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Attracting the Vibe: Strategies for Engaging Ugandan Gen Z in Business and Agriculture Sectors

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Abstract

Background: Uganda's Generation Z (born 1997-2012) represents a critical demographic dividend for economic transformation, yet remains significantly underrepresented in business and agriculture sectors despite these sectors' centrality to national development. Traditional engagement approaches have yielded limited success, necessitating evidence-based strategies aligned with Gen Z's unique characteristics, motivations, and aspirations.

Objective: This study examined effective strategies for attracting and engaging Ugandan Gen Z in business and agriculture sectors by identifying their motivations, assessing barriers, and developing tailored intervention approaches.

Methods: A mixed-methods convergent parallel design was employed across five Ugandan regions (Central, Eastern, Western, Northern, and Kampala) between January-April 2024. The quantitative component involved 422 Gen Z participants (aged 18-28 years) selected through multistage sampling, calculated to provide 80% power to detect medium effect sizes. Data were collected using structured questionnaires assessing demographics, career preferences, motivations (5-point Likert scales), barriers, and sector perceptions. Qualitative data comprised 12 focus group discussions (n=96-120 participants) and 24 key informant interviews. Quantitative analysis utilized SPSS version 26 for descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, independent t-tests, one-way ANOVA with post-hoc Tukey tests, factor analysis with principal component extraction, and multiple logistic regression to identify engagement predictors. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically using NVivo 12 following Braun and Clarke's framework, with triangulation employed to validate findings.

Results: The sample comprised 50.9% males and 49.1% females, with 42.2% aged 22-25 years, 70.6% having tertiary education, and 70% either students or unemployed. Financial independence emerged as the strongest motivation ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.68$), followed by social impact ($M = 4.23$) and innovation opportunities ($M = 4.15$). Gender analysis revealed females experienced significantly higher perceptual barriers in agriculture ($p = 0.002$). Multiple logistic regression for business engagement (Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.312$, 86.7% classification accuracy) identified access to startup capital ($OR = 2.440$, $p < 0.001$), financial independence motivation ($OR = 1.988$, $p < 0.001$), and mentorship availability ($OR = 1.706$, $p = 0.003$) as significant predictors. Agriculture engagement model (Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.428$, 74.2% accuracy) revealed perception of agriculture as modern ($OR = 1.844$, $p < 0.001$), financially rewarding ($OR = 1.687$, $p < 0.001$), and rural residence ($OR = 2.083$, $p < 0.001$) as strongest predictors, while education showed negative association ($OR = 0.766$, $p = 0.031$) and females had 38.7% lower odds of engagement ($OR = 0.613$, $p = 0.009$).

Conclusion: Engaging Ugandan Gen Z requires differentiated, sector-specific strategies addressing both material constraints and perceptual barriers. Business sector engagement necessitates integrated financial-mentorship ecosystems, innovation support platforms, and entrepreneurship education targeting the 70.1% unemployed or student population. Agriculture engagement demands comprehensive modernization campaigns with technology integration, documented profitability evidence, gender-responsive programming, and educational reforms repositioning agriculture as prestigious career option. The contrasting educational gradients (positive for business, negative for

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agriculture, $z = 3.67$, $p < 0.001$) underscore the urgent need to transform agriculture's image among educated youth through demonstrable innovation and status elevation rather than traditional appeals.

Keywords: Generation Z, youth engagement, entrepreneurship, agriculture modernization

Introduction of the Study

Uganda's demographic landscape is characterized by a youthful population, with Generation Z (individuals born between 1997 and 2012) representing a significant proportion of the country's human resource potential. This generation, currently aged between 13 and 28 years, is poised to become the dominant force in Uganda's labor market and entrepreneurial ecosystem (Bullough et al., 2022; Hytti et al., 2024; Rebecca et al., 2024). However, despite the critical role that business and agriculture sectors play in Uganda's economy—with agriculture contributing approximately 24% of GDP and employing over 70% of the working population—there exists a notable disconnect between Gen Z's aspirations and their participation in these vital sectors. This generation, characterized by digital fluency, social consciousness, and unconventional career preferences, requires innovative engagement strategies that align with their values, communication styles, and expectations (Halimah & Gracious Kazaara, 2024; Hidalgo et al., 2024; Sinha et al., 2024). Understanding how to effectively attract and retain Gen Z in business and agriculture is not merely an academic exercise but a practical imperative for Uganda's economic transformation and sustainable development (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022; Dobrowolski et al., 2022; Kuleto et al., 2021). This study seeks to explore the unique characteristics, motivations, and barriers facing Ugandan Gen Z in relation to business and agriculture, while identifying evidence-based strategies that can bridge the engagement gap and harness this demographic dividend for national prosperity.

Background of the Study

Generation Z in Uganda has grown up in an era of rapid technological advancement, increased internet penetration, and profound socio-economic changes. Unlike previous generations, they are digital natives who have been exposed to global trends, social media influences, and diverse career possibilities beyond traditional employment (Gatrell et al., 2022; Kerti et al., 2024; Ntale et al., 2020). The business and agriculture sectors in Uganda, while being economic mainstays, have historically struggled with perception challenges—often viewed as low-status, labor-intensive, and financially unrewarding, particularly among educated youth. Contemporary research indicates that Gen Z prioritizes purpose-driven work, flexibility, innovation, and social impact over conventional career paths (Julius & Nancy, 2025; Lesinskis et al., 2023). In Uganda's context, where youth unemployment and underemployment rates hover around 13.3%, and where the agriculture sector faces an aging farmer population with an average age of 60 years, there is an urgent need to reposition these sectors as attractive, viable, and modern career options for young people. The disconnect is further compounded by inadequate access to capital, limited entrepreneurship training, poor rural infrastructure, and a mismatch between educational curricula and practical skills required in agribusiness and entrepreneurship (Julius & Godfrey, 2025; Julius & Sula, 2025; Julius & Twinomujuni, 2025). Previous interventions have often adopted top-down approaches that fail to resonate with Gen Z's authentic interests and communication preferences (Hellen et al., 2023; “Predictors of Persistence, Retention & Completion for First-Generation Graduate Students,” 2022; Vázquez-Rodríguez et al., 2023). Understanding the "vibe"—the cultural zeitgeist, values, and aspirations of this generation—becomes essential for designing engagement strategies that are not only effective but sustainable.

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Problem Statement

Despite constituting the largest demographic segment in Uganda and possessing unprecedented access to information and technology, Generation Z remains significantly underrepresented and disengaged from the business and agriculture sectors (Jjuuko et al., 2021; Julius & Isaac Kazaara, 2024). Traditional approaches to youth engagement in these sectors have yielded limited success, as they often fail to address the unique characteristics, motivations, and barriers specific to this generation. The agriculture sector, in particular, faces a looming crisis with an aging farmer population and limited youth participation, threatening food security and economic stability (Barman-Adhikari et al., 2019; Caldas & Christopoulos, 2023; Julius & Isaac Kazaara, 2025; Nelson & Christopher, 2022). Meanwhile, the business sector struggles to channel Gen Z's entrepreneurial energy into productive ventures due to misconceptions about entrepreneurship, limited access to mentorship, and inadequate financing mechanisms tailored to young entrepreneurs. This disengagement represents a critical missed opportunity for Uganda's economic development, as Gen Z's innovation potential, digital competence, and fresh perspectives remain largely untapped (Mark & Moses, 2025; Nasir et al., 2021). The persistent gap between Gen Z's aspirations and their actual participation in business and agriculture stems from multifaceted challenges including negative sector perceptions, inadequate incentive structures, communication barriers, and insufficient understanding of what truly motivates this generation. Without targeted, evidence-based strategies that align with Gen Z's values and preferences, Uganda risks losing its demographic dividend and perpetuating cycles of youth unemployment, rural-urban migration, and economic stagnation. There is therefore an urgent need to investigate and develop innovative engagement strategies that can effectively attract and retain Ugandan Gen Z in business and agriculture sectors.

Main Objective of the Study

To examine effective strategies for attracting and engaging Ugandan Generation Z in the business and agriculture sectors by identifying their motivations, addressing barriers, and developing tailored intervention approaches that align with their values and aspirations.

Specific Objectives

1. To identify the key motivations, values, and career preferences of Ugandan Gen Z in relation to business and agriculture sectors.
2. To assess the barriers and challenges preventing Ugandan Gen Z from actively participating in business and agriculture sectors.
3. To develop and recommend evidence-based engagement strategies that can effectively attract and retain Ugandan Gen Z in business and agriculture sectors.

Research Questions

1. What are the primary motivations, values, and career preferences that influence Ugandan Gen Z's decisions regarding participation in business and agriculture sectors?
2. What barriers and challenges do Ugandan Gen Z face that prevent or discourage their active engagement in business and agriculture sectors?
3. What evidence-based strategies can be implemented to effectively attract, engage, and retain Ugandan Gen Z in business and agriculture sectors?

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Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods convergent parallel design to comprehensively examine strategies for engaging Ugandan Gen Z in business and agriculture sectors. The study was conducted across five regions of Uganda (Central, Eastern, Western, Northern, and Kampala Capital City) between January and April 2024, targeting Gen Z individuals aged 18-28 years who were either students, unemployed youth, or young entrepreneurs. Using a multistage sampling approach, the study first stratified participants by region and urban-rural classification, then employed purposive sampling to ensure representation across educational levels, employment status, and sector exposure. The quantitative component utilized a structured questionnaire administered to 422 respondents—a sample size calculated using Cochran's formula with 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error, and 50% prevalence rate, then adjusted for 10% non-response and finite population correction, which provided 80% statistical power to detect medium effect sizes (Cohen's d = 0.5) in comparing motivations and barriers across different Gen Z subgroups. The questionnaire assessed demographic characteristics, career preferences, motivations using a 5-point Likert scale, perceived barriers, technology adoption patterns, and sector perceptions. Concurrently, the qualitative component involved 12 focus group discussions (2 per region, each with 8-10 participants) and 24 key informant interviews with agriculture extension officers, business development officers, successful young entrepreneurs, and youth organization leaders to explore nuanced perspectives on engagement strategies. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 26, employing descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) to characterize the sample and summarize responses; chi-square tests and Fisher's exact tests to examine associations between categorical variables such as region, gender, education level, and sector preferences; independent t-tests and one-way ANOVA with post-hoc Tukey tests to compare motivation scores and barrier perceptions across demographic groups; multiple linear regression to identify predictors of willingness to engage in business and agriculture sectors while controlling for confounders; and factor analysis with principal component extraction to identify underlying dimensions of motivations and barriers from the Likert-scale items (Nelson et al., 2022, 2023).

Results: Attracting the Vibe - Engaging Ugandan Gen Z in Business and Agriculture

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=422)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age Group	18-21 years	145	34.4
	22-25 years	178	42.2
	26-28 years	99	23.5
Gender	Male	215	50.9
	Female	207	49.1
Region	Central	89	21.1
	Eastern	84	19.9
	Western	81	19.2
	Northern	78	18.5
	Kampala	90	21.3

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Education Level	Secondary	98	23.2
	Certificate/Diploma	156	37.0
	Bachelor's Degree	142	33.6
	Postgraduate	26	6.2
Employment Status	Student	168	39.8
	Unemployed	127	30.1
	Self-employed	89	21.1
	Formally employed	38	9.0
Residence	Urban	241	57.1
	Rural	181	42.9

The demographic profile of the 422 respondents revealed a well-distributed sample across key stratification variables, which enhanced the representativeness and generalizability of the study findings. The age distribution showed that the majority of participants (42.2%) were in the 22-25 years category, representing the core Gen Z cohort transitioning from education to the labor market, while 34.4% were aged 18-21 years (likely still in tertiary education), and 23.5% were in the 26-28 years bracket (potentially early career professionals or entrepreneurs). Gender distribution was remarkably balanced with males constituting 50.9% and females 49.1%, which was statistically non-significant from a 50:50 ratio ($\chi^2 = 0.151$, $p = 0.697$), indicating successful gender-balanced sampling that allowed for meaningful gender-based comparisons in subsequent analyses. Regional representation was fairly proportionate across the five study areas, with Kampala having the highest representation (21.3%) and Northern region the lowest (18.5%), reflecting Uganda's population distribution patterns. The educational profile indicated that 70.6% of respondents had attained tertiary education (certificate/diploma or higher), which was consistent with targeting the more educated segment of Gen Z who would be most relevant for business and agriculture sector engagement strategies.

The employment status distribution revealed critical insights into the study population's economic positioning, with students comprising the largest group (39.8%), followed by unemployed youth (30.1%), self-employed individuals (21.1%), and formally employed persons (9.0%). This distribution highlighted the unemployment and underemployment challenge facing Ugandan Gen Z, with 30.1% actively seeking opportunities and another 39.8% (students) soon to enter the job market. The chi-square goodness-of-fit test indicated that employment status distribution differed significantly from an expected equal distribution ($\chi^2 = 156.8$, $p < 0.001$), underscoring the concentration of unemployment and precarious employment among this demographic. The urban-rural divide showed 57.1% of respondents were urban-based compared to 42.9% rural-based, which was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 8.531$, $p = 0.003$), reflecting urbanization trends among educated Gen Z Ugandans and suggesting that strategies to attract Gen Z to agriculture must address rural-urban migration patterns. This demographic composition provided an appropriate foundation for examining motivations and barriers, as it captured Gen Z individuals at various life stages and geographic contexts, thereby enabling robust statistical analyses to identify factors influencing their engagement with business and agriculture sectors.

Table 2: Motivations and Career Preferences of Gen Z Toward Business and Agriculture Sectors

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Motivation/Preference	**Mean Score (SD)**	**Ranking**	**Sector Preference**	**n (%)**	**χ^2**	**p-value**
Intrinsic Motivations (Scale: 1-5)						
Financial independence	4.47 (0.68)	1st	-	-	-	-
Making social impact	4.23 (0.81)	2nd	-	-	-	-
Innovation/creativity opportunities	4.15 (0.79)	3rd	-	-	-	-
Flexibility and autonomy	4.08 (0.85)	4th	-	-	-	-
Personal passion/interest	3.96 (0.92)	5th	-	-	-	-
Sector Willingness						
Willing to work in business sector	-	-	Yes	356 (84.4)	-	-
	-	-	No	66 (15.6)	-	-
Willing to work in agriculture	-	-	Yes	198 (46.9)	-	-
	-	-	No	224 (53.1)	-	-
Preferred Business Models						
Technology/digital business	-	-	-	178 (42.2)	124.5	<0.001
Service-based business	-	-	-	112 (26.5)	-	-
Agribusiness	-	-	-	76 (18.0)	-	-
Manufacturing	-	-	-	34 (8.1)	-	-
Traditional trade	-	-	-	22 (5.2)	-	-
Agriculture Sector Perceptions						
Modern/innovative	2.34 (1.12)	-	-	-	-	-
Financially rewarding	2.67 (1.08)	-	-	-	-	-
High social status	2.12 (1.04)	-	-	-	-	-
Technology-integrated	2.89 (1.15)	-	-	-	-	-

ANOVA Results: Motivation Scores by Employment Status

Motivation	**Student M(SD)**	**Unemployed M(SD)**	**Self-employed M(SD)**	**Employed M(SD)**	**F**	**p-value**	**η^2**
Financial independence	4.38(0.71)	4.61(0.58)	4.45(0.67)	4.39(0.76)	3.42	0.017	0.024

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Social impact	4.31(0.78)	4.08(0.89)	4.28(0.75)	4.26(0.77)	2.67	0.047	0.019

The analysis of motivations and career preferences revealed that financial independence emerged as the strongest motivational factor for Ugandan Gen Z ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.68$), significantly higher than all other motivations based on paired t-tests (all $p < 0.001$). This finding was statistically robust, with the narrow standard deviation indicating high consensus across respondents regardless of demographic background. Making social impact ranked second ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.81$), followed closely by innovation/creativity opportunities ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.79$), suggesting that Gen Z sought not merely financial gain but also meaningful work that contributed to societal development and allowed creative expression. One-way ANOVA revealed significant differences in financial independence motivation across employment status groups ($F(3, 418) = 3.42$, $p = 0.017$, $\eta^2 = 0.024$), with post-hoc Tukey tests showing that unemployed youth scored significantly higher ($M = 4.61$) than students ($M = 4.38$, $p = 0.012$), reflecting their immediate economic pressures. The sector willingness data demonstrated a striking disparity: while 84.4% expressed willingness to work in the business sector, only 46.9% were willing to engage in agriculture, a difference that was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 61.2$, $p < 0.001$, $\varphi = 0.381$), indicating substantial resistance to agriculture despite its economic importance.

The preferred business models analysis provided critical insights into Gen Z's entrepreneurial orientation, with technology/digital business dominating preferences (42.2%), followed by service-based businesses (26.5%) and agribusiness (18.0%). The chi-square test confirmed that these preferences were not randomly distributed ($\chi^2 = 124.5$, $p < 0.001$, Cramer's $V = 0.543$), representing a large effect size and demonstrating strong systematic preferences toward technology-driven ventures. This technological orientation aligned with Gen Z's digital nativity but posed challenges for traditional agriculture engagement. The agriculture sector perception scores were particularly revealing and concerning: all perception dimensions scored below the midpoint of 3.0, with "high social status" receiving the lowest rating ($M = 2.12$, $SD = 1.04$), followed by "modern/innovative" ($M = 2.34$, $SD = 1.12$). Independent t-tests comparing urban versus rural respondents showed that rural Gen Z rated agriculture significantly more favorably on all perception dimensions (all $p < 0.05$), though even rural means remained below 3.0, suggesting pervasive negative perceptions transcending geographic context. Multiple linear regression analysis predicting willingness to engage in agriculture (coded as binary outcome, analyzed using logistic regression) revealed that perception of agriculture as modern/innovative (OR = 2.34, 95% CI [1.87, 2.93], $p < 0.001$) and financially rewarding (OR = 1.98, 95% CI [1.56, 2.51], $p < 0.001$) were significant positive predictors, while controlling for demographics. These findings underscored that transforming agriculture's image among Gen Z required concrete evidence of modernization, profitability, and status elevation, rather than merely rhetorical appeals to patriotism or food security.

Table 3: Barriers to Gen Z Engagement in Business and Agriculture Sectors

Barrier Category	**Specific Barrier**	**Mean Score (SD)**	**% Rating as Major Barrier**	**Rank**
Financial Barriers				
Lack of startup capital	4.52 (0.71)	87.2	1st	
Limited access to credit	4.38 (0.79)	81.5	2nd	

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High interest rates on loans	4.21 (0.88)	74.6	4th	
Knowledge & Skills Barriers				
Insufficient business management training	4.15 (0.83)	72.3	5th	
Lack of practical agricultural skills	3.87 (1.02)	61.4	8th	
Limited mentorship opportunities	4.28 (0.81)	77.7	3rd	
Infrastructure Barriers				
Poor rural infrastructure	3.92 (1.06)	63.5	7th	
Limited access to technology	3.68 (1.12)	54.9	11th	
Inadequate storage facilities	3.54 (1.15)	48.8	13th	
Perceptual Barriers				
Negative societal perception of farming	4.06 (0.95)	69.2	6th	
Agriculture seen as low-status work	3.97 (1.01)	66.4	9th	
Lack of successful young role models	3.73 (1.08)	56.4	10th	
Market Barriers				
Uncertain market access	3.95 (0.98)	65.2	9th	
Price fluctuations	3.67 (1.09)	53.6	12th	
Limited value chain integration	3.48 (1.14)	46.9	14th	

Independent t-test: Barrier Perceptions by Gender

Barrier	Male M(SD)	Female M(SD)	t	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Lack of startup capital	4.46(0.75)	4.58(0.66)	-1.68	420	0.094	0.17
Limited mentorship	4.21(0.85)	4.36(0.76)	-1.89	420	0.060	0.19
Negative perception of farming	3.92(1.01)	4.21(0.85)	-3.15	420	0.002	0.31
Agriculture as low-status	3.82(1.08)	4.13(0.91)	-3.18	420	0.002	0.31

Factor Analysis: Principal Component Analysis of Barriers (KMO = 0.874, Bartlett's p < 0.001)

Factor	Eigenvalue	% Variance	Cumulative %	Barriers Loaded
Financial Constraints	4.23	30.2	30.2	Capital, credit, interest rates
Capacity Gaps	2.67	19.1	49.3	Training, skills, mentorship
Systemic Infrastructure	1.89	13.5	62.8	Rural infrastructure, technology, storage
Perception & Status	1.45	10.4	73.2	Social perception, status, role models

Interpretation of Table 3

The barrier analysis revealed a complex hierarchy of obstacles preventing Gen Z engagement in business and agriculture sectors, with financial barriers dominating the landscape. Lack of startup capital emerged as the most severe barrier (M = 4.52, SD = 0.71), with 87.2% of respondents rating it as a major barrier, followed closely by

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limited access to credit (M = 4.38, SD = 0.79, 81.5%). The consistency of these high ratings across demographic groups (standard deviations < 1.0) indicated universal agreement on financial constraints as primary impediments. One-sample t-tests comparing each barrier mean against the scale midpoint of 3.0 showed that all barriers except value chain integration and storage facilities scored significantly above the neutral point (all $p < 0.001$), confirming their substantive impact on Gen Z decision-making. Limited mentorship opportunities ranked third (M = 4.28, SD = 0.81, 77.7%), highlighting the knowledge gap and need for experiential learning that formal education systems failed to provide. This finding was particularly salient given that qualitative data from focus group discussions consistently emphasized participants' desire for "someone who has walked the journey" to guide them through entrepreneurial challenges.

The independent t-tests examining gender differences in barrier perceptions revealed statistically significant disparities in perceptual barriers, with females rating "negative societal perception of farming" ($t(420) = -3.15$, $p = 0.002$, $d = 0.31$) and "agriculture as low-status work" ($t(420) = -3.18$, $p = 0.002$, $d = 0.31$) significantly higher than males. These moderate effect sizes (Cohen's $d \approx 0.31$) suggested that social and cultural barriers disproportionately affected young women's willingness to engage in agriculture, potentially reflecting gendered expectations about appropriate career paths and the intersection of gender norms with occupational status. The factor analysis with principal component extraction successfully identified four underlying dimensions of barriers, with excellent sampling adequacy (KMO = 0.874) and significant inter-correlation among items (Bartlett's test $p < 0.001$). The four-factor solution explained 73.2% of total variance, with "Financial Constraints" accounting for 30.2% alone, further validating its primacy. The "Perception & Status" factor, while explaining only 10.4% of variance, remained statistically distinct and theoretically meaningful, confirming that image-related barriers operated independently from material constraints. Chi-square tests examining associations between region and barrier severity ratings showed significant variations for infrastructure-related barriers ($\chi^2 = 34.7$, $p < 0.001$), with Northern and Eastern regions reporting significantly higher infrastructure challenges than Kampala, but no significant regional differences for financial barriers ($\chi^2 = 8.3$, $p = 0.081$), suggesting that capital constraints transcended geographic boundaries. These findings collectively indicated that effective engagement strategies must adopt a multi-pronged approach addressing financial access, skills development, infrastructure improvement, and perceptual transformation simultaneously, as no single intervention would sufficiently overcome the interconnected barrier system Gen Z faced.

Table 4: Predictors of Willingness to Engage in Business and Agriculture Sectors (Multiple Logistic Regression)

Model 1: Predictors of Willingness to Engage in Business Sector

Predictor Variable	B	SE	Wald χ^2	OR	95% CI	p-value
Age	0.048	0.034	1.99	1.049	[0.982, 1.121]	0.158
Gender (Female)	-0.231	0.287	0.65	0.794	[0.453, 1.392]	0.421
Education level	0.412	0.156	6.97	1.510	[1.112, 2.051]	0.008
Urban residence	0.523	0.245	4.56	1.687	[1.045, 2.723]	0.033
Financial independence motivation	0.687	0.198	12.03	1.988	[1.347, 2.933]	<0.001
Innovation motivation	0.445	0.167	7.11	1.561	[1.126, 2.164]	0.008
Access to startup capital	0.892	0.213	17.52	2.440	[1.607, 3.705]	<0.001

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Mentorship availability	0.534	0.181	8.71	1.706	[1.197, 2.431]	0.003
Constant	-2.567	1.234	4.33	0.077	-	0.037

Model Statistics: $\chi^2(8) = 87.34$, $p < 0.001$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.312$; Hosmer-Lemeshow $\chi^2(8) = 6.73$, $p = 0.566$; Classification accuracy = 86.7%

Model 2: Predictors of Willingness to Engage in Agriculture Sector

Predictor Variable	B	SE	Wald χ^2	OR	95% CI	p-value
Age	0.089	0.041	4.71	1.093	[1.009, 1.184]	0.030
Gender (Female)	-0.489	0.187	6.84	0.613	[0.425, 0.885]	0.009
Education level	-0.267	0.124	4.63	0.766	[0.601, 0.976]	0.031
Rural residence	0.734	0.189	15.07	2.083	[1.438, 3.018]	<0.001
Social impact motivation	0.398	0.143	7.74	1.489	[1.125, 1.971]	0.005
Perception: Agriculture as modern	0.612	0.121	25.58	1.844	[1.456, 2.336]	<0.001
Perception: Financially rewarding	0.523	0.118	19.66	1.687	[1.338, 2.127]	<0.001
Access to startup capital	0.678	0.156	18.87	1.970	[1.452, 2.673]	<0.001
Availability of agri-technology	0.445	0.134	11.04	1.561	[1.201, 2.029]	0.001
Negative social perception (barrier)	-0.356	0.129	7.62	0.700	[0.544, 0.901]	0.006
Constant	-3.892	1.156	11.33	0.020	-	0.001

Model Statistics: $\chi^2(10) = 156.47$, $p < 0.001$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.428$; Hosmer-Lemeshow $\chi^2(8) = 8.92$, $p = 0.349$; Classification accuracy = 74.2%

Comparative Analysis: Key Predictors by Sector

Predictor	Business OR	Agriculture OR	Z-score	p-value
Financial access	2.440	1.970	1.23	0.219
Urban/Rural residence	1.687 (urban)	2.083 (rural)	-1.45	0.147
Education level	1.510	0.766	3.67	<0.001
Gender (Female)	0.794 (ns)	0.613	-1.98	0.048

The multiple logistic regression models provided robust predictive frameworks for understanding factors influencing Gen Z's willingness to engage in business and agriculture sectors, with both models demonstrating strong overall fit and significant explanatory power. Model 1 (business sector) was statistically significant ($\chi^2(8) = 87.34$, $p < 0.001$), explained 31.2% of variance in business sector willingness (Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.312$), and correctly classified 86.7% of cases. The Hosmer-Lemeshow test indicated good model fit ($p = 0.566 > 0.05$), confirming that predicted probabilities matched observed outcomes across deciles of risk. Access to startup capital emerged as the strongest predictor (OR = 2.440, 95% CI [1.607, 3.705], $p < 0.001$), indicating that Gen Z individuals with perceived access to capital were 2.44 times more likely to express willingness to engage in business, holding all other variables constant. Financial independence motivation (OR = 1.988, $p < 0.001$) and mentorship availability (OR = 1.706, $p = 0.003$) were also significant positive predictors, supporting the theoretical framework that both material resources and social capital

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influenced entrepreneurial intentions. Education level showed a positive relationship (OR = 1.510, p = 0.008), suggesting that each additional level of education increased business sector willingness by approximately 51%, likely reflecting increased confidence, networks, and awareness of opportunities among more educated Gen Z individuals. Model 2 (agriculture sector) demonstrated even stronger predictive power ($\chi^2(10) = 156.47$, $p < 0.001$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.428$), explaining 42.8% of variance and correctly classifying 74.2% of cases, though with slightly lower classification accuracy than the business model due to the more evenly split dependent variable (46.9% willing vs. 53.1% unwilling). The model revealed fundamentally different predictive patterns compared to business engagement, highlighting agriculture's unique challenges. Perception of agriculture as modern and innovative emerged as the strongest predictor (OR = 1.844, $p < 0.001$), indicating that each one-unit increase in this perception nearly doubled the odds of willingness to engage in agriculture. Similarly, perception of agriculture as financially rewarding was highly significant (OR = 1.687, $p < 0.001$), collectively suggesting that transforming sectoral image was paramount for agriculture engagement—more so than for business where such perceptual variables were not significant predictors.

Rural residence showed a strong positive effect (OR = 2.083, $p < 0.001$), with rural Gen Z being twice as likely to consider agriculture compared to their urban counterparts, while education level surprisingly showed a negative relationship (OR = 0.766, p = 0.031), indicating that higher education was associated with 23.4% lower odds of agriculture willingness, possibly reflecting the pull of white-collar career aspirations cultivated through formal education. Gender emerged as a significant predictor specifically for agriculture (OR = 0.613, p = 0.009), with females having 38.7% lower odds of willingness compared to males, confirming the gendered nature of agricultural participation. The comparative analysis using z-scores to test differences between corresponding coefficients across models revealed that education level's contrasting effects (positive for business, negative for agriculture) were statistically significant ($z = 3.67$, $p < 0.001$), underscoring fundamentally different educational gradients between sectors. These regression results provided actionable intelligence for policy interventions: business sector engagement strategies should prioritize financial access mechanisms and mentorship programs targeting educated urban youth, while agriculture engagement required comprehensive image transformation campaigns emphasizing modernization and profitability, coupled with gender-responsive programming to address barriers facing young women, and educational curricula reforms to position agriculture as a viable career for the educated elite rather than a fallback option for the less educated.

Conclusion

This study successfully achieved its objectives of examining effective strategies for attracting and engaging Ugandan Generation Z in business and agriculture sectors through comprehensive identification of their motivations, assessment of barriers, and development of evidence-based intervention approaches. In addressing the first objective, the study identified that financial independence (M = 4.47) emerged as Gen Z's primary motivation, followed closely by making social impact (M = 4.23) and innovation opportunities (M = 4.15), while their career preferences demonstrated strong inclination toward technology-driven business models (42.2%) with significantly higher willingness to engage in the business sector (84.4%) compared to agriculture (46.9%), which was perceived negatively across all dimensions including social status (M = 2.12) and innovation potential (M = 2.34). Regarding the second

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objective, the assessment of barriers revealed that lack of startup capital (M = 4.52, 87.2% rating it as major barrier) constituted the most severe obstacle, followed by limited access to credit (M = 4.38) and mentorship opportunities (M = 4.28), with factor analysis confirming four distinct barrier dimensions—financial constraints, capacity gaps, systemic infrastructure, and perception/status issues—that collectively explained 73.2% of variance in engagement challenges, while gender analysis revealed that females experienced significantly higher perceptual barriers in agriculture ($p = 0.002$).

In fulfilling the third objective of developing evidence-based engagement strategies, the multiple logistic regression models demonstrated that access to startup capital (OR = 2.440), mentorship availability (OR = 1.706), and financial independence motivation (OR = 1.988) significantly predicted business sector engagement, while agriculture sector engagement was most strongly predicted by perception of agriculture as modern and innovative (OR = 1.844), perception of financial rewards (OR = 1.687), and rural residence (OR = 2.083), with education showing contrasting effects across sectors (positive for business OR = 1.510, negative for agriculture OR = 0.766, $z = 3.67$, $p < 0.001$). These findings conclusively indicated that engaging Ugandan Gen Z required differentiated, sector-specific strategies: business engagement necessitated enhanced financial access mechanisms, structured mentorship programs, and innovation support systems targeting educated urban youth, while agriculture engagement demanded fundamental image transformation through demonstrable modernization, technology integration, profitability evidence, gender-responsive programming to address barriers facing young women (OR = 0.613), and educational reforms to reposition agriculture as a prestigious career option for the educated elite rather than a subsistence fallback.

Recommendations

Establish Integrated Financial and Mentorship Ecosystems for Youth Entrepreneurship

Given that access to startup capital (OR = 2.440, $p < 0.001$) and mentorship availability (OR = 1.706, $p = 0.003$) emerged as the strongest predictors of business engagement, government agencies, financial institutions, and private sector partners should collaboratively establish Gen Z-focused financing mechanisms that combine low-interest startup loans (below UGX 50 million) with mandatory mentorship components, digital lending platforms with simplified application processes accessible via mobile devices, and structured incubation programs that pair young entrepreneurs with successful business leaders for minimum 12-month mentorship periods. These programs should specifically target the 70.1% of Gen Z who are either unemployed or students transitioning to the labor market, incorporate innovation challenges and pitch competitions that align with Gen Z's preference for technology-driven ventures (42.2%), and establish regional entrepreneurship hubs in all five study regions to ensure equitable access beyond Kampala, with performance metrics tracking capital disbursement rates, business survival rates, and mentor-mentee satisfaction indices.

Launch Comprehensive Agriculture Modernization and Image Transformation Campaign

Since perception of agriculture as modern (OR = 1.844, $p < 0.001$) and financially rewarding (OR = 1.687, $p < 0.001$) were the strongest predictors of agriculture engagement, while current perception scores remained critically low (M = 2.34 and M = 2.67 respectively), the Ministry of Agriculture, development partners, and agricultural organizations should implement a multi-faceted campaign featuring: showcase farms demonstrating precision agriculture, drone

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technology, automated irrigation systems, and smart farming applications; documented case studies and media profiles of young agripreneurs earning substantial incomes (UGX 5-20 million monthly) through value-added agriculture; integration of agri-technology curricula in secondary and tertiary institutions emphasizing agriculture as a STEM career; targeted social media campaigns using Gen Z influencers and platforms (TikTok, Instagram, YouTube) showcasing the "cool factor" of modern farming; establishment of agriculture innovation challenges with significant prize money (minimum UGX 50 million) to attract educated Gen Z (who currently show negative association with agriculture, OR = 0.766); and gender-responsive programming addressing the 38.7% lower odds females face in agriculture engagement through women-led agribusiness networks, female role model visibility, and addressing societal perception barriers that disproportionately affect young women ($t = -3.18$, $p = 0.002$).

Reform Educational Systems to Bridge the Business-Agriculture Skills Gap and Transform Sectoral Perceptions

With insufficient business management training ranked as the 5th most severe barrier ($M = 4.15$, 72.3%) and education showing contrasting sector effects (positive for business, negative for agriculture), educational institutions from secondary to university levels should undergo curriculum transformation that includes: mandatory entrepreneurship and financial literacy courses with practical business simulation exercises; agricultural science programs rebranded as "Agribusiness Technology" or "Agricultural Innovation" to emphasize modernity and reduce status stigma (current perception $M = 2.12$); semester-long internship requirements in successful agribusinesses and technology-driven farms replacing theoretical classroom instruction; establishment of university-based business incubators and agricultural innovation labs providing students hands-on experience with modern equipment; partnerships between educational institutions and private sector employers for co-designed curricula ensuring graduates possess market-relevant skills; and incorporation of successful young entrepreneurs (under 30 years) as guest lecturers and adjunct faculty to provide the role modeling that 56.4% of Gen Z identified as lacking, thereby simultaneously addressing capacity gaps, transforming sectoral perceptions, and channeling Gen Z's strong social impact motivation ($M = 4.23$) toward productive engagement in Uganda's priority economic sectors.

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