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This official scientific publication of the Faculty of Agriculture, Abdullahi Fodio University of Science and Technology Aliero, is a non-profit, open access, double-blind peer-reviewed Journal publishing four issues (January, April, July and October) per annum. The Journal is a platform open to collaborations with researchers, authors, institutions, research agencies and private companies related to Agriculture. The Mission of the Journal is to disseminate scientific knowledge through the publication of original research articles, research notes, book reviews, letters to the editor and reviews of Literature, representing a contribution to scientific and technological knowledge in respective areas covered by the Journal. The Kebbi Journal of Agriculture and Natural Sciences seeks to validate and disseminate new knowledge, making it public in order to strengthen the human capacity, constitute a link in the scientific community to the society and encouraging the expansion of University and academic researches.

Scope of Kebbi Journal of Agriculture and Natural Sciences (KEJAANS)

The Kebbi Journal of Agriculture and Natural Sciences has the sole aim of providing an intellectual platform and ideas for scholars, by promoting interdisciplinary studies related to agriculture and natural science through publishing the latest scientific research findings that are of direct policy implications and beneficial to the research community. Consequently, the journal covers all aspects of Crop Science, Animal Science, Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, Food Science, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Biotechnology, Soil Science and Agricultural Engineering, Forestry and Environment, Wildlife, Agricultural Education, Agro-allied Industries as well as all Natural Science researches related to Agriculture.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FINAL YEAR AGRICULTURE STUDENTS AND PERCEIVED PROJECT SUPERVISION SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between socioeconomic characteristics of undergraduates of agriculture and their perceived satisfaction with project supervision. Specifically, the study describes the socioeconomic characteristics of agriculture graduates, and determined their level of satisfaction with final year project supervision. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 150 graduates who came for clearance. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and binary logistic regression. Results show high satisfaction with supervisors' openness (Mean = 3.95) and constructive feedback (Mean = 3.69) but low satisfaction with communication clarity (Mean = 2.46) and encouragement (Mean = 2.05). Findings revealed that age ($p = 0.006$), department ($p < 0.001$), spillover year ($p = 0.001$), and GPA ($p = 0.007$) significantly influenced level of satisfaction levels, while gender, marital status, and project grades showed no significant effect. The study concludes that graduates of agriculture had high level of satisfaction with project supervision in openness, and constructive feedback and poorly satisfied with the communication clarity.

Keywords: Final year, graduates, agriculture, supervision

Introduction

In earlier generations, students engaged with their final-year research projects with genuine delight, focused curiosity, and zeal. These projects were community milestones: supervisors, departments, faculties, and the public alike celebrated when a student delivered original, well-executed research. Project management appeared less onerous then, owing to smaller student populations and more mature, intrinsically motivated learners. Lecturers held strong moral authority, monitored student growth, and largely shunned unethical practices such as exam fraud, mark inflation, or favoritism.

Egborge's work reminds us that technological advancement depends on robust research, not just on importing or borrowing innovations (Adedokun, and Oyetunde-Joshua, 2024). In the Nigerian context, the linkage between university-based research and national development is frequently emphasized. Thus, final-year projects at institutions like the University of Benin (UNIBEN) carry symbolic and functional weight, often accounting for a greater credit load than many coursework modules.

However, contemporary studies point to significant strains in the research supervision environment. For example, Oladejo and



Adenuga (2022) document that lecturers in Nigerian universities are burdened with heavy teaching and supervision loads, which undermines their capacity for quality mentorship (Oladejo & Adenuga, 2022). In postgraduate settings, supervision quality is recognized as central to success: effective supervision is described as a reciprocal, structured engagement that supports both academic milestones and professional integration (Mothiba et al., 2020) (as cited in the African doctoral supervision literature) (Mothiba et al., 2020). In a similar vein, doctoral students report that adequate infrastructure, supervisor training, and resource access are critical enablers for satisfaction and timely completion (Mothiba et al., 2020) (as reflected in supervisor perspectives across African institutions) (Mothiba et al., 2020).

Furthermore, student satisfaction with institutional facilities is empirically linked to their overall academic experiences: better infrastructure and services correlate positively with student satisfaction (Napitupulu et al., 2018 and Napitupulu et al., 2018). In the Nigerian postgraduate nursing milieu, weak mentorship, infrastructural deficits, and erratic supervisory communication have been cited as recurring obstacles.

Hence, while final-year research once symbolized an inspiring collaboration between student and mentor, today it contends with systemic pressure, resource constraints, and inconsistent supervision. Restoring it to its intended role—as the capstone of undergraduate scholarship and a driver of local innovation—will require institutional reform: clearer supervisory protocols, training for supervisors, adequate infrastructure, and equitable distribution of supervision workload. During the course of a final-year research project, students ideally work in close collaboration with their supervisors, who are

entrusted with guiding and supporting them toward timely and high-quality completion. However, in practice, many lecturers are burdened by heavy workloads: beyond supervising undergraduate projects, they are expected to conduct their own research (a key criterion for promotion), and many also carry extensive administrative responsibilities. Moreover, the number of students requiring supervision continues to rise annually, exacerbated by large cohorts of final-year students and concurrent supervision of postgraduate (master's and doctoral) candidates. This proliferation of supervisory demand can compromise the ability of lecturers to provide individualized oversight and quality mentorship (Bassey et al., 2024).

Without a well-defined supervision framework and adequate resources, supervisory challenges escalate, and student satisfaction tends to decline. Many students may come to view the research project as merely a graduation requirement rather than an opportunity for inquiry and intellectual growth. Yet satisfaction with supervisory support is known to influence both students' academic achievements and their general well-being, shaping trajectories of professional development and scholarly identity (Li et al., 2025).

Indeed, concern is growing over student dissatisfaction with supervision quality. Commonly identified contributors include lack of timely, constructive feedback (Severinsson et al., 2012), unavailability of supervisors (Mncina et al., 2024), and poor communication—especially lack of clarity and openness in interactions (Grohnert et al., 2024). Inadequate communication can lead students to feel isolated, disconnected, and uncertain, thereby undermining their creativity and capacity to engage fully with research (Li et al., 2025).

The communicative behavior of project supervisors is therefore central: it influences student performance, project quality, and satisfaction. Effective supervision is increasingly seen as a reciprocal, interactive process in which the supervisor's sensitivity to student competence and limitations is vital (Severinsson et al., 2012). Although much attention has been paid to master's and doctoral supervision, relatively little research has concentrated on undergraduate, final-year project supervision (Grohnert et al., 2024; Li et al., 2025).

In the Nigerian context—and particularly at UNIBEN—empirical studies on student satisfaction with supervision are scarce. To address this gap, the present study examines relationships between socio-economic characteristics of agriculture graduates and their satisfaction with project supervision. It aims to (1) describe the socio-economic profiles of agriculture graduates at the University of Benin, and (2) assess their levels of satisfaction with supervision during their final-year projects.

Methodology

The study was carried out in the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria, which was considered appropriate because of its long history of training students in various agricultural disciplines and its sizeable population of final-year undergraduates. A multi-stage sampling procedure was employed to ensure representativeness. At the first stage, the Faculty of Agriculture was purposively selected due to its relevance to the study's objectives and the availability of a large pool of agriculture graduates. At the second stage, a stratified sampling technique with equal allocation was used to select a total of 150 respondents. Specifically, 50 respondents were drawn from each of three graduating cohorts:

the 2022/2023, 2021/2022, and 2020/2021 sets. This stratification ensured that perspectives were captured across different graduating years, thereby providing a more robust understanding of student experiences.

In addition to the student survey, a focus group discussion (FGD) was organized with project supervisors within the Faculty of Agriculture. The FGD provided qualitative insights into supervisors' communicative behaviors, their experiences in handling supervision challenges, and their perceptions of student expectations. This mixed-methods approach enriched the data, combining both quantitative and qualitative dimensions.

Data collected from the students were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, and means to summarize socio-economic characteristics and satisfaction levels. To test the study's hypothesis and identify the socio-economic factors significantly influencing satisfaction with project supervision, binary logistic regression was employed. This analytical technique was chosen because the dependent variable—student satisfaction—was measured as a binary outcome (satisfied vs. not satisfied), making it suitable for modeling the relationship between predictor variables and supervisory satisfaction.

Results and Discussion

Socioeconomic characteristics of respondents

The socioeconomic profile of the respondents offers important insights into both access and outcomes in agricultural education. Results in Table 1 shows that nearly balanced gender distribution—45.7% male and 53.6% female—suggests that, at least in this sample, agricultural training is accessible to both sexes. This aligns with evidence of increasing female participation in agricultural and STEM



disciplines in recent years (Fagbemi et al., 2023). The majority of students (60.4%) fell within the 25–30 age bracket, with a mean age of 26. This concentration in early adulthood suggests that many of these graduates are at a life stage characterized by fewer external obligations, allowing more focus on academic pursuits. This observation resonates with findings in educational research that younger adult learners often show higher engagement when not encumbered by heavy family responsibilities (Trahan, 2017). Regarding marital status, 88% of graduates were single, indicating that most respondents had fewer competing family roles such as child-rearing or spousal support obligations. Family structure and marital status have been shown in previous studies to exert measurable influence on student performance—married or parenting students often face more constraints on time, stress, and competing demands (Schlecht, 2024). The predominance of single students in your sample might thus partly buffer them from such pressures, contributing to more sustained focus on their projects.

Employment status in the sample was varied: 30.2% held full-time jobs, 28.2% part-time, and 9.4% were self-employed. Such diversity reflects that many undergraduates combine academic work with practical income-generating activities—which may provide valuable real-world experience but also present competing time demands. In studies of educational outcomes, employment engagement can both help by fostering discipline and real-world relevance, and hinder when hours conflict with academic needs (Ward, 2018)

The largest share of students (33.8%) specialized in Agricultural Economics and Extension Services. This may reflect a perception among students that extension-related careers are more promising in terms of job opportunities or community impact, as

extension roles often bridge academic knowledge with community application. The popularity of such subfields is consistent with student preference studies in agricultural faculties, where disciplines with clearer career pathways tend to attract more interest.

A relatively small fraction (9.3%) experienced spillover years, and 87.3% had no carryovers (failed or repeated courses). These figures point to a strong academic performance overall and suggest that most students progressed through their programs smoothly. High rates of on-time progression are often considered indicators of effective curriculum design, student support, and supervision (Wube et al., 2024)

The mean GPA of 3.69, with 61.6% obtaining Second Class Upper degrees, and 76.8% earning an ‘A’ in their project work, signals generally high academic outcomes. Such performance may partly reflect effective project supervision and good communication between supervisors and students. Literature on supervision in higher education frequently highlights that clarity of guidance, regular feedback, and a supportive supervisor-student relationship are associated with higher student satisfaction and better performance (Wu et al., 2024).

Indeed, in studies investigating supervisor impact, stronger supervisory engagement correlates with greater research productivity, fewer delays, and higher student morale (Wu et al., 2024). Together, these findings suggest that your cohort is relatively advantaged in terms of demographics—youthful, largely unencumbered by family demands, academically strong—and that this advantageous positioning likely interacts with supervisory quality to yield high project outcomes. However, it should be acknowledged that these are associations; causality cannot be definitively established without longitudinal or experimental designs.

Table 1. Socio-economic characteristics of agriculture graduates

Variable	Freq.	%	Mean	Std. Dev.
Sex of respondent				
Male	69	45.7		
Female	81	53.6		
Age of respondent (in years)				
20 – 24	51	34.2		
25 – 30	90	60.4	25.61	2.256
31 – 35	8	5.4		
36 years and Above	0	0.00		
Marital Status				
Single	132	87.4		
Married	18	11.9		
Separated	0	0.00		
Divorced	0	0.00		
Widowed	0	0.00		
Nature of employment				
Full time	45	30.2		
Part time	42	28.2		
Contract	27	18.1		
NYSC	21	14.1		
Self employed	14	9.4		
Department				
Agricultural economics and extension services	51	33.8		
Animal science	24	15.9		
Crop science	22	14.6		
Soil science	21	13.9		
Fisheries	14	9.3		
Forestry and wildlife management	18	11.9		
Spill over year				
Yes	14	9.3		
No	136	90.7		

Table 1 (continued)

Carry overs at final year				
0	131	87.3		
1-2	16	10.6		
3 and above	3	2.0		
GPA at graduation				
First class	11	7.3		
Second class upper	93	61.6	3.69	0.768
Second class lower	40	26.5		
Third class	5	3.3		
Pass	2	1.3		
Project grade				
A	116	76.8		
B	34	22.5		

Source: Field survey, 2025

Satisfaction with Supervisors' Communication

Table 2 presents respondents' satisfaction with their supervisors' communicative behavior. Respondents reported highest satisfaction in their supervisors' ability to maintain open and honest communication throughout the project ($\bar{x} = 3.95$). This suggests that most supervisors were transparent in their interactions with students which is a key factor in fostering trust and clarity. This also ensure everyone is on same page. This finding aligns with a response from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), where a male lecturer from the department of Aquaculture and fisheries management emphasized that their communicative approach encourages students to express their opinions freely:

Based on the way I communicate with my students, it is easier for them to air their opinions and give their own observation on what we are discussing...(Excerpt from an FGD session conducted in the department of Aquaculture and fisheries management, UNIBEN, Edo State, Nigeria, on 20th January 2025).

Recent studies support the importance of transparency in supervision. For instance, Wu

et al., (2024) found that transparent supervision encourages regular dialogue between students and supervisors, which is crucial for addressing concerns and providing timely feedback. Similarly, students were satisfied with how their supervisors addressed concerns and questions ($\bar{x} = 3.74$) including constructive criticism ($\bar{x} = 3.69$). This highlights the importance of feedback in the research process. A male lecturer from the department of Animal Science described their supervision style, emphasizing the need to break down instructions when necessary:

... As we go about with our research, I normally ask my students if they are satisfied with my style of interaction. Sometimes they don't answer, this gives me a feeling that they are not satisfied. I will break down the instructions and make sure they understand the message.....(Excerpt from an FGD session conducted in the department of Animal Science, UNIBEN, Edo State, Nigeria, on 20th January 2025).

Furthermore, result on availability for communication ($\bar{x} = 3.71$) and the provision of timely feedback ($\bar{x} = 3.68$) were rated positive. This suggests that supervisors who were readily available and responsive had a

significant impact on students' satisfaction. A male supervisor from the department of soil science highlighted the importance of availability in ensuring effective communication:

...I am readily available and accessible, except when I'm busy or outside official times...(Excerpt from an FGD session conducted in the department of Soil science, UNIBEN, Edo State, Nigeria, on 20th January 2025).

In a similar study, Wu et al., (2024) found that regular interactions between supervisors and students lead to better understanding and support, which can significantly boost student motivation. Despite the positive aspects, some areas of dissatisfaction were noted. Supportive and encouraging moments of communication were rated low ($\bar{x} = 2.05$). This suggests that students perceived their supervisors' communication as rigid or lacking emotional support. A lack of support and helpful criticism undermines their confidence and excitement, thereby affecting their overall academic achievement. Furthermore, inadequate communication can impact the timely completion of research projects. Adedokun and Oyetunde-Joshua (2024) highlight the importance of emotional support through communication, positing that such support plays a pivotal role in assisting students in navigating and mitigating anxiety and burnout that may manifest throughout the course of their studies. Additionally, students were not satisfied with the frequency of time their supervisors communicated with them ($\bar{x} = 2.63$) even though they were available, they were not readily accessible. A study by de Kleijn, Mainhard, Meijer, Pilot and Brekelmans (2012) showed that emotional involvement is closely related to student satisfaction and learning. Students value when

a supervisor is accessible and available. However, mismatched expectations may occur as students expect the supervisor to be emotionally supportive while the supervisors' focus is on the academic aspects of supervision (McGinty, Koo, & Saeidi, 2010). While some supervisors maintained weekly interactions, a female lecturer from the department of agricultural economics had no structured communication schedule, as noted in the FGD: **...No specific time period...**(Excerpt from an FGD session conducted in the department of Agricultural economics, UNIBEN, Edo State, Nigeria, on 20th January 2025).

Findings by Ley et al. (2019) emphasize that structured communication schedules significantly improve student productivity and reduce research delays. However, another major issue was the clarity of supervisors' communication ($\bar{x} = 2.46$) and their ability to explain research expectations and guidelines ($\bar{x} = 2.47$). Some students struggled to understand their supervisors' instructions, leading to frustration. A male supervisor from the department of Forestry and Wildlife Management acknowledged this challenge, recounting an experience where a student misunderstood instruction:

...Yes, a student didn't understand my instructions at some point. I had to sit him down and educate him properly before the commencement of his work fully. It is a difficult thing though, but sometimes we go through this process for some students...(Excerpt from a FGD session conducted in the department of Forestry and Wildlife Management, UNIBEN, Edo State, Nigeria, on 20th January 2025). In addition, Pham et al., (2024) support the notion that providing step-by-step explanations helps students navigate complex research processes.

Table 2. Satisfaction with supervisors' communicative behaviour

Satisfaction	Mean	Std. dev
Timely feedback on research progress	3.68*	1.178
Communication clarity	2.46	0.841
Frequency of communication	2.63	0.959
Level of support and encouragement in communication	2.05	0.968
Addressing concerns and questions	3.74*	1.116
Clarity in explaining research expectations and guidelines.	2.47	0.833
Availability for communication.	3.71*	1.115
Quality of constructive criticism provided	3.69*	1.039
Openness and honesty in communication	3.95*	1.119

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

*Mean \geq 3.0 = High satisfaction

Test of Hypothesis

The logistic regression analysis in Table 3 showed that age, department, spillover year, and GPA significantly influenced satisfaction with project supervision, while gender, marital status, employment type, carryovers, and project grade were not significant predictors. The model explained a moderate share of variation (Cox & Snell $R^2 = 0.284$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.408$), suggesting that individual and institutional factors jointly shape student experiences.

Older graduates reported higher satisfaction, consistent with studies linking maturity and realistic expectations to positive supervision experiences (Bălătescu & Cernea-Radu, 2024). Departmental differences highlight how

supervision culture and workload distribution affect student outcomes (Grohnert et al., 2024). Interestingly, spillover students were more satisfied, possibly due to extended contact with supervisors. GPA's positive effect supports evidence that high-performing students both benefit from and reinforce strong supervisory relationships (Steindórsdóttir et al., 2024). The non-significance of demographic variables mirrors prior findings that institutional practices, rather than personal characteristics, drive satisfaction (Wu et al., 2024; Napitupulu et al., 2018). Overall, these results underscore the importance of structured supervision protocols and departmental benchmarking to enhance student experiences.

Table 3. Relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of respondents and their level of satisfaction.

	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Gender	0.726	0.531	1.867	0.172	2.066
Age	0.460	0.166	7.705	0.006*	1.584
Marital status	-	0.914	0.782	0.376	0.445
	0.809				
Nature of employment	0.232	0.194	1.431	0.232	1.262
Department	-	0.129	12.686	<0.001*	0.632
	0.459				
Spillover year	2.674	0.840	10.141	0.001*	14.497
Carry overs at final year	0.389	0.393	0.981	0.322	1.475
GPA at graduation	0.996	0.369	7.278	0.007*	2.708
Project grade	-	0.574	0.430	0.152	0.686
	0.377				
Constant	-	5.428	11.346	<0.001	0.000
	18.28				
	3				
-2 Log likelihood	127.05				
	6 ^a				
Cox & Snell R Square	0.284				
Nagelkerke R Square	0.408				

Source: Field survey, 2025
 * Sign at 0.05 level of significance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the socio-economic characteristics of agriculture graduates at the University of Benin and their satisfaction with project supervision. Results showed high satisfaction with openness, honesty, and constructive feedback, but lower satisfaction with clarity, encouragement, and frequency of communication. Logistic regression revealed that age, department, spillover years, and GPA significantly predicted satisfaction, while gender, marital status, employment, carryovers, and project grade did not.

These findings highlight that supervisory practices and departmental culture, rather than demographic factors, drive student satisfaction. To improve outcomes,

supervisors should adopt clearer communication strategies, structured feedback schedules, and provide more supportive engagement. At the institutional level, benchmarking departmental practices and offering targeted training for supervisors can help strengthen supervision quality. Ultimately, enhancing supervision will not only improve project completion and student success but also build stronger research capacity critical for Nigeria's agricultural development.

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