

Perceived Communication Role of Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) Among Poultry Farmers in Southern Agricultural Zone of Edo State, Nigeria.

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Abstract: This study assessed perceived communication role of Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) among poultry farmers in southern agricultural zone of Edo state, Nigeria. Specifically, it examined the socio-economic characteristics of respondents, ascertained their perceived communication role of ADP as an information channel and perception of factors that constrains extension agents in communicating poultry technologies to them. Data were collected from 140 randomly selected poultry farmers through a well structured questionnaire validated by expert judgment. Result shows that majority (62.8%) and (71.4%) were males and married respectively with a mean poultry farming experience of 8years, and majority (84.3%) keeping stock type of layers and broilers facilitation/training (M=3.03) and inadequate mobility (M=3.85) was the only perceived communication role of ADP and perceived major constraint of ADP respectively. It was thus recommended that extension agents should always put into consideration education level and poultry farming experience of individual farmers when training and disseminating information and engaging the services of more female extension agents to reach female farmers with proven poultry technologies.

Key words: communication role, agricultural development programme, poultry farmers and southern agricultural zone of Edo state.

INTRODUCTION

The role of communication boarder on it's effectiveness which is foundational to socio-economic and political development of a nation. Adekunle and Ogoto (1994), asserted that effective communication is a precondition for sustainable technology transfer in agriculture; and the feed forward- feed back mechanisms which are essential ingredients in the technology transfer process are only made possible through communication process. A good communicator or information source knows his audience, his wants, needs, message, the effective channel of communication applicable to his audience, prepares his information to be communicated carefully, speaks clearly, uses simple languages that people understand and is aware of the limitation of time. The message or innovation is the subject matter that the audience (farmers) are expected to receive, understand and act upon; the code (language) of the message, it's idea or contents and the presentation of the message of the farmer matters. The credibility and technical competence of the communicator (extension agent) will go a long way in people (farmers) putting their trust in him as an authority of valid assertions and a rekoned officer. Hence Torimiro and Akinyemiju (2008) opined that in order to maintain good credibility extension agents need to have adequate knowledge and skill in dealing with people, and that a message is not of no value unelse it is understood accepted by the receiver and creates a motivation to act. Ekumankma and Nwankwo (2002) observed the poor exposure of farmers to appropriate agricultural information as one of the major reasons for low yield recorded by many Nigerian farmers. This have been of great concern to agricultural communicators, administrators, and policy makers in the country over the years and finds expression in the federal governments' effort in initiating different agricultural programmes including Agricultural Development Programmes across the country in the last four decades. Uphoff (2000) and Leeuwis (2004) ascerting a new societal function for extension said that emphasis/responsibilities have shifted from a function that fostered knowledge and technology transfer between farmers and researchers and among farmers themselves to include more complex tasks of altering interdependencies and co-ordination between various actors, in addition new challenges, problems and development- some of which operate at a larger scale than before (e.g. ecological degradation, globalization and knowledge society) that further complicate matters, hence the issues extension is dealing with now are concerned more broadly with rural resource management- resource in this context include not only water, land, biological process and biophysical inputs, but also human relations, forms of organizations, economic and legal institutions, knowledge or skills. Leeuwis (2004) observed that communication intervention which is seen as different communication services since they essentially define kinds of products that can be

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delivered by communication workers and at the same time seen as different strategies because they refer also to the way in which communication intervention is supposed to contribute to societal problem solving. Depending on one's analysis of the problem, one may decide that improving a specific type of service is an appropriate strategy towards improving the situation. Leeuwis (2004) further opined that the term farm management communication is general communication function which can be relevant within different communication services and strategies include: raising awareness; consciousness of predefined issues; exploring views and issues; information provision and training, with corresponding roles of communication workers to include; providing (confrontational) feedback; raising questions; stimulating people to talk (active listening, active learning); translating and structuring information; and educators/trainers. Realizing the role of communication, Okoedo-Okojie (2008) asserted that the purpose of communication is to bring about change in attitude, knowledge and skills of the receivers. Hence, effective communication can improve farmers' value for adoption of proven technologies. It is expected that the high number of poultry farmers in Edo state, Nigeria would bring the high price of poultry products to its barest minimum and improve its availability, yet the reverse is the situation. The socio-economic characteristic of poultry farmers; ascertain respondents perceived role of ADPs extension agents' as information channel; and ascertain farmers perception of factors than constraints extension agents in communicating poultry technologies of them. A null hypothesis was set that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic characteristics of respondent and perceived communication role of ADP.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area:

This study was conducted in southern agricultural zone of edo state. The zone comprise of the following local government areas (LGAs), which comprise Oredo, Ikpoba-Okha, Orhionmwon, Egor, Ovia south west, Ovia north east and uhunwonde LGAs. The natural vegetation consist of rain forest in Benin low lands.

Design and Sampling Procedure:

Data were gathered by means of questionnaire validated by expert judgment and reliability of $r=0.84$. A multi stage sampling procedure was used to select respondents for the study. The first stage was purposive selection of two LGAs i.e, Oredo and Ikpoba-Okha because of the predominance of poultry farming in these LGAs. The second stage was random sampling of seven (7) communities from each of the LGAs making a total of 14 communities. In Oredo LGA, Ogbe, Iyekogba, Ugbor, Ekae, New Benin, Etete, and East circular area while in Ikpoba okha LGA, Ogiso, Ikpoba, Idogbo, Aduwawa, Evboriaria, Ugbekun and Okhacommunities were sampled. The third stage was random selection of ten (10) poultry farmers from each community, hence a total of one hundred and forty (140) respondents were selected for study.

Measurement of Variables:

Responses were solicited on farmers socio-economic characteristics i.e. sex, marital status, education qualification, household size, farming experience, stock size, stock type and annual income from poultry farming. Respondents' perception of ADP communication role was measured in a 4 point rating scale of very active coded 4, active coded 3, little active coded 2 and not active coded 1. A mean score of 2.50 ($4+3+2+1=10/4=2.50$) was taken to mean that respondents perceive a particular communication role carried out by ADP extension agents as active. Respondents' perception of constraints limiting ADP extension agents in communicating poultry technologies was measured in a 4-point rating scale of very serious coded 4, serious coded 3, little serious coded 2, not a problem coded 1. A mean score of 2.50 and above was taken to mean that a particular constraint was serious. Frequency, percentage, and mean were used in data analysis. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used for hypothesis testing. This correlation is between quantitative variables and is defined as the degree of relationship existing between two or more variables, it could be linear or non-linear. The purpose of correlation analysis is to know the influence of one variable on the other, also to know how well two variables move together, whether weak or strong. A correlation is a number between -1 and +1 that measures the degree of association between two variables (x and y).

Pearson product moment correlation was used to find the level of association / relation between the variables.

$$r_{xy} = \frac{\sum x_i y_i}{\sqrt{\sum x_i^2} \sqrt{\sum y_i^2}}$$

Correlation coefficient

x - Socio – economic characteristics

y – Perceived communication role

$$\sum x_i y_i = \text{summation of variables x and y}$$

$$\sum x_i^2 = \text{summation of the square of x variables}$$

$$\sum y_i^2 = \text{summation of the square of y variable.}$$

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents:

Table 1 showed that majority (62.86%), (71.43%), (67.86%) were males, married and had secondary education respectively. This result shows there are more males than female involved in poultry production than females. The implication of the finding show that not money women and are actively involved in poultry farming, though they may play significant role in the industry, 3.57% of the respondents education and indication that the re4spondents are literate, this will make it possible for them to accurately assess the role of ADP as it borders on their poultry enterprise. With a modal household size of between 5 and 7 persons (67.86%). The respondents are expected to be keen enough in poultry production and hence can ingnusive about technologies available through the extension delivery system ADP and the communication role accessibility. Entries in Table 1 also show that most (57.14%) of the respondents have farming experience of between 6 and 10 years, an indication that they have experience good enough to arouse felt needs for proven poultry technologies and fair knowledge of the role expected of ADP in communicating these technologies. Most (32.86%) of the respondent and majority (84.3%) have stock size of between 201 and 500 birds, and keep layers and broiler stock, while majority (67.86%) earn annual income of N100,000 = and below. These result shows that the annual income of respondent is not commensurate with their size of stock and type of birds kept. The implication is a high dependent of ADP for technology availability and technological advice that can improve earnings from their poultry venture.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=140).

Characteristics		Freq	Percentage	Mean
Sex	Female	52	37.1	
	Male	88	62.9	
Marital status	Single	35	25.0	
	Married	100	71.4	
	Divorced	5	3.6	
Education Qualification	No Formal Education	10	7.1	
	Primary	30	21.4	
	Secondary	95	67.9	
	Tertiary	5	3.6	
Household size (persons)	<4	26	18.5	
	5-7	95	67.9	5
	8-10	18	12.9	
	>10	1	0.7	
Farming experience (years)	5 & below	34	24.3	
	6-10	80	57.1	
	11-15	13	9.3	8
	16-20	11	7.9	
	>20	2	1.4	
Stock size	1-200	46	22.1	
	201-500	31	32.9	675
	500-1000	34	24.3	
	>1000	29	20.7	
Type of birds kept	Pullet	2	1.4	
	Layer	6	4.3	
	Broiler	7	5.0	
	Pullets and layer	1	0.7	
	Pullet and broiler	6	4.3	
	Layer and broiler	118	84.3	
Annual Income (Naira)	100,000 & below	95	67.86	
	100,001 – 200,000	11	7.86	
	200,001 – 300,000	5	3.57	
	300,001 – 400,000	5	3.57	52614.29
	400,001 – 500,000	3	2.14	
	500,001 – 600,000	20	14.29	
	>600,000	1	0.71	

Source: Field Survey Data 2012.

Farmers Perception of ADP Extension Agents Communication Role:

Table 2 shows poultry farmers' perception of ADPs' extension agents communication role, as an institution that brings poultry information to them. The table reveals that most of the mean scores are not up to 2.50 meaning that ADPs' extension agents do not play any important/active role in communicating information on poultry except facilitator/training role (mean = 3.03). It shows that extension agents are not technically equipped in other communication roles. Whereas, for farmers to achieve the full benefit of facilitation/training other role of extension agents have to be actively functional. For instance "raising question" (mean = 2.39), "training information" (mean = 2.11), "motivate me to listen actively" (mean = 2.05), "motivate me to listen actively" (mean = 1.86), and other roles are all functional aspects of facilitation/training where the extension agents have not been active. The implication is that poultry farmers will not get the full benefit of training section for instance, as result shows that participation approach was not employed () observe that adult learners are known to be active in training sections and acquiring teaching and learning experiences when there is adequate feedback from the tutor yet "stimulate me to access challenging feedback" (mean = 1.19) was not active role by extension agents based on farmers' perception. This result negates the Moshia (2006) that extension officers have increasingly recognised the importance of a work relationship with farmers by employing participatory approach to service delivery. On the other hand, however the result agrees with Moshia (2006) that many scientific articles published in agricultural journals are scientifically complex for extension officers and some B. Agric holding incumbents to understand thus making it difficult for them to replicate research guide on scientific investigative procedures.

Farmers Perception of the Constraints Limiting ADP Extension Agents in Communicating Poultry Technologies.

Table 2: Farmers Perception of ADP Extension Agents, Communication Role.

Communication Role	Mean	SD
Facilitator/Trainer	3.03*	.678
Restructuring information	2.49	.861
Raising Questions	2.39	.820
Translating Information	2.11	.849
Motivate me to learn actively	2.05	.499
Stimulate me to access challenging feed back	1.19	.599
Motivate me to listen actively	1.86	.582

Source: field survey data 2012 *active role (mean \geq 2.50).

Farmer's Perception of ADP Extension Agent's Constraints:

Table 3 shows respondents perception of ADP extension agents constraints in communicating poultry technologies. The most serious constraints was "extension agents are not mobile" (mean=3.85) followed by "insufficient media of communication" (mean=3.17) and "insufficient female extension workers" to address information needs of women farmers (mean=2.99).

Table 3: Farmer's perception of constraints limiting ADP extension agents in communicating poultry technologies.

Constraints	Mean	SD
The extension agents are not mobile	3.85*	.358
Insufficient channels of communication	3.17*	1.217
Insufficient female extension workers to address information needs of women farmers	2.99*	.925
Inadequate housing	1.70	.802

Source: Field survey data 2012 . *serious constraints(mean \geq 2.50).

Hypothesis:**Relationship between Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents and their Perceived Communication Role of extension agents:**

Entries in table 4 reveals that non of the socio economic variables of the respondents significant relationship ($p > 0.05$) with their perceived communication role of ADP. Meanwhile sex ($r = -0.079$ $p > 0.05$) and education ($r = -0.040$ $p > 0.05$) had negative correlation and no significant relationship with perceived communication roles of ADP. This implies that female farmers are more conscious of the communication roles ADP play in disseminating technologies. This further implies that the female farmers are less likely to benefit from ADP intervention. This can boarder on the fact that one of the major constraints the farmers face is that of insufficient female extension officers to take care of the information needs of women farmers. Also, the less educated farmers will be more conscious of the communication roles of ADP than those educated. This may be expected as less education will constrain poultry farmers in production, a situation that is addressed by training/facilitators function of ADP. It takes education for farmers to observe the inactive role of ADP communication as observed in table 2. However, household size ($r = 0.034$, $p > 0.05$), farming experience ($r = 0.977$, $p > 0.05$), stock size ($r = 0.080$, $p > 0.05$) and income ($r = 0.050$, $p > 0.05$) all had positive but not significant relationship with perceived communication role of ADP. This implies that respondents large household will be

more conscious of ADP communication role than those with smaller household size, hence respondents with higher household will be more seriously and will exhibit a higher reliance on ADP to disseminate proven technologies information for improvement of their poultry outfit.

This equally applies to respondents with higher farming experience, larger stock size and higher income.

Table 4: Relationship between Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents and their Perceived Communication Role of ADP.

Variable	r	Probability level
Sex	-.079	.354
Education	-.040	.640
Household size	.034	.687
Farming Experience	.097	.253
Stock size	.080	.0349
Income	.050	.559

Source: Computed from field survey 2012 *correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Conclusion:

The results of the study showed that poultry farming in the southern agricultural zone of Edo state, Nigeria was dominated by male farmers, fairly experienced in poultry farming. Poultry farming is characterized by a combination of layer and broiler enterprises. The most serious constraint faced by ADP extension agents in technology dissemination as perceived by farmers was inadequate mobility which reduced their frequency of conveniently reaching farmers with proven technologies. Facilitation and training was the only perceived active role performed by ADP extension agents.

Recommendations:

Based on findings, the following recommendations are made.

1. Edo State Agricultural Development Programme (EDADP) should organize regular seminars and for extension agents for training on communication roles were they are presently inactive i.e. restructuring information, raising questions, translating information, motivating farmers to learn actively, stimulating farmers to access challenging feedback, and motivating farmers to listen actively, for farmers to benefit from available poultry technologies.
2. Extension agents should put into consideration the educational level and poultry farming experience of individual farmers when disseminating information.
3. Edo state Agricultural Development programme in corroboration with the Ministry of Agriculture should provide means of transport for extension agents to increase their number and convenience of contact with farmers.
4. Extension agents should improve number of channels of communication through which they reach farmers with proven technologies.
5. The services of more female extension agents should be engaged to reach more female farmers with proven technologies.

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