

# Attitudes of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries' Children Towards Pursuing Agriculture as a Career

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*Abstract* — This study explored the attitudes of children of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) towards pursuing agriculture as a career in Tarangnan, Samar during the academic year 2024-2025. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, the study investigated how demographic factors influence career decisions among 287 respondents selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected through structured surveys evaluating career preference factors and attitudes toward agriculture across six dimensions: observation, imitation, modeling, outcomes, economic stability, and community respect. Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, ranking, multiple regression analysis, and ANOVA. Results indicated that ARBs' children possessed moderate attitudes toward agriculture (grand mean = 3.25), with imitation showing the highest rating (3.72). Key motivating factors included access to family-owned agricultural resources (72.47%) and agriculture's impact on community food security (70.03%). Demographic factors, particularly age, education, and family income, significantly influenced attitudes ( $p < 0.05$ ). The study concludes that targeted interventions enhancing land access, promoting mentorship, and providing early agricultural exposure can foster positive career attitudes among ARBs' children. Policy recommendations include strengthening community bonds, improving hands-on training opportunities, and enhancing economic incentives to make agriculture more appealing as a career path.

*Keywords* — *Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries, Career Perspectives, Agriculture Career Choices, Demographic Factors, Mentorship and Training, Rural Youth Development, Agricultural Education, Social Cognitive Theory, Theory of Planned Behavior*

## I. Introduction

Agriculture serves as the cornerstone of rural development in the Philippines, particularly in communities where Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) work diligently to sustain their families and contribute to the local economy. Recognized by law as the primary economic engine of the Philippines under Republic Act 11321 (2019), agriculture encompasses over 30% of the nation's arable land and supports more than half of the population residing in rural areas (The World Bank, 2020). Despite its fundamental importance, the agricultural sector faces significant challenges, with its contribution to the Philippines' Gross Domestic Product declining to merely 10.2% in 2020, marking the lowest recorded figures in recent years (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2020).

The journey of agrarian reform in the Philippines, spearheaded by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), has significantly transformed the rural landscape since the 1970s. Nationally, the program has successfully redistributed over 5.4 million hectares of land to approximately 2.8 million ARBs, empowering countless farming families and fostering economic opportunities. In Region 8 (Eastern Visayas), agrarian reform covers 201,751 ARBs benefiting from 444,556 hectares of redistributed land, while Samar Province specifically includes 31,694 ARBs and 78,147 hectares. In Tarangnan, Samar, the program serves 1,123 ARBs, distributing 2,544.3065 hectares under Certificate of Land Ownership Awards (CLOAs).

A critical concern threatening agricultural sustainability is the aging farmer population and declining youth interest in agricultural careers. Briones (2021) attributes the industry's slow development to declining labor involvement and deteriorating total factor productivity. Filipino farmers average 57 years old (Lugtu, 2022), and research suggests the nation may experience severe farmer shortages within 13 years due to current demographic trends (Business Mirror, 2021). Multiple studies indicate that older farmers frequently achieve lower yields with reduced technical efficiency and slower technology adoption rates (Cabangbang & Quicoy, 2019; Balogbog, 2020; Castriciones, 2020; Diaz et al., 2021).

Young people globally exhibit general distaste for agriculture, perceiving it as unable to provide the lifestyles they desire and expect in the 21st century (Udemezue, 2019). Detailed studies reveal that most youth view agriculture as a low-class occupation, the domain of those who have not completed their education, or a last resort for poor academic performers (Mulema et al., 2021; Zidana et al., 2020; Anyidoho & Njeru, 2017; Chinsinga & Chasukwa, 2017). Agricultural careers are frequently perceived as demeaning, unclean, and physically demanding, contributing to younger generations avoiding agricultural careers due to their perceived lack of attractiveness (Udemezue, 2019; Muthoni, 2017).

Research indicates that Filipino farmer-parents often discourage their children from entering agriculture, hoping to spare them from financial and physical challenges (Palis, 2020). Higher educational attainment among rural youth is associated with decreased likelihood of pursuing agricultural careers, as they seek urban employment opportunities perceived to offer better financial stability and social status (Garcia & Mendoza, 2023). After witnessing firsthand the financial struggles in agriculture, many Filipino farmers' children show no interest in agricultural careers, preferring to sell family farmlands and pursue different careers in cities or abroad (Manalo IV & van de Fliert, 2018).

This study addresses the critical gap in understanding how ARBs' children in Tarangnan, Samar perceive agriculture as a career during the academic year 2024-2025. Preliminary data suggest that less than 20% of ARB households actively encourage their children to pursue agriculture, citing economic instability, lack of modern farming technologies, and limited market opportunities as key deterrents. A local survey revealed that over 60% of ARBs' children viewed

agriculture as labor-intensive and low-reward compared to urban-based occupations, reflecting declining interest in sustaining family farming traditions.

Understanding these attitudes is crucial for developing targeted interventions that promote agricultural careers and ensure the continuity of farming practices. By examining the perspectives and aspirations of ARBs' children, this research seeks to uncover challenges and opportunities facing the next generation of farmers, ultimately contributing to agricultural sustainability and rural development in the Philippines.

### **Literature Review**

Recent literature emphasizes the multifaceted nature of factors influencing youth attitudes toward agricultural careers. Smith and Johnson (2021) found that children from farming families typically had more positive agricultural outlooks, attributing this to direct exposure to farming practices and family encouragement. The study highlighted that familial support acts as a significant motivator, fostering identity and belonging linked to agricultural careers. Families who openly discuss agricultural experiences and successes significantly influence children's perceptions, instilling pride and helping children visualize futures in farming.

Socioeconomic factors play crucial roles in shaping rural youth career aspirations. Nguyen and Lee (2022) revealed that children from lower-income families often viewed agriculture as less appealing due to perceived economic instability. Lack of financial resources and access to modern farming technology discouraged children from pursuing agricultural careers, as they associated farming with poverty and hard labor. The study emphasized the importance of targeted interventions addressing socioeconomic barriers through improved resource access, training, and financial support.

Educational factors significantly impact agricultural career interests. Martinez and Cruz (2023) emphasized that hands-on agricultural education substantially shapes children's attitudes toward farming careers. Their research found that experiential learning opportunities, including school gardening projects and agricultural field trips, significantly increased students' interest in pursuing agricultural education and careers. Schools incorporating agricultural curricula and hands-on experiences demonstrated higher student engagement levels, highlighting educational institutions' pivotal role in shaping career aspirations.

Community attitudes strongly influence youth agricultural aspirations. Dela Cruz and Santos (2023) found that communities viewing agriculture positively tend to inspire children to consider it as a viable career option. Conversely, negative community perceptions, often stemming from urbanization and city life glamorization, can deter youth from agricultural pursuits. The authors emphasized the need for community engagement initiatives promoting agriculture as a respectable and rewarding career choice through highlighting successful local farmers and integrating agricultural success stories into community events.

Mentorship and role models significantly shape youth agricultural aspirations. Thompson and Baker (2022) indicated that children with access to successful agricultural mentors were more likely to pursue farming careers, as mentors provided inspiration and practical guidance. Mentorship programs bridge gaps between education and real-world agricultural practices, connecting youth with experienced farmers who provide valuable insights and experiences motivating agricultural career consideration.

Gender disparities exist in agricultural career aspirations among rural youth. Rodriguez and Kim (2024) found that boys generally expressed stronger inclinations toward agriculture compared to girls, attributed to societal norms positioning farming as masculine endeavors, thus discouraging female participation. The authors suggested implementing targeted outreach programs for girls, showcasing successful female agricultural role models to foster inclusive environments encouraging girls to explore agricultural careers.

Cultural values significantly influence agricultural career aspirations. Alvarez and Chen (2023) revealed that in communities with strong agricultural traditions, children are more likely to view farming as respected and viable career choices. Cultural pride associated with farming can significantly boost children's interest in agricultural careers. Integrating local agricultural heritage into educational programs can enhance children's understanding of agriculture's community importance, fostering deeper connections to farming and motivating agricultural career pursuit.

Technology exposure affects youth attitudes toward agriculture. Pritchard and Gomez (2022) found that children engaging with innovative farming practices, including precision agriculture and sustainable farming techniques, developed more favorable views of agricultural careers. Modern technology enhances productivity and makes farming more appealing to younger generations. Integrating technology into agricultural education can significantly reshape perceptions by demonstrating agriculture's relevance and potential in today's world.

Economic perceptions significantly influence agricultural career decisions. White and Johnson (2022) found that concerns about financial viability deterred many children from considering farming careers. Perceived income instability in agriculture significantly impacts children's aspirations. Showcasing successful agricultural entrepreneurs and innovative farming practices could help shift perceptions by highlighting profitability potential in modern agriculture, encouraging children to view farming as viable career choices.

Environmental education connections to agriculture show positive impacts. Hernandez and Lopez (2023) found that increased awareness of sustainable farming practices positively influenced children's agricultural career perceptions. Integrating environmental education into agricultural curricula enhances students' understanding of sustainable practices' importance. Children participating in environmental initiatives were more likely to consider agricultural careers, underscoring the need for educational programs emphasizing environmental stewardship alongside agricultural skills.

Philippine-specific research provides additional insights. Palis (2020) explored aging Filipino farmers and societal attitudes toward farming, finding that agriculture is often avoided due to perceived low prestige and financial limitations. Parents and communities discourage agricultural engagement, driven by aspirations for better prospects outside agriculture. Most young people do not find agriculture aligned with their personal desires and aspirations, perceiving farming as unattractive or incompatible with modern goals.

Lumen (2020) examined youth involvement in agriculture in the Davao Region, emphasizing that farming's image as part-time work or pursuits for those failing to achieve other societal aspirations strengthens negative perspectives. Youth perceive agriculture as labor-intensive, unrewarding, and unprofitable work, contributing to farming profession disinterest. Panela (2025c) highlighted that comprehensive skills assessment and capacity building are essential for addressing educational gaps that may influence career choices among young people in rural areas.

## II. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine relationships between variables without manipulation, allowing identification of patterns and associations in naturally occurring data (Burns & Grove, 2016; Polit & Beck, 2021). This approach provides fundamental information that can guide future research by recognizing and evaluating connections between variables impacting particular behaviors or outcomes, such as young people's career choices in agriculture (Garcia & Mendoza, 2023). The study was descriptive in quantifying and analyzing demographic profiles and attitude levels, while correlational in testing relationships among independent and dependent variables.

The sample size was determined using the Raosoft Calculator for a population of 1,123 ARBs in Tarangnan Municipality. With a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the calculated sample size was 287 ARBs, ensuring accurate population representation. Stratified random sampling was adopted to ensure adequate representation of various subgroups within the ARB population, including different age groups, genders, and career preferences. The total population was divided into strata based on relevant demographic factors, then ARBs were randomly selected using random number generators, ensuring equal inclusion opportunities for all individuals.

Data collection involved structured survey questionnaires adapted from Mwolo and Espinosa (2023), systematically collecting data on demographic profiles and attitudes toward agricultural careers. The survey comprised three main parts: demographic profile information (age, sex, education, family income, address), factors influencing career preferences toward agriculture, and attitude assessments across six dimensions (observation, imitation, modeling, outcomes, economic stability, community respect).

Statistical treatments included frequency and percentage distributions for demographic profiles, ranking for career preference factors, and means with standard deviations for attitude assessments. Multiple regression analysis determined significant relationships between attitudes and demographic profiles, while One-Way ANOVA examined significant differences in attitudes based on demographic variables. The significance level was set at 0.05 for all statistical tests.

Ethical considerations prioritized informed consent, particularly for minors, ensuring parents or guardians were adequately informed about study purposes, methods, and potential impacts. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained to protect participant identities and personal information. Sensitivity to socio-economic contexts was exercised, ensuring voluntary participation without exploitation or coercion. Data were anonymized using pseudonyms, stored securely with restricted access, and properly disposed of upon study completion. Panela (2025d) emphasized the importance of ethical considerations in research involving vulnerable populations, particularly during challenging circumstances.

### III. Results and Discussion

#### Demographic Profile

The study involved 287 respondents representing ARBs' children across six barangays in Tarangnan, Samar. The age distribution showed 187 respondents (65.16%) aged 17-18 years, 60 (20.91%) aged 15-16 years, and 40 (13.94%) aged 13-14 years. This concentration of older adolescents aligns with Gonzalez and Verma (2023), who emphasized that career considerations peak during late adolescence, particularly for those transitioning from secondary education. The gender distribution revealed 200 males (69.69%) and 87 females (30.31%), suggesting greater male involvement in agricultural activities or access to field opportunities.

Educational attainment showed 100 respondents (34.84%) as high school graduates, 82 (28.57%) as high school undergraduates, 45 (15.68%) each as elementary graduates and college undergraduates, and 15 (5.23%) as elementary undergraduates. Santos and Kumar (2024) found that structured career guidance significantly improved children's knowledge and perceptions of agricultural careers, particularly relevant given the educational profile where most respondents fell within high school completion ranges.

Family income distribution indicated 127 respondents (44.25%) earning PHP 5,000-9,999 monthly, 100 (34.84%) earning PHP 10,000-14,999, and 60 (20.91%) earning above PHP 15,000. This income profile reflects economic limitations that influence youth career choices, as lower-income families may perceive farming as low-reward professions, deterring younger generations from agricultural career pursuit. Panela (2025a) noted that economic stress can significantly impact decision-making processes among young people, particularly regarding career choices.

### Career Preference Factors

The ranking of factors influencing ARBs' children's career preferences revealed that "Access to land or family-owned agricultural resources" ranked highest (72.47%), followed by "The impact of agriculture on community and food security" (70.03%), and "Role models or mentors in agriculture" (65.51%). These findings highlight the crucial role of practical resources and social values in shaping career decisions.

"Positive experiences or exposure to farming during childhood" (52.52%) and "Availability of scholarships or financial assistance" (51.22%) ranked in middle positions, suggesting that while beneficial, these factors alone may not drive interest unless paired with deeper social and family connections to agriculture. Interestingly, "income potential" (46.69%) and "social recognition" (47.39%) ranked lower, indicating that ARBs' children may not view agriculture purely through financial or status-driven lenses.

**Table 1**

*Ranking on Factors Influencing Career Preferences of the children of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) toward Pursuing Agriculture as a Career*

Indicators	n	Percent	Rank
1. Access to land or family-owned agricultural resources influences my decision to work in agriculture.	208	72.47%	1
2. The impact of agriculture on community and food security motivates me to pursue it.	201	70.03%	2
3. Role models or mentors in agriculture encourage me to consider it as a career path.	188	65.51%	3
4. Positive experiences or exposure to farming during childhood influenced a career choice.	151	52.52%	4
5. Availability of scholarships or financial assistance in agriculture-related courses influences my career plans.	147	51.22%	5
6. Access to technology and resources in the agricultural sector makes it a more viable career option.	146	50.87%	6
7. The level of social recognition and respect for careers in agriculture impacts my interest in this field.	136	47.39%	7
8. The income potential in agriculture affects my decision to pursue it as a career.	134	46.69%	8
9. Family encouragement and support influence my interest in agriculture as a career.	129	44.95%	9
10. Awareness of career opportunities in agribusiness, research, and agricultural science influences my interest.	120	41.81%	10
11. Opportunities for growth and advancement within the agricultural sector affect my career choice.	119	41.46%	11
12. The physical demands and challenges of agricultural work influence my decision.	104	36.24%	12
13. The perception of agriculture as a stable career option influences my decision.	98	34.15%	13
14. My understanding of modern agricultural practices makes agriculture more appealing to me.	87	30.31%	14
15. Job security and long-term prospects in agriculture affect my career preference.	74	25.78%	15

The lowest-ranked factors included "physical demands and challenges of agricultural work" (36.24%) and "job security and long-term prospects" (25.78%), suggesting that while these

are considerations, they are not strong deterrents. These findings imply that ARBs' children are drawn to agriculture when it offers tangible resources, community impact, and mentorship, with less emphasis on financial gain or social prestige.

### Attitude Assessment

The summary results revealed that ARBs' children held generally moderate attitudes toward pursuing agriculture as careers, with an overall grand mean of 3.25. The highest-rated dimension was Imitation (3.72), indicating strong inclination to adopt practices and skills of respected farmers they observe. This finding aligns with Social Cognitive Theory principles, emphasizing observational learning and modeling as vital processes in rural settings.

**Table 2**

*Summary Results on the Level of Attitudes of Children of the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) towards Pursuing Agriculture as a Career*

Indicators	n	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Observation	287	3.25	0.56	Moderate
Imitation	287	3.72	0.56	High
Modeling	287	3.12	0.61	Moderate
Outcomes	287	3.09	0.65	Moderate
Economic Stability	287	3.15	0.80	Moderate
Community Respect	287	3.16	0.79	Moderate
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

Other dimensions showed moderate ratings: Observation (3.25), Community Respect (3.16), Economic Stability (3.15), Modeling (3.12), and Outcomes (3.09). These results suggest that while ARBs' children show genuine interest in agriculture, their enthusiasm for economic and social rewards remains tempered. Nguyen and Lee (2022) and Smith and Johnson (2021) echoed these findings, noting that rural youth are often influenced by traditional agricultural practices and community norms but may not be fully convinced of long-term economic stability or respect associated with agricultural careers.

The Observation dimension (mean = 3.25) showed that respondents moderately observed agricultural practices, with highest ratings for "agricultural practices change with the seasons" (3.37) and "variety of crops grown in my area and their success" (3.32). These findings suggest that community members generally view agriculture positively, with agricultural achievements being celebrated and successful farmers being respected, indicating strong cultural appreciation for the agricultural sector.

The Imitation dimension achieved the highest overall rating (mean = 3.72), with top indicators including "enjoy mimicking the skills of local farmers when I help them" (3.97) and "try to replicate successful farming methods I see in my community" (3.96). This suggests strong

inclination among ARBs' children to learn from and emulate agricultural practices, particularly emphasizing replication of local successful farming methods and valuing seasoned farmers' advice.

### Statistical Relationships

Multiple regression analysis revealed significant relationships between attitudes toward agriculture and demographic factors. The model showed  $R = 0.182$ ,  $R^2 = 0.029$ , with  $F = 18.45$  and  $p = 0.04$ , indicating that while correlation is weak, the relationship is statistically significant. Individual demographic factors showed that age ( $\beta = 0.08$ ,  $p = 0.03$ ), education ( $\beta = 0.11$ ,  $p = 0.03$ ), and monthly family income ( $\beta = 0.12$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ) significantly influenced attitudes, while sex showed no significant effect ( $\beta = -0.02$ ,  $p = 0.15$ ).

**Table 3**

*Multiple Regression Analysis on Test of Relationship between the Level of attitudes of children of the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) towards Pursuing Agriculture as a Career and their Demographic Profile*

Variables	Beta	p-value	Decision
Age	0.08	0.03	Significant
Sex	-0.02	0.15	Not Significant
Education	0.11	0.03	Significant
Monthly Family Income	0.12	0.01	Significant

The age effect aligns with Quijano-Pagutayao et al. (2020), who found that older students with farming exposure were more likely to choose agriculture-related courses. The education effect suggests that students with higher educational attainment better understand opportunities in modern agriculture, supported by Ibañez et al. (2023), who emphasized that academic engagement positively influences agricultural career preferences. The family income effect reflects that families with better financial standing are more capable of supporting agricultural ventures or education, making career paths more feasible and appealing.

One-Way ANOVA results confirmed significant differences in attitudes based on all demographic variables: age ( $F = 7.780$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), sex ( $F = 2.628$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), education ( $F = 9.059$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ), and family income ( $F = 5.941$ ,  $p = 0.012$ ). These findings emphasize that demographic factors meaningfully shape children's perceptions about agriculture, supporting the need for targeted interventions based on demographic profiles.

These results align with studies by Singh and Wong (2024) and Roberts and Mason (2022), emphasizing that demographic factors heavily shape youth attitudes toward agriculture, particularly through direct engagement with farming practices and observation of successful agricultural models. Panela (2025b) also noted that individual characteristics significantly influence how young people respond to various career opportunities and challenges.

The implications suggest that policies encouraging ARBs' children to pursue agricultural careers should emphasize access to family-owned land and promote agriculture's impact on community well-being and food security, as these are top motivating factors. Additionally, initiatives providing role models, farming exposure, and financial support for agriculture-related education could enhance field interest by aligning with both personal and community-oriented values.

#### IV. Conclusion

This study provides comprehensive insights into factors influencing ARBs' children's attitudes toward agricultural careers in Tarangnan, Samar. The findings reveal that while these youth maintain moderate overall attitudes toward agriculture (grand mean = 3.25), their strongest inclination lies in imitating successful agricultural practices they observe (mean = 3.72). The most significant motivators include access to family-owned agricultural resources (72.47%) and agriculture's perceived impact on community food security (70.03%), highlighting the importance of practical, tangible support and community-oriented values.

Demographic factors significantly influence attitudes, with age, education, and family income showing positive relationships with agricultural career interest. The concentration of respondents in the 17-18 age group (65.16%) represents a critical decision-making period where targeted interventions could have maximum impact. The moderate ratings across all attitude dimensions suggest potential for positive change through appropriate interventions addressing specific concerns and barriers.

The study emphasizes the need for tailored programs and policies catering to ARBs' children's specific needs. Programs promoting access to agricultural resources, mentorship, and exposure to modern agricultural practices are likely more effective in encouraging agriculture as a viable career path. Early interventions, particularly for younger teens, could establish groundwork for long-term agricultural interest. These findings suggest that fostering a new generation of agricultural professionals requires efforts addressing practical concerns such as land access and financial support while strengthening social and community-based networks providing guidance and inspiration.

The research concludes that by aligning policy initiatives with personal and community-oriented values of ARBs' children, agriculture can be positioned as a sustainable and attractive career choice for future generations. The moderate attitudes observed indicate room for improvement through strategic interventions that bridge traditional agricultural values with modern opportunities, ultimately contributing to agricultural sustainability and rural development in the Philippines.

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