

Level of Respondents' Awareness about Extension Activities in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria

Alarape A. B¹, Adedokun S. A², Sulaiman O. N³, Olunloyo A. A⁴, Ogunsola J. O⁵

^{1,2}Department of Basic Science and General Studies, Federal College of Forestry, P.M.B 5087, Jericho, Ibadan, Nigeria.

³Department of Forestry Technology, Federal College of Forestry, P.M.B 5087, Jericho, Ibadan, Nigeria.

⁴Department of Agricultural Technology, Federal College of Forestry, P.M.B 5087, Jericho, Ibadan, Nigeria.

⁵Department of Agricultural Extension and Management, Federal College of Forestry, P.M.B 5087, Jericho, Ibadan, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

The study was carried out to assess the extension education needs of crop farmers in Ido local government area of Oyo state. The data were collected using multi-stage techniques to select the sample size of 145 respondents. It assessed the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, their level of awareness in the study area. The data were subjected to descriptive (percentage, frequency and mean) and inferential (chi-square and correlation) statistics. The study showed that most (66.2%) of the respondents were male whose ages range between 30 and 50 years. also, majority (77.9%) were married with household size of between 5-14. Additionally, 50.3% of the respondents were illiterates with years of farming experience of 5 years and above, 50.4% have farm size of above 15 acres of land. The result showed a low respondents' level of awareness about extension activities in the study area. It is therefore recommended that farmers adult literacy education programmes should be organize to help the farmers.

Keywords : Extension, Socio-Economic, Illiterates, Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Extension is a service or system which assists farm people, through educational procedures, in improving farming methods and techniques, increasing production efficiency and income, bettering their standard of living and lifting social and educational standards. Agricultural extension can be defined as an advice and assistance given to the farmers and his families through educational procedures on new farming methods and techniques in order to improve their production efficiency and social standard of the farmers. Ozowa (2011) reported that education is an

essential element in agricultural development programs but the education provided is influenced by policy makers, researchers, and those who manage policy decisions with little consideration given to the education peculiarities of those for who the education was meant. Chah *et al.* (2013) therefore opined that agricultural development programs approaches will be workable if agricultural education dissemination and management is premised on understanding of what farmers' information needs.

Over the years, our rural crop farmers depend on indigenous or local knowledge for improved farming

system. Such knowledge refers to skill and experience gained through oral tradition and practice over many generations. Yet this improvement has not been encouraging due to lack of new innovations which supposed to be handled by agricultural extension education.

Although rural farmers are actively involved in the process of food production, processing and marketing but social and economic constraints have placed barriers around their access to scientific and technological education. (Daman, 1997). African farmers labour without crucial support that could raise their agricultural productivity. Scarce inputs like credit, improved seeds, among others rarely flow to farmers in the African country side.

Ozowa (2011) reported that education is an essential element in agricultural development programs but the education provided is influenced by policy makers, researchers, and those who manage policy decisions with little consideration given to the education peculiarities of those for who the education was meant. Chah ,*et al.* (2013) therefore opined that agricultural development programs approaches will be workable if agricultural education dissemination and management is premised on understanding of what farmers' information needs are. The information needed differs among categories of farmers and can be based on specifics that delineate these group of farmers, for example, land tenure, farm size or agro-climatic region (Rivera, 1996). Swanson (2008) submitted that apart from varied education required by different farmers and the different education source available to them, farmers' literacy level and resources accessibility, impacts on education needs, searching behavior, access and use of information by farmers. Oladele (2010) reported that farmers in significant determinants of education seeking by farmers in Lagos and Ogun States, Nigeria on seeds and planting materials were age, educational level, farming experience, family size, credibility of source

of education, language of instruction, and organization membership.

Therefore, this paper deals with education needs of crop farmers. Generally, needs assessment is the study of the differences between the current situation and the desired situation. Furthermore, "educational needs" means desirable changes that should take place in knowledge, skills, and behaviors of individuals so that they could be able to do their duties and responsibilities pertaining to their jobs acceptably, desirably, and according to the standards so as to determine the level of respondents' awareness about extension activities in the study area.

II. METHODS AND MATERIAL

Methodology

Area of the study

The study was carried out in rural farming community of Ido Local Government Area in Oyo State. It is located between latitude 6°45N and 9°41N and longitude 2°30E and 5°15E. The local government has a population of about 103,261 people (NPC 2006). It occupies a land mass of 865,49km² with about 57% of the total land used for agricultural purposes (NPC, 2006), it is bounded along the sides of Akinyele, Oluyole, Ibarapa Local Government areas of Oyo State and Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State. The people are predominantly farmers and farming is accountable for about 63% of total economic status in the local government area. The fertile land supports the growth of arable and cash crops.

Study population

The population of this study is the crop farmers in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Data collection

Data were collected through interview with the aid of well-structured questionnaire.

Sampling procedure and sampling techniques

A multistage sampling technique was used to carry out the study.

The following steps were taken:

Stage 1: Ido local government was purposively selected based on the higher concentration of crop farmers in the local government.

Stage 2: Identification of wards in Ido Local Government Area with their respective villages.

WARD 1 Aba Eemo, Alako, Ilaju, Apata, Eboade

WARD 2 Akinware, Akindele, Idowu, OmuAran, Tola

WARD 3 Akufo, Adegbolu, Araromi, Abegunrin, Idigba.

WARD 4 Apete, Ayegun, Awotan

Ward 5 Batake, Idiya, Ajeerun, Ladunni.

WARD 6 Erinwusi, Koguo, Odetola.

Ward 7 Fenwa, Oganla, Elenusonso

WARD 8 Ido, Onikede, Okun-awo

WARD 9 Ogundele, Alaho, Siba, Adi-ahun.

Ward 10 Omi-Adio, Omi- Onigbagbo, Bakatari.

Three wards were selected out of the ten(10) wards

Stage 3: Random selection of villages in the selected wards. Two villages were randomly selected from each ward

Fourth stage: Random sampling techniques was used

At Idiya, 50 respondents were selected out of 500 crop farmers.

At Ajeerun, 25 respondents were selected out of 250 crop farmers.

At Omu-aran, 14 respondents were selected out of 140 crop farmers.

At Adetola, 45 respondents were selected out of 450 crop farmers.

At Adegbolu, 8 respondents were selected out of 80 crop farmers.

At Abegunrin, 3 respondents were selected out of 30 crop farmers.

Therefore, Total number of 145 questionnaires was administered

Table 1a : Socio Economic Characteristics of Respondents N=145

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 96 | 66.2 |
| Female | 49 | 33.8 |
| Total | 145 | 100.0 |
| Age | | |
| Less than 20 | 5 | 3.4 |
| 20-29 | 13 | 9.0 |
| 30-39 | 40 | 27.6 |
| 40-49 | 35 | 24.1 |
| 50-59 | 26 | 17.9 |
| 60 and above | 26 | 17.9 |
| Total | 145 | 100.0 |
| Marital status | | |
| Single | 23 | 15.9 |
| Married | 113 | 77.9 |
| Widowed | 9 | 6.2 |
| Total | 145 | 100.0 |
| Religion | | |
| Christianity | 99 | 68.3 |
| Islam | 46 | 31.7 |
| Total | 145 | 100.0 |
| Household size | | |
| Less than 5 | 30 | 20.7 |
| 5-9 | 94 | 64.8 |
| 10-14 | 18 | 12.4 |
| 15-19 | 2 | 1.4 |
| Greater than 19 | 1 | 0.7 |
| Total | 145 | 100.0 |
| Educational status | | |
| No formal education | 73 | 50.3 |
| Primary education | 40 | 27.6 |
| Secondary education | 27 | 18.6 |
| Tertiary education | 5 | 3.4 |
| Total | 145 | 100.0 |

Table 1b : Socio economic characteristics continued

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
|----------|-----------|------------|

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

| Years of experience | | |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Below 5 | 24 | 16.6 |
| 5-9 | 50 | 34.5 |
| 10-14 | 16 | 11.0 |
| 15-19 | 8 | 5.5 |
| Above 20 | 47 | 32.4 |
| Total | 145 | 100.0 |
| Farm size(in acres) | | |
| Between 1-5 | 8 | 5.5 |
| Between 6-10 | 48 | 33.1 |
| Between 11-15 | 16 | 11.0 |
| Greater than 15 | 73 | 50.4 |
| Total | 145 | 100.0 |

Source: field survey, 2015

Table 1a showed that about 66.2% of the respondents were males while 33.8% were female. The results inferred that agricultural production were male dominated. This was supported by Babu (2012) that more men are engaged in agriculture than women.

Also, about 75% of the respondents were between the ages of 30-59 years. It inferred that most of the farmers were in their active years. Thus majority of the sampled farmers were middle aged which could result in a positive effect on their production. This contradicts the proposition of Madhur (2000) who said that older people of old age are more into farming than younger people in Africa.

The result also indicated that majority (77.9%) of the respondents were married. This showed that respondents in the study area will have additional responsibility to their family. The result further show that 64.8 percent of the respondents had household size of 5-9 persons living in their house. The household size may be as a result of the need for farm labour. This large family size can serve as sources of free and cheap labour. Time is focused around production, management, or marketing efforts, with much of the labor coming from within the household itself according to Cantor and Strochlic 2009.

Moreover, the results further showed that only 50.3% had no formal education. In essence 49.7% of the respondents had one form of education or the other. This could enhance adoption of improve crop production technologies through extension activities in the study area as education has a positive influence on awareness, ability to access agricultural information and adoption of agricultural innovations. Education also opens windows of giving out experiences, best practices, sources of financial aids and new markets. By the same token, Education enables farmers to make informed decisions regarding production and marketing and managing their lives successfully to cope with everyday problems and to realize their opportunities according to Swanson, 2008.

In terms of farming experience, about 34.5% of the farmers had farming experience of between 5 – 9 years followed by 32.5% of respondents with farming experience of above 20 years. This could be explained that farmers who have long years of farming experience have high adoption rate, have the capacity to overcome their production constraints and advantage for increase in productivity. This is also in line with what Ogboma (2010) said that the sources of information used by crop farmers were personal experience, workshops and Seminars, Ministry of agriculture, magazines of agriculture, extension officers, local Government officers, non-Government organization, libraries of agriculture and posters.

Also, 61.4% of the respondents had farm size of between 11 acres of farmland and above . This implies that the respondents were medium scale but commercial farmers producing on a which indicate that they will be receptive to any extension educational activities that could be brought to them in order to improve and increase their productivity. This is in line with Riesenber and Gor (1999), which found that small and marginal farmers accessed less information and from fewer sources than medium and large Scale farmers. It also shows that 68.3 % of

the respondents believed in Islam and 31.7%of the respondents are Christians. Various religious categories are represented in the study.

TABLE 2 : AWARENESS OF RESPONDENTS ABOUT EXTENSION ACTIVITIES IN THE STUDY AREA

| AWARENESS | SA | A | SD | D | U | MEAN(X) |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| Provision of extension education to farmers is regular and timely | 30(20.7) | 76(52.4) | 11(7.6) | 23(15.9) | 5(3.4) | 2.29 |
| Feedback from extension agents to farmers is always prompt | 22(15.2) | 74(51.0) | 13(9.0) | 31(21.4) | 5(3.4) | 2.47 |
| Teaching on the use of farm implements is very useful | 27(18.6) | 88(60.7) | 11(7.6) | 15(10.3) | 4(2.8) | 2.18 |
| Extension agents always give advice on agricultural problems | 30(20.7) | 83(57.2) | 10(6.9) | 17(11.7) | 5(3.4) | 2.20 |
| Training and visit by extension agent is regular and constant | 21(14.5) | 52(35.9) | 25(17.2) | 40(27.6) | 7(4.8) | 2.72 |
| Demonstration plots are located in your village and accessible to all | 2(1.4) | 8(5.5) | 73(50.3) | 36(24.8) | 26(17.9) | 3.52 |
| Provision of farm input supply to farmers is regular and timely | 13(9.0) | 57(39.3) | 27(18.6) | 32(22.1) | 16(11.0) | 2.87 |
| Extension agents organizes family health education | 18(12.4) | 46(31.7) | 27(18.6) | 30(20.7) | 24(16.6) | 2.97 |
| Extension agents normally fix field trip days for farmers | 1(0.7) | 8(5.5) | 57(39.3) | 41(28.3) | 38(26.2) | 3.74 |
| Extension agents normally exhibit agricultural shows | 4(2.8) | 8(5.5) | 58(40.0) | 35(24.1) | 40(27.6) | 3.68 |

Source : field survey,2015 NB : Percentage in parenthesis

SA=strongly agree, A=agree, SD=strongly disagree, U=undecided

Table 2 presented the level of awareness of respondents about extension activities and as Zijp and Byerlee,(2001) puts it that extension programmes failed in the 60s,70s and 80s due to poor awareness on the part of the people for which it is meant for, for this led to misconception and subsequently its failure. But it was repackaged with reasonable awareness inculcated into it, it begins to gain popularity and this is reflected in the table above. Majority of the respondents (73.1%) aware that the provision of

extension information to farmers is regular and timely.66.2% of them agreed that feedback from extension agent to farmers is always prompt.79.3% also agreed that teaching on the use of farm implement is very useful. Also,77.9% of the respondents agreed that extension agent give advice on agricultural problems. While majority of the respondents disagreed on the extension activities of demonstration plots, provision of farm input, family health education, field trip days for farmers and exhibition of agricultural shows. All these are in line with the study of Rivera, 1996 who said that with strict implementation, dissemination and interpretation of research studies, extension service

will enhance agricultural development and agricultural production performance.

This means that further extension programmes are needed to be done in the area to increase the level of awareness of extension activities as forerunner and foundation for extension education. And that Extension education programmes should be conducted on a regular basis to upgrade the knowledge and the skills of the farmers in their areas.

Table 3 : Level of awareness of respondents about extension activities

| LEVEL | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE | MEAN(X) |
|-------|-----------|------------|---------|
| Low | 77 | 53.1 | |
| High | 68 | 46.9 | 1.47 |
| Total | 145 | 100.0 | |

Source: field survey, 2015

The level of awareness of respondents about extension activities is moderately low due to the fact that majority of the mean level of respondents is below the mean value.it shows that the awareness level is low at 53.1% and 46.9% only believed that the awareness level about extension is high.

IV.CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study revealed that majority of the respondents were male while about 75% of the respondents were between the ages of 30-59 years. It inferred that most of the farmers were in their active years. It was further revealed that the level of awareness of respondents about extension activities is moderately low due to the fact that majority of the respondents had no formal education. It is therefore recommended that farmers adult literacy education programmes should be organize to help the farmers acquire basic skills and abilities to seek and receive needed agricultural education through modern communication channels.

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