

ORIGINAL-RESEARCH

Field Management Skills Required by Florists for Effective Floricultural Production for Sustainable Self-Employment in Ebonyi State

Ugwuede, Anthonia Adaora(1)

1. 1 Department Department of Technology and Vocational Education (TVE), Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on field management skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The study was carried out in Ebonyi State, Nigeria using a descriptive survey research design. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. The population for the study was 187 respondents, comprising 134 registered florists and 53 agricultural extension workers in Ebonyi State. There was no sampling because of the population size. Structured questionnaire containing 30 items was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha Statistics was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument and a coefficient of .79 was obtained. Out of 187 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 180 copies were properly filled and returned given a return rate of 96.3%. It was this properly filled and returned copies that was used for analysis. The resulting data were analyzed using weighted mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed among others that all the items under manuring skills, pruning and weed control skills are required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The study therefore concluded that the identified skills be adopted by the florists to enable them establish and manage floricultural farms effectively. Based on the findings, the following recommendation among others were made: floriculturists should adopt the identified skills for increased production of ornamental plants and skill acquisition centers should adopt the identified skills in training and retraining of farmers and youths who are interested in management of floriculture farms.

Keywords: Field Management | Skills | Florist | Floricultural Production

Introduction

Agriculture has been identified as the key sector for repositioning the socio-economic structure and youth unemployment in Nigeria. It plays many roles in the development of national economy. It provides food, shelter, employment opportunities, raw materials for agro based industries and a means for foreign exchange (Iwena, 2020). Agriculture accounts for over 38 percent of the non-oil foreign exchange and employs about 70 percent of the active labour force of the population (Bureau of Public Enterprise (BPE), 2004). Okoye (2023) pointed out that agriculture being one of the primary sectors of the economy contributes a significant amount of the Gross Domestic Products (GDP) of the nation. Iwena (2020) stated that all the branches of agriculture provide job opportunities for the increasing population. Among the branches are crop science, animal science, agricultural engineering, agricultural economics, agricultural extension, agronomy, horticulture among others. Horticulture is the art and science of growing fruits, vegetables, flowers and ornamental plants. It is a branch of agriculture that focuses on cultivating high value crops, often on a smaller scale, with intensive management and care. Nnoka and Ndupu (2017) stated that horticulture embraces production of edible fruits- pomology, vegetable crops-olericulture, creation of lawns and production of ornamental crops ? floriculture.

Floriculture is the cultivation of flowers and ornamental plants for commercial purposes, involving the production, marketing and sales of flowers, foliage and decorative plants. It is a branch of horticulture that offers numerous benefits ranging from economic and aesthetic value to therapeutic and environmental sustainability. According to Iwena (2020), floriculture involves the growth, care, uses and marketing of some flowering plants, trees and shrubs. Udeke (2014) highlighted that floriculture refers to farming, plant care, propagation and cultivation with one goal in mind, the maximum production of flower buds and

flowers. Floriculture is the entire gardening spectrum that is geared towards understanding and improving, all aspects of bud and flower creation, including indoor lighting, greenhouse needs, plant nutrition and breeding new cultivars/strains. The aim of floriculturist is always to improve the plant to yield larger buds and have optimal flowering times.

For floricultural farm to provide the farmer with the desired output, it requires certain skills. Ozougwu, Ozougwu, Aneke, and Ugwu (2022) defined skills as the ability to make purposeful movements that are necessary to complete or master a particular task. This implies that skill is the ability to do something well. It is acquired through training to do a particular task. According to Alade (2016), skill is referred to as the ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in the execution of a task or performance-oriented activities. That is a person's ability in performing a given task as well as a result of training and practice. Skill with reference to this study can be regarded as performance activities required by florists for effective management of floricultural farms. The skills required for effective field management of floricultural farm for job security covers knowledge of flower and other ornamentals, planting, spacing, pruning, ideal flower harvest time frame and post-harvest chores such as storage and packaging of buds, flower heads and other parts of the plants (Okeke, 2018). Okeke noted that floriculturists need to gain skills in planning and marketing in order to achieve the objective of establishing the farm. The understanding of the skills and knowledge needed to produce and sell to the customers determines the success of the florists.

Florists usually center their goals around the plant health, branching, growth size, bud formation, flower harvest and bud yield with less attention on managing the flower to the deserving customers. A florist is a person trained with skills and knowledge of growing and selling of flowers. It is important to note that floriculture careers start with growers, who must be proficient in knowing precise harvest times. Smith (2013), noted that flower growing techniques vary, depending on the plant and climate. Jobs in this industry include field work for crops grown outside and sheltered culture for crops grown in green houses and high tunnels or hoop houses. In some cases, growers hire horticulturists to propagate plants in houses and others purchase liners, whips or tissues-cultured plants, which they pay workers to put in containers or plant in field. Acquiring these skills helps in the establishments and effective management of floricultural farms. Management is an active process of decision making so that the available human and material resources of an enterprise are effectively utilized through the coordinating performance of the functions of management, planning, organizing and controlling in order to accomplish the aims and objectives of enterprise (Okoye, 2023). Field management is an operation farmers carryout in their farm after planting.

In the context of this study, field management in floricultural production involves care and maintenance of flower plants after planting to maturity in the field. Some of the field management skills as noted by Ezeja (2019) include manuring/fertilization, thinning, mulching, weed control, pruning, disease and pest control among others. Floricultural field management implies that flower farmers will have adequate knowledge on how to maintain and care for flower plants and other facilities in use in flower production.

The degree or success of any flower production depends on the skills of the florist. Most flowers prefer some nutrients- rich and well-drained soil with appropriate manure. Manuring of flower plants is one of the field management skills which is very important in ensuring good growth and high yield. Manure contains nitrogen, phosphorus and other nutrients that helps plants to grow. Manuring according to Iwena (2020) is the process of applying organic matter, typically animal waste or decomposed plant material, to soil to improve its fertility and structure, promoting healthy plant growth. Udofia and Nlebem (2013) pointed out that manure improves the physical structure and stability of soils particularly degraded soil particles. Floriculturists are required to add manure to the flowering plants by selecting the type of organic and in-organic manure to be used, using animal waste, preparing of compost among others. Manure according to Nnoka and Ndupu (2017) can be land-applied in its raw form or after processing (for example, composting, pelletizing, nutrient extraction). Proper use of manure as a fertilizer minimizes nutrient pollution to water resources and help build healthy soils. Manure nutrients can also be used to grow worms, insect larvae, algae, or other living organisms for effective floriculture production and management. Manuring enhances the growth of flowers and the florist are required to prune the flower to optimize its bloom.

Pruning according to Ezeja (2019) is the horticultural practice of selectively removing parts of a plant, like branches, shoots, or roots, to improve its structure, promote healthy growth, enhance flowering and maintain shape. The objective of pruning may include to shape, form, and correct growth, prevent disease or damage, control capacity and vigor and provide clearance for electrical assets. Baliya (2012) supported this, by stating that pruning is done in order to remove deadwood, re-direct growth, sustain health, reduce risk from falling branches among others. In this study, pruning is the process of regulating the number of suckers, leaves and shootouts that grow from the stem. In other words, pruning is a continuous process of reducing or reshaping flower plant corm in order to have the required number.

According to Okoye (2023) if too many suckers, leaves and shootouts are left without pruning, the result will be overcrowding, bushy and unattractive. Pruning is conducted based on the growth rate of flowers and species, for instance rose flower plant is

first pruned three to four months after planting the flower plants (Klein and Zaid, 2016). There is need to prune flowers as this would help; to control the size and shape the plants, optimize the blooms and remove dead or diseased portions.

Furthermore, field management of floricultural business requires one to have weed control skills. Weeding is one of the necessary operations in floricultural farm. If weeding is not carried out in a regular basis, the farm is likely to have a very low and sub-optimal yield. Ugwuode (2022) noted that weeds are unwanted plants that grow alongside with crops. Iwena (2020) defined weed as a plant growing where it is not desired in such a way that it constitutes a nuisance either to man, livestock or crops. Iwena further stated that flower plants are very sensitive to weed infestation. The author added that poor weed management result in poor establishment, poor growth and low yield. It is important to note that weeds are genetically more viable and aggressive than flower plants; they compete with flowers for nutrients, air and water. They also harbour pests that can reduce the quantity and quality of flower plants. Some flower plants may find it very difficult to outwit the weeds if not intervene. The intervention is in the form of manual or mechanical weeding or using herbicides. Weeding should be done from time to time and should be continuous as to protect flower plants fruits, colouration and beautification of the environment. These skills in floricultural production is not fixed but can be acquired with the assistance of agricultural extension workers.

Extension workers are trained personnel's who carries scientific research and new knowledge of agricultural practices to the farmers through agricultural education. The extension workers help to educate floricultural farmers on field managerial skills to enhance floricultural production. Production is the process of combining various inputs and materials in order to increase output for consumption (Udofia & Nlebem, 2013) . This means that production is the process and methods used to transform tangible inputs (raw materials semi-finished goods into finished goods and services. With reference to this study, field management skills in floricultural production are the ability to manure the farm, prune the flowers and weed the farm, harvest and market flower products. Acquisition of these skills may likely help the florists to be self-employed.

Employment can be seen as the act of providing opportunities for men and women to obtain decent and productive work. Hornby (2015) defined employment as work, especially when it is done to earn money; the state of being employed. Self-employment is the act of being occupationally and economically independent of jobs provided by the government and organized private sector. For someone to be self-employed, the person must have the skills, the knowledge and the attitude that will enable him/her to establish a farm for agriculture business and earn a living from it. In the context of this study, self-employment is the ability of the florists to acquire skills in flower production, and effectively manage a floricultural farm and produce enough that can financially sustain them without seeking for government or privately paid job.

Floricultural production has been recognized as a viable source of income since it is highly demanded and used for beautification. It plays a crucial role in various cultural and social events, such as weddings, festivals and celebrations. However, in Ebonyi State, the researcher has observed that floricultural production is still practiced at the subsistence level despite high demand of the product. If adequate training in field management in floricultural production is given to farmers, it will help update their knowledge and skills in floricultural production. Hence, the need for this study to determine the field management skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Statement of the Problem

In contemporary society, floriculture has provided a lucrative atmosphere that the florists need to utilize in order to harness the opportunities therein. Identification and acquisition of skills in floricultural business will have positive influence for flower production, distribution, design, retailing, marketing, researches and food production such as (honey). More so, floriculture is necessary for addressing the challenges of job security because one can be self-employed in floriculture. Despite the benefits, florists seem to find it difficult to manage floricultural garden, because most of them seem not to possess the required skills. If these florists do not acquire these relevant skills, production of flowers and other benefits of the business will be hampered, hence the need for this study field management skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the field management skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

Manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Pruning skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Weed control skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

What are the manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State?

What are the pruning skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. _____

What are the weed control skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State? ³

Hypothesis

manuring skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

H 02 : A significance difference does not exist in the mean scores of agricultural extension workers and the florists on the pruning skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

H 03 : A significance difference does not exist in the mean scores of agricultural extension workers and the florists on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Research Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey research design according to Nworgu (2015) is a design in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. The design was used for the study because of wide distribution of the respondents. The study was conducted in Ebonyi State. Ebonyi State is one of the five states in South -East of Nigeria. It has boundaries with Cross-River state to the East, Benue State and Kogi State to the North, Abia State and River State to the south and Enugu State to the West. Ebonyi State was used for the study because of the growing need to improve the farmer's skills on floricultural production for job security. The state is dominated by the indigenous people of Igbo extraction and they are known for an enterprising spirit in making wealth.

The population for the study comprised of 187 respondents made up of 134 registered florists and 53 extension workers in Ebonyi State (**ESADP, 2023**). The entire population was used for the study because the population size was small, therefore, no sampling was made.

A self -structured questionnaire was used as instruments for data collection. The questionnaire contains a total of 30 structured items generated from an extensive review of literature. The questionnaire was divided into three sections (A - C) in order to collect data pertinent to the research questions. Specifically, Section A contained 10 items on manuring skills required by florists for effective floricultural production. Section B contains 10 items on pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production while Section C contains 10 items on weed control skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. All the items are on four-point rating scale with response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree (SD) with weighting numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was face validated by three experts, two from Department of Technology and Vocational Education and one from Department of Mathematics and Computer Education, all from Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. They validated the instrument to ensure the appropriateness of the items in addressing the research questions, clarity of instrument to the respondents and proper wording of the items. The validators comments were used to modify the final instrument that was used for data collection.

The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient and the reliability coefficient of .79 was obtained indicating that the instrument was reliable for use in data collection. A total of 187 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents with the help of three research assistants. 180 copies were properly filled, returned and used for data analysis, thus representing 96.3% return rate. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the three research questions. The decision was based on the principle of lower and upper limit of the mean thus;

Strongly Agree (SA) 3.50 - 4.20

Agree (A) 2.50 - 3.49

Disagree (D) 1.50 - 2.49

Strongly Disagree (SD) 1.00 - 1.49

Results

The results obtained from the data analyzed are presented in tables below according to the research questions and hypothesis that guided the study.

Research Question 1

What are the manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State?

Table 1 : Means scores and standard deviation of florists and extension workers on manuring skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebony State

S/N	Manuring skills required by florists for effective floricultural production includes:	Florist N = 127		Extension Workers N = 53		Overall		Decision
		Mean	SD1	Mean	SD2	Mean	SD G	
1	Use of organic manures/inorganic fertilizers (NPK, Ammonia)	3.28	0.62	3.26	0.62	3.28	0.62	Agree
2	Understanding plant nutrient needs (NPK, micronutrients)	3.27	0.66	3.30	0.64	3.28	0.65	Agree
3	Use of sustained nutrients supply suited to flower plants	3.24	0.66	3.32	0.68	3.24	0.67	Agree
4	Adopt a method of applying the fertilizer e.g spraying, ringing among others	3.19	0.68	3.23	0.70	3.20	0.68	Agree
5	Apply organic manure during planting	3.13	0.75	3.17	0.78	3.14	0.76	Agree
6	Adopt basal application of farm yard manure	3.17	0.70	3.21	0.69	3.18	0.70	Agree
7	Add organic manure during the pruning time.	3.20	0.63	3.23	0.61	3.21	0.63	Agree
8	Cover the fertilizer lightly with earth	3.15	0.67	3.18	0.65	3.16	0.66	Agree
9	Apply the quantity measured 5cm away from each stand for band placement method.	3.17	0.61	3.18	0.59	3.18	0.60	Agree
10	Matching nutrients to growth stages (vegetative, flowering)	3.15	0.59	3.19	0.59	3.16	0.59	Agree
	Cluster Mean/SD	3.20	0.65	3.23	0.65	3.21	0.65	Agree

Note : X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

Date presented in Table 1 shows that the items have overall mean scores ranging from 3.14 to 3.28 indicating agree. This shows

that the respondents agreed that the items are the manuring skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job creation in Ebonyi State. The overall cluster mean of 3.21 further reveals that the identified are the manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The low standard deviation of 0.65 shows that the respondents do not differ remarkably on their opinions to the items.

Hypothesis 1:

A significant difference does not exist in the mean scores of agricultural extension workers and the florists on the manuring skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Table 2

Summary t-test analysis of mean scores of agricultural extension workers and the florists on the manuring skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State

Variables	N	t	df	Sig (2 failed)	Mean difference	Std. Error Difference	Decision
Extension workers	53						
		0.540	178	.590	34081	.063101	NS
Florists	127						

Note NS: not significant

The data obtained from the t-test analysis in Table 2 shows that the t-value at 0.05 level of significant and 178 degree of freedom for the items is 0.540 with a significant value of 0.590. Since the significant value of .590 is more than the .05 level of significant the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that a significant difference does not exist with respect to the items on the mean scores of extension workers and the florists on manuring skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Research Question 2

What are the pruning skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State?

Table 3 :

Means scores and standard deviation of florists and extension workers on pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebony State

S/N	Pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production includes:	Florist N = 127		Extension Workers N = 53		Overall		
			SD1		SD2		SD G	Decision
11	Identify flower sucker, shoots and leaves to be pruned	3.33	0.63	3.38	0.66	3.34	0.64	Agree
12	Pruning at the optimal growth stage (e.g. post flowering)	3.09	0.73	3.21	0.76	3.12	0.74	Agree
13	Understand how plants respond to pruning	3.18	0.61	3.23	0.64	3.19	0.62	Agree

14	Clean cuts, using right tools (secateurs, shears)	3.14	0.63	3.17	0.64	3.15	0.63	Agree
15	Remove buds for larger blooms	3.17	0.68	3.19	0.68	3.17	0.68	Agree
16	Slant cuts above buds to promote growth	3.03	0.55	3.06	0.57	3.04	0.55	Agree
17	Remove dead/diseased parts to promote health	3.15	0.57	3.08	0.58	3.13	0.58	Agree
18	Remove tips to encourage branching	3.11	0.55	3.08	0.58	3.10	0.56	Agree
19	Determine the time according to weather condition for flower plant pruning	3.14	0.65	3.09	0.66	3.13	0.65	Agree
20	Clean tools to reduce disease spread	3.13	0.68	3.09	0.69	3.12	0.68	Agree
	Cluster Mean/SD	3.15	0.63	3.16	0.65	3.15	0.63	Agree

Note : X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

Date presented in Table 3 above shows that the overall mean scores ranging from 3.04 to 3.34 indicating that the items are the pruning skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The overall cluster mean of 3.15 also depicts strongly agreed. The standard deviation of 0.63 shows that the respondents have homogeneity in their responses to the items as the pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the pruning skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Table 4

Summary of t-test Analysis of mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the pruning skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State

Variables	N	t	Dt	Sig (2 failed)	Mean difference	Std. Error Difference	Decision
Florists	127						
		0.165	178	.869	-.09360	.56763	NS
Extension workers	53						

Note : Not significant

The result of data analysis obtained from the t-test in Table 4 shows that the t-value at .05 level of significant and 178 degree of freedom for the items is 0.165 with a significant value of 0.869. Since the significant value of 0.869 is more than the .05 level of significant, the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference with respect to the items on the mean scores of the florists and extension workers on the pruning skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Research Question 3

What are the weed control skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State?

Table 5 :

Means scores and standard deviation of respondents on weed control skills required by florists for effective floricultural

production for job security in Ebony State.

S/N	Weed control skills required by florists for effective floricultural production includes:	Florist N = 127		Extension Workers N = 53		Overall		Decision
			SD1		SD2		SD G	
21	Recognizing common weeds in floriculture (grasses, broadleaves)	3.32	0.63	3.32	0.64	3.32	0.63	Agree
22	Using (mulching and clean planting materials)	3.06	0.79	2.96	0.83	3.03	0.80	Agree
23	Weeding mechanically using hoe/cutlass	3.17	0.59	3.15	0.63	3.17	0.60	Agree
24	Removing the weak flowers from the healthy once	3.16	0.58	3.13	0.59	3.15	0.58	Agree
25	Using herbicides to control weeds	3.76	0.62	3.60	0.65	3.72	0.48	S/Agree
26	Using a knapsack herbicide sprayer	3.32	0.43	3.25	0.59	3.30	0.62	Agree
27	Applying herbicide on weeds two or three months after planting flowers	3.18	0.73	3.02	0.77	3.13	0.74	Agree
28	Repeating the application of herbicides after four months of first application	3.21	0.61	3.15	0.63	3.19	0.62	Agree
29	Measuring herbicide correctly and diluting with water before the application like 1:5 cubic cup of herbicide and water	3.17	0.61	3.13	0.65	3.16	0.62	Agree
30	Using hand picking or pulling of weed method	3.20	0.68	3.17	0.70	3.19	0.69	Agree

	Cluster Mean/SD	3.25	0.62	3.22	0.64	3.23	0.63	Agree
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Note : X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

Date presented in Table 5 shows that the mean scores for item 25 were 3.72 indicating strongly agree. The remaining 9 items ranges from 3.03 to 3.32 indicating agree. This shows that the respondents scored the items as weed control skills required by florists for effective management of floricultural farm for job creation in Ebonyi State. The overall cluster mean of 3.23 indicates that the items are the skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The low standard deviation of 0.63 indicates that the respondents have similar opinions on the items.

Hypothesis 3:

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Table 6 : Summary of t-test Analysis of mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi state.

Variables	N	t	df	Sig (2 tailed)	Mean difference	Std. Error Difference	Decision
Florists	127						
		.056	178	0.956	.03328	.59867	NS
Extension workers	53						

Note : Not significant

The result of t-test analysis in Table 6 shows that the t-test value at 0.05 level of significant and 178 degree of freedom for the 10 items is 0.056 with a significant value of 0.956. Since the significant value of 0.956 is more than 0.05 level of significant the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study on research question one showed that the statement items are the manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job creation in Ebonyi State. Some of the identified manuring skills include; use of organic manures/inorganic fertilizers, understanding plant nutrient needs, use of sustained nutrient supply suited to flower plants, apply organic manure during planting, adopt basal application of farm yard manure among others. The findings were in consonance with Okoye (2023) who noted that organic manure such as farm yard manure can be added to the soil to improve its fertility. Iwena (2020) supported this by stating that fertilizer and organic manure can be applied to the soil to improve the fertility for the growth of ornamental trees, shrubs and flowers. Iwena further stated that these should be applied 3 to 4 weeks after planting to improve vegetative growth and also help to maintain turgor of the plant. The finding of the study depicted that there was no significant difference on the scores of florist and extension workers on the manuring skill required by the florist for the effective floricultural production in Ebonyi state. This meaning of no significant difference was that the responses of the florists and the extension workers had no influence on the identified skills for effective floricultural production.

The findings of the study in research question two revealed the following as the pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production, identify flower sucker, shoots and leaves to be pruned, pruning at the right growth stage, understand how plant respond to pruning, clean cut, using right tools (secateurs, shears), remove buds for larger blooms among others. The finding of the study were in line with Ezeja (2019) who stated that old leaves, stems and side braches should be pruned with either shears or secateurs to provide even spacing of the flower.

Furthermore, the study indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean scores of florist and extension workers on the pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The implication of the findings was that status of the respondents had no significant influence on the identified pruning skills for effective management of floricultural farms. The study depicted the weed control skills required by florist for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. They are: recognizing common weeds impacting floriculture, practice prevention strategies (Mulching, clean planting Materials), weed mechanically using hoe/cutlass, remove the weak flowers from the healthy once, use herbicide to control weeds, use a knapsack herbicide sprayer among others. The findings of the study was in

line with Iwena (2020) who stated that weeds can be controlled using cutlass /hoe to clear the farm of weeds, using herbicides to control the growth of weeds, practice crop rotation and cover crops to suppress the growth of weeds among others. The author further stated that florist should ensure that weeds are removed so as to allow for adequate nutrients, space, light and water for the normal growth of ornamental plants.

In addition to the above, the findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference on the mean scores of florists and extension workers on the weed control skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi state. The implication of no significant different was that the florist and extension workers had homogeneity in their responses on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production.

Conclusion

The study determined the field management skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi state. It was carried out in Ebonyi state. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. Based on the findings of the study, the conclusions were made that the identified skills may be adopted by the florist to equip them to be competent in flower production.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

Floriculturist should adopt the identified skills for increased production of ornamental plants.

Skill acquisition centers should adopt the identified skills in retraining farmers and youths who are interested in management of floricultural farm.

Agricultural extension workers should utilize the identified management skills in their extension services to the young floriculturist.

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REFERENCES

- [1] Introduction Agriculture has been identified as the key sector for repositioning the socio-economic structure and youth unemployment in Nigeria. It plays many roles in the development of national economy. It provides food, shelter, employment opportunities, raw materials for agro based industries and a means for foreign exchange (Iwena, 2020). Agriculture accounts for over 38 percent of the non-oil foreign exchange and employs about 70 percent of the active labour force of the population (Bureau of Public Enterprise (BPE), 2004) . Okoye (2023) pointed out that agriculture being one of the primary sectors of the economy contributes a significant amount of the Gross Domestic Products (GDP) of the nation. Iwena (2020) stated that all the branches of agriculture provide job opportunities for the increasing population. Among the branches are crop science, animal science, agricultural engineering, agricultural economics, agricultural extension, agronomy, horticulture among others. Horticulture is the art and science of growing fruits, vegetables, flowers and ornamental plants. It is a branch of agriculture that focuses on cultivating high value crops, often on a smaller scale, with intensive management and care. Nnoka and Ndupu (2017) stated that horticulture embraces production of edible fruits- pomology, vegetable crops-olericulture, creation of lawns and production of ornamental crops ? floriculture. Floriculture is the cultivation of flowers and ornamental plants for commercial purposes, involving the production, marketing and sales of flowers, foliage and decorative plants. It is a branch of horticulture that offers numerous benefits ranging from economic and aesthetic value to therapeutic and environmental sustainability. According to Iwena (2020), floriculture involves the growth, care, uses and marketing of some flowering plants, trees and shrubs. Udeke (2014) highlighted that floriculture refers to farming, plant care, propagation and cultivation with one goal in mind, the maximum production of flower buds and flowers. Floriculture is the entire gardening spectrum that is geared towards understanding and improving, all aspects of bud and flower creation, including indoor lighting, greenhouse needs, plant nutrition and breeding new cultivars/strains. The aim of floriculturist is always to improve the plant to yield larger buds and have optimal flowering times. For floricultural farm to provide the farmer with the desired output, it requires certain skills. Ozougwu, Ozougwu, Aneke, and Ugwuode (2022) defined skills as the ability to make purposeful movements that are necessary to complete or master a particular task. This implies that skill is the ability to do something well. It is acquired through training to do a particular task. According to Alade (2016), skill is referred to as the ability to use one?s knowledge effectively and readily in the execution of a task or performance-oriented activities. That is a person?s ability in performing a given task as well as a result of training and practice. Skill with reference to this study can be regarded as performance activities required by florists for effective management of floricultural farms. The skills required for effective field management of floricultural farm for job security covers knowledge of flower and other ornamentals, planting, spacing, pruning, ideal flower harvest time frame and post-harvest chores such as storage and packaging of buds, flower heads and other parts of the plants (Okeke, 2018). Okeke noted that floriculturists need to gain skills in planning and marketing in order to achieve the objective of establishing the farm. The understanding of the skills and knowledge needed to produce and sell to the customers determines the success of the florists. Florists usually center their goals around the plant health, branching, growth size, bud formation, flower harvest and bud yield with less attention on managing the flower to the deserving customers. A florist is a person trained with skills and knowledge of growing and selling of flowers. It is important to note that floriculture careers start with growers, who must be proficient in knowing precise harvest times. Smith (2013), noted that flower growing techniques vary, depending on the plant and climate. Jobs in this industry include field work for crops grown outside and sheltered culture for crops grown in green houses and high tunnels or hoop houses. In some cases, growers hire horticulturists to propagate plants in houses and others purchase liners, whips or tissues-cultured plants, which they pay workers to put in containers or plant in field. Acquiring these skills helps in the establishments and effective management of floricultural farms. Management is an active process of decision making so that the available human and material resources of an enterprise are effectively utilized through the coordinating performance of the functions of

management, planning, organizing and controlling in order to accomplish the aims and objectives of enterprise (Okoye, 2023). Field management is an operation farmers carry out in their farm after planting. In the context of this study, field management in floricultural production involves care and maintenance of flower plants after planting to maturity in the field. Some of the field management skills as noted by Ezeja (2019) include manuring/fertilization, thinning, mulching, weed control, pruning, disease and pest control among others. Floricultural field management implies that flower farmers will have adequate knowledge on how to maintain and care for flower plants and other facilities in use in flower production. The degree or success of any flower production depends on the skills of the florist. Most flowers prefer some nutrients- rich and well-drained soil with appropriate manure. Manuring of flower plants is one of the field management skills which is very important in ensuring good growth and high yield. Manure contains nitrogen, phosphorus and other nutrients that helps plants to grow. Manuring according to Iwena (2020) is the process of applying organic matter, typically animal waste or decomposed plant material, to soil to improve its fertility and structure, promoting healthy plant growth. Udofia and Nlebem (2013) pointed out that manure improves the physical structure and stability of soils particularly degraded soil particles. Floriculturists are required to add manure to the flowering plants by selecting the type of organic and in-organic manure to be used, using animal waste, preparing of compost among others. Manure according to Nnoka and Ndupu (2017) can be land-applied in its raw form or after processing (for example, composting, pelletizing, nutrient extraction). Proper use of manure as a fertilizer minimizes nutrient pollution to water resources and help build healthy soils. Manure nutrients can also be used to grow worms, insect larvae, algae, or other living organisms for effective floriculture production and management. Manuring enhances the growth of flowers and the florist are required to prune the flower to optimize its bloom. Pruning according to Ezeja (2019) is the horticultural practice of selectively removing parts of a plant, like branches, shoots, or roots, to improve its structure, promote healthy growth, enhance flowering and maintain shape. The objective of pruning may include to shape, form, and correct growth, prevent disease or damage, control capacity and vigor and provide clearance for electrical assets. Baliya (2012) supported this, by stating that pruning is done in order to remove deadwood, re-direct growth, sustain health, reduce risk from falling branches among others. In this study, pruning is the process of regulating the number of suckers, leaves and shootouts that grow from the stem. In other words, pruning is a continuous process of reducing or reshaping flower plant form in order to have the required number. According to Okoye (2023) if too many suckers, leaves and shootouts are left without pruning, the result will be overcrowding, bushy and unattractive. Pruning is conducted based on the growth rate of flowers and species, for instance rose flower plant is first pruned three to four months after planting the flower plants (Klein and Zaid, 2016). There is need to prune flowers as this would help; to control the size and shape the plants, optimize the blooms and remove dead or diseased portions. Furthermore, field management of floricultural business requires one to have weed control skills. Weeding is one of the necessary operations in floricultural farm. If weeding is not carried out in a regular basis, the farm is likely to have a very low and sub-optimal yield. Ugwuode (2022) noted that weeds are unwanted plants that grow alongside with crops. Iwena (2020) defined weed as a plant growing where it is not desired in such a way that it constitutes a nuisance either to man, livestock or crops. Iwena further stated that flower plants are very sensitive to weed infestation. The author added that poor weed management result in poor establishment, poor growth and low yield. It is important to note that weeds are genetically more viable and aggressive than flower plants; they compete with flowers for nutrients, air and water. They also harbour pests that can reduce the quantity and quality of flower plants. Some flower plants may find it very difficult to outwit the weeds if not intervene. The intervention is in the form of manual or mechanical weeding or using herbicides. Weeding should be done from time to time and should be continuous as to protect flower plants fruits, colouration and beautification of the environment. These skills in floricultural production is not fixed but can be acquired with the assistance of agricultural extension workers. Extension workers are trained personnel's who carries scientific research and new knowledge of agricultural practices to the farmers through agricultural education. The extension workers help to educate floricultural farmers on field managerial skills to enhance floricultural production. Production is the process of combining various inputs and materials in order to increase output for consumption (Udofia & Nlebem, 2013). This means that production is the process and methods used to transform tangible inputs (raw materials semi-finished goods into finished goods and services. With reference to this study, field management skills in floricultural production are the ability to manure the farm, prune the flowers and weed the farm, harvest and market flower products. Acquisition of these skills may likely help the florists to be self-employed. Employment can be seen as the act of providing opportunities for men and women to obtain decent and productive work. Hornby (2015) defined employment as work, especially when it is done to earn money; the state of being employed. Self-employment is the act of being occupationally and economically independent of jobs provided by the government and organized private sector. For someone to be self-employed, the person must have the skills, the knowledge and the attitude that will enable him/her to establish a farm for agriculture business and earn a living from it. In the context of this study, self-employment is the ability of the florists to acquire skills in flower production, and effectively manage a floricultural farm and produce enough that can financially sustain them without seeking for government or privately paid job. Floricultural production has been recognized as a viable source of income since it is highly demanded and used for beautification. It plays a crucial role in various cultural and social events, such as weddings, festivals and celebrations. However, in Ebonyi State, the researcher has observed that floricultural production is still practiced at the subsistence level despite high demand of the product. If adequate training in field management in floricultural production is given to farmers, it will help update their knowledge and skills in floricultural production. Hence, the need for this study to determine the field management skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Statement of the Problem In contemporary society, floriculture has provided a lucrative atmosphere that the florists need to utilize in order to harness the opportunities therein. Identification and acquisition of skills in floricultural business will have positive influence for flower production, distribution, design, retailing, marketing, researches and food production such as (honey). More so, floriculture is necessary for addressing the challenges of job security because one can be self-employed in floriculture. Despite the benefits, florists seem to find it difficult to manage floricultural garden, because most of them seem not to possess the required skills. If these florists do not acquire these relevant skills, production of flowers and other benefits of the business will be hampered, hence the need for this study field management skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Purpose of the Study The main purpose of this study was to determine the field management skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the: Manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Pruning skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Weed control skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Research Questions The following research questions guided the study: What are the manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State? What are the pruning skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. What are the weed control skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State? Hypothesis The following null hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance H 01 : A significant difference does not exist in the mean scores of agricultural extension workers and the florists on the manuring skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. H 02 : A significance difference does not exist in the mean scores of agricultural extension workers and the florists on the pruning skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. H 03 : A significance difference does not exist in the mean scores of agricultural

extension workers and the florists on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Research Method The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey research design according to Nworgu (2015) is a design in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. The design was used for the study because of wide distribution of the respondents. The study was conducted in Ebonyi State. Ebonyi State is one of the five states in South-East of Nigeria. It has boundaries with Cross-River state to the East, Benue State and Kogi State to the North, Abia State and River State to the south and Enugu State to the West. Ebonyi State was used for the study because of the growing need to improve the farmer's skills on floricultural production for job security. The state is dominated by the indigenous people of Igbo extraction and they are known for an enterprising spirit in making wealth. The population for the study comprised of 187 respondents made up of 134 registered florists and 53 extension workers in Ebonyi State (ESADP, 2023). The entire population was used for the study because the population size was small, therefore, no sampling was made. A self-structured questionnaire was used as instruments for data collection. The questionnaire contains a total of 30 structured items generated from an extensive review of literature. The questionnaire was divided into three sections (A - C) in order to collect data pertinent to the research questions. Specifically, Section A contained 10 items on manuring skills required by florists for effective floricultural production. Section B contains 10 items on pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production while Section C contains 10 items on weed control skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. All the items are on four-point rating scale with response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree (SD) with weighting numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was face validated by three experts, two from Department of Technology and Vocational Education and one from Department of Mathematics and Computer Education, all from Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. They validated the instrument to ensure the appropriateness of the items in addressing the research questions, clarity of instrument to the respondents and proper wording of the items. The validators comments were used to modify the final instrument that was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient and the reliability coefficient of .79 was obtained indicating that the instrument was reliable for use in data collection. A total of 187 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents with the help of three research assistants. 180 copies were properly filled, returned and used for data analysis, thus representing 96.3% return rate. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the three research questions. The decision was based on the principle of lower and upper limit of the mean thus; Strongly Agree (SA) 3.50 - 4.20 Agree (A) 2.50 - 3.49 Disagree (D) 1.50 - 2.49 Strongly Disagree (SD) 1.00 - 1.49 Results The results obtained from the data analyzed are presented in tables below according to the research questions and hypothesis that guided the study. Research Question 1 What are the manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State? Table 1 : Means scores and standard deviation of florists and extension workers on manuring skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebony State S/N Manuring skills required by florists for effective floricultural production includes: Florist N = 127 Extension Workers N = 53 Overall SD1 SD2 SD G Decision 1 Use of organic manures/inorganic fertilizers (NPK, Ammonia) 3.28 0.62 3.26 0.62 3.28 0.62 Agree 2 Understanding plant nutrient needs (NPK, micronutrients) 3.27 0.66 3.30 0.64 3.28 0.65 Agree 3 Use of sustained nutrients supply suited to flower plants 3.24 0.66 3.32 0.68 3.24 0.67 Agree 4 Adopt a method of applying the fertilizer e.g spraying, ringing among others 3.19 0.68 3.23 0.70 3.20 0.68 Agree 5 Apply organic manure during planting 3.13 0.75 3.17 0.78 3.14 0.76 Agree 6 Adopt basal application of farm yard manure 3.17 0.70 3.21 0.69 3.18 0.70 Agree 7 Add organic manure during the pruning time. 3.20 0.63 3.23 0.61 3.21 0.63 Agree 8 Cover the fertilizer lightly with earth 3.15 0.67 3.18 0.65 3.16 0.66 Agree 9 Apply the quantity measured 5cm away from each stand for band placement method. 3.17 0.61 3.18 0.59 3.18 0.60 Agree 10 Matching nutrients to growth stages (vegetative, flowering) 3.15 0.59 3.19 0.59 3.16 0.59 Agree Cluster Mean/SD 3.20 0.65 3.23 0.65 3.21 0.65 Agree Note : X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation Date presented in Table 1 shows that the items have overall mean scores ranging from 3.14 to 3.28 indicating agree. This shows that the respondents agreed that the items are the manuring skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job creation in Ebonyi State. The overall cluster mean of 3.21 further reveals that the identified are the manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The low standard deviation of 0.65 shows that the respondents do not differ remarkably on their opinions to the items. Hypothesis 1: A significant difference does not exist in the mean scores of agricultural extension workers and the florists on the manuring skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Table 2 Summary t-test analysis of mean scores of agricultural extension workers and the florists on the manuring skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State Variables N t df Sig (2 tailed) Mean difference Std. Error Difference Decision Extension workers 53 0.540 178 .590 34081 .063101 NS Florists 127 Note NS: not significant The data obtained from the t-test analysis in Table 2 shows that the t-value at 0.05 level of significant and 178 degree of freedom for the items is 0.540 with a significant value of

- [2] Since the significant value of .590 is more than the .05 level of significant the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that a significant difference does not exist with respect to the items on the mean scores of extension workers and the florists on manuring skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Research Question 2 What are the pruning skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State? Table 3 : Means scores and standard deviation of florists and extension workers on pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebony State S/N Pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production includes: Florist N = 127 Extension Workers N = 53 Overall SD1 SD2 SD G Decision 11 Identify flower sucker, shoots and leaves to be pruned 3.33 0.63 3.38 0.66 3.34 0.64 Agree 12 Pruning at the optimal growth stage (e.g. post flowering) 3.09 0.73 3.21 0.76 3.12 0.74 Agree 13 Understand how plants respond to pruning 3.18 0.61 3.23 0.64 3.19 0.62 Agree 14 Clean cuts, using right tools (secateurs, shears) 3.14 0.63 3.17 0.64 3.15 0.63 Agree 15 Remove buds for larger blooms 3.17 0.68 3.19 0.68 3.17 0.68 Agree 16 Slant cuts above buds to promote growth 3.03 0.55 3.06 0.57 3.04 0.55 Agree 17 Remove dead/diseased parts to promote health 3.15 0.57 3.08 0.58 3.13 0.58 Agree 18 Remove tips to encourage branching 3.11 0.55 3.08 0.58 3.10 0.56 Agree 19 Determine the time according to weather condition for flower plant pruning 3.14 0.65 3.09 0.66 3.13 0.65 Agree 20 Clean tools to reduce disease spread 3.13 0.68 3.09 0.69 3.12 0.68 Agree Cluster Mean/SD 3.15 0.63 3.16 0.65 3.15 0.63 Agree Note : X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation Date presented in Table 3 above shows that the overall mean scores ranging from 3.04 to 3.34 indicating that the items are the pruning skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The overall cluster mean of 3.15 also depicts strongly agreed. The standard deviation of 0.63 shows that the respondents have homogeneity in their responses to the items as the pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the pruning skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Table 4 Summary of t-test Analysis of mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the pruning skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State Variables N t Dt Sig (2 tailed) Mean difference Std. Error Difference Decision Florists 127 0.165 178 .869 -.09360 .56763 NS Extension workers 53 Note : Not significant The result of data analysis obtained from the t-test in Table 4 shows that the t-value at .05 level of significant and 178 degree of freedom for the items is 0.165 with a significant value of

- [3] Since the significant value of 0.869 is more than the .05 level of significant, the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference with respect to the items on the mean scores of the florists and extension workers on the pruning skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Research Question 3 What are the weed control skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State? Table 5 : Means scores and standard deviation of respondents on weed control skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebony State. S/N Weed controlskills required by florists for effective floricultural production includes: Florist N = 127 Extension Workers N = 53 Overall SD1 SD2 SD G Decision 21 Recognizing common weeds in floriculture (grasses, broadleaves) 3.32 0.63 3.32 0.64 3.32 0.63 Agree 22 Using (mulching and clean planting materials) 3.06 0.79 2.96 0.83 3.03 0.80 Agree 23 Weeding mechanically using hoe/cutlass 3.17 0.59 3.15 0.63 3.17 0.60 Agree 24 Removing the weak flowers from the healthy once 3.16 0.58 3.13 0.59 3.15 0.58 Agree 25 Using herbicides to control weeds 3.76 0.62 3.60 0.65 3.72 0.48 S/Agree 26 Using a knapsack herbicide sprayer 3.32 0.43 3.25 0.59 3.30 0.62 Agree 27 Applying herbicide on weeds two or three months after planting flowers 3.18 0.73 3.02 0.77 3.13 0.74 Agree 28 Repeating the application of herbicides after four months of first application 3.21 0.61 3.15 0.63 3.19 0.62 Agree 29 Measuring herbicide correctly and diluting with water before the application like 1:5 cubic cup of herbicide and water 3.17 0.61 3.13 0.65 3.16 0.62 Agree 30 Using hand picking or pulling of weed method 3.20 0.68 3.17 0.70 3.19 0.69 Agree Cluster Mean/SD 3.25 0.62 3.22 0.64 3.23 0.63 Agree Note : X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation Date presented in Table 5 shows that the mean scores for item 25 were 3.72 indicating strongly agree. The remaining 9 items ranges from 3.03 to 3.32 indicating agree. This shows that the respondents scored the items as weed control skills required by florists for effective management of floricultural farm for job creation in Ebonyi State. The overall cluster mean of 3.23 indicates that the items are the skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The low standard deviation of 0.63 indicates that the respondents have similar opinions on the items. Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Table 6 : Summary of t-test-analysis of mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi state. Variables N t df Sig (2 tailed) Mean difference Std. Error Difference Decision Florists 127 .056 178 0.956 .03328 .59867 NS Extension workers 53 Note : Not significant The result of t-test analysis in Table 6 shows that the t-test value at 0.05 level of significant and 178 degree of freedom for the 10 items is 0.056 with a significant value of
- [4] Since the significant value of 0.956 is more than 0.05 level of significant the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of the florists and agricultural extension workers on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. Discussion of Findings The findings of the study on research question one showed that the statement items are the manuring skills required by the florists for effective floricultural production for job creation in Ebonyi State. Some of the identified manuring skills include; use of organic manures/inorganic fertilizers, understanding plant nutrient needs, use of sustained nutrient supply suited to flower plants, apply organic manure during planting, adopt basal application of farm yard manure among others. The findings were in consonance with Okoye (2023) who noted that organic manure such as farm yard manure can be added to the soil to improve its fertility. Iwena (2020) supported this by stating that fertilizer and organic manure can be applied to the soil to improve the fertility for the growth of ornamental trees, shrubs and flowers. Iwena further stated that these should be applied 3 to 4 weeks after planting to improve vegetative growth and also help to maintain turgor of the plant. The finding of the study depicted that there was no significant difference on the scores of florist and extension workers on the manuring skill required by the florist for the effective floricultural production in Ebonyi state. This meaning of no significant difference was that the responses of the florists and the extension workers had no influence on the identified skills for effective floricultural production. The findings of the study in research question two revealed the following as the pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production, identify flower sucker, shoots and leaves to be pruned, pruning at the right growth stage, understand how plant respond to pruning, clean cut, using right tools (secateurs, shears), remove buds for larger blooms among others. The finding of the study were in line with Ezeja (2019) who stated that old leaves, stems and side braches should be pruned with either shears or secateurs to provide even spacing of the flower. Furthermore, the study indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean scores of florist and extension workers on the pruning skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. The implication of the findings was that status of the respondents had no significant influence on the identified pruning skills for effective management of floricultural farms. The study depicted the weed control skills required by florist for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi State. They are: recognizing common weeds impacting floriculture, practice prevention strategies (Mulching, clean planting Materials), weed mechanically using hoe/cutlass, remove the weak flowers from the healthy once, use herbicide to control weeds, use a knapsack herbicide sprayer among others. The findings of the study was in line with Iwena (2020) who stated that weeds can be controlled using cutlass /hoe to clear the farm of weeds, using herbicides to control the growth of weeds, practice crop rotation and cover crops to suppress the growth of weeds among others. The author further stated that florist should ensure that weeds are removed so as to allow for adequate nutrients, space, light and water for the normal growth of ornamental plants. In addition to the above, the findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference on the mean scores of florists and extension workers on the weed control skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi state. The implication of no significant different was that the florist and extension workers had homogeneity in their responses on the weed control skills required for effective floricultural production. Conclusion The study determined the field management skills required by florists for effective floricultural production for job security in Ebonyi state. It was carried out in Ebonyi state. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. Based on the findings of the study, the conclusions were made that the identified skills may be adopted by the florist to equip them to be competent in flower production. Recommendation Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made; Floriculturist should adopt the identified skills for increased production of ornamental plants. Skill acquisition centers should adopt the identified skills in retraining farmers and youths who are interested in management of floricultural farm. Agricultural extension workers should utilize the identified management skills in their extension services to the young floriculturist.