraction of higher-paying jobs in urban areas influence their attitudes. The study suggests several measures to enhance agricultural education and interest to students, including, the government to offer appropriate and high-quality education by providing positive technical supports for the students who choose agriculture as their preferred career path by increased practical experiences, and media campaigns to shift perceptions and encourage students to consider agriculture as a viable career option. Also, parents and the society at large to support and encourage their children and youths to view agriculture with a positive eye and see it as a way of livelihood*

**Keywords:** *employment, agriculture, career choice, technology*

## INTRODUCTION

### *Background of the Study*

Agriculture is important and very essential to man and the national as it comprises 50% of the national GDP. The term agriculture can be considered as the practice of cultivating soil, growing crops or raising livestock for human use including the production of food, feed, fiber, or other useful products (Garnett et al., 2023). However, despite of the critical role performed by agriculture to both individual and the country, the agriculture sector is still facing a lot of challenges like poor infrastructures, poor technology, unsupportive government policy on agricultural sector and inadequacy knowledge of the farmers.

Although these factors tend to decline the agricultural sector, but currently there is a big challenge facing agricultural sector which is the decline of the interest and preference of the youths towards agriculture as the profession. Tanzania is one of the countries facing this challenge. The decline of the student interest in agricultural career is pressing concern (Smith et al.2019). Despite the pivotal role of the agricultural sector in global economies, there is a noticeable lacks of enthusiasm among student to pursue careers in this field. This decline poses a substantial threat to the sustainability and growth of the agricultural industries (Johnson, 2018). So the core connection between students' attitudes towards agriculture and its implications for career acceptability is a critical emergency demanding scholarly exploration. This highlights a gap in understanding the intricate relationship between student's perceptions and their acceptance of agricultural careers. This gap necessitated the need of this research study which aimed to provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers and career counselors, facilitating the development of targeted interventions to foster a more favorable perception of agricultural professions among students.

Many review of existing literature revealed a scarcity of studies that comprehensively address the many sided aspects of student attitudes towards agriculture and their career acceptability. Existing research tend to be fragmented, often overlooking the dynamic factors that contributes to shaping students perceptions of agriculture careers. This study sought to fill this void by synthesizing and building upon previous research, thereby contributing to a more holistic understanding of the subject matter.

Though some research have been done to investigate the relationship between student attitudes and the agricultural career choice but they lack the in-depth exploration into the refined factors influencing student attitudes towards agriculture. Many studies focus narrowly on surface level perceptions, relegating the social cultural, educational, and economic dimensions that play a pivotal role in shaping these attitudes.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Agriculture is a crucial sector, providing livelihoods for a significant portion of the population. However, there was a growing concern about the attitudes of secondary school students towards agriculture and their career acceptability in this field. The perception of agriculture as a viable career choice among students is essential for the future development of the agricultural sector.

The attitudes of students towards agriculture and their career acceptability have a direct impact on the future of the agricultural sector. Negative attitudes and low career acceptability may lead to a shortage of skilled labor in the agricultural industry, hindering its

growth and development. This, in turn, affects food security, economic development, and employment opportunities.

Agriculture is a vital sector that sustains the livelihoods of a large portion of the population, particularly in developing countries (FAO, 2020). However, concerns are rising regarding the attitudes of secondary school students towards agriculture and the level of interest in pursuing careers in this field. The perception of agriculture as a viable career choice is crucial for the long-term growth and sustainability of the agricultural sector (Dube et al., 2021).

Students' attitudes towards agriculture and their career aspirations in this sector play a pivotal role in shaping the future of agriculture. Negative attitudes and low interest in agricultural careers can result in a shortage of skilled labor, which may impede the development and modernization of the agricultural industry. Such a shortage can have far-reaching consequences, including reduced food security, slower economic growth, and limited employment opportunities in rural areas (FAO, 2020; Dube et al., 2021). Therefore, understanding and addressing students' attitudes towards agriculture is essential in ensuring the sector's continued contribution to economic development.

### *Objectives of the Study*

#### **General Objective**

The general objective of this study was to explore student's attitudes towards agriculture as a source of employment

#### **Specific Objectives:**

- To determine the attitudes of students towards pursuing a career in agriculture
- To examine the factors influencing students' choice of agriculture as career path

#### *Research Questions*

- What are the attitudes of students towards pursuing a career in agriculture?
- What are the factors influencing students to choose agriculture as career path?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Introduction**

The agricultural industry's sustainability and growth depend on attracting a new generation of talent. However, student attitudes towards agriculture significantly influence their career choices and, consequently, the availability of a skilled workforce in the agricultural sector. This literature review aimed to comprehensively explore existing research on the factors influencing student perceptions of agriculture as a career choice and their potential impact on workforce availability within the agricultural industry.

### *Theoretically Framework*

This research was guided by three theories so as to get better understanding of students' attitudes on career choice. This research draws upon Social Cognitive Theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior, and Expectancy-Value Theory. Through the integration of these frameworks, the study will provide a holistic view of the influences, ranging from social and cultural factors to individual expectations that affect students' perceptions of agricultural careers.

### **Social Cognitive Theory**

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura (1986), is important for understanding how individuals form attitudes and behaviors through their interactions with their social environment. SCT emphasizes the role of observational learning, self-efficacy, and social influences in shaping individual behavior. In the context of choosing agriculture as a career, students' perceptions may be influenced by the experiences and behaviors they observe within their family, school, and community environments. For example, students who observe family members or teachers engaged in successful agricultural careers may be more likely to develop a positive attitude towards agriculture as a career choice.

Central to SCT is the concept of self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in a given activity (Bandura, 1986). Students with high self-efficacy related to agriculture are more likely to pursue it as a career, believing that they can successfully navigate agricultural education and achieve career success. Conversely, if students perceive agricultural careers as difficult or lacking in success stories, their self-efficacy might be low, leading them to reject agriculture as a career path.

Thus, SCT suggests that students' attitudes towards agriculture are shaped by their observational learning from others, as well as their perceived ability to succeed in agricultural fields. This theory offers a foundation for understanding how students' social environments and self-beliefs influence their career decisions.

### **Theory of Planned Behavior**

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) provides another useful framework for understanding career decision-making. According to TPB, three primary factors influence an individual's behavior: attitudes towards the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of students choosing agriculture as a career, attitudes refer to students' evaluations of agriculture as a desirable or undesirable career. If students perceive agriculture as a rewarding and respected profession, their attitude toward it will be more positive.

Subjective norms or the social pressure to engage in or avoid a particular behavior. In this case, students' decisions may be influenced by the opinions of family, peers, teachers, and society at large. For instance, if students perceive that their parents or peers disapprove of a career in agriculture, they may be less likely to consider it, even if they have a positive personal attitude towards the field. Conversely, if agriculture is seen as a respectable or prestigious career within a community, students are more likely to feel social pressure to pursue it.

Finally, perceived behavioral control refers to an individual's belief in their ability to control their actions. For students considering agriculture as a career, this might involve factors like access to agricultural education, financial resources, or career opportunities. If students believe that they have the resources and opportunities to pursue an agricultural career, their perceived control over the choice will be high, making them more likely to choose agriculture. However, if students perceive barriers, such as limited access to agricultural programs or low income, they may feel that pursuing agriculture is not within their control, thus negatively influencing their career decision. By incorporating the TPB, this study will examine how students' attitudes, social influences, and perceived control affect their decision to pursue agriculture as a career.

### **Expectancy-Value Theory**

Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) provides another critical perspective for understanding students' career choices. According to Eccles and Wigfield (2002), individuals' decisions and motivation are shaped by their expectations about their ability to succeed and the value they place on a particular activity or outcome. In terms of career choice, EVT suggests that students will be more likely to pursue agriculture if they believe they can succeed in agricultural studies and later careers (expectancy), and if they perceive agriculture to be a valuable, rewarding, or important career (value).

There are two primary types of value in EVT: intrinsic value and extrinsic value. Intrinsic value refers to personal interest or enjoyment, such as the desire to work outdoors or contribute to food security. Extrinsic value, on the other hand, is the perceived benefits of the career, such as salary, job security, and social status (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Students who perceive agriculture as a career that offers both intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic rewards will likely place high value on it and be more motivated to pursue it.

The expectancy component of EVT is also crucial: students who believe that they are capable of succeeding in agricultural education and career development are more likely to choose agriculture. If students have the perception that agricultural careers require specialized knowledge and skills but that they can acquire those skills, their expectancy for success increases. In contrast, students who perceive the agricultural field as difficult or not aligned with their abilities are less likely to consider it. Therefore, EVT suggests that students' career choices are influenced by how they value agriculture (both intrinsically and extrinsically) and by their expectations of success in the field. This theory will help guide the examination of how students' perceptions of the value and feasibility of agricultural careers influence their decision-making process.

### **Integration of the Theories**

These three theoretical frameworks provide complementary insights into the factors that influence students' attitudes toward agriculture as a career. Social Cognitive Theory emphasizes the importance of observational learning and self-efficacy in shaping career attitudes. The Theory of Planned Behavior highlights the role of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control in career decision-making. Finally, Expectancy-Value Theory focuses on how students' expectations of success and the value they place on agriculture influence their career choices.

Together, these theories offer a comprehensive approach to understanding how students develop attitudes towards agriculture as a career, considering both individual and social factors. They also provide a framework for exploring how students' perceptions of agriculture as a field-shaped by their social context, personal beliefs, and expectations ultimately influence their career decisions.

### **Empirical Studies**

The choice of career is influenced by a multitude of factors, including personal interests, social influences, and perceived economic rewards. One area that has attracted attention in recent years is the attitudes of students towards pursuing agriculture as a career. Despite agriculture being one of the most essential sectors for the global economy, food security, and environmental sustainability, it is often regarded by students as a less appealing



career option compared to other professional fields. Several studies have provided valuable insights into the factors influencing student perceptions of agriculture as a career choice focusing on cultural, economic, educational, and psychological aspects.

### **Cultural and Social Influences**

Cultural perceptions and societal expectations have a profound effect on students' career choices. Agriculture, traditionally viewed as a low-status and labor-intensive field, is often associated with rural poverty and limited social prestige. In many developing countries, particularly in urbanized areas, agriculture is seen as a profession primarily for those with limited access to other opportunities, and this perception discourages many students from considering it as a viable career path. A study by Akinmoladun et al. (2021) notes that students living in urban settings are more likely to reject agriculture as a career choice, seeing it as a field that involves manual labor and is associated with lower social status and income. This negative perception of agriculture can stem from a lack of understanding about the diverse career opportunities available within the agricultural sector.

Conversely, students from rural areas may have a more positive view of agriculture due to their direct exposure to farming and the agricultural industry. According to Ugochukwu (2019), rural students are often more likely to pursue agriculture as a career because they are familiar with the profession and understand its role in community life. In rural areas, agriculture is seen as an essential and often prestigious profession, and many students' families are directly involved in farming, which influences their attitudes toward the field.

The influence of family and peers cannot be overstated. Parents and teachers often play a pivotal role in shaping students' attitudes towards different professions. In rural communities, where agricultural practices are deeply embedded in everyday life, family members might encourage younger generations to follow in their footsteps. However, in urban settings, where there is greater exposure to non-agricultural career paths, students may be steered towards more modern and "prestigious" professions, leading to the further decline of interest in agricultural careers. These social dynamics create a strong divide between students from different geographical and socio-economic backgrounds in terms of their attitudes towards agriculture as a profession.

### **Economic Factors**

Economic considerations are another crucial factor that influences students' career choices. The financial stability and future income potential of a career are significant determinants in the decision-making process. For many students, agriculture is not perceived as a high-paying profession, especially when compared to fields like medicine, engineering, or law. According to Guei (2018), students in many countries often prioritize careers that promise higher salaries and better financial security, leading to a decline in interest in agriculture. The economic challenges associated with the agricultural sector, such as fluctuating crop prices, inconsistent government support, and the high cost of agricultural inputs, make it seem like a less lucrative option.

However, there is a shift occurring in how students view agriculture as a career. Recent studies indicate that the economic potential of modern agriculture, particularly through agribusiness, agricultural technology (agritech), and sustainable farming, is becoming more recognized among students. Barros (2020) highlights that students exposed to innovations in agriculture, such

as precision farming, biotechnology, and organic farming are more likely to perceive agriculture as a promising field with potential for economic success. As agriculture becomes more technology-driven, offering opportunities in areas such as farm management, agribusiness, and research, it is becoming a more attractive option for students who are drawn to both financial success and innovation.

Moreover, students' attitudes towards the economic rewards of a career in agriculture are also influenced by government policies and programs that support the sector. When students see that agriculture is supported through government subsidies, grants, and programs that offer financial support or incentives for young farmers and entrepreneurs, they are more likely to consider it as a viable and potentially profitable career path. These factors demonstrate that while economic perceptions may discourage many students from entering the field, changing the narrative through education and policy support can shift their attitudes positively.

### **Educational and Institutional Factors**

Educational institutions play a significant role in shaping students' career choices, particularly through the curriculum and available learning opportunities. In many countries, agricultural education is often marginalized or undervalued compared to other fields of study. According to Omoregie and Okoh (2021), agricultural education is frequently viewed as secondary or less important, which results in limited resources, outdated curricula, and insufficient practical exposure for students. This lack of exposure to the diverse opportunities within the agricultural sector can lead students to underestimate the field's potential and fail to recognize the wide variety of careers available within it, from agronomy to agricultural engineering and food science.

In contrast, students who are exposed to modern, hands-on agricultural education are more likely to view the field positively. A study by Madu and Igboke (2019) found that agricultural students who engage in practical training through internships, field trips, or industry partnerships are more likely to develop a genuine interest in agriculture as a career. These experiences allow students to see agriculture as a dynamic, innovative field rather than a static, old-fashioned profession. Additionally, the introduction of specialized programs that focus on agricultural entrepreneurship and innovation can inspire students to pursue agriculture not just as a career, but also as a business opportunity.

Furthermore, the quality of teaching and the involvement of agricultural professionals in the education process can have a significant impact on students' attitudes towards the field. Institutions that collaborate with industry professionals, offer mentorship programs, or invite guest speakers from successful agricultural backgrounds can provide students with a more comprehensive and motivating view of agricultural careers. Louw and Breen (2020) argue that seeing successful professionals in the field can challenge the stereotypes surrounding agriculture and motivate students to pursue a career in this sector.

### **Psychological and Personal Factors**

In addition to external factors like societal views, economics, and education, psychological factors play a critical role in shaping students' attitudes towards agriculture. Personal interests, values, and self-belief in one's abilities (self-efficacy) are important elements of career decision-making. Ndiritu et al. (2020) found that students who have a strong personal interest in agriculture,

perhaps due to family background, prior exposure, or personal experiences, are more likely to choose agriculture as a career. These students tend to have a more positive view of agriculture, seeing it as a fulfilling and worthwhile profession.

Self-efficacy is another important factor influencing career choices. Students who believe in their ability to succeed in agriculture are more likely to pursue this career. This sense of confidence can be nurtured through exposure to successful agricultural role models and through education and training programs that empower students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the field. According to Ajani et al. (2021), students who feel confident in their ability to contribute to the agricultural sector, whether through farming, technology, or research are more likely to consider agriculture as a viable and rewarding career path.

Psychological factors such as personal values and motivations also influence career choices. Some students are motivated by the desire to make a meaningful impact on society or the environment. Agriculture, especially in its sustainable form, offers opportunities to contribute to food security, environmental conservation, and the well-being of communities. Students who are driven by these values may find agriculture to be an attractive career option, as it aligns with their personal goals of making a positive difference in the world.

### **Technological Advances and Future Prospects**

The increasing role of technology in agriculture has the potential to reshape students' perceptions of the field and make it a more attractive career choice. Modern agriculture is increasingly reliant on cutting-edge technologies such as drones, artificial intelligence, and genetic modification. As these technologies become more integrated into farming practices, the agricultural sector is becoming more sophisticated and appealing to students who are interested in innovation and entrepreneurship. Osuji et al. (2022) suggest that students who are exposed to the high-tech side of agriculture through educational programs or industry partnerships are more likely to see it as a field with potential for growth and success.

The rise of agribusiness and the growing importance of sustainability have also contributed to the appeal of agriculture. As the global population continues to grow, the demand for food and sustainable agricultural practices increases. This has led to a new generation of young farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs who are using technology to meet the challenges of food production and environmental sustainability. As Chukwuma et al. (2020) point out; the emphasis on green jobs and sustainable farming practices makes agriculture an essential field that offers career opportunities with a meaningful impact on society.

The perception of agriculture as a high-tech, forward-looking industry is gradually changing the narrative around agricultural careers. Students are beginning to see the field as an exciting and dynamic sector with opportunities for innovation, problem-solving, and economic growth.

### **Research Gap**

The literature on students' attitudes towards agriculture as their career acceptability lacks in-depth exploration on young people's perceptions of agricultural sector especially students at secondary schools. While there was a substantial body of research on career attitudes and choices among students, there was a noticeable gap in the literature when it comes to understanding the unique challenges and opportunities associated with agricultural careers. Most

existing studies tend to focus on more traditional career paths, such as business, engineering, or healthcare, with limited attention given to the agricultural sector. This gap was significant because it overlooks the specific considerations and motivations that may influence students' perceptions of agriculture as a viable career option. Understanding these factors was very crucial for developing effective strategies to attract and retain talent in the agricultural industry.

Furthermore, the limited research on secondary school students' attitudes towards agricultural careers was particularly striking given the increasing demand for professionals in the agricultural sector. As global population growth and environmental sustainability concerns continue to shape the future of agriculture, it is important to understand how young people perceive this field as a viable career option. Therefore by identifying this gap in the literature made the need for researchers to do this research.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Area of the Study***

The study was conducted at Bihawana Boys Secondary School, located at Mbabala ward in Dodoma District Council, in Tanzania. This area had been chosen due to its significance as an agricultural hub and the potential impact of students' attitudes towards agriculture on the local community and economy.

### ***Research Approach and research Design***

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods. This allowed a comprehensive understanding of students' attitudes towards agriculture as a career choice and the factors influencing their perceptions. Also, this study was mostly apply the survey design, whereby the data was collected from a sample through interview and questionnaires to gather the information under both open ended questions and closed ended questions.

### ***Population of the Study***

The population for this study comprised only students from Bihawana Boys secondary schools in Dodoma Municipal, Tanzania, with the sample size of 60 male students. The students were in the age range of 17 to 23 years, representing a diverse group in terms of socioeconomic background, academic performance, and personal interests. The respondents of this study were also chosen purposively from both rural and urban areas from different regions in Tanzania.

### ***Sample size***

The study comprised of 60 respondents (Students), to represent the whole population and ensure the practical feasibility of data collection and analysis.

### ***Purposive Sampling***

In this study, purposive sampling was used to select a representative sample of students from both rural and urban areas. Bihawana Boys Agricultural Secondary School, situated in Dodoma Municipal, has students from both rural and urban backgrounds. To gain a comprehensive understanding of how students' attitudes towards agriculture as a career may vary based on their place of origin, the research specifically targeted participants from these two groups.

The purposive sampling procedure followed these steps: First by grouping students basing on residential area: students were categorized according to whether they came from rural or urban areas. This classification was important for exploring how the

geographic context could affect their views on agriculture as a career. Secondly by ensuring balanced representation: Efforts were made to balance the number of students from rural and urban areas, ensuring that neither group dominated the findings. This was done to avoid bias and to capture a diverse range of perspectives, and lastly by inclusion of diverse student profiles: The sample also considered students from various socioeconomic backgrounds and academic levels, providing a more thorough understanding of how different factors might influence their career choices.

### Simple Random Sampling

Simple random sampling technique was employed to get a number of respondents required from those found by the purposive sampling by the use of piece of papers. Two kind of slip papers were made, written YES ns others written NO. Those who chose YES were included in the sample. This kind of sampling technique ensures that, each and every member of the population has equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. This helped to avoid bias because each student in the population had an equal chance of being selected to ensure a representative population.

### Data Collection Tools

The study utilized a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews as data collection tools. Questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data on students' attitudes towards agriculture as a career choice. Prior to implementation, the questionnaire was pre-tested to establish its validity and reliability. The interviews were designed to explore in-depth insights into the factors influencing students' attitudes to supplement those found from questionnaires. Both instruments were developed in the English language to enhance understanding and were administered by trained researchers.

### Data Processing and Analysis

The collected data was processed using statistical software such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) or Excel to organize, clean, and analyze the information. The analysis of the data involved both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Quantitative analysis included descriptive statistics to summarize the students' attitudes and career acceptability scores, as well as inferential statistics to examine relationships between different variables like, gender, academic performance, exposure to agricultural activities and attitudes towards agriculture.

But Qualitative analysis involved thematic coding of open-ended responses from the surveys or interviews to identify recurring themes and patterns related to students' perceptions of agriculture as a career option.

### Ethical Consideration

The ethical consideration of research is of great importance. Research ethics takes into account the moral values and principles that guide the respondents, sponsors, researchers and all individuals to be involved in the research (Strydom, J. W (2007). In this research, the researchers expected to comply with human research ethics, informed consent, respect for confidentiality and anonymity, storage of data and privacy for the results. The researchers asked for permission to conduct the research and the respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, and that their identities was not disclosed to other people, and that the information they provided remained confidential and used only for this study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Objective One: To determine the attitudes of students towards pursuing a career in agriculture.**

### Demographic information

The respondents are all students, with the majority (83.3%) in Form VI, and the remaining 16.7% in Form V. This suggests the sample is predominantly composed of students nearing the completion of their secondary education. In terms of age, the respondents are evenly split between two age groups - 50% are between 18-20 years old, and the other 50% are between 21-23 years old. This represents a fairly wide range of ages within the sample. The respondents' sex is reported as male, and their education level is specified as Advanced level, indicating they are pursuing higher-level secondary studies (Table, 1).

This demographic data was considered important in understanding the perspectives and experiences they may share regarding agriculture as a potential career path.

**Table 1: Age and Class of respondents**

Variable	Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Class	Form v	10	16.7
	Form vi	50	83.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>
Age	18-20	30	50
	21-23	30	50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

### Considering agriculture as the potential career

Based on the research data provided in Table 2 below, the majority of respondents (93.3%) indicated that they don't consider agriculture as a potential career choice. The remaining 6.7% found agriculture to have potential being a career path. These findings lines up with what was written by Guei (2018) which elucidate that for many students, agriculture is not perceived as a high-paying profession, especially when compared to fields like medicine, engineering, or law. According to, students in many countries often prioritize careers that promise higher salaries and better financial security, leading to a decline in interest in agriculture. This suggest that most students just take agriculture as a subject but have no plan to use it as a career hence few professionals having passion with agriculture.

**Table 2: Choice of agriculture as a career**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
No	56	93.3
Yes	4	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

### Have you received any formal education or training in agriculture?

The survey data indicates that the majority of respondents (86.6%) have received formal education or training in agriculture in school. An additional 13.4% are currently enrolled in agricultural studies, suggesting a continued interest in the sector (Table 3). This shows high proportion of respondents with agricultural education backgrounds lends credibility to their perspectives shared in the

previous responses. The data points to a sample population that is well-versed in agricultural concepts and practices, providing a solid foundation for the discussion of agriculture's role and future outlook.

**Table 3: Agriculture training attainment**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	52	86.6
Currently enrolled in agriculture studies	8	13.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Do you think advanced education is essential for a successful career in agriculture?**

The research data suggests that the majority of respondents, 56.7%, believe that advanced education is absolutely necessary for a successful career in agriculture. Another 43.4% of respondents consider advanced education as important, but not mandatory, for an agricultural career (Table 4). Overall, the data indicates a strong sentiment among the respondents that higher education is a valuable, if not essential, component for achieving success in the agricultural field.

**Table 4: Importance of advanced Education**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Absolutely necessary	34	56.7
Important but not mandatory	26	43.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Have you ever considered entrepreneurship in agriculture as a career path?**

The research data (Table, 5) reveals that a significant majority of respondents, 80%, have actually considered entrepreneurship in agriculture as a potential career path. An additional 10% of respondents indicated they have considered it, but not seriously. Only a small percentage, 10%, said they have never thought about it. Overall, the data suggests a strong interest and openness among the surveyed population to exploring entrepreneurial opportunities within the agricultural sector. This implies that, when it comes to agriculture as a business more youths would like to be either middle men or entrepreneurs, but not going to farm directly.

**Table 5: Considering Agriculture as Entrepreneur**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes, actively considering	48	80
Yes, but not seriously	6	10
No, never thought about it	6	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**What aspect of agriculture appeal to you as potential career choice?**

The research data provides a comprehensive overview of the various aspects of agriculture that appear as potential career paths to the respondents. Based on the findings, the most popular areas of interest seem to be animal science 33.3% of respondents indicating interest, and crop science, also at 40%. Veterinary medicine and agribusiness also garnered interest from 30% of

respondents. However, the majority of respondents expressed little to no interest in areas such as agricultural engineering, wildlife management, agricultural extension, teaching, beekeeping, agronomy, agroforestry, poultry science, entrepreneurship, transportation, horticulture, dairy technology, soil science, range management, general agriculture, plant breeding, environmental conservation, and aquaculture. The data in Table 6, suggests a diverse range of preferences among the respondents, with certain agricultural disciplines emerging as more appealing potential career paths than others.

**Table 6: Choice of Agriculture Specialty**

Specialty	Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
Animal science,	YES	24	33.3
	NO	36	66.7
Veterinary medicine,	YES	18	30.0
	NO	42	70.0
Agricultural engineering,	YES	16	26.7
	NO	44	73.3
Wild life management,	YES	8	13.3
	NO	52	86.7
Agricultural extension officers	YES	10	16.7
	NO	50	83.3
Teaching	YES	16	20.0
	NO	48	80.0
Bee keeping	YES	4	6.7
	NO	56	93.3
Agronomy	YES	10	16.7
	NO	50	83.3
Crop science	YES	24	40.0
	NO	36	60.0
Agroforestry	YES	16	26.7
	NO	44	73.3
Agribusiness	YES	18	30.0
	NO	42	70.0
Horticultural crops	YES	6	10.0
	NO	54	90.0
Soil science	YES	8	10.3
	NO	52	89.7
Range management	YES	4	6.7
	NO	56	93.3
Agricultural general	YES	10	16.7
	NO	50	83.3
Environmental	YES	4	6.7



conservation	NO	56	93.3
Aquaculture (fish keeping)	YES	6	10.0
	NO	54	90.0

**How do you perceive the role of agriculture in addressing current societal challenges?**

The respondents (Table 7) perceive agriculture as playing a multifaceted role in addressing current societal challenges. Majority of respondents recognize agriculture's importance in market allocation of produced goods and as a backbone for development among different people in the country. However, others feel its role has not been fully understood by people. The data also suggests that respondents view agriculture as a source of income, food, employment opportunities, and raw materials for industries. Additionally, some respondents believe that engaging in agricultural production can help raise the living standards of people, thereby contributing to poverty reduction. Overall, the respondents highlight agriculture's potential to create fairness between humans and the environment, as well as its capacity to address societal issues related to food security, employment, and economic development (Table, 7).

**Table 7: Role of agriculture in addressing current societal challenges**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Play role in market allocation for the produced goods	2	3.3
Source of income	6	10.0
Source of food, employment and raw materials for industries	22	36.7
Source of self-employment opportunity to the people	18	30.0
Has not played that much role because peoples are still not understanding it	2	3.3
Creates the ground of fairness between man and the environment.	2	3.3
Act as the back born for development among different people in our country	2	3.3
Through engaging in agricultural production, the living standard of the people may be risen hence poverty reduction	6	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Barriers that students might face when considering agriculture as a career option**

According to the survey data (Table 8), students interested in pursuing agriculture as a career may face several key barriers. The most significant challenge appears to be the inadequate availability of facilities for practical experience and hands-on training, as indicated by over a third of respondents. Other barriers include poor knowledge of agricultural practices and a lack of specialized education in the field, the absence of dedicated programs and

resources, the need for suitable environmental conditions, the influence of negative societal perceptions towards agriculture, the high costs associated with agricultural inputs and labor, as well as the unavailability of essential learning tools and equipment. These multifaceted obstacles may present significant hurdles for students looking to explore agriculture as a potential career path, highlighting the need for targeted interventions and improvements in the educational and infrastructural support for the agriculture sector.

**Table 8: Barriers that students might face when considering agriculture as a career option**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Inadequate of facilities for practical experiences and practices,	22	36.7
Poor knowledge of performing practical or agricultural activities and lack of education in agricultural field.	8	13.3
Good environmental condition must be provided	6	10.0
Influence from their fellow ones who consider agriculture as outdated career	6	6.7
Unavailability of learning tools and equipment's	10	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**How can educational institutions promote agricultural career paths to students?**

Basing on the collected data (Table, 9), education institutions can better promote agricultural career paths to students through a multi-pronged approach. Respondents suggest that institutions should invite students to visit agricultural facilities to enhance their practical knowledge and understanding of the sector. They also recommend providing students with comprehensive theoretical and hands-on education on the agriculture industry, as well as securing external motivation and financial support to encourage participation in agricultural activities. Additionally, the inclusion of agriculture-related subjects in the education curriculum, the provision of relevant learning equipment and tools, and the organization of informative seminars can help raise awareness and interest among students. Respondents further emphasize the need to improve the existing agriculture syllabus and develop specialized professionals in various agricultural domains. By addressing these key areas, educational institutions can better position agriculture as an attractive and viable career option for students, ultimately contributing to the growth and development of the agriculture sector.

**Table 9: Promoting Agriculture through educational institutions**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Inviting students to visit some of the agricultural facilities for more knowledge.	2	3.3



Providing fully consideration and external motivation to students	4	6.7
Creation of many job with giving little material support for the running the agricultural activities at school	4	6.7
By providing both theoretical and practical application of agricultural sectors	26	43.3
By provision of learning equipment's for practical activities and visit frequently for advices.	4	6.7
Provide seminars to schools and practice some of the agricultural activities	6	10.0
To include the agricultural subject in educational curriculum	8	13.3
To improve agricultural syllabus and to prepare special people to be professional to some area in agriculture	6	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**OBJECTIVE TWO: To examine the factors influencing students' choice of agriculture as career path**

**In your opinions, what are the key skills required for a successful career in agriculture?**

From the results (Table 10), it was found out that, large proportion of respondents, (40%), believes that all of the listed skills - analytical skills, problem-solving ability, and technical knowledge, are important for a successful career in agriculture. (26.7%) identified technical knowledge as the most important skill. This result align with what was found out by Barros (2020) highlights that students exposed to innovations in agriculture, such as precision farming, biotechnology, and organic farming are more likely to perceive agriculture as a promising field with potential for economic success. As agriculture becomes more technology-driven, offering opportunities in areas such as farm management, agribusiness, and research, it is becoming a more attractive option for students who are drawn to both financial success and innovation.

This data suggests that the respondents generally recognize the need for a diverse skillset, including both technical expertise and higher-order cognitive abilities, to thrive in an agricultural career. The relatively broad distribution of responses indicates there may not be a clear consensus on the single most important skill, but rather an acknowledgement of the multifaceted nature of the competencies required for success in the agriculture field.

**Table 10: Key skills required for a successful career in agriculture**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Analytical skills	6	10.0
Problem solving ability	14	23

Technical knowledge	16	26.7
All above	24	40.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Would you opt in pursuing further education or training in agricultural studies?**

Results in Table 11 below, indicates that, majority of respondents don't see the need of taking higher education in agriculture, 1 majority of respondents (66.7%), they see there is no need for higher education to be agricultural specialist. An additional 20% of respondents indicated that they need further agriculture-focused training as necessary. This situation implies that, more efforts need to be done so as to arise interests within students to opt for agricultural studies.

**Table 11: Interest to pursuing further education or training in agricultural studies**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
No	20	66.7
Yes, if necessary	6	20.0
Maybe in the future	4	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**How do you perceive the role of technology in shaping the future of agriculture careers?**

The data clearly indicates that the overwhelming majority of respondents (93.3%) perceive technology as essential for the future growth and development of agriculture-related careers. This strong consensus suggests that the respondents recognize the transformative potential of technological advancements in reshaping and enhancing the agriculture industry. The remaining respondents (6.7%) don't see the role of technology in shaping the future of agriculture (Table, 12). These results matches with those found in the research done by Madu and Igbokwe (2019) which assets that agricultural students who engage in practical training through internships, field trips, or industry partnerships are more likely to develop a genuine interest in agriculture as a career. This finding highlights the respondents' awareness of the critical role that technological innovation will play in shaping the trajectory of agricultural careers and the industry as a whole.

**Table 12: Perception on the role of technology in shaping the future of agriculture careers**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Is important	56	93.3
Not important	4	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Do you think agricultural careers offer equal opportunities for both men and women?**

The data indicates a positive outlook on the availability of equal opportunities for both men and women in agriculture-related careers. A significant majority of respondents, (73.3%), believe that agriculture offers absolutely equal opportunities regardless of gender. Another 8 respondents (26.7%) expressed a similar sentiment, but with some limitations (Table, 13). This data

suggests that the respondents generally perceive the agriculture industry as a field that promotes gender equality and provides equitable prospects for professional advancement, although there may still be some room for improvement in certain areas.

**Table 13: Do you think agricultural careers offer equal opportunities for both men and women?**

Parameter	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes, absolutely	44	73.3
Yes but with some limitation	16	26.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**How do you think agricultural education can be improved to attract more students to this field?**

The data from Table 14 below suggests a variety of ways in which agricultural education can be improved to attract more students to this field. Results showed that, 26.7% proposed agriculture should be offered as a subject in different school systems across Tanzania, and students should be supported with the necessary implements and resources to motivate their participation. Another respondent (30%) emphasized the importance of incorporating more practical components into agricultural education. These results aligns with the results found in the study done by Omoregie and Okoh (2021), which suggests that, agricultural education is frequently viewed as secondary or less important, which results in limited resources, outdated curricula, and insufficient practical exposure for students. This range of ideas highlights the need for a multi-faceted approach, addressing both the curricular and infrastructural aspects of agricultural education, as well as increasing awareness and access to practical training. Implementing these suggestions could help attract a greater number of students to pursue careers in the agricultural field.

**Table 14: Improvements to be done so as to attract more students**

9365	Frequency	Percent (%)
Introduce agriculture clubs in schools	6	10
Improve and increase practical activities	18	30
Make Agriculture a compulsory subject to primary and secondary schools	16	26.7
Employ more agriculture teachers in schools	2	0.03
Increase employment in agriculture sector	8	
Increase more resources in for agriculture subject in schools	10	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Personal experiences that have shaped interest in pursuing a career in agriculture**

The data reveals a diverse set of personal experiences that have shaped the respondents' interest in pursuing careers in agriculture

(Table, 15). Most of the respondents (46.6%) cited experiences of agriculture activities outside the school settings(home and people doing agriculture) through observing the employment opportunities in agriculture, and witnessing the benefits people have gained through farming, jobs, and agriculture-related businesses. This is the same as what was found out by Ugochukwu (2019) whereby students from rural agricultural families areas are often more likely to pursue agriculture as a career because they are familiar with the profession and understand its role in community life. In rural areas, agriculture is seen as an essential and often prestigious profession, and many students' families are directly involved in farming, which influences their attitudes toward the field. These results imply that, something must be done more to our schools so as to expose our students in agricultural activities and its economic benefit.

**Table 15: Experiences that shaped students interest in agriculture**

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
Personal Interest	4	6.7
From home/family activities	14	23.33
From neighbors	8	
People employed as agriculture officers	14	23.33
Learning from school	16	26.7
No experience at all	4	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**CONCLUSION**

From this study results from the data collected, the findings show that the higher number of students interests towards agriculture is increasing due to the influence from family backgrounds, job security and employment opportunities both self-employments and those provided by the government. For the case of the number of students who study agriculture. It was discovered that there is low percentage of students selected agriculture as their career path under their own interest, this gives an alarm on the need to invest more in agricultural schools and knowledge on the importance of agriculture in the country. Also the government should offer appropriate and high-quality education by providing positive technical supports for the students who choose agriculture as their preferred career path. Also, parents might be most influential players to ensure that the percentage of students who selected agriculture is increasing daily by providing special supports to their children particularly through advices in the area of agricultural sector.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following suggestions are provided to teachers and the government based on the findings of the study. They are thought to have a part to play in influencing student's attitude towards pursuing agriculture as their preferred career path as explained below;

**Government**

Government should provide enough support to the agricultural schools through provision of adequate equipment's that could help students to learn practically and individually in order to increase their interest in agriculture. The government should also employ

enough teachers with professional qualities and experiences in agricultural subjects in order to facilitate the learning activities and hence motivating students to choose a career in agriculture.

### Teachers

Teachers and other instructors should provide real-life examples of educated people in the community who are currently practicing agricultural activities to help children understand the value of agriculture and get motivated to choose a career in agriculture. Also, teachers should facilitate hands on learning where students are directly involved in the process of practical learning; this improves Students knowledge and skills that can increase motivation for student to choose a career in agriculture.

### Parents/ guardians

Parents or guardians should provide support to their children on what they want to be in the future. This increases student desire of pursuing a career in agriculture. Also, parents should consider the students internal interests and needs of their children and not forcing them into careers which they do not like

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