

Comparative Analysis of Factors Affecting Effective Participation in Agricultural Extension Services Among Male and Female Extension Agents in the Cross River State Agricultural Development Project (CR-ADP)

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Abstract

This study determines the factors affecting effective participation in agricultural extension services among male and female extension agents in the cross river state agricultural development project (CR-ADP) by ascertaining, comparing and contrasting the reasons for their participation in agricultural extension. The study was conducted in the Cross River State Agricultural Development Project (CR-ADP) which covers the Northern, Central and Southern Agricultural Zones in Cross River State. The population of the study comprised of extension workers in the eighteen blocks in the state. A purposive sampling technique was adopted to select 35 male and female extension workers respectively. A researcher structured questionnaire was used to obtain primary data from respondents while secondary data was obtained from the Cross

River State Agricultural Development Programme (CRADP). Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics and Student T-test. Results indicate that, the desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development was mostly ranked (1st, \bar{x} = 2.0), followed by need for income, and the desire for solving complex farm problems through mediating between the research and farmers (2nd, \bar{x} = 1.94) among male extension agents while the desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development ranked highest with a mean (\bar{x}) of 2.0. among female extension agents. This was followed by Need for income (2nd, \bar{x} = 1.94) and improving rural lives through community projects (3rd, \bar{x} = 1.91). The study concluded that certain ethical variation and similarity silently exist between male and female extension agents in the CR-ADP, and recommended that agricultural stakeholders must understand that a certain level of disparity exist in gender studies, and so development programmes must capture all options under consideration.

KEYWORDS: *Participation, Agricultural Extension Services, Male and Female Extension Agents, Cross River State Agricultural Development Project.*

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality is the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex, opportunities, allocation of resources and benefits, or in access to services such as agricultural advice. It implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity among different groups of women and men (Marc and Mamusha, 2011). Agricultural development is an integral part of national development. It is that aspect of development that is related to agrarian reforms and their contribution to the socio economic development of many countries (Uzokwe, Ofuoku and Dafe, 2017). Different social and economic parameters as well as developmental matrixes has been affected in Nigeria during the administration of ex-president MuhammaduBuhari who had informed Nigerians especially the youth, about the non-availability of government jobs in the country. This was in a sense to boast their innovativeness, entrepreneurship and investment in agriculture and other sectors of the economy for their personal development rather than waiting for a juicy position from the government (Stephen, 2022). However, the reality of a crumbling economy, rising debt profile, inflation, poor infrastructural development, covid-19 pandemic, among other challenges in Nigeria made this call to be very difficult to yield to. These factors also culminated to a limited availability of job opportunities in the private sector.

The term "gender" can also be viewed to economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. Gender focuses on the relationship between men and women, their roles, access to and control over resources, division of labour and needs. It is also a socio-economic parameter that is useful in analyzing the roles, responsibilities, opportunities and constraints of both men and women along different ethnic, religion and ecological lines (Mohammed and Abdulquadri, 2012). Gender analysis is an important social division characterized by inequality. it takes into consideration the differentials in control and access to resources. Men and women are affected differently in their operation in factors like markets and socio-cultural environments. Women are more constrained than their male counterparts in terms of access to information technology, inputs, credits, etc. According to Mohammed and Abdulquadri, (2012), in agriculture, men are generally presumed to be the chief

actors in agricultural production and, as such, are often the main participants in and/ or recipients of programme – related supports. Although, men and women participate in agriculture, the task may be sex specific but they are complementary and reciprocal.

In Nigeria, investment and development in agriculture has been recommended as the locus for socioeconomic development, poverty reduction, industrialization, employment creation, and food security. Agricultural Extension Services is inevitable, and paramount in its developmental role for economic development, diversification and agricultural transformation in Nigeria. Agricultural change agents or Extension agents have experienced different forms of underutilization, poor attention and low mobilization due to the high level of negligence of the sector overtime. Participation in extension services/programmes became a rare opportunity due to lack of jobs in other sector. The passion for agricultural extension witnessed a very low motivation among extension agents who are affected by unfavourable government economic policies (Etim, Okoi and Obhiokhenan, 2022a). However, extension workers have had some salient but laudable reasons to enhance their participation in agricultural extension programmes. Most extension agents developed their passion for agriculture while on the job, and are motivated for promotion, participating in international agricultural programmes, having a personal need for self fulfilment and achievement to improve their livelihood outcomes (Etim, Okoi, Mohammed and Ntui, 2023). Notwithstanding, different socioeconomic and socio-cultural variations among various ethnic groups, tribes and regions in Nigeria, has influenced participation in agricultural extension across male and female farmers which has affected the overall outcomes of extension services. This may be based on the varied roles, responsibility and expectations that the society has placed on both gender (Etim, Okoi, Ntui and Ayi, 2022b). Agricultural extension services is one most viable tool for attaining agricultural development outcomes. It engaged the farmers at different levels and expectations, with productive information and problem solving technique through different media to enhance farmer's productivity and programme development for effective result. Gender development in agricultural extension has become another approach for effective service delivery based on perceived socio-cultural patterns across locations in Nigeria (Etim, et al., 2022). Sociological approaches and socio-cultural dimensions has influenced the perception of gender in agricultural extension based on the level of interaction, degree of association, type of organization, membership in cooperatives, and social organizations between sexes (Adebayo and Worth, 2022). The sense of feminism brings out some unique social qualities, character and emotions peculiar to women which characterize their beautiful nature and influences the direction of their decision making, whereas the masculine gender is bequeathed with a natural sense of authority, leadership, decision making, headness, directing, among others. However, conditions exist where these role and qualities cut across both sexes. According to Jafrey and Sulaiman, (2013a), the impact and role of a female extension agent will be more impactful among her sex, in her women cooperative, or organization than male dominated organization. The freedom, likeness, oneness is greater.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Gender analysis influences the role of extension agents to an extent. Various reasons also have influenced participation, motivation and decision making among male and female extension agents. This can be seen in their level of motivation, activity, goal oriented behaviour, execution of programmes and projects, attitude to self fulfillment, job performance, acquisition of skills,

equality, wealth, knowledge, interaction and leadership. Different researches have advocated for an increment in the number of female extension agents to enhance the development of women in agriculture and their participation in agricultural extension programmes with notable reasons, citing many gender challenges they face. Marguerite, Virginia and Amy (1984) on 'The Gender Gap in Agricultural Extension' highlighted that women field agents may be more likely than men agents to establish contact with women farmers. Lahaïet al, (1999) also indicated that gender of the extension worker can be a strong reason that influences the participation of women farmers in extension program. Many others have called for the use of female extensionists as the primary means of aiding women farmers (Ashby, 1981; Staudt, 1982; and DeLancey, 1984). In Nigeria, studies by Adedotun (2022) indicated that women constitute more than 70% of the agricultural labour force. An FAO survey showed that female farmers receive only seven percent of all agricultural extension services world-wide and that only 11 percent of extension agents are women (FAO, 2020). Poor institutional/organizational framework of agricultural institutions in Nigeria has served as one of the greatest constraints faced by women farmers. Other studies indicated that the ratio of male to female extension agents is far below average against female extension agents in most countries (Mohammed and Abdulquadri, (2012); Jafrey and Sulaiman, (2013b); FAO (2020); and Adesiji, Kehinde and Omotesho (2013)). It is on this backdrop that this study seek to assess the reasons for effective participation in agricultural extension work among male and female extension agents in the CR-ADP

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were to;

1. ascertain the reasons for participation in Agricultural Extension work among male extension agents in the CR-ADP
2. ascertain the reasons for participation in Agricultural Extension work among female extension agents in the CR-ADP
3. compare the reasons for participation in Agricultural Extension work among male and female extension agents in the CR-ADP
4. contrast the reasons for participation in Agricultural Extension work among male and female extension agents in the CR-ADP

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gender of the extension worker can be a strong reason that influences the participation of women farmers in extension program. Women farmers, who had females for extension agents had relatively higher levels of awareness and participation of the extension activities organized, improved adoption of and technical knowledge of recommended technologies/practices and satisfaction with the quality of agents' services and credibility. These differential effects of female and male agents on women's access to extension are significant to deliver the extension services to women farmers, especially (Lahai, et al., 1999). While studying on 'Bridging the Gender Gap In Agricultural Extension', Marguerite, Virginia and Amy (1984) indicated that the goal of expanding women farmer's participation in agricultural extension programs should include increasing the number or proportion of women extension agents. According to Marguerite, et al., (1984) while women field agents may be more likely than men agents to

establish contact with women farmers, they will not be effective if they are not able to offer a "product" or service that will yield material benefits for these farmers. According to Marguerite, et al., (1984), the danger in simply adding women extensionists is that their place in the extension structure may prevent them from providing the type of product or service that women need to support their farming roles. Ultimately, the effectiveness of extension agents whether women or men in reaching and assisting women farmers will probably depend on the features of the extension system in which they operate and the quality of the message they have to extend.

Mohammed and Abdulquadri, (2012) indicated the trend in gender involvement in agriculture in Nigeria between 1995 and 2006. The result revealed that the male involvement in agricultural production was highest in 1995 at 68% as against female involvement which was 32%. However, despite the continuous increase in the country's population growth rate, male involvement in agriculture continued to decline to about 64% from 2006 while the involvement of female in agriculture was on the increase, rose from 32% in 1995 to 36% in 2006. As revealed by Adesiji, Kehinde and Omotesho (2013), agricultural extension service in Nigeria have traditionally been focused on men and their farm production needs despite women's major role in the economy. women farmers have been by and large neglected by existing extension system, receiving about 5%-7% of extension services, due to their limited control over assets and decisions and systemic biases that are evident in agricultural institution throughout Africa and much of the world.

On gender preference over extension agents, Lahai, et al, (1999), noted that, women's access to extension advice depends on extension agents who advise farmers are male or female. The result showed all women respondents preferred female extension workers. Most on the men respondents did had preference over gender of extension workers. This was because women farmers felt shy and hesitated to speak with male extension workers. Also, the women farmers said that male extension worker sometimes ignored questions from women farmers. However, it seems that the cultural aspect of the women farmers was also found the determining factor influencing on the preferences for a female extension worker by the women farmers. According to Lahai, et al, (1999), the use of female extensionists has become increasingly popular as the primary means of aiding women farmers, and a number of governments are already taking steps to expand the number of women extension agents they employ.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in the Cross River State Agricultural Development Project (CR-ADP). The CR-ADP has extension staff spread in all the eighteen (18) blocks that makes up the three Agricultural Zones in Cross River State (Northern, Central and Southern Agricultural Zones). The population of the study comprised of extension workers in the eighteen blocks in the state. The study adopted the purposive sampling technique to select 35 female extension workers and 35 male extension workers. This is so to ensure adequate representation of female extension workers in the study. This gives a total of 70 respondents sampled in this study. A researcher structured questionnaire was used to obtain primary data from respondents while secondary data was obtained from the Cross River State Agricultural Development Programme (CRADP) office on the number and socio-economic characteristics of extension workers.

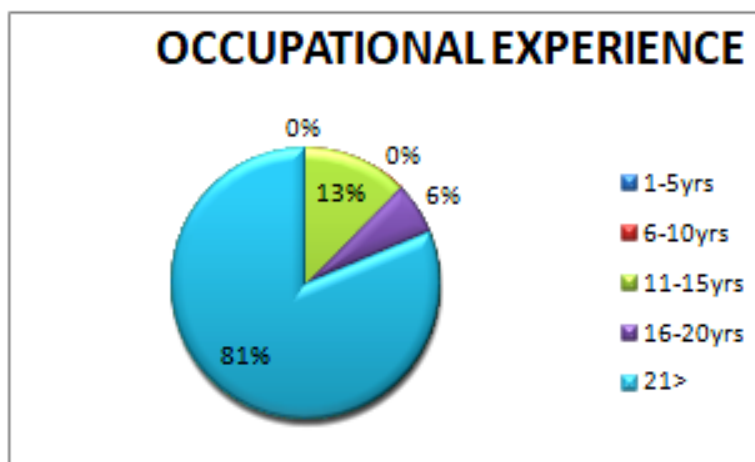
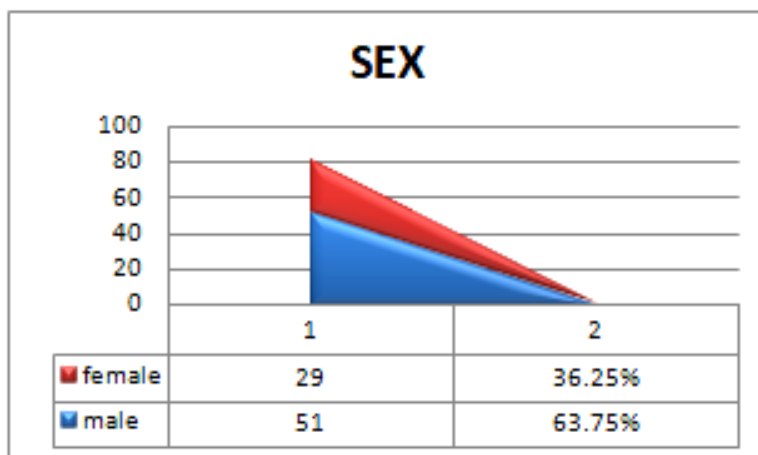
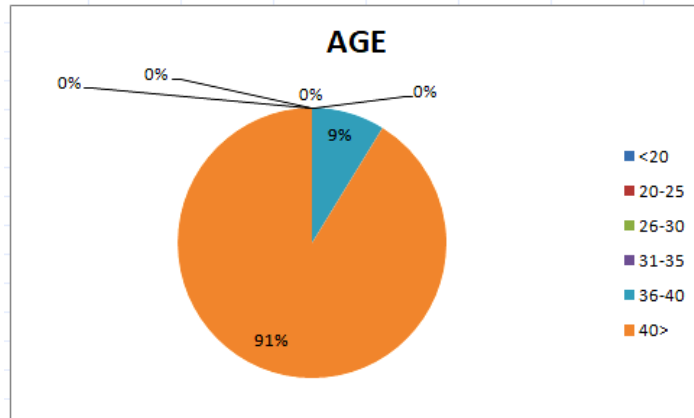
Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as; frequency, means score, and ranking. A Student T-test was also used in objective 3 and 4 to compare the means of the variables. Data collected were sorted, coded and analyzed using binomial regression as: Agree = 2 and Disagree = 1.

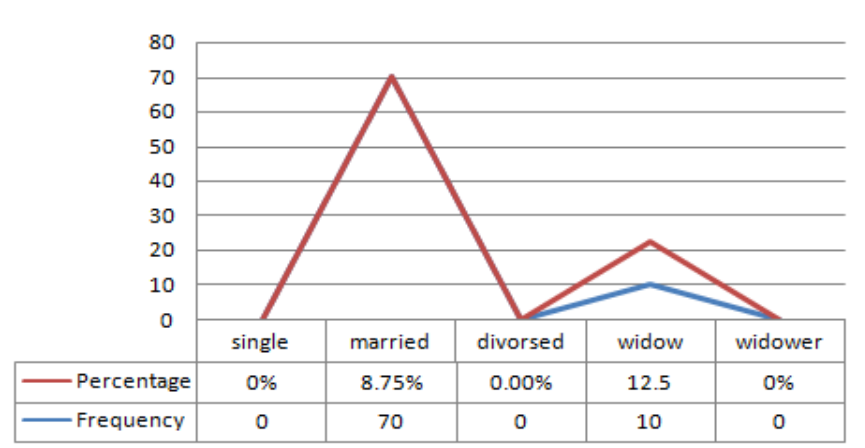
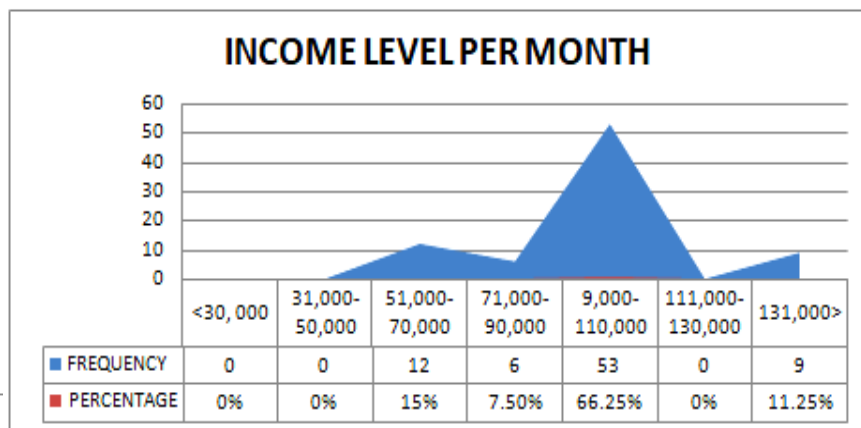
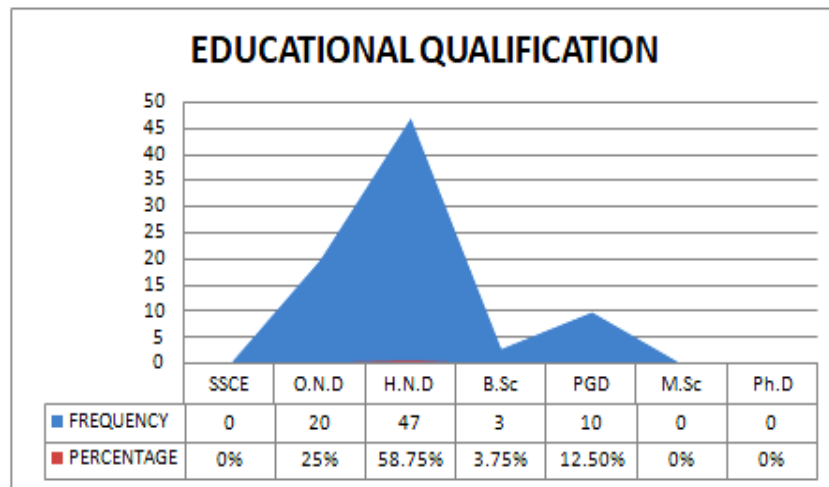
Table 1. Number of extension agents in the Cross River Agricultural Programme (CR-ADP)

S/No.	Blocks	Number of Extension Staff
1.	Calabar Municipality	3
2.	Calabar South	3
3.	Akpabuyo	3
4.	Odukpani	5
5.	Biase	4
6.	Bakassi	4
7.	Akamkpa	3
8.	Yakurr	9
9.	Obubra	6
10.	Ikom	7
11.	Boki	7
12.	Etung	4
13.	Abi	9
14.	Itigidi	4
15.	Yala	5
16.	Ogoja	7
17.	Obudu	4
18.	Bekwarra	5
	Total	92

Source: ADP, 2021

SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS





Source: Etim, *et al.*, (2021).

RESULT AND DISCUSION

Table 2. Distribution of respondents based on the mean rating of reasons for participation in extension work in CR-ADP among male extension agents

Variables	Agree	Disagree	Mean	Ranking
1. Inadequate opportunities in other jobs	13	22	1.37	12 th
2. Need for Self fulfillment	20	15	1.57	10 th
3. Passion for agriculture	13	22	1.37	12 th
4. Passionate about guiding farmers	27	8	1.77	5 th
5. Participation in extension programmes	25	10	1.71	6 th
6. Communication development nature of extension profession	23	12	1.65	7 th
7. Acquisition of in-situ training	27	8	1.77	5 th
8. Adding to a job experience	25	10	1.71	7 th
9. Most accessible/available Job	27	8	1.77	5 th
10. A graduate of agriculture	10	25	1.28	13 th
11. Improving rural lives through community projects	32	3	1.91	3 rd
12. Family pressure/ needs	21	14	1.60	9 th
13. Need for income	33	2	1.94	2 nd
14. Personal development	31	4	1.88	4 th
15. Having a good farming background	19	16	1.54	11 th
16. Being an agricultural consultant with traditional expertise	5	30	1.14	14 th
17. Desire for solving complex farm problems through mediating between the research institute and farmers.	33	2	1.94	2 nd
18. Desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development	35	0	2.0	1 st
19. Passion for community interaction during agricultural development.	22	13	1.62	8 th

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Results in Table 2 indicate the reasons for participation in Extension Work in CR-ADP among male extension agents. According to the findings, the desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development was mostly ranked (1st, \bar{x} =2.0), followed by need for income, and the desire for solving complex farm problems through mediating between the research and farmers (2nd, \bar{x} = 1.94), Improving rural lives through community projects, (3rd, \bar{x} = 1.91), Personal development (4th, \bar{x} = 1.88), Acquisition of in-situ training (5th, \bar{x} = 1.77), among others. While, Being an agricultural consultant with traditional expertise (\bar{x} = 1.14), Being a graduate of agriculture (\bar{x} = 1.28), Having a passion for agriculture and Inadequate opportunities in other jobs, and Passion for agriculture (\bar{x} = 1.37) ranked low with 14, 13, and 12 positions respectively.

Marguerite, *et al.*, (1984) had indicated that women farmers surveyed had positive response to female extension agents, but male farmers felt there was nothing they could learn from female extensionists in the area. Also, Marguerite went further to indicate that when extensionists do contact women, it is often to provide information and advice that pertains to women's household, rather than farming, responsibilities. Some Ministries of Agriculture have separate extension units for women that are devoted to home economics, which generally touch on agricultural

matters only insofar as they relate to nutrition and family welfare. Other governments provide this type of extension service for women within a separate agency or ministry, such as a Ministry of Social Welfare. In farmer training centers, instruction for women is also oriented toward home economics. This approach offers little hope for including women in the expanding commercialization of food production that is taking place as Third World countries develop.

This implies that extension services generally favours male extension agents because of their ability to enhance agricultural development through leadership, authority, ability to solve complex farm problems and withstand high level stress and difficult conditions/terrain to earn income than their female counterpart. This is a natural sociological phenomenon akin in Africa and Nigeria. Men are meant to provide leadership to their household which includes their wives and children who are taught by their husbands within the family/household as sources of agricultural labour. Extension project development activities in various communities favours male extension agents ahead of their female counterpart due to safety and security reasons based on the multifaceted religious and cultural dynamics that exist between and within communities in the rural sociology of the study area. Male headed households had mostly benefited from extension service more than female headed households because leadership, project evaluation and implementation. Female extension agents who had a restrictive cultural background from their communities will not ability fits into extension roles that puts them in the position of a man. Most female extension agents may not go to rural areas dominated by male, or without a male escort. They may have some feeling of insecurity, inferiority, inability to win the male farmers who may feel they are unrepresented except they show a high sense of humility to the male gender as required in the rural cultural ecology, also, the extension system may feel under represented if only female extension agents are used for a particular projects that involves both sexes. But most women farmers are not under any pressure because they are akin to male's leadership of their households.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents based on the mean rating of reasons for participation in extension work in CR-ADP among female extension agents.

	Variables	Agree	Disagree	Mean	Ranking
1.	Inadequate opportunities in other jobs	15	20	1.42	11 th
2.	Need for Self fulfillment	20	15	1.57	9 th
3.	Passion for agriculture	15	20	1.42	11 th
4.	Passionate about guiding farmers	13	22	1.37	12 th
5.	Participation in extension programmes	28	7	1.80	7 th
6.	Communication development nature of extension profession	31	4	1.88	4 th
7.	Acquisition of in-situ training	30	5	1.85	5 th
8.	Adding to a job experience	20	15	1.57	9 th
9.	Most accessible/available Job	27	8	1.77	8 th
10.	A graduate of agriculture	5	30	1.14	14 th
11.	Improving rural lives through community projects	32	3	1.91	3 rd
12.	Family pressure/ needs	19	16	1.54	10 th

13.	Need for income	33	2	1.94	2 nd
14.	Personal development	29	6	1.82	6 th
15.	Having a good farming background	19	16	1.54	10 th
16.	Being an agricultural consultant with traditional expertise	2	33	1.05	15 th
17.	Desire for solving complex farm problems through mediating between the research institute and farmers.	10	25	1.28	13 th
18.	Desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development	35	0	2.0	1 st
19.	Passion for community interaction during agricultural development.	19	16	1.54	10 th

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

On reasons for participation in Extension Work in CR-ADP Among female extension agents, Table 3 reveal that; The desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development ranked highest with a mean (\bar{x}) of 2.0. This was followed by Need for income (2nd, \bar{x} = 1.94), Improving rural lives through community projects(3rd, \bar{x} = 1.91), Communication development nature of extension profession (4th, \bar{x} = 1.88), whereas;Being an agricultural consultant with traditional expertise (15th, \bar{x} = 1.05), A graduate of agriculture (14th, \bar{x} =1.14) and,Desire for solving complex farm problems through mediating between the research institute and farmers(13th, \bar{x} = 1.28) ranked very low respectively.

The findings in Table 2 is in tandem with Mamun-ur-Rashid, *et al.*, (2017) who noted that linking women with agricultural extension work has a number of persuasive reasons. Bringing gender equality in extension and advisory services can contribute to different aspects of personal, social, and economic development. As women play an imperative role in advancing agricultural extension, development and food security, enhanced opportunities for women can have enormous impact on productivity and agriculture-led growth.

This implies that the utilization of female extension agents is crucial to agricultural development and efficient extension service delivery and programme/project development in the study area.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents based on the comparison of means on reasons for participation in extension work in CR-ADP among male and female extension agents through a listing of the dissimilarity

Dissimilarity Variables	Male			Female		
	Agree	Disagree	Mean	Agree	Disagree	Mean
1. Inadequate opportunities in other jobs	13	22	1.37	15	20	1.42
2. Passion for agriculture	13	22	1.37	15	20	1.42
3.. Participation in extension programmes	25	10	1.71	28	7	1.80
4. Communication development nature of extension profession	23	12	1.65	31	4	1.88

5.	Acquisition of in-situ training	27	8	1.77	30	5	1.85
6.	Adding to a job experience	25	10	1.71	20	15	1.57
7..	A graduate of agriculture	10	25	1.28	5	30	1.14
8.	Family pressure/ needs	21	14	1.60	19	16	1.54
9.	Needs for income	33	2	1.94	30	5	1.85
10.	Personal development	31	4	1.88	29	6	1.82
11.	Being an agricultural consultant with traditional expertise	5	30	1.14	2	33	1.05
12.	Passion for community interaction during agricultural development.	22	13	1.62	19	16	1.54
13.	Passionate about guiding farmers	27	8	1.77	13	22	1.37
14.	Desire for solving complex farm problems through mediating between the research institute and farmers.	33	2	1.94	10	25	1.28

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 4 compares the dissimilarity for participation in extension work in CR-ADP among male and female extension agents. According to the result, Male extension agents are less likely to participate in agricultural extension work in CR-ADP due to inadequate opportunities in other jobs with a lower mean (\bar{x}) of 1.37 over 1.42 for female extension agents. Female extension agents are more passionate for agriculture ($\bar{x} = 1.42$) than their male counterpart ($\bar{x} = 1.37$). Female extension agents are more likely to participation in extension programmes in the CR-ADP ($\bar{x} = 1.80$), than their male counterpart ($\bar{x} = 1.71$). The study further indicated that female extension agents are more likely to participate in extension work in the CR-ADP due to the communication development nature of extension profession ($\bar{x} = 1.88$), and the acquisition of in-situ training ($\bar{x} = 1.85$). The findings corroborate the study by Mamun-ur-Rashid, Kamruzzaman, and Mustafa, (2017) which observed that women participation in agricultural extension service is inevitable for maintaining production and agriculture-led growth. Women are essential contributors to agriculture and rural economics in developing countries. Although their role varies within and between different regions, but their involvement is conspicuous irrespective of country borders. The findings is also in tandem with Swanson and Rajalahti (2010), who indicated that participation in agricultural extension activities can enhance women income and possibilities of sharing valuable information, which in turn can improve the quality of their livelihood. However, Male extension agents are more likely to participate in agricultural extension work in CR-ADP than their female counterpart due to; Adding to a job experience ($\bar{x} = 1.77$); As graduate of agriculture ($\bar{x} = 1.28$); Family pressure/ needs ($\bar{x} = 1.60$); Needs for income ($\bar{x} = 1.94$); Personal development ($\bar{x} = 1.88$); Being an agricultural consultant with traditional expertise ($\bar{x} = 1.14$); Passion for community interaction during agricultural development ($\bar{x} = 1.62$); Passionate about guiding farmers ($\bar{x} = 1.77$) and Desire for solving

complex farm problems through mediating between the research institute and farmers ($\bar{x} = 1.94$). To support this findings, Marguerite, Virginia, and Amy, (2003) reported that there was difference in participation of men and women farmers in different activities. Women’s participation in residential training was found to be zero. Because, first of all, women did not get permission to participate, in fact women were not allowed to stay outside of the home during the night. Also, women with children did not get the child care facility in the training which discouraged them to participate for long duration residential training. This is akin to female extension agents who may have a huge social responsibility at home.

Table 5. Distribution of respondents based on the comparison of means on reasons for participation in extension work in CR-ADP among male and female extension agents through a listing of the similarity.

	Similarities	Male			Female		
		Agree	Disagree	Mean	Agree	Disagree	Mean
1.	Most accessible/available Job	27	8	1.77	27	8	1.77
2.	Desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development	35	0	2.0	35	0	2.0
3.	Need for Self fulfillment	20	15	1.57	20	15	1.57
4.	Improving rural lives through community projects	32	3	1.91	32	3	1.91
5.	Having a good farming background	19	16	1.54	19	16	1.54

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Similarities

Table 5 represent the distribution of respondents based on the comparison of means on reasons for participation in extension work in CR-ADP among male and female extension agents through a listing of the similarity. It shows instances where male and female extension agents are akin in their reasons for participation in Extension services in CR-ADP. They include; Most accessible/available Job ($\bar{x} = 1.77$), Desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development ($\bar{x} = 2.0$), Need for Self fulfillment ($\bar{x} = 1.57$), Improving rural lives through community projects ($\bar{x} = 1.91$) and Having a good farming background ($\bar{x} = 1.54$). While corroborating the findings of this study, Mamun-ur-Rashid, et al., (201) opined that; women field agents may be more likely than men agents to establish contact with women farmers. Even if women field agents are employed by the agricultural division of the extension organization, the characteristics of existing delivery mechanisms or the types of crops emphasized may still put a barrier between them and the women farmers who need assistance. Women extension agents and village level para-professionals should be incorporated into mainstream extension activities on an equal basis with men, not just to work with women. In addition, both men and women extension agents should receive training to increase their awareness of the needs of women farmers and allow

them to work more effectively with women. Their study suggests that incentive systems should be structured to reward men and women extension staffs who are successful in reaching and assisting farmers.

CONCLUSION

Agricultural extension service is a veritable tool for agricultural development in a community. It is crucial to educating adult farmers and improving their knowledge, awareness and adoption of agricultural innovation. Certain ethical variations however, silently exist between male and female extension agents which influences their effective participation in agricultural extension projects in the CR-ADP. The study also shows that despite the variation in the reasons for participation in agricultural extension programme between male and female extension agents however, they also share similarity in some factors that influence their participation in extension programmes within the CR-ADP.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations were made based on the findings;

1. The desire for solving complex farm problems through mediating between the research institute and farmers, and the desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development, were the major factors that influence participation of male extension agents in Agricultural Extension work in the CR-ADP. This study recommends that the Federal government, Civil Societies, Non-governmental organizations, and stakeholders in the agricultural sector should engage the services of male extension agents in the Cross River ADP in the initiation and execution of agricultural development projects that are complex in nature for the agricultural development of Cross River State, Nigeria.
2. The factors that influence participation in Agricultural Extension work among female extension agents in the CR-ADP were mostly the desire to be a part in enhancing agricultural development, and the need for income. This study recommends that agricultural stakeholders including the Federal government of Nigeria should increase the formulation of policies and agricultural development programmes that will improve on the socioeconomic characteristics of extension actors mostly the female extension agents.
3. Major dissimilarity between male and female extension agents were; the masculine desire for solving complex farm problems through mediating between the research institute and farmers, and the feminine association with the communication development nature of extension profession. This study recommends that agricultural stakeholders must understand that a certain level of disparity exist in gender studies, and so development programmes must capture all options under consideration to enhance effective gender participation in programmes and projects.

4. Agricultural extension service among male and female extension agents is a most accessible and available job. Hence agricultural stakeholders including the Federal government must improve the value of extension service as a veritable tool for agricultural development by increasing the level of support and revenue allocation to agricultural development projects and programmes in Cross River State and Nigeria.

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