



## Research Article

### Analysis of Factors Influencing the Performance of Extension Administrators in Imo State Agricultural Development Programme

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#### ABSTRACT

The study analyzed factors influencing the performance of extension administrators in Imo State Agricultural Development Programme. Specifically, various factors influencing extension administrators' performance were identified; level to which constraining factors influenced the performance of extension administrators was assessed; and the relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of extension administrators and performance was determined. Data were collected using structured questionnaire from 120 respondents (20 extension administrators and 100 extension agents) selected through multi-stage sampling technique. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools such as percentage, mean score and ordinary least square (OLS) regression model were used for the analysis. Results showed a strong and direct relationship ( $R = 0.82$ ) between the socio-economic characteristics of the extension administrators in Imo State Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) poor personnel motivation and inadequate funding were most influential constraints affecting the performance of personnel who administer extension in the state ADP. The study recommends alternative sources of funding and adequate logistic support among other ways of overcoming the challenges facing extension administrators' performance.

**Key words:** Extension Administrator, Extension services, Agricultural Development Programme

#### INTRODUCTION

The failure of several developmental efforts to stimulate agricultural growth through extension services is largely attributed to the persisting weaknesses in extension administration. The key reason for the growing concern on performance of extension administrators is the inability of extension to achieve its statutory aims of effectively educating and facilitating learning among farmers. According to Madukwe (2011), those who administer should have adequate training in extension administration. Duru (2015) posited that the relationship between individual administrators' performance and the success of extension administration is a strong and positive one. Chukwu *et al.* (2015) opined that various socio-economic factors of extension administrators influence their performance either positively or negatively. It is not unlikely that the failure of extension administrators is sometimes occasioned by certain factors which are beyond their control. Agbamu (2011) found inadequate training, poor funding, disproportionate ratio

of extension agents to farmer, poor logistics, weak administrative framework, among others militate against extension service delivery in Nigeria. Obibuaku (1983) states that lack of incentive is a crucial factor responsible for the unproductiveness of extension workers.

Performance assessment involves efforts aimed at identifying whether the set goals have been achieved, the level to which they are achieved, possible areas of strength and weaknesses where consolidation and improvements are needed respectively. Obibuaku (1983) further posited that unless various factors that posed challenges to extension administration are checked, all efforts to achieve the desired goals in extension administration will be a mirage. Authors expressed the concept of extension administration in various ways. Gill (2004) sees it as the art of carrying into effect any policy, plan or undertaking conceived by extension service. Akubulo (2008) supported this view point by stating that extension administration should involve the organization and direction of human and material resources to achieve stated goals. Madukwe (2005) sees extension administration

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as the effort to direct, guide and integrate the activities of members of staff of an agricultural extension organization with a view to achieving the objectives of the extension service.

All expressions to this subject matter (extension administration) as given by various experts geared towards achieving goals of extension service. The issue remains whether the goals are likely to be achieved with all the challenging factors. It is in effort to address this issue that this study tries to broadly analyze the factors influencing performance of extension administrators in Imo State Agricultural Development Programme.

Specifically, the study:

- i) identified the factors influencing the performance of extension administrators in Imo State ADP extension service delivery;
- ii) assessed the level to which constraining factors influenced the performance extension administrators in Imo State ADP;
- iii) determined the relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of extension administrators in Imo State ADP and their perceived performance.

A hypothesis was postulated and this states that there is no significant relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of extension administrators in Imo State ADP and their perceived performance.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Imo State, located in the South-Eastern Agricultural zone of Nigeria, lies between latitudes 4°45'N and 7°15'N and longitude 6°50'E with land area of 5,530km<sup>2</sup> and population of 3,934,899 (NPC, 2006 and NBS, 2007). The state has three agricultural zones of Orlu, Okiogwe and Owerri. It has 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 cooperative, 2009). Extension activities in the state are undertaken by Imo State ADP and demarcated into 39 blocks and 326 circles for effective extension activity.

The study population consisted of all extension personnel in Imo ADP, while a multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample size. In the first stage, extension personnel in Imo ADP were stratified into state headquarters, zones, Blocks and circles based on their location of service. Based on the result of the reconnaissance survey, the second stage involve 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 cadre of administrators in each location. The fourth state involved the proportionate sampling of extension agents in the 3 zones in the ratio of 3:1:1.

Primary data were obtained from extension administrators and extension agents using two sets of structured instrument. Analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics, mean scores and ordinary least square regression model, implicitly represented as

$$Y = f(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n, e)$$

Where

Y=dependent variable of pooled performance of extension administrators

X<sub>1</sub>= Sex (Dummy; Female=0, Male=1)

X<sub>2</sub>= Age (years)

X<sub>3</sub>= Marital Status (Dummy; Married =1, Single=2)

X<sub>4</sub>= Educational level (Years)

X<sub>5</sub>= Membership of Professional organization (Dummy; Member=1, Non-member =2)

X<sub>6</sub>= Attendance to conference

X<sub>7</sub>= Monthly income (Naira)

X<sub>8</sub>= Years of Experience

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results in Table 1 revealed that poor personnel motivation and inadequate funding were perceived by extension personnel as the greatest constraints affecting the performance of people who administer extension in Imo ADP. Poor logistic support and limited extension coverage were ranked as third and fourth, while gender bias was perceived as the least constraint militating against the performance of extension administrators. These results suggest that activities of extension administrators in Imo ADP lacked adequate funding.

**Table 1:** Distribution of extension personnel by factors influencing the performance of extension administrators in Imo ADP

Constraints	*Freq.	%	Rank
i. Poor personnel motivation	120	100.0	1
ii. Inadequate Personnel training	98	81.7	5
iii. Poor logistic support	100	83.3	3
iv. Limited extension coverage	100	83.3	4
v. Political interference	95	79.2	6
vi. Corruption	94	78.3	7
vii. Poor administrative network	93	77.5	8
viii. Inadequate funding	120	100.0	1
ix. Gender bias	71	59.2	13
x. bureaucracy	91	75.8	11
xi. In-fighting among personnel	93	77.5	9
xii. Government policy	91	75.8	12
xiii. Political instability	92	76.7	10

**Source:** Field survey data, 2015. \*Multiple response; N = 120

Results as indicated in Table 2 showed that poor personnel motivation ( $\bar{X} = 3.0$ ) and inadequate funding ( $\bar{X} = 3.0$ ) were not just perceived by extension personnel as constraints affecting the performance of extension administrator in Imo ADP, but the results express them as serious constraints capable of undermining service delivery in the study area. Other serious constraints included poor logistic support ( $\bar{X} = 2.2$ ) and limited extension coverage ( $\bar{X} = 2.8$ ), political interference ( $\bar{X} = 2.5$ ), poor administrative network ( $\bar{X} = 2.4$ ), corruption ( $\bar{X} = 2.3$ ), among others. These results corroborate the findings of Agbamu (2011), which identified inadequate finance, poor personnel training, inadequate logistics among factors constraining extension service delivery.

Result in Table 3 showed that the linear functional form of the Ordinary Least Square multiple regression analysis gave the best fit based on the number of statistically significant variables, the F-value and the

**Table 2:** Distribution of extension personnel by the level to which constraining factors influenced the performance of extension administrators in Imo ADP

Factors	Very seriously	Seriously	Not seriously	Mean score	Remark
i. Poor personnel motivation	120	0	0	3.0	Serious
ii. Inadequate Personnel training	50	20	50	2.1	Serious
iii. Poor logistic support	50	40	30	2.2	Serious
iv. Limited extension coverage	100	18	02	2.8	Serious
v. Political interference	72	34	14	2.5	Serious
vi. Corruption	54	43	23	2.3	Serious
vii. Poor administrative network	59	47	14	2.4	Serious
viii. Inadequate funding	120	0	0	3.0	Serious
ix. Gender bias	53	54	13	2.3	Serious
x. Bureaucracy	24	32	64	1.7	Not Serious
xi. In-fighting among personnel	11	34	75	1.5	Not Serious
xii. Government policy	31	43	46	1.9	Not Serious
xiii. Political instability	41	32	47	2.0	Serious

**Source:** Field survey data, 2015.  $X \geq 2.0$  (Serious);  $X < 2.0$  (Not serious)

**Table 3:** Relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of extension administrators in Imo ADP and their perceived performance

Explanatory Variables	Linear function	Double log	Semi-log	Exponential function
Constants	49.743	10.717	12.137	22.634
R <sup>2</sup>	0.828	0.789	0.698	0.679
No of Observation	100	100	100	100
F-value	26.110	9.679*	0.783	0.221
Sex X <sub>1</sub>	0.515(1.983)*	0.000(0.373)	0.003(0.626)	0.670(1.110)
Age X <sub>2</sub>	0.275(7.870)**	0.000(-6.050)	0.009(-1.989)*	0.080(12.244)**
Marital Status X <sub>3</sub>	0.022(1.24)	0.369(0.330)	0.001(-0.629)	0.000(9.830)**
Educational Level X <sub>4</sub>	0.000(5.289)**	0.000(7.095)**	0.011(1.792)	0.001(-1.211)
Membership of Professional Org X <sub>5</sub>	0.003(4.240)**	0.030(0.207)	0.003(-1.464)	0.009(-4.848)**
Attendance to conference X <sub>6</sub>	0.857 (4.184)**	0.579(0.568)	0.000(4.292)**	0.017(1.510)
Monthly income X <sub>7</sub>	0.000 (-8.315)**	0.007(-3.136)**	0.002(1.340)	0.000(3.698)**
Years of Experience X <sub>8</sub>	0.749 (0.326)	0.329(-1.012)	0.015(4.312)**	0.000(-6.581)**

**Source:** Field survey data, 2015; \* t – ratio significant at 5% probability level; \*\* t – ratio significant at 1% probability level

value of coefficient of multiple determination ( $R^2$ ). The  $R^2$  value was 0.828, implying that about 82 percent of the variation in the performance of extension administrators in Imo ADP was accounted for by socio-economic characteristics investigated in the study. This implies that a strong direct relationship exist between the socio-economic characteristics of extension administrators and their performance in Imo ADP, hence the hypothesis is rejected. The coefficients of age ( $t = 7.870$ ), educational level ( $t = 5.289$ ), membership of professional organization ( $t = 4.240$ ), attendance to conference ( $t = 4.184$ ) and monthly income ( $t = 8.315$ ) were found significant at 1% probability level, while the variable sex ( $t = 1.983$ ) was found significant at 5% probability level explaining them as very important factors influencing the performance of extension administrators in Imo ADP.

By these result, it could be inferred that the older the extension administrators get, the greater they administer extension services. This is because the older they get the more administrative experiences they acquire. Higher educational qualification of the administrators would increase their knowledge of extension administration as more training leads to possible job success (Madukwe, 2011). Clover and Darroch (2005), added that education increases intrinsic motivation and energizes behaviour. Increased membership of professional organization increases the chances of the extension administrators to participate in information/knowledge sharing forums, trainings and network, thereby increases their performance. This is corroborated by the finding that

increased attendance to conference is likely to increase the performance of the administrators through increased training on extension administration. Increased income is likely to increase the comfort of the administrators, and thus increase their commitment to service. Sex on the other hand, is likely to affect the level of commitment to extension services. While male administrators may have less issues competing with their time, FAO, IFAD and ILO (2008) observed that women juggle a lot of domestic tasks and responsibilities with their job. Thus, their efficiency in administering extension is likely to suffer.

### Conclusion

Findings showed that poor personnel motivation and inadequate funding were perceived as the greatest constraints affecting the performance of people who administer extension services in Imo ADP. Other factors identified include poor logistics support, limited extension and gender bias. The poor personnel motivation and inadequate funding were expressed as serious constraints capable of undermining service delivery in the area.

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