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Research Article

Assessment of the Organizational Efficiency of Imo State Agricultural Development Programme

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ABSTRACT

The study was on the assessment of the Organizational efficiency of Imo State Agricultural Development Programme as perceived by extension administrators and extension agents. Data were collected using structured questionnaire from 120 respondents (20 extension administrators and 100 extension agents) selected through multistage sampling technique. Descriptive statistics, mean score and ranking order were adopted for data analysis. Results showed that the Imo State Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) extension services was efficient ($\bar{X}$=3.12) in managing available resources towards the attainment of organizational objectives as perceived by both extension administrators and extension agents. The study hence recommends need for sustainability, for this could be achieved through having simple chain of command in organizational structure which clearly defines roles and functions of personnel and work policies which should be gender sensitive.

Key words: Agricultural Development Programme, Imo State, Organizational Efficiency

INTRODUCTION

The importance of bringing together materials and human resources and channeling them towards meeting set organizational goals cannot be over stressed. The achievement of goals by an organization depends on the structure and its efficiency (Duru, 2015). The Imo State Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) has extension unit charged with the responsibility of delivering extension services to the target audience (famers). The effectiveness of this unit in carrying out this vital function depends on the nature and efficiency of the entire organization.

In the ADP hierarchy, the programme manager is the chief extension administrator who coordinates other administrators in the headquarters, zonal and block levels. The director of extension (DES) is directly responsible for management of day-to-day extension activities in the state and assisted by two deputies (Deputy director of Extension, Head, Women in Agriculture). They constitute the top administrative staff in extension service system (Jobowo, 2005). The state ADP was structured into other administrative units (zones, blocks and circles).

The failure of several developmental efforts to stimulate agricultural growth through extension service is largely attributed to the persisting weakness of the extension organization (Duru, 2015). Madukwe (2005) essentially identified among other problem in administering extension services in Nigeria to include inefficient extension organization with too many lines of authority. According to Okoroma and Anaeto (2013), extension organizational efficiency speaks volume about the effectiveness of those administering the organization. Efficiency of any organization like that of extension is judged based on the utilization of both human and material resources available, and a more representative judgement lies in the average perception of the administrators and extension agents on how ADP of the state utilize both human and material resources available.

Some authors conceive organizational efficiency as strictly confined to the achievement of organizational objectives. Others view it as a totality of organizational goodness. Riggs (1992), conceives efficiency in terms of achievement of organizational objectives. He further defined efficiency as the extent to which a given objective is carried out. Etzioni (1999), states that efficiency of a specific organization is determined by the degree to which it realizes its goals. Kate and Kahn (1990), on their own see the concept of efficiency as a sum total of organizational goodness which connotes elements like

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effectiveness, profitability and productivity. The organisational efficiency takes into measure all aspects of extension performance ranging from structural organisational set up, performed functions to expected outcome of extension services.

In view of the nature, success/failure, outcome and quality of extension delivery in farming communities today, there is doubt if Imo State ADP extension organisation is efficient. This is because its efficiency is expected to impact positively in our farming communities. It is against this background that this study specifically determined the organisational efficiency of Imo State ADP as perceived by both Extension Agents and Administrators.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Imo State of Nigeria. Imo State is located in the South Eastern agricultural zone of Nigeria and lies between latitudes 4^0 45´N and 7^0 15´N and longitude 6^0 50´E with land area of 5,530 Km^2 and with a population of 3,934, 899 (NPC, 2006 and NBS, 2007). The state has three agricultural zones (Orlu, Owerri, Okigwe) with an average annual temperature of 28%, average annual relative humidity of 80%, average annual rainfall of 1800-2500mm and an altitude of about 100m above sea level (Imo ADP, 2004; Microsoft cooperation, 2009). Extension activities in the state are undertaken by Imo State ADP with agricultural zonal setup in Owerri, Orlu and Okigwe demarcated into 39 blocks and 326 circles for effective extension activity.

Multi-stage sampling was used in selecting the sample for the study. The first stage involved the stratification of extension personnel in Imo ADP into State headquarters, zones, blocks and circles based on their location of service. Based on the result of the reconnaissance survey, the second stage involved the purposive selection of all the personnel (5) at the state headquarters due to their small distribution and desirable attributes. In the third stage, 15 administrators at the zones and block levels were purposively selected to cover all the cadre of administrators in each location. The fourth stage involved the proportionate sampling of extension agents in the 3 zones in the ratio of 3:1:1.

Both primary and secondary data were collected for the study. Primary data were obtained using two sets of structured questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and mean score analysis. The mean score computation was achieved using the formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where:

$\bar{X}$ = the value by which the organizational efficiency of Imo ADP extension service is to be judged.

$\sum x$ = Sum of the various indices of organizational efficiency

N = Sample size

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 results showed that an average extension administrator perceived Imo ADP extension organization as being efficient ($\bar{X}$=3.5) in delivering extension services and achieving its organizational objectives. Precisely, it could be seen that out of 26 organizational efficiency index used for the study, the Imo ADP extension organization was perceived efficient in 19 by the administrators. This results portray Imo ADP organization as one which utilizes minimum inputs such as fewer extension personnel and supporting materials to produce huge results (such as increased productivity of the farmer, improved livelihood of the farmer, increased adoption of technologies, increased credibility of extension personnel, etc). The outcome is probably due to the way administrative functions are jointly carried out by administrators and those providing complementary management services. This kind of atmosphere begets a situation where extension personnel become multitasking. That is a situation where personnel of different cadres are acquainted through coaching and trial with multiple tasks, regardless of their cadre/job description. Thus, it is easier for one staff to effectively hold brief for another or perform the latter's role in his/her absence. Of course, where 10 extension personnel learn to perform the job of 100 personnel through multitasking, operating cost is bound to fall while maintaining the same result. For instance, the results show that 20 personnel administer extension services in Imo ADP, when in reality the organization has only 11 extension administrators. The State government in this kind of situation is likely not going to employ more administrators since at the end of the day the expected output is met. Okoroma and Anaeto (2013) in their study found the organizational setup of Imo ADP, which allows for multitasking and task overlap as a significant contributor to its organizational efficiency.

The results in Table 2 showed that the average extension personnel perceived Imo ADP extension organization as being efficient ($\bar{X}$=3.0) in providing extension services and achieving its organizational objectives. Unlike the administrators, Imo ADP extension organization was perceived efficient by the respondents in 14 organizational efficiency indices out of 26 index points used for the study. The essence of comparing the perception of the administrators and other extension personnel on Imo ADP organizational efficiency was to draw a balanced conclusion on the issue. According to Kuchnike *et al.* (2008), it is important because lack of input from other appraisers can be a weakness in extension appraisal system. Hence, it could be concluded based on their average perceptions that Imo ADP extension organization was efficient.

Results as shown in Table 3 gave a summary of extension agents and administrators perception about the organizational efficiency of Imo State ADP.

Conclusion

The Imo State ADP is found to be efficient in delivering extension services and achieving organizational objectives as perceived by both extension administrators and extension agents. For sustainability, simple chain of command which clearly defines roles and functions should be adopted to avoid overlapping of duties resulting from poor administrative network. Work policies in the state extension organization should be gender sensitive such that non feels neglected and unduly exploited.

Table 1: Distribution of the organizational efficiency of Imo ADP as perceived by extension administrators

Organizational Efficiency Index	Very efficient	Moderately efficient	Efficient	Poorly efficient	Not efficient	Mean score	Remark
Technical Support Activities							
1. Credit/loan linkage	4.0	10.0	5.0	1.0	0.0	3.9	Efficient
2. Technical assistance	5.0	9.0	4.0	1.0	0.0	3.8	Efficient
3. Input assistance	0.0	5.0	2.0	5.0	8.0	2.2	Not efficient
4. Market assistance	3.0	4.0	1.0	7.0	5.0	2.6	Not efficient
5. Communication of research results	1.0	5.0	5.0	6.0	3.0	2.8	Not efficient
6. Number of farm families per EA	10.0	4.0	4.0	2.0	0.0	4.3	Efficient
Result of Extension activities							
7. Increase in knowledge of farmers	3.0	6.0	5.0	4.0	0.0	3.1	Efficient
8. Change in farming practices/methods	8.0	9.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	Efficient
9. Increase in yield	3.0	6.0	5.0	6.0	0.0	3.3	Efficient
10. Improved processing/storage/marketing	6.0	10.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	Efficient
11. Number of farmers reached out the target number	5.0	12.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	4.4	Efficient
12. No. of farmers adopting Imo ADP recom. practice	12.0	6.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	Efficient
Extension administration							
13. Organizational setup	8.0	10.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	Efficient
14. Performance of extension personnel	4.0	10.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	3.8	Efficient
15. Visit by extension personnel	7.0	9.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	4.2	Efficient
16. Dissemination of research results	5.0	9.0	4.0	1.0	0.0	3.8	Efficient
17. Number of monitoring unit personnel per ten EAs	4.0	6.0	5.0	3.0	2.0	3.4	Efficient
18. Number of male to female extension personnel	14.0	3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	4.6	Efficient
Logistics							
19. Number of cinema/TV shows	0.0	1.0	2.9	10.0	7.0	1.9	Not efficient
20. Budgetary expenditure	2.0	4.0	7.0	5.0	2.0	3.0	Efficient
21. Number of print materials per year	2,0	2.0	4.0	5.0	7.0	2.4	Not efficient
Personnel training/motivation							
22. No. of extension agents trained in specialized training courses per year	0.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	12.0	1.5	Not efficient
23. Number of personnel promoted per year	4.0	5.0	8.0	4.0	0.0	3.4	Efficient
24. Number of graduate extension workers	14.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.7	Efficient
25. Number of SMS per EA Average perception	4.0	6.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	3.5	Efficient

Source: field survey data, 2015 $\geq$ 3.0 (efficient < 3.0 (Not efficient) n = 20

Table 2: Distribution of the organizational efficiency of Imo ADP as perceived by extension agents

Organizational Efficiency Index	Very efficient	Moderately efficient	Efficient	Poorly efficient	Not efficient	Mean score	Remark
Technical Support Activities							
1. Credit/loan linkage	10.0	60.0	15.0	15.0	0.0	3.2	Efficient
2. Technical assistance	15.0	55.0	24.0	10.0	0.0	3.9	Efficient
3. Input assistance	0.0	5.0	12.0	25.0	58.0	1.6	Not Efficient
4. Market assistance	13.0	24.0	1.0	57.0	5.0	2.8	Not Efficient
5. Communication of research results	11.0	15.0	35.0	26.0	13.0	2.9	Not efficient
6. Number of farm families per EA	10.0	24.0	40.0	26.0	0.0	2.9	Not efficient
Result of Extension activities							
7. Increase in knowledge of farmers	13.0	36.0	25.0	26.0	0.0	3.4	Efficient
8. Change in farming practices/methods	18.0	29.0	30.0	28.0	0.0	3.5	Efficient
9. Increase in yield	20.0	26.0	35.0	19.0	0.0	3.2	Efficient
10. Improved processing/storage/marketing	7.0	20.0	34.0	30.0	9.0	2.9	Not efficient
11. Number of farmers reached out the target number	15.0	22.0	35.0	10.0	8.0	2.7	Not efficient
12. No. of farmers adopting Imo ADP recom. practice	22.0	36.0	42.0	0.0	0.0	3.8	Efficient
Extension administration							
13. Organizational setup	18.0	20.0	32.0	30.0	0.0	3.3	Efficient
14. Performance of extension personnel	24.0	30.0	35.0	11.0	0.0	3.4	Efficient
15. Visit by extension personnel	37.0	39.0	24.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	Efficient
16. Dissemination of research results	25.0	39.0	24.0	12.0	0.0	3.8	Efficient
17. Number of monitoring unit personnel per ten EAs	14.0	26.0	35.0	20.0	5.0	2.9	Not Efficient
18. Number of male to female extension personnel	24.0	30.0	30.0	16.0	0.0	3.6	Efficient
logistics							
19. Number of cinema/TV shows	0.0	3.0	12.0	15.0	70.0	1.5	Not Efficient
20. Budgetary expenditure	5.0	10.0	20.0	35.0	20.0	2.2	Not Efficient
21. Number of print materials per year	2,0	12.0	14.0	35.0	37.0	2.1	Not Efficient
Personnel training/motivation							
22. Number of extension agents trained in specialized training courses per year	0.0	11.0	33.0	34.0	22.0	2.3	Not Efficient
23. Number of personnel promoted per year	24.0	25.0	28.0	23.0	0.0	3.1	Efficient
24. Number of graduate extension workers	22.0	38.0	10.0	20.0	10.0	3.4	Efficient
25. Number of SMS per EA	4.0	16.0	35.0	35.0	10.0	2.4	Not Efficient
Average Perception						3.0	Efficient

Source: Field survey data, 2015; $\geq$ 3.0 (efficient) < 3.0 (not efficient) n = 100

Table 3: Summary Table of Imo ADP organizational efficiency as perceived by extension administrators and extension agents

Organizational Efficiency Index	Administrators Mean score	Extension Agents Mean score	Average mean	Remark
A. Technical Support Activities				
1. Credit/loan linkage	3.9	3.2	3.6	Efficient
2. Technical assistance	3.8	3.9	3.9	Efficient
3. Input assistance	2.2	1.6	1.9	Not efficient
4. Market assistance	2.6	2.8	2.7	Not efficient
5. Communication of research results	2.8	2.9	2.9	Not efficient
6. Number of farm families per EA	4.3	2.9	3.6	Efficient
B. Result of Extension activities				
7. Increase in knowledge of farmers	3.1	3.4	3.3	Efficient
8. Change in farming practices/methods	4.1	3.5	3.8	Efficient
9. Increase in yield	3.3	3.2	3.3	Efficient
10. Improved processing/storage/marketing	4.1	2.9	3.5	Efficient
11. Number of farmers reached out the target number	4.4	2.7	3.6	Efficient
12. Number of farmers adopting Imo ADP recommended practice	4.5	3.8	4.2	Efficient
C. Extension administration				
13. Organizational setup	4.5	3.3	3.9	Efficient
14. Performance of extension personnel	3.8	3.4	3.6	Efficient
15. Visit by extension personnel	4.2	4.1	4.2	Efficient
16. Dissemination of research results	3.8	3.8	3.8	Efficient
17. Number of monitoring unit personnel per ten EAs	3.4	2.9	3.2	Efficient
18. Number of male to female extension personnel	4.6	3.6	4.1	Efficient
D. Logistics				
19. Number of cinema/TV shows	1.9	1.5	1.7	Not efficient
20. Budgetary expenditure	3.0	2.2	2.6	Not efficient
21. Number of print materials per year	2.4	2.1	2.3	Not efficient
E. Personnel training/motivation				
22. Number of extension agents trained in specialized training courses per year	1.5	2.3	1.9	Not efficient
23. Number of personnel promoted per year	3.4	3.1	3.3	Efficient
24. Number of graduate extension workers	4.7	3.4	4.5	Efficient
25. Number of SMS per EA	3.5	2.4	3.0	Efficient
Average Perception			3.12	Efficient

Source: Field survey data, 2015

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