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EDITORIAL

Continuing Education and Extension Quarterly is a platform which the Department of Continuing Education and Extension Services, University of Maiduguri uses for sharing high quality academic contributions worldwide and on a quarterly basis. The editorial team is enriched to make the Journal multidisciplinary in nature. The Department make efforts to increase and update the team of associate editors and editorial advisers. This is to promote quality advice from within and outside the scope of the University. Manuscript sent from contributors are processed through a double blind peer review system and authors are assured that the process will continue to be detailed and efficient. It is expected that given the commitment of the Editorial Board, and response from the authors across Nigeria and hopefully, beyond; the Journal will continue to gain visibility and wider spread.

Thank you.

Dr. Abubakar Abba Aji
Editor.

Prof.

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About the Journal

CEEQ is a peer reviewed multidisciplinary publication of the Department of Continuing Education and Extension Services, Faculty of Education, University of Maiduguri. Its aim is to provide a platform for the dissemination of knowledge and exchange of ideas amongst scholars in Education, Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and related fields. It prefers empirical papers to theoretical ones, and receives articles throughout the year.

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Extension Education and Farmers Capacity building: A Mechanism for Addressing National Food Security in Kwara State

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ABSTRACT

This paper was titled Extension Education and Farmers Capacity building: A Mechanism: Addressing National Food Security in Kwara State. The paper focused on enlightenment campaign for rural farmers through non-formal and extension education to equip farmers with modern scientific approaches to farming techniques, technologies and improved seedlings. The study aimed to bridge the gap between agricultural researchers and rural farmers. Thus, the research work is face to face educational instructional strategies that teach farmers on improving farming system thereby boosting food production and food security for the general population. The paper advocated extension education programme sand retraining of extension workers, improved teaching facilities and funding the extension programs for sustainability. However, the researcher concluded that extension education remains a very viable option for mass literacy and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) poverty alleviation and socioeconomic emancipation, it is therefore, recommended that the Government should conduct need assessment in various Communities and design a suitable extension education that fosters on farmers capacity building and food security in the nation. Again, it was recommended that more extension workers be employed to improve proper delivery of extension education across rural communities for a long lasting solution to the nation's food insecurity.

Keywords: Extension Education, Framers Capacity building and National Food Security

Introduction

Education and Extension Education

Agricultural extension is a form of rural development that relies on non-formal education. It is an old curriculum that works hand in hand with applied and academic agricultural scientific research. There is a wide debate about the necessity of separating the skills of the researcher from those of the agricultural extension worker (Mohunnad, Nowrin and Stoweka, 2021). The term extension education is an ancient word derived from Latin 'ex' meaning out of and 'tension' meaning stretching. Education is a systematic arrangement that promotes learning of numerical or alphabetic knowledge, skills, social interactions that promote communication, self-reliance and positive self-concept necessary to boost innovation. Education includes all forms of knowledge transfer, training, discussion that aims to achieve stated learning objectives. Sa'Adu and Matthew (2017)

According to agriculture, extension education involves the conscious use of communication of information to help the farmers to form sound opinions and make good farm decisions. Education can take the form of group discussion among learners, instructor approach where the teacher stands in front of the instructor to pass instructions to the learner in a formal setting such as school or in an informal setting aimed at passing information from the instructor to the learner. Education improves the ability of the learner to think and act in a manner that improves innovation and productivity.

Education extension is primarily focused on reaching-out to those population not covered by the formal education in attempt to spread literacy across the villages where formal schools are unavailable. Surendra (2014) Extension education also provide learning and motivation of adults on family living, leadership development, community improvement and environment and as well in assisting farmers and other people in relation to public affairs. Education is like a window that helps people to view the world in a better perspective and act in a productive manner. Education promotes desirable behavioural change among people. Webster 2023 viewed education as teaching to develop the knowledge, skill or character of the student. Rodney Stark, a sociologist, viewed education as the cheapest, most rapid and most reliable path to economic advancement under present conditions. Omelu (2023) highlighted activities of United Nation Education, scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO) and United Nation international children emergency fund (UNICEF) etc., that are directly or indirectly involved in the initiation or identification of a development programme or project and are involved in the implementation of such a programme or project for the betterment of the people and their communities. Thus, this paper is focused on Extension Education and Farmers Capacity building: A Mechanism for Addressing National Food Security in Nigeria.

Types of Education

We have two types of education known as the formal system of education and the non-formal system of education.

i. Formal Education

The formal education is an institutionalized and systematic way of teaching and learning which takes place through well documented and planned academic

modules, well structured and carried-out within a stipulated timeframe and a given age range of learners as stipulated National Policy of Education of a given country. Such educational content is however subjected to specified content, prescribed methodology for teaching and meant for specific stages of learning with set objectives to be achieved with stringent considerations to societal norms and values. The formal education involves three key actors: the learner, the teacher and the institution. It is planned with stated behavioural objectives, specified times-frame, well defined curriculum and delivered by a trained teacher, includes other aerobic and extra-curricular activities to be doggedly followed.

Formal education is well planned with a target to be attained at the end of the training. Formal education has a given time lag; it's a programme that is planned to roundup within a specific period of time and a systematically designed curriculum to be followed. All learning activities that offer activities outside the classroom and follow instructions appropriately are referred to as a formal education.

ii. Informal Education

Informal education is a learning that takes place between a learner and an instructor in any private setting adjudged to be conducive for knowledge transfer. Informal education maybe a form of adult education organized for the elderly in the communities or a remedial session organized for out-of-school adults who missed the opportunity of formal education. The informal education is incidental and spontaneous learning approach that is not predetermined or planed by any central body or special agency and no predetermined timeframe neither timetable nor a central curriculum dictate. Learning is carried-out in an informal way that is convenient to both the teacher and the learners.

iii. Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education may also be a skill acquisition centre where people go to learn lifelong skills, it maybe a home lesson for individualized learning for out-of-school adults. It provides the learner and the instructor with ample opportunity to have face-face contact with no systematically rigid curriculum to follow. This type of education is focused on specific skills and for a given homogeneous group using a given skills acquisition centre. As the name connotes, non-formal education is the type of learning that is done outside the realm of the formal education. It is an individual or homogenous group learning that is chosen by the learner.

Basic Definitions Related to Extension

Extension education as an applied science that is made up of research outcomes, hands-on experiences as well as theories of behavioural sciences developed into knowledge using available technology to educate and empower out-of-school adults and young people to solve their challenges and meet their aspiration in life. Extension work is an out-of-school remedial education where the learning approach is learning by practicing the instructions being passed by the trainee. In order words, extension education is a practical approach to learning where the government facilitates the knowledge and skills to be delivered to the people in attempt to develop the people and in turn develop their community. Education

extension is targeted at raising standard of living of village dwellers by increasing their skills to boost their productivity.

Extension education sieve scientific findings and pass scientific guideline or information to people living in rural communities. The information maybe in areas of literacy, health, agriculture or others in order to help them stay informed. So, extension education is a continuous effort of both learner and the teacher to achieve literacy. Sa'adu and Matthew (2017) Extension education equips rural dwellers with knowledge that improves their decision making ability in specific areas of Endeavour. The importance of agricultural extension in agricultural development is widely acknowledged, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria whereby in most developing countries, agriculture is the main source of livelihood.

Methods of Extension Education Delivery

There are different approaches to extension education. Majorly, we have face-to-face approach and the one done via the human aided technology.

i. **Face-To-Face Extension Delivery:** any form of extension education that is done at the convenience and proximity of the learners across communities other than the conventional school setting and rigid curriculum is known as face-to-face extension delivery. This type of extension is promoted by government, organizations or individual in attempt to achieve global literacy. Given the spatial settlement pattern across villages, face-to-face extension becomes a vital tool to achieve the UNESCO target of achieving the vision 2030 global literacy rate. This method will help in sensitizing local farmers to gain skills and knowledge necessary agricultural technological advancement, latest technology to maximize farming output and effectively counter pest and weed control. Also, face-to-face extension trickles down the research innovation necessary to improve farm-yield and acquire knowledge to improve yield and take care of their health properly. This approach help learners to ask questions and get feedback in real time; however, it is very expensive to sustain as it requires more personnel and logistics support to achieve the goal of extension education.

ii. **The Technological Aided Extension Education:** The innovation in science and technology has brought the world into a global village. In this segment, it is worthy to note that technology aids communication which significantly promote extension education. However, the challenge remains the ability of rural dwellers to effectively manipulate the technology for effective communication. Every manual lectures delivery via face-to-face can as well is delivered with adequate deployment and utilization of technology. In this circumstance, there will be need for tech experts to teach locals on how to manipulate the technology in order to connect to online modules to benefit from extension education aided by technology. If this technology adoption is successful, local farmers can achieve extension education seamlessly at a cheaper and convenient means.

Extension Education and Farmers Capacity Building:

The need for extension education cannot be over-emphasized. For any farmer to adequately understand the nature of soil and its suitable crops, quality pest control management and weed control as well as access to modern research, unhindered

access to technology is very critical to enrich local farmers knowledge for improved seedling and general productivity. The followings are benefits of extension education to farmers' capacity building:

- i. **Technology Transfer and Adoption:** extension education is aimed at equipping local farmers with modern technology that increase farm yield and reduce manual labour. Extension education teaches farmers how to operate modern farming tools for increased output. With this technology adoption, farmers will make more profit and reduce wastages. In this regard, government should provide necessary infrastructures, good road network, electricity, rural communication facilities where farmers can have access to it. Bisi, Akande and Biola (2010) observed that, extension and community research conducted not on the basis on the needs and aspirations of the farmer is bound to produce invalid results because the farmers may tend not to respond sincerely.
- ii. **Ecological Multilevel Community Analysis:** for increased farming produce to take place, proper ecological factors studies are necessary to ascertain suitability of crops and timing of seeds planting, weeding and other farming activities to promote productivities. Extension education also exposes farmers to cash crops needed for export and wealth creation. With the aid of research, farmers as re-oriented that animal dunks are sources of manure that can enrich soil for improved crop production. Extension education promotes farmers knowledge on climate change and its dynamics as it affects crops production and animal health for improved productivity. Extension education puts into consideration the multi-dimensional mix of the societal cortex in forming the roadmap of extension education for holistic development of the community. The outcome of the above will guide the ecological aspects to be studied during the course of the extension education in ensuring the social challenges are addressed.
- iii. **Social problems:** the primary objective of the extension of education is fine-tuning the decision making process of the individuals in the community for personal and community development in a manner that it doesn't clash with existing socio-cultural norms and values of the people. Also, the policy makers in the extension education should put into cognizance the in addressing the women empowerment, drug abuse, terminal diseases such as HIV/AIDS, hunger and other social vices ensuring that they are adequately addressed in ensuring poverty alleviation in Nigeria. Extension education should note individual household, their needs and expectations, state of marriage, family size and weight of responsibilities, their religion and issues regarding gender roles and expectations. These factors will add value to the quality of extension education delivery to the local farmers across different community for their development.
- iv. **Rural Community and Quality of Life:** the quality of social, health and security facilities available in the rural community should be assess to establish the challenges affecting the people of the community. Extension education pays kin attention to the effectiveness of these facilities to ensure that the welfare of the people of the community. Every community is made of diverse kinds of interest or social-cultural groups that have come together to form a community. These groups

include religious groups, cultural groups, social clubs, specialized organizations and other organization who made-up the community. Thus, the extension education should look into the effectiveness of these groups in contributing to the community development. In addition, extension education look into community formation, their interaction, participation in community development, partnership with one another, goals, age groups, gender matters and level of education as they affect or influence participation in extension education. For instance, there are communities that perceive the education of the girl-child as a taboo and heavily stereotyped against. Extension education must be seen to tackle this wrong perception doggedly.

v. **Sense of Rural Community:** Extension education activities are very needed in remote communities than the urban centres due to lack of schools and social amenities in the rural communities. Bichi (2010) highlighted the need to underscore the level at which segment of the community are directly connected to the larger community in strengthening the relationship that exist between them. The cohesion among these groups is very key in conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence. Shitu (2012) outlined four dimensionstowards understanding sense of rural community thus: participation, encouragement, incorporation andintegration, and self-dependence and joint responsive linkages.

vi. **Collective Action and Rural Community Dynamism:** extension education should also focus on changes required to ensure sustainable rural community development economically, politically, socially, intellectually and psychologically. In this context marginalized groups resources are harnessed and efficiently utilized towards given them a voice and raising their consciousness on the potentialities they possess. This type of research involves extensive community education facets, mobilization techniques, involvement strategies and participation methods. Moreover, it is an effort to bring closer all the societal components together for proactive action to ensure change is effected for the majority of the community members' mostly low-income earners.

Roles/Impact of Extension Education on Food Security

The roles of extension education to Nigeria's quest for food security cannot be overemphasized. The local farmers are left in the hands of ignorance without extension education. Extension education provide local farmers with the followings"

i. **Education for informed decision:** education is the bedrock of community development. When the general population is educated, there is higher chance for them to make informed decision about themselves, their career, their community and the country at large. With quality extension education, the local farmer will acquire information necessary to boost crop production by reducing cost and improving farming yield.

ii. **Research feedback for increased productivity:** Research information will be put into proper use through sensitization offered by extension education. Research information equips farmers with information on improved seedling, soil suitability for given crops and climate change. This information will guide the farmer on choice of crops, effective ways to combat weeds, effective climate change adaptation for increased farming outputs for cost-effective and improved farming produce. With climate information, farmers would be guided in farming activities to cut cost due to climate change activities.

iii. **Adequate pest management and control:** uncontrolled pest destroy crops thereby leading to great lost of farming revenue. Information on how to curb the effects or spread of pests on farm produce will greatly help farmers to cut losses thereby maximizing farming productivity and by implication increasing farmer revenue. The sensitization on pest management helps the farmers to understand at what stage to apply the insecticides, herbicides and weed management of the crop.

iv. **Education for farmers' family members:** the local farmers are usually living in remote villages where they carry-out their farming activities. They marry and raise children too. These children are entitled to Universal Basic Education while the adults who missed education during early year's development need adult literacy centre to achieve universal global education targets set by UNESCO.

v. **Education for socio- economic and political participation:** a well informed citizen is equipped to take active rolls in the socio-political participation in his community. Education creates knowledge, confidence and the needed communication skills to engage the people in his community. Good leadership and people-oriented political policies is also dependent on the amount of awareness, the social skills and utilization abundant technologies to achieve socio-political emancipation of the people. When people are well educated, they realize their rights, responsibility and expectations set by the community they live.

vi. **Education for self-reliance:** education has often been described as the best legacy because it empowers people in multi-dimensional perspectives. Education helps people to think and apply such thoughts towards financial freedom and they create businesses that create wealth which eventually lead to financial freedom.

Issues in Extension Education towards Community Empowerment

There are myriads of issues affecting extension education in Nigeria. In recent time, health challenges such HIV/AIDS, COVID 19 pandemic and indeed the climate change has affected the smooth implementation of the extension education in Nigeria. Another ailing factor affecting extension of education is lack of clear definition of roles and responsibilities of each of the three tiers of government (Federal, State and the Local Government Area council) in the legislation thereby creating the lacuna hampering the smooth implementation of the extension education in areas of research, information communication facilities provision, gender related factors which affects collaboration in Nigeria.

Traditionally, women stand a better chance to facilitate women extension activities. However, the political will to employ and engage women for extension education seem to be facing a difficult storm from both the government and the family as women are mostly relegated to the kitchen. When women are engage in driving extension education, more people will develop interest to participate in it which promotes programme stability. However, many scholars are yet to focus on the above assertion. Nevertheless, the above provide the basis for public engagement in scholastic discussion centered on socio-cultural constraint limiting women participation in extension education.

Challenges of Extension Education in Community empowerment

- i. **Political system:** the major challenge facing the survival of extension education is the political systems of Nigeria are listed below:
The Nigerian political system is very irregular, turbulent and greatly affected by tribalism, sectionalism, corruption, sexual harassment, terrorism and growing rate of kidnappings among others. These factors affect the implementation of the extension education in Nigeria.
- ii. **Bad Budgeting and Corruption:** the undue allocation of Nigeria's budget to political office holders against professionals is a great problem affecting the morals of extension education personnel. A situation where salaries for 35 years service of a Professor combined together cannot match the monetary value of a Senator/House of Rep member SUV car at #160 million as budgeted in the 2024 annual budget of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is a great demoralizing factor for extension workers and education in general (Annual Budget of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 2024).
- iii. **Instability:** change of government often leads to aborted intension of government policies. When a new government comes onboard, existing policies are eroded for fresh policies. This lack of continuity of government policy also affects the progress of extension education in Nigeria. When policies are abandoned, the intension of such policies is aborted. New government comes onboard with new policy entirely different from the existing ones.
- iv. **Population Explosion:** there have being exponential explosion of young people and adult population in Nigeria over the years. This situation has led to overbearing workload on the already thin extension education workforce in Nigeria resulting in poor management of the extension education scheme (Kalusam, 2013).
- v. **Proficiency of the workforce:** generally, one of the major factors affecting extension education is poorly trained workforce. Education has being relegated to employment opportunity where teaching appointments are shared by government officials according to slots as against qualification and suitability. Poor remuneration of teachers has discouraged qualified graduates from applying for teaching jobs leading to brain-drain in Nigeria educational sector. This situation has left management of extension education in the hands of quacks that are grossly below standard for teaching.
- vi. **Training and retraining:** there should be a biannual retreat for teachers to refresh their knowledge and increase their productivity in Nigeria. Over the years, international organizations like the UNDP, UNICEF and NDGs engaged in same have tried to motivate the learners. However, the government must address the poor standard of extension education (Sani, Turiman, Ismi & Zohara, 2015).
- vi. **Poor teaching facilities:** the extension education is facing challenges of lack of laboratory for practical experiments, libraries, workshops for artisans, lack of electricity supply to remote villages, poor facilities among others. The above are factors reducing teaching in to merely abstract in class. The teacher-students ratio of extension education is overwhelming and the ratio goes above 1 teacher to 1,400 students. This situation reduces impact and increase quackery.
- vii. **Poor funding:** the lack of substantive funding for extension education by Federal, State and Local Governments has bedeviled the survival of extension

education in Nigeria. This has reduced the extension education to end in mere policy design without proper implementation. Sani, Turiman, Ismi and Zoharah (2015) recommended that extension education funding should be captured in the exclusive budget list in order to overcome the fracas of poor funding. They also emphasis on the need to leverage of other international bodies like the UNICEF, UNDP, (NGOs) for more access to funding.

Extension Programme and Farmer Field Schools

The following are the two types extension projects are widely practiced. They are extension programme and farmer field schools.

i. **Extension Programme:** this is the theoretical aspect of extension education. It include the classroom engagement between teacher and the learner across extension centres in Nigeria. During this programme, the learners are thought alphabetical and numerical values and application of the knowledge acquired in real life situation. The learners are taught how to read and write, communicate in both oral and written forms. The aspects of the extension programme may span around literacy education, health education, physical fitness, agricultural education, entrepreneurship, finance and other aspect of education.

ii. **Practical agriculture at School Field:** here, the extension officer engage learners in practical ways to prepare a farm land, plough the land, identify suitable soil for specific crops, plant seeds, weeding activities (physical or application of chemicals), pest management, harvesting, climate change and effects on farm produce and storage processes are taught during practical education at the school farm. It's the right platform that enables the teacher to explain the practical aspects of agriculture to the learners with hands-on experiences. The Farmer Field School (FFS) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) have combined efforts to achieve this height. The target of School Field is to grow healthy crops, learn weeding activities and pest control approaches continually monitor crop growth and develop professional farmers that will apply scientific research outcomes to develop our agriculture.

Purposes of Agricultural Extension

The followings are the purposes of agricultural extension:

i. **Synergy:** the essence of agricultural extension is to ensure that the wide gap between literacy and the rural dwellers is bridged. Also, the outcomes of scientific researches need to be communicated down to the grassroots and the feedback is also communicated back to the researchers. This is very vital towards building farmers' capacity and improving food sufficiency in Nigeria.

ii. **Improving on Agricultural practice:** Through extension education, the general farming practice is developed, revamped and enhanced for increased farming produce by reducing direct labour and embracing use of scientific and technological implements and approaches to fight pest, improve seedlings, and use knowledge gained from the extension education to do farming better, faster and more productively.

Conclusion

Extension education is a veritable window to achieving mass literacy and the attainment of the global, national and state Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria. However, the Extension Education is challenged due to lack of funding and the political will to achieve mass literacy in Nigeria. If funding requirement is adequately addressed, Nigeria will find herself on the roadmap to mass literacy, poverty alleviation and socio-economic emancipation of the people. A well educated society have chances of liberating themselves from poverty other challenges compared to non-literate population. In view of the above, the government is hereby advised to adhere to the requisite funding of the extension education in order to achieve mass literacy in Nigeria by planning and implementing short, medium and long term solution to extension education in Nigeria.

Recommendations

In view of the above discussions, the researcher has itemized the following as recommendations for the study:

- i. The government should conduct need assessment of the various communities in order to plan a suitable extension education that will help the locals to harness the resources at their disposals thereby fighting rural-urban drift after completion of extension education.
- ii. There is a pressing need for more extension personnel to be recruited into the scheme and the government should ensure that the number of extension personnel is not overwhelmed with workload to avoid brain-drain. The government should also give consideration to natives of these communities when recruiting staff for extension education.
- iii. The government should address the critical matter of legislation regarding extension education. There should be clear statement of which tiers of government is responsible for funding, implementation and running of extension education in Nigeria.
- iv. The community also has a critical role in volunteering for extension education services in Nigeria.
- v. The extension education stakeholders should bridge the gap between government and non-governmental organizations to the benefit of the extension education.

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