



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BEHAVIOR OF THE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORKERS AND FARMERS' SATISFACTION WITH THE EXTENSION SERVICES IN KURA LOCAL GOVERNMENT, KANO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to determine the attitude of extension staff towards agricultural extension work, examine the nature of the relationship between farmers and agricultural extension staff, examine the scope of farmers' satisfaction with services provided by extension workers, and determine the challenges affecting effective relationship between farmers and agricultural extension staff in Kura Local Government, Kano State, Nigeria. The population of the study was 2567 registered farmers and 8 qualified Extension workers. Questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. 80 respondents were used as the sampling frame. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics i.e. percentage and frequency count. The research findings revealed that there is strong positive relationship between behavior of Agricultural Extension Workers and farmers satisfaction, the findings of the study indicated, among others, that the challenges affecting relationship between the farmers and the Extension Staff in the study area included staff inadequacy, slow process and the attitude of the Extension Workers toward Agricultural Extension exercise included dedication to duty, positive manners, among the others. Additionally, the findings indicated that the nature of the relationship between the farmers and Agricultural Extension Workers was based on Extension workers farm visit, response to request and enquiries by the farmers and friendliness to the farmers. It is therefore, recommended that the number of Extension workers should be added and welfare package of the Extension Workers should be improved to avoid delay in the process, to mention but a few.

KEYWORDS: Attitude, Services Provided, Satisfaction, Behaviour and Relationship.

Introduction

Agricultural extension primarily deals with Human Resource Development (HRD) and the transfer of technology and knowledge from agricultural research centers to farmers. Improving Human Resource Development (HRD) within rural community is essential for agriculture and community development. Extension workers are professionals in the extension system responsible for developing individuals in the community. Hence, as the profession of extension work continues to expand, it is necessary to identify leadership skills possessed by the agricultural extension workers in order to gauge their performance in the extension system. Therefore, there is a need first to gauge performance of extension workers and a need to determine predictors of performance.

Agbamu (2005), described agricultural extension worker as a person who helps the farmers to identify and analyze their production problems, make them become aware of the opportunities for improvement of farm yield in order to obtain increased income and attain a better standard of living requires for the achievement of the required and expected outcomes of agricultural extension services. Erabor (2003) identified five qualities of a good extension agent as follows: communication balance, social interaction, cultural balance, knowledge of the extension work and abiding by the government policy. With this kind of agricultural extension agent, as explained by Agbamu (2005) and Erabor (2003), a good relationship is established between the two, i.e. the extension worker and the farmers. This is because the five qualities mentioned reflect good behaviors that should be acquired and exhibited by an extension worker in the course of task performance. It is this relationship that this study intended to explore with regard to farmers in Kura Local Government Area, Kano state.

Statement of the Problem

Agricultural extension services are ways of providing services to farmers about agriculture with a view to improving agricultural activities. Agricultural extension workers are the key variable in providing agricultural extension services. Therefore if agricultural extension services are to be taken to the farmers and get them satisfied, the relationship between farmers and agricultural extension workers has to be good and viable. It is on this light this study looks into the relationship between behaviour of agricultural extension workers and farmers' satisfaction with extension services in Kura Local Government Area.

Despite the effort made by the government and the private organization to improve the general welfare of farmers and public in the country more particular in Kura Local Government Area what has been achieved is not up to standard because farmers are still not fully aware of extension services. Farmers are having risk of production inefficiency and market deficiency because government authorities are no longer fully participating in farmers' production or purchasing their produce, which result in loss at end the of the growing season, result to undermining farmers efforts to agriculture. Meanwhile, shortage of extension agent and problem of inexperience and incompetent agent is another problem resulting to back-drop of farming in Kura Local Government Area. Moreover, the motivation behind the selection of this topic is also based on the researches conducted by scholars for example, Musa (2008) found out that extension services have the following problems: inadequate number of extension agents,

insufficient number of extension contact, and high cost of registration fees for farmers' organization, low quality extension service delivery and inadequate incentive to farmers.

In a related development, Haruna (2007) affirmed that incompatibility of some of the innovations with existing farmers practices, financial constraints, inadequate input facilities, lack of adequate support from ADP, transportation problems, poor extension agent welfare, lack of incentives for extension workers, delay in solving urgent farmers problems and slow rate of extension agent, promotion are the problems of agricultural extension services. Based on the aforementioned findings, the researcher intends to investigate on the relationship between behavior of the agricultural extension workers and farmers satisfaction with the extension services in Kura Local Government, Kano State.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to explore the relationship between behavior of Agricultural Extension Workers and farmers' satisfaction with Extension Services in Kura Local Government Area, Kano State, Nigeria, the specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the attitude of extension staff towards agricultural extension work, in Kura local Government Area
2. Examine the nature of the relationship between farmers and agricultural extension staff in Kura local Government Area
3. Examine the scope of farmers' satisfaction with services provided by extension workers, in Kura local Government Area
4. Determine the challenges affecting effective relationship between farmers and agricultural extension staff, in Kura Local Government Area.

Review of Related Literature

Extension education is an applied behavioral science, the knowledge of which is applied to bring about desirable changes in the behavioral complex of human beings usually through various strategies and programmes of change and by applying the latest scientific and technological innovations.

Extension education has now developed as a full-fledged discipline, having its own philosophy, objectives, principles, methods and techniques which must be understood by every extension worker and others connected with the rural development. It might be mentioned here that extension education, its principles, methods and techniques are applicable not only to agriculture but also to veterinary and animal husbandry, dairying, home science, health, family planning, etc. Based upon its application and use, various nomenclatures have been given to it, such as agriculture extension, veterinary and animal husbandry extension, dairy extension, home science extension, public health extension, and family planning extension (Krishiworl, 2010).

According to Mundi (2006), agricultural extension in Nigeria has a long history, which dates back to 1893. To a layman, extension simply means 'something extended or projected'. But to a

professional the real meaning of extension must go deeper. Extension education is a voluntary out – of – school educational programme for children and adults. It employs the principles of teaching and learning that affect changes in the life of children, their parents and farmers; it is generally carried out in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect between agricultural extension workers and their clientele (farmers).

It is a two – way communication process in which the extension agent carries the information from research to the farmers and the farmers’ problem are brought back to research by the extension agents. According to Van den Ban and Hawkins (1996), agriculture extension is a public service for HRD of workers in agribusiness sector, including farmers. However, the function of agricultural extension is not only seen as vehicle for spreading scientific and technical progress and technology transfer. The agricultural extension, therefore, is a broader concept which emphasized implementation of projects, delivery of knowledge and information. The system is also an avenue for mutual interaction and opportunity that help people to develop solutions to their problems. Extension then is much related to a leadership function in the community. So, an extension worker is not simply seen as a technical innovation motivator, but is gone beyond a human resource development leader to help in institution building and mobilization of resources in the community.

Methodology

Kura Local Government Area (Kura LGA) is one of the 44 local governments of Kano state. That its people engage in rainy season farming and irrigation farming for agricultural purpose. Some of the crops that are harvested there include: sorghum, millet, rice, vegetables, to mention but a few. Kura Local Government Area has an area of 206 Km² and a population of 143,094 (Male 76,921, Female 66,173) according to 2006 population census. The administrative capital of Kura LGA is Kura and its postal code is 711 (National population commission (NPC, 2006). The study area (Kura LGA) has been chosen because the area is one of the areas that agriculture is the most significant factor of the economy in Kano state. Farming activities are carried throughout the year, i.e. both irrigation and rainy season farming are done in the area, not only during rainy season, and therefore, agricultural extension has to be considered with regards to the area.

This research adopted the survey design. The population of the study included the population of farmers and extension workers living in Kura Local Government Area that numbered 2567 registered and 8 qualified respectively. (KNARDA, 2020). The sample of the research was made to be 80 that is larger than the initial 30 as explained by the literature (Cohen et al , 2002). Kura Local Government Area has 10 political wards; stratified sampling was used in selecting six wards out of the ten political wards. In each ward 12 respondents were selected using simple random sampling techniques, thus, a total of 72 respondents from the sample frame with reference to 8 extension workers were used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Opinion of farmers on the attitude of the extension workers towards Agricultural extension exercise

S/N	Tested Items	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Dedication to duty	66	94%
2.	Friendly language in communication with the farmers	55	78.8%
3.	Positive manners	56	80%
4.	Punctuality to duty	48	68.6%

**Source: field survey; 2020*

***multiple responses exist hence > 72*

Table 1 shows farmers' perception of attitude of the extension staff towards their works. It was found that dedication to work is 94%; friendly language 78%; positive manners of approach 80% and punctuality 68.6%. The attitude of the Agricultural Extension Workers towards Agricultural Extension Exercise involves dedication to duty, friendly language in communication with the farmers, positive manners and punctuality to duty.

The attitude of the extension staff in Kura Local Government Area is replanted in dedication to duty, friendly language in communication with the farmers, positive manners and punctuality to duty. Therefore the perception of the Extension workers of their work sound positive hence, the relationship between the Extension workers and farmers would be good and this indicates that the attitude of extension workers influences the relationship. The reason for that is dedication to duty, friendly language, positive manners, and punctuality to duty shows good disposition from the extension workers, that would make the feelings of the farmers to be good.

Table 2: Farmers' perception of the nature of the relationship between farmers and the extension staff

S/ N	Tested Item	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Extension workers Farm visit	22	27.5%
2.	Response to request and inquiries by the farmers	26	32.5%
3.	Friendliness to the farmers	32	40%

**Source: field survey; 2020*

***multiple responses exist hence > 72*

Table 2 shows the nature of relationship between the farmers and the Agricultural extension staff based on farmers' perception. It was found that farm visit is 27.5%, response to request and inquiries by farmers 32.5% and friendliness to the farmers taken 40. The nature of the relationship between the farmers and the Agricultural Extension Workers was based on Extension Workers farm visit, response to request and enquiries by the farmers and friendless to the farmers. The nature of relationship between the farmers and extension staff is inhibited by some other issues as indicated by the findings, this is in such a way that the responses made by farmers indicated that the extension staff do not pay visit to their farms, respond to their enquiries as expected and are not friendly to some extent. As a result this implication, extension workers need to improve upon these issues.

Table 3: Scope of the farmers' satisfaction with extension services provided by the extension workers

S/N	Tested Items	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Extension services help to boost production	52	74.3%
2.	Extension services provide more knowledge on farming	57	81.4%
3.	Extension services ensure good advice to the farmers	39	55.7%
4.	Extension services provide new technology	65	92.9%
5.	The Farmers think the extension workers have good knowledge of their work and services	62	88.6%
6.	The Farmers appreciate efforts of the extension workers in their farming progress	63	90%

*Source: field survey; 2020

**multiple responses exist hence > 72

Table 3 shows the various areas where the farmers show satisfaction with services provided by the extension workers as follows; boost in production (74.3%), gain more knowledge of farming (81.4%); good advise (55.7%), new farming technologies (92.9%) enough knowledge of work and services (88.6%), and effort appreciation (90%). The scope of the farmers' satisfaction with services provided by the extension workers covers the help that extension services give to boost agricultural production, extension services provide more knowledge of farming, extension services ensure good advice to farmers, extension services provide new technology, the farmers think the extension workers have good knowledge of their work and services, the farmers appreciate efforts of the extension workers in farming progress.

The scope of farmers' satisfaction with services provided by extension workers is as wide as it covers helps to boost production, provide more knowledge of farming, ensure good advice to the farmers, and provide new technology. The farmers as well think the Extension workers have good knowledge of their work and services and the farmers' appreciate the effort of the extension works farming progress, and this in line with Agbamu (2005) and Madukwe (2006).

Table 4: (a.) challenges affecting relationship between the farmers and the extension staff in Kura Local Government Area.

S/ N	Tested Item	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Staff in adequacy	44	62.9%
2a.	Over-work	7	10%
b.	Loss of interest	8	11.4%
c.	Slow process	8	11.4%
d.	A, B and C	47	67.1%
3.	Language barrier	63	90%
4.	Lack of contact	64	91%
5	Social and cultural background	56	80%

**Source: field survey; 2020*

***multiple responses exist hence > 72*

Table 4: (a) result shows that challenges affecting relationship between the farmers and the extension staff in Kura Local Government Area involves staff inadequacy (62.9%) and in the following ways: Over-work (10%) Discourage of interest (11.4 %,) slow processes (11.4%) A, B and C (67.1 %) Language barriers (90 %,) lack of contact 91% and social or cultural background (80%) are also challenges.

Table 4: (b) suggestions for improving effective relationship

S/N	Tested Item	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Provision of enough staff	60	85.7%
2.	Provision of accommodation	55	78.6%
3.	Reciprocal visits	58	82.9%
4.	Forums for the farmers and the extension workers	53	75.7%
5.	Any other suggestion	Nil	Nil

**Source: field survey; 2020*

***multiple responses exist hence > 72*

Table 4 (b): The following suggestions have been found with regard to suggestion for improving effective relationship from the responses as shown in the table above. Provision of accommodation (85.7%), reciprocal visit (82.9%), and forums for the farmers and the extension workers (75.7%). Any other suggestion (0%).

The challenges affecting relationship between the farmers and the extension staff in Kura Local Government Area: Staff inadequacy, over burdening, ruining of interest, delay in the process, language barriers, lack of contact and social and cultural background. It is discovered that the relationship between the farmers and extension staff in Kura Local Government Area was faced with some challenges. The challenges included staff inadequacy, over work, discouraging of interest and slow process. These challenges could negatively affect zeal of the Extension Staff. This is because if the Extension Staff are inadequate, the Extension staffs schedule of duty would be overworked and this results in reduction of interest in the job and slow in the process. As a result of this circumstance the Extension Staff are de-motivated thus, the relationship between the Extension Staff and the farmers becomes sour. And this is as explained by Adeloje (2002) with regards to motivation. The relationship is affected by the challenges of staff inadequacy, over work, loss of interest and slow process. These challenges could affect negatively the motivation of the Extension Staff and motivation matters in the issue of relationship. This is as explained by Adeloje (2002).

Result: - Interview schedule for the agricultural extension workers: results and discussion.

An interview schedule was conducted with some extension staff on some relevant issues to the research problem. The results are as presented below:-

The Extension staff in Kura Local Government Area responded to the interview questions on the tested variables mentioned in the tables above. On the attitudes of the extension staffs, improvisation, adoption of innovation, dedication and good approach were mentioned as the

attitudes. Bad attitudes are developed in the extension workers by lack of motivation from government, lack of job skills and lack of job facilities as explained by the respondents. The Farmers – extension workers relationship is made good or bad by manners of approach, good information for farmers, good supply of inputs, and respect for culture. The following have been mentioned to be the more satisfying services to the farmers among the extension services by the respondents, Provision of input and fertilizer.

The respondents, just as the extension staff said, the service performed well by an extension worker was providing information on agriculture. Based on the findings in the table above, increase in yield, new farming techniques and good manners of approach were believed to be the reasons for the farmers' satisfaction with the extension services in Kura Local Government Area.

There were problems affecting the farmers – extension worker relationship and course were according to the responses of the extension workers as follows: inadequate input supply, bad orientation, lack of trust and lack of self – confidence. According to the respondents, there was a link between what the extension worker does and the farmers' satisfaction. The link lies in giving the farmers current information on farming.

Conclusion

Therefore, going with what has been discussed about the Relationship between Behavior of the Agricultural Extension Workers and farmers' Satisfaction with Extension Services in Kura Local Government Area, Kano State, Nigeria in this paper, it shows how can help extension workers in addressing the issues of their challenges. This would opportune the extension workers the practical and physical knowledge and experience of the farmers and their farming activities for corrections and recommendations. And in addition so that the relationship between the farmers and the extension workers is made respectful and more intimate.

Recommendations

Going with the findings of the study, the following recommendation have been made:

1. The attitude of extension workers should be maintained and promoted by the relevant means possible like giving the extension staff an incentive like letter of recommendation and bonuses
2. Extension staff should be oriented on paying visit to farmers, responding to the requests and enquiries by the farmers and friendliness to the farmers.
3. The relationship between the farmers and the extension workers is made respectful and more intimate.
4. Language barriers should also be given much concern in order to enhance quality extension service vis-à-vis sustained farmers' production.

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