

Chapter 21

Determinants of Farmer Participation in Private and Public Extension Organizations in Southwestern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

*This study was designed to analyze the participation of farmers in the public and private extension organizations in Nigeria. Multi-stage random sampling methods was used in selection of 30 beneficiaries from ADP, FADU, and JDPM-RUDEP in three states from Nigeria. Questionnaires were used to collect data and analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics. Kruskal Wallis test of difference ($X^2 = 0.79$, *assymp. Sig* of 0.72) shows that beneficiaries' participation in the extension services of public and private organizations was not different but correlation results indicated association between farmers' participation in public ($r = 0.279$, $p < 0.10$) and FADU ($r = 0.790$, $p < 0.10$) and benefits derived. It was concluded that farmers' participation in the study organizations were not significantly different, but was associated with benefits from some organizations. Benefit-oriented extension programmes are recommended for extension organizations in order to benefit the participants in their specific needs.*

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INTRODUCTION

The inefficient administration of public sector extension was the reason for its inability to guarantee the expected development of Agriculture and rural areas in Nigeria. Though a total overhauling of national agricultural support systems has been advocated as a strategy for increasing agricultural production in sub-Saharan Africa. Agricultural extension is a system working through the principles of education to improve the capacity of farm families and empower them to be adequately resilient to any prevailing problem. The system in the past had been severally attacked for not being relevant, insufficient impact, ineffective, inefficient and sometimes not pursuing programmes that foster equity (Williams and Qamar, 2003). But with a turning point which affected the manner in which information is transferred, considered the responsibilities of public sector extension was evolved and practiced. Not only did the Public Extension system come under Public Scrutiny and Political attack, but was faced by high competitive interests from the private sectors. Agricultural extension practiced by the public is described as the extension activities put in place by government under the control of Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) in all states to cater for the needs of farmers. Agricultural Extension is expected to foster sustainable and dynamic approach to agricultural development and which has remained of great concern to the government and priority for discourse in policy arena (Agwu, et al, 2008).

It is the consideration of this responsibility that has made the past government in Nigeria making policies to raise productivity and living standard of the rural populations. The country has therefore, over the years, tried many Agricultural Extension System to improve agricultural production. Examples were RBDA (River Basin Development Authority), OFN (Operation Feed the Nation), DFRRRI (Directorate of Food Road, and Rural Infrastructure) among others. Many of these development programmes are agricultural focused. While others were non-Agricultural. These programmes were put in place with the plan to improve the living standard of rural people as well as boosting their share of Gross Domestic Product. Despite these efforts, many studies have continued to indicate the inadequacy and ineffectiveness of some of these development programmes (Ayansina, 2011).

Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) was established in 1975, though at a pilot level to improve agricultural development and living standard of the farm population. ADP was put in place to accelerate a complete development in the Agricultural sector. At the period of its establishment, farmers' hope were raised in reflection of their genuine commitment to reduce the social political and economic problem that stagnated theory in cycle of poverty (Akinbode, 1989). Agricultural Development Programme in all states of Nigeria practiced the system of "Training and Visit" (T&V) extension system in order to boost production, solve the prevailing extension problem such as administrative bottleneck and bureaucracy, limited number of extension officials and faulty policy formation. The Training and Visit extension system as written by Bennon, et al, (1984) is an extension system requires training of the extension officers during the Fortnight Meetings (FNT) and in Monthly Technological Review Meetings (MTRM) on the specific agricultural practices and visiting of the farmers on their farms and homes for onward transferring of the idea, knowledge needed within a specified frame of time. Training and visit extension system as put in place features professionalism, single line of command; time bound work, concentration of effort, regular and continuous training, farm and field orientation and regular extension linkage among others.

Furthermore, because of the huge cost of input provision, administrative failure, inadequate formation and implementation of programmes and failure to solve specific challenges linked to public extension in Nigeria and have led to patronage of private extension sector. Therefore, the more involvement of

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