ANALYSIS OF AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATION FOR IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY AMONG RURAL FARMERS IN ODEDA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION,
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FEBRUARY, 2016

DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation titled: ANALYSIS OF AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATION FOR IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY AMONG RURAL FARMERS IN ODEDA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OGUN STATE, NIGERIA, was carried out by me, in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. That the information derived from Literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and in the list of references. No any part of this dissertation was previously presented for another degree in this, or any other Institution.

	.....	.....
Oluwatoyin Shakirat SALAMI	Signature	Date

CERTIFICATION

This Dissertation titled: ANALYSIS OF AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATION FOR IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY AMONG RURAL FARMERS IN ODEDA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OGUN STATE, NIGERIA, by Oluwatoyin Shakirat SALAMI (Mrs.) meets the requirements, regulations and a standard governing the award of the Master of Science (M.Sc) in Mass Communication of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, and it is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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Member, Supervisory Committee

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated only to the Almighty Allah (SWT), the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful, the Master of the Day of Judgment, my pillar of strength, who has always been there for me, Alhamdulillah!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ADP:	Agricultural Development Programme
AFDB:	African Development Bank
BES:	Block Extension Supervisors
DFRR1	Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure
DOI:	Diffusion of Innovation
EAs:	Extension Agents
IFAD:	International Funds for Agricultural Development
IITA:	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
NAFPP:	National Accelerated Food Production Programme
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
NOU:	National Open University
NPC:	National Population Commission
OFN:	Operation Feed the Nation
OGADEP:	Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme
PME:	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
RID:	Rural Institution Development
TFP:	Total Factor Productivity

ABSTRACT

This study analyzed Agricultural Communication for Improving Productivity among Rural Farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. The research problem was the persistent low agricultural productivity in Nigeria, as a result of lack of access to adequate agricultural information by the rural farmers to their improve productivity. It looked at the Communication methods being used by the Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme (OGADEP) to pass relevant Agricultural Information to its rural farmers, to improve Productivity. It also examined how farmers access Agricultural Information, and the challenges being faced by OGADEP and the farmers, in passing, as well as, receiving the information respectively. Four research questions were generated for the study. In collecting data, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Survey research and structured interviews were adopted. The population of the study was in three categories; rural farmers in Odeda, extension agents in the area and the OGADEP information officer in the State: 3,155, five (5), and one (1) respectively. Three Hundred and Fifteen (315) rural farmers in this local government, five Extension Agents, covering the areas under the LGA and the OGADEP Information Officer formed the population of the study. It adopted stratified sampling under the probability sampling method. Data were collected through both primary and secondary sources. Questionnaires and face-to-face interview were used to collect primary data for the study. The findings revealed that Extension Agents (EAs), and the Mass Media, are the main Methods being used by OGADEP in passing Agricultural Information to the rural farmers. Findings also showed that the Mass Media and the EAs were the major sources of Agricultural Information for the farmers. The result also revealed the various challenges being encountered in passing and accessing information by the EAs and the farmers respectively and their suggested solutions. Also, the farmers preferred getting their information from sources, with immediate feedback. The Study recommended that there should be improved communication as a means of ensuring farmers get access to Agricultural Information.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Due to the challenges of hunger, unemployment as well as poverty, and the continuous increase in population, which characterise the Nigerian nation, the need to ensure food security through agricultural sector is being agitated by various levels of government. It is believed that, if Nigeria, as a nation, can again get it rightful place in Agriculture, most of its present problems will be solved. This is because, agriculture, in the past, has proved, not only to feed the country, but generate revenues for the government to carry out its various developmental programmes, in addition to providing employment opportunities for the citizen. It is thus, no wonder that today, several steps are being taken to fast track agricultural development in the country.

However, in ensuring this, the importance of information in facilitating agricultural development cannot be under estimated. Dissemination of appropriate information to farmers from places, like, Research Institutes, Universities, as well as relevant authorities in the area, using the right communication methods, is very important, if the utilizers of the information (the farmers) must make meaning out of it and respond as intended. The accessibility of information by these farmers, especially those in the rural areas, has been identified by various scholars (Sharma, 2003; Oyekunle, 2011; Arokoyo, 2012), as one of the major factors, militating against development of agriculture in Nigeria today. The use of effective communication to promote agricultural development is being advocated for by stakeholders, as, it has

been identified, that, no development programme can succeed without the effective use of communication.

Agricultural communication therefore, is the effective transfer of agricultural innovations from Technology developers, to the end users, that is, the farmers. For this transfer of information to be effective and the desired result achieved, it requires the use of appropriate methods or channels, in order to elicit the desired response from the intended beneficiaries (Farmers in this instance). Thus, communication has a vital role to play in any efforts towards ensuring improved rural productivity. Dissemination of information using the right communication technology is very important, if the receiver must make a meaning out of the messages being received (Oyekunle, 2011).

One of the functions of the media, among other numerous ones, is to educate the public on issue, ranging from developmental issues, programmes and projects of the Government, through a medium or media. Realizing the importance of communication, in the development of any society, the Nigerian Government at all levels, at one time, or the other, made mass use of the media of communication, to disseminate important messages to mobilize the people, towards a particular programme or policy. This tactic has been applied to Agricultural sectors over time. Programmes like the Operation Feed the Nation, and the Back to Land of the 70's by the Military Government of General Olusegun Obasanjo (Rtd.), were some of the programmes that the government have employed the use of the media for mobilization of the populace to go back to land, that is, the farms (the target being towards food security) (Sa'adatu, 1993).

According to Obatolu, (2002) in Oyekunle (2011), the success of any developmental oriented programme or project is dependent on the effective, and efficient means by which beneficiaries and participants are sensitized and motivated for change. Thus, to achieve the goal of mass mobilization, attitudinal change and participation, the use of an effective and efficient communication approach is imperative.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Agriculture used to be the main stream of the economy in Nigeria, before the discovery of oil in 1956. So many developmental programmes and projects that are still in existence today were achieved through agricultural sector. In the past, the nation, relied so much on agriculture as the main source of its income. Consequently, so many things went wrong, and subsequent governments have introduced several measures as intervention, to save the situation and return the country back to its 'good old days', when there were abundant of groundnuts in the North, cocoa in the West and Palm kernel in the East. However all these agricultural development intervention programmes have yielded no positive results.

Among the programmes that had been experimented with were; Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) of the then Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo, launched in 1976, the River Basin and Rural Development Authorities also in 1976, the Green Revolution of 1980, as well as the World Bank-funded Agricultural Development Projects (ADP). However, none of these initiatives have been able to yield the desired results. Inspite of all the nation's enormous resources, Nigeria as a nation still cannot feed herself, not to talk of exporting for revenue generation; rather it relies mostly on importing large quantity of food to feed herself (Akpan, 2002).

Agricultural researchers have adduced various reasons for these problems. Topmost is lack of information or poor communication, which is believed to be one of the major factors responsible for low agricultural production in Nigeria. The availability of this information (to the farmers) is a major issue. Limited or lack of access to agricultural information has been identified as the most serious constrain to agricultural development in Nigeria. Are the people that assigned the responsibility of disseminating the information passing it? In what manner? All these are the problems associated to effective passage of agricultural information to the farmers, which in turn leads to low productivity and subsequently affecting the development of agricultural sector. The research therefore, problem was the persistent low agricultural productivity in Nigeria, as a result of lack of access to adequate agricultural information by the rural farmers to their improve productivity. It is thus important that information reach the farmers when he or she needs it, using appropriate communication strategies, in order to reinforce a new behaviour, so that, it can become part of his or her routine. Rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, like any of their counterpart across the country, have been identified as having challenges of low productivity, due to lack of access to necessary information. To tackle this challenge, the responsibility thus rest on the concerned body saddled with agricultural information dissemination to adopt various communication strategies that will ensure farmers' access to adequate information. Thus, rural farmers are expected to have access to agricultural information that will provide them with necessary knowledge to overcome such challenges.

This study, focused on the availability of agricultural information in Odeda Local Government Area, analyzed the agricultural communication for improving

productivity among rural farmer in the study area and investigated the challenges that hinder these farmers from accessing agricultural information for improved productivity as well as identified the preferred communication methods by these rural farmers.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to analyze the agricultural communication for improving productivity among rural farmers in Ogun State, with particular reference to farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of the State. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the availability of agricultural information for rural farmers in the study area.
2. Identify the sources of agricultural information for rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State.
3. Identify the challenges of rural farmers in accessing Agricultural information in the Study Area.
4. Identify the preferred medium of communication by the farmers as source of information.

1.4 Research Questions

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the Agricultural information available to farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State?
2. What are the available sources of agricultural information for rural farmers in the Local Government?
3. What are the challenges confronting rural farmers in accessing agricultural information in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State?

4. What is the preferred communication medium by the rural farmers as source of information in the Study Area?

1.5 Justification / Significance of the Study

One of the major goals of communication is to pass information across to the end user and for the end user to adequately receive and comprehend the intended messages and use as appropriate. This, to a large extent, determine, the success of any developmental programme or project, that is, the ability of the beneficiaries of such programmes to successfully have access to, and, understand the necessary information being passed across to them, as well as, use such, as it is intended.

According to agricultural researchers, various agricultural programmes, projects and even policies of the Nigeria Government at all levels had failed in the past to achieve the desired results, hence the need to analyse the communication strategies that are being adopted by the relevant stakeholders to communicate to the rural farmers, and also, the medium of communication these farmers have access to, or, prefer, as well as the impact of such communication strategies in the overall achievement of improved productivity. The identification of the right communication strategies for the rural farmers will assist relevant stakeholders in the agricultural sector to know the effective and appropriate communication strategies, with a view to reaching more potential rural farmers. It is also expected that this will assist, in no small way, the OGADEP through its extension services to possibly re-appraise its communication strategies to achieve its desired goals.

As the findings of this study identified the constraints and challenges of farmers in accessing information, solutions can be adopted by the relevant authorities to checkmate such challenges in subsequent activities. The findings will assist the

farmers to further understand the importance of accessing information for better yield, improved productivity and income. Furthermore, this study reveals other researchable problems militating against easy access to information by rural farmers (if any).

1.6 Scope of the Study

The communication activities of the Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme (OGADEP) were used as case study for this thesis, while the rural farmers in Odeda LGA of Ogun State were focused on. In order to get the desired results, the study was carried out among the target groups –the rural farmers, the Extension Agents and the Information Officer of OGADEP.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on concepts and past studies that are relevant to this study. The topics that were covered include; concept of development, agricultural communication, communication for development, agricultural development in Nigeria, concept of improved productivity and agricultural development, the role of communication in agricultural development, rural farmers, communication for rural farmers, agricultural extension services, communication strategies, conceptual framework, empirical review of literature, as well as the theoretical framework.

2.2 Conceptual Review of Related Literature

2.2.1 Development

Various early scholars gave different definitions to the term, 'development'. They see development from different angles. Development according to Walter Rodney is a many sided process that increase the skills and capacity, freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility, and mental well-being of an individual.

Everett Rogers, (1983) sees development as all about new ideas; it involves higher per capita Income, and also affects the level of living and above all he states that development is all about improved social recognitions. An advocate of Diffusion of Innovation Theory, Rogers is of the opinion that for any change to occur in the society, there must be injections of new ideas that will seek to change the situation at the grass root, therefore resourceful ideas must be sought for, from the research centres, and simplified to be disseminated to the target users for adaptations (Umar, 2012).

Dudley Seers in his own definition of development noted that development is all about reduction of poverty, unemployment and inequality. However, all their definitions pointed to one angle, that is, development is about improved social change or social transformation. Udomisor (2007) citing Crocker (1993) concurred, saying the term 'development' should be replaced by word such as 'Progress', 'transformation', 'beneficial change,' 'liberation' or even in some cases, 'revolution'. Also Udomisor (2007) further quoted Ngugi (1995) as defining development as "a type of social change which has the sole intention of bringing about both social and material advancement for the generality of the people and this also include the area of the people's human rights".

2.2.2 Communication for Development

Communication for development is defined by Arokoyo (2012) as 'a researched and planned process crucial for social transformation and operating through three main strategies; advocacy to raise resources and political and social leadership commitment for development goals; social mobilization for wider participation and ownership; and programme communication for bringing about changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices among specific participants in programmes' Access to clear, reliable and appropriate information is necessary for citizen to make informed decision and to influence policy processes that affect their lives. Communication for development processes can therefore, be seen as essential for effective participation and central to enhancing human development (UNDP, 2007).

The role of communication in development among others, is to produce the desired change in human behaviour. It is the processes by which new information, be it on agricultural innovations, health improvement methods, political news, new

manufacturing techniques get transferred from one source to another (Aboyade, 1990). Okpoko (2010) says development communication is making communication, especially mass communication as the focal instrument of achieving reforms in the society.

Nwosu (1990) in Okiyi (2007) observed that development experiences in other part of the World have continued to point to the fact that communication is central to rural and national development. Effective communication is evaluated by the attainment of the desired response or change resulting from the information disseminated. All in all, the concept of communication has moved from mere transferring of ideas, messages or information from a source to the receiver, but also now emphasis on the need to effect a change by getting the desired responses inform of change in attitude, knowledge or way of life.

The media is an instrument used in moulding the society, consciously or subconsciously. The news media is powerful and influential. The capacity to influence and even to shape ideas and opinions and the problems involved makes journalism both a profession and a mission (Jimada, 2006: 3). Wilbur Schramm (1964) argues that for any national development programme, the role of communication media is very vital. He thus dwelled on the vital roles of communication in the long process of National Development.

Dare (1990) noted that some of the leading experts in the area, among them, Everret Rogers, Daniel Lerner, Lucian Pye and to a lesser extent, Wilbur Schramm, saw communication as an independent variables, indeed as the causal agent, in a game called development. These founders of Development Communication, which

include, the aforementioned scholars, Everret Rogers, Wilbur Schramm, Daniel Learner and Lucian Pye agreed that development Communication is all about social transformation.

Development Communication consists of information about government's plans and efforts to improve the standard of living of the populace. It appeals to citizens to adopt new ideas and ways of doing things as it contains stories for betterment, or news of achievement that spur or inspire the citizen. It seeks to persuade citizen to accept that their happiness lies in and is enhanced by their adoption of innovation (Okpoko, 2010).

In this strategy for mobilizing the people, the provision of information, according to Aboyade (1990), has been shown to be a major factor because of its potential for giving new knowledge, raising consciousness, strengthening links and achieving integration of disparate social groups**.** This means when knowledge is acquired through the process of participatory communication in development communication, the citizen will be strengthened to adopt the new innovation in order to the desired transformation in agricultural yielding for instance. It indeed persuade the citizen to accept that their happiness lies in and is enhanced by their adoption of innovation

With all the above argument, we cannot underscore the vital role effective communication plays in the overall development of any nation. The two words, development and communication, can thus be said to go hand-in-hand, especially with the fact that development can be said to rely solely on communication to be successful.

2.2.3 Agricultural Development in Nigeria

Ogen (2007) noted that before the discovery of oil in 1956, Nigeria as a Nation relied so much on Agriculture as the main source of its income. So much was achieved then from the proceeds of Agriculture. The nation was well sufficient as well as exports so many cash crops to generate more resources used for its various developmental Programmes and Policies. The Nigerian economy, like that of Brazil, during the first decade after independence could reasonably be described as an agricultural economy because agriculture served as the engine of growth of the overall economy. From the standpoint of occupational distribution and contribution to the GDP, agriculture was the leading sector.

Alkali (1997) in Ogen (2007) agreed that during this period Nigeria was the world's second largest producer of cocoa, largest exporter of palm kernel and largest producer and exporter of palm oil. Nigeria was also a leading exporter of other major commodities such as cotton, groundnut, rubber and hides and skins. Buttressing this, Lawal (1997:195), states that the agricultural sector contributed over 60% of the GDP in the 1960s and despite the reliance of Nigerian peasant farmers on traditional tools and indigenous farming methods, these farmers produced 70% of Nigeria's exports and 95% of its food needs.

However, events took a downturn following the oil boom of 70s, which turn the country's attention to 'oil dollars', leading to the total neglect of this important sector, Agriculture. Since then the country has been witnessing several economic problems, as the nation that export can no longer even feed itself. Despite the country's abundant manpower, land and water resources, food and animal production

continues to be on the decline, a situation which prompts the government to import food to meet the nation's food requirement. Nigeria's Agriculture suffers from problems of illiteracy and low productivity (Udomisor, 2007).

According to the 2006 National Population Census, Nigeria has a population of about 150 million and about 71 millions of hectares of arable lands. However inspite of all these, it still cannot feed its populace, not to talk o f exporting for more income generation. Many government as well as other stakeholders in the sector have therefore, continue to come up with different intervention programmes to revive the ailing economy by addressing the Nation's Agricultural challenges. Among some of the development initiatives that had been implemented to bring the nation back to its good old days included; the Farm Settlement Schemes; and National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP), launched in 1972, the Operation Feed the Nation, launched in 1976, the River Basin and Rural Development Authorities, established in 1976, the Green Revolution Programme, inaugurated in 1980, the Back to land initiative, the Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), as well as the World Bank-funded Agricultural Development Projects (ADP), among others. All these programmes sought to improve food production which will subsequently translates to food security and better economy. Also in September 2000, Nigeria was one of the 193 nations of the world that endorsed the Millennium Development declaration aimed at encouraging development by improving social and economic conditions in the world's poorest countries. The summit developed a roadmap that have as its target eight goals that are to be achieved by the year 2015.The goal one of these Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is to' Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger' by the year 2015. And

to this end, Nigerian governments at all levels on their part, have continued to embark on many programmes and introduce many policies to increase food production via agricultural development.

There have also been various Presidential Initiatives on Agriculture and Rural Access as well as programmes such as Mobility Programme, Buyer of Last Resort Programme, Fertilizer Stabilization Programme, National Special Programme on Food Security, Community- Based Agricultural Development Programme and National Fadama Development Programme, and of recent, the Transformation Agenda. Mboho (2007) noted that the overall development of any nation rests squarely on its ability to feed its population. Some nations do more than this; they have surpluses to exports and earn valuable foreign exchange.

Different scholars have adjudged many reasons for this problem. Arokoyo (2012) stated that many development efforts in Nigeria including agriculture, in which substantial human and financial resources have been invested, have failed to achieve the expected desired results primarily because the targeted beneficiaries of the efforts have not been involved in the planning and design of the programme. Generally the intervention has been top-down. Mboho(2007) stated that, regrettably, even though African Nations may possess the natural resources: People, land, water to be self sufficient in food production, other constraints such as poor technology, low capital base, lack of expertise, armed conflict, and lopsided policies have made sustainable Agriculture impossible. `

2.2.4 The Concept of Improved Productivity and Agricultural Development

Agricultural productivity is measured as the ratio of Agricultural outputs to agricultural inputs. Output is usually measured as the market value of final product which excludes intermediate products. This output value may be compared to many different outputs such as labour and land (Yield). These are called partial measures of productivity. Agricultural Productivity may also be measured by what is termed total factor productivity (TFP). This method of calculating agricultural productivity compares an index of agricultural inputs to an index of agricultural outputs. Changes in Total Factor Productivity (TFP) is usually attributed to technological improvements. In developed nations of the world, the ratio of agricultural input is always at its maximum with the input. The percentage of growth are more faster than in early rapid growth stage while in developing countries yields are still rising and thus the continuous search for improved and better seedlings aimed at improved productivity.

To this end some sources of agricultural productivity are identified as; mechanization, high yields varieties, fertilizers, liming of acid soils, irrigation, herbicides, pesticides and increased plant density among others.

It has been analysed that the productivity of any region's farms is very important for many reason. Apart from providing more food and thus ensuring food security for a nation, increasing and improved productivity of farms is a big determining factor on a nations' prospects for growth and development as well as competitiveness in agricultural markets, as a lots of proceeds that can be gotten as income from exporting of a nations farms products (the excess from farm produces) can always be

used for the overall development of such nation or region. An increase in a nation's agricultural productivity implies a more efficient distribution of scarce resources. Furthermore, increase in agricultural productivity lead to agricultural growth and can help to alleviate poverty especially in developing countries, where agriculture often employs the greatest portion of the population. As farms become more productive, the wages of those who work in agriculture increase. At the same time, food prices decrease and food supplies become more stable. Labourers therefore have more money to spend on food as well as other products. This also leads to agricultural growth. People see that there is a greater opportunity in earning their living by farming and are attracted to agriculture either as owners of farms themselves or as labourers. However improved productivity can only be achieved when all the methods or sources of agricultural productivity are adequately and effectively communicated to the end users, that is, the farmers.

2.2.5 The Role of Communication in Agricultural Development

Oyekunle (2011), citing Adebayo (1997) noted that there are three distinct levels of stratification in the Agricultural industry. These are the researchers and policy makers, the extension agents and the farmers. The various forms of interaction among these sets of people constitute what is today known as Agricultural communication. Citing Agbaje (1998), Owolabi (2004), described Communication as a necessary condition for bringing about most desired change especially as it affects agricultural improvement. Researchers (Arokoyo, 2012; and Oyekunle, 2011) have agreed that to have any appreciable progress in agricultural production, there is need for the transfer of information or ideas about new technology to the farmers, who are the end users.

Oyekunle (2011) defines agricultural communication as the effective transfer of Agricultural Technological Innovation from Technology Developers (e.g. Research Institutes, Universities, Private Organisations, e.t.c) to the technological utilizers (the farmers). Leagans (1961) opined that effective communication requires a skilful communicator sending a useful message through the proper channels, effectively transmitted to an appropriate audience, to elicit the desired response. However, this information can be transferred or passed to the farmers through various communication methods or strategies, and these serves as the links between the senders and the recipient or users of the agricultural information. It is thus very paramount to identify the appropriate communication methods or strategies to be used to be able to achieve effective communication.

2.2.6 Rural Farmers

According to Obidike (2011), rural farmers account for the greater part of the population of any developing country such as Nigeria, and thus Governments of developing countries have a major responsibility of ensuring that there is adequate rural development in their various communities and local governments which would lead to effective and efficient agricultural systems that will not only supply food and animal protein but also foster the utilization of natural resources in a sustainable manner.

Lack of access to required knowledge and information that can help rural farmers in their farms achieve maximum agricultural productivity contribute in no small way to inadequate food security for the nation as well and incapacitate the nation's ability to have excess for exporting which could have generated more income for development. Udomisor (2007), is of the view that, Nigeria's land is fertile and

almost all crops can grow well in the country. This means that to feed the nation effectively should never be a problem. In more than twenty years ago, Nigeria relied almost exclusively on cash crops such as cocoa, groundnuts, rubber, palm oil and kernel for its foreign exchange earnings.

However, because of inadequate infrastructural and development facilities in rural areas, as a result of neglect of the rural areas, and giving more attention to the development of urban areas, many rural farmers have migrated to the urban centres in search of greener pastures while the few remaining are either too old to toil the farm with their hands (the use of old manual labour) or have died off. These and other reasons have greatly decreased the percentage of farmers in the rural areas thereby leading to serious decline in food productivity.

Thus, the efforts by the various governments to make agriculture more attractive to the youth through the promotion of mechanized farming, provision of better yield as well as provision of necessary and adequate infrastructural facilities to draw the larger percentage of the populace back to farms yield little or no positive sustainable results..

2.2.7 Communication for Rural Farmers

Obidike (2011) is of the opinion that lack of access to basic agricultural knowledge and information by rural farmers may be as a result of certain constraints, has made these farmers to stick to their old traditional methods of farming system and animal husbandry practice, hence resulting in poor crop and livestock productivity. According to her, information and knowledge are very vital in agricultural development of any community and where they are poorly disseminated as a result

of certain constraints, the community agricultural development becomes highly impeded.

Balogun (1990) explained that there is no doubt that our research institutes including the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), have developed a formidable array of improved production techniques in the areas of cropping systems, improved seeds varieties, and fabrication of hands tools and simple machines. It is one thing to amass this knowledge and another to get the farmer, who should be the ultimate user and beneficiary, to adopt the knowledge. Thus the role of communication in forging this linkage cannot be over-emphasized. Information is essential for facilitating agricultural and rural development and bringing about social and economic change (Yahaya, 2003).

Dissemination of information using the right communication technology is very important if the receiver must make a meaning out of the messages being received. Age, Obinne, and Demenongu in Oyekunle (2011) noted that as long as there is continued imbalance in the diffusion of agricultural information and wrongful targeting of information, the possibility of harnessing the full potentials of our rural populace towards attaining sustainable and holistic national, rural and agricultural development will remain problematic and in a limbo.

Thus communication is the essence of extension which seeks to provide knowledge and information for rural people to modify their behaviours in ways that provide sustainable benefits to them and the society in general. This is in view of the fact that the dissemination of an appropriate agricultural information to farmers is one of the major function of an extension services in any state. Oyekunle (2011) opined that

this is so because the achievement of increased productivity is predicated among other factors on a time bound and systematic delivery of relevant agricultural information via communication media to the farmers.

Ogunbade (2002) explained that one of the many ways by which agricultural information gets to farmers is through extension services. Agricultural extension as a discipline has two major dimensions, i.e. Communication and Education. These dimension are needed to achieve not only the dissemination of information but also to help farmers learn how to use the information to build a better life for themselves, their immediate family and the entire society.

2.2.8 Agricultural Extension Services

Umar (2007) defines extension communication as an attempt by an extension worker to transfer or disseminate proven technical information or ideas, and the reception or adoption of such information or ideas by the target individual or group. Extension workers are usually trained to interact well with ordinary people in the promotion of agriculture, health, education literacy, etc. Citing Ugwu (2008), NOU(2010), observed that, Extension services are services employed in the diffusion of new innovations to people who live in the remote areas of a community. They have limited access to their information needs in the areas of agriculture, building, trade, healthcare, domestic work and other areas of human activities.

Ballantyne and Bokve (2003) described extension as service, public or private, that responds to the needs of farmers and rural people for knowledge that they can use to improve their productivity, incomes and welfares and to manage the natural resources on which they depend in a sustainable way. It brings information and new technologies to farming communities, allowing them to improve their production,

incomes and standard of living. Sharma (2003) also define extension as an ongoing process of getting useful information to people (communication dimension) and then assisting these people to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to utilize effectively the information or technology (Education Dimension). Thus extension has two dimension to it; Communication and Education.

Agricultural extension can be defined as an advice and assistance given to farmers through educational procedures on new farming methods and techniques in order to improve their production efficiency and income, bettering their level of living and uplifting the education and social standard of the farmers. Essentially, agricultural extension provides farmers the scientific knowledge so that they could solve their problems. It helps the farmers to learn about what other alternatives that exist in farming so that they can choose the best alternatives for themselves (Oyekunle, 2011). He further noted that this is so because the achievement of increased productivity is predicated among other factors on a time bound and systematic delivery of relevant agricultural information via communication media to the farmers.

All these underscore the importance of dissemination of an appropriate agricultural information to farmers which is one of the major function of an extension services in any state. However in spite of all these important roles that Extension workers are supposed to play in the overall achievement of sustainable Agricultural development in Nigeria, there are still serious challenges that serves as obstacle to communicating effectively with the farmers, especially those in the rural areas. Lawal and Odemwinge (1990) noted that there are communication gaps among the key players

in the Agricultural development and Agricultural Production. Agricultural scientists do not always know the real problems and the constraints that farmers face, and farmers are often not aware of what scientists have to offer them. In the area of Agricultural extension, for example, local farmers' participation, credit, marketing, etc, information can play a very important role in raising the productivity of farmers. The extension officers or agents are basically the source of new information (Dare, 1990).

2.2.9 Communication Strategies

According to Grade (2007), communication strategies involves identifying the most appropriate communication channels and language to use, most especially vocabulary, channels, timing and tone of the messages, recognizing that all farmers are not the same. Okpoko (2010) noted that African Governments are continually faced with problems in mobilizing their citizens for development purposes. This is because they spend more time talking about mobilization than working out effective strategies for mobilizing the citizens for this development. Ogunbade (2002) opined that the agricultural extension system and the mass media are mostly responsible for disseminating information required for mobilizing farmers into participating actively in Agricultural development process.

Communication strategies or methods are thus, ideas or strategies adopted to convey new practices, ideas or methods of farming from the research institutes/universities to the Farmers who are the end users of these technologies (Oyekunle, 2011). Many studies and programme evaluations have weakness in the links between institutions responsible for agricultural research and those concerned with transferring technology to the farmers as a major obstacle to the development and application of

beneficial new technologies in developing countries (World Bank, 1985). Heong, Escalada, Huan, Chien and Quynh (2010) are of the opinion that Agricultural technical information needs to be distilled and communicated in a format that is well understood and motivating to be effective.

There are varied numbers of methods or strategies that an extension workers (who are responsible for educating the farmers) can choose to maximize transfer of information and skills to the farmers. According to Oyekunle (2011) some of these communication strategies/methods include;

a. **Individual Contacts Methods**

Agbamu (2006) in Oyekunle (2011) sees individual contacts as a one – to –one interaction which are aimed at individual farmers. It has to do with a face-to-face discussion under a relaxed and informal atmosphere between an extension worker and a farmer for a specific objectives. This may also involve a farm family that comprise father, mother, children and relative in the household. The household is taken as an individual unit. Example of individual contact methods include; farm and home visits, office calls, telephone calls, correspondence/personal letters, informal / unplanned contacts as well as the use of flags.

b. **Group Methods**

According to Agbamu (2006), this method involves bringing farmers together in one form or another by the extension workers in order to carry out his jobs. This gives rooms for interaction among members of the groups and the extension worker. It provides the members with an opportunity of participation by allowing farmers to ask questions for clarifications discuss issues affecting them with the extension workers and reached a mutual understanding on how best to resolve such. This group

method is more usually used by extension worker as it gives him the opportunity of reaching more farmers at the same time, thereby saving cost and time.

Examples include; method demonstration (extension worker teaching a skill to a group of farmers), result demonstrations (a procedure by the extension agents to prove the advantage of and build confidence in a practice or technology recommended or introduced to the farmers), Meetings **(**the extension Agent meets with the farmers at a specified dates and venues), Fields days/Field trips (the extension agent and farmers visit farmers where proven and adopted technologies were used), Group Discussion **(**Farmers within the same vicinity formed into a discussion group) and excursion / conducted tour **(**group of farmers travelling to another location for a day or more to observe agricultural practices and projects that are not available locally).

c. Mass Methods

This involves the use of techniques that can reach a large number of people at the same time. Mass methods are grouped into three main media techniques; Print (posters, newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets, flayers or extension guides, bulletins), screen (slides, and the multimedia projectors presentations) and broadcast media techniques (Radio, Television, film, and video).

Smith (1985) noted that irrespective of the communication strategies/methods used, it is obvious that the axis of effective agricultural communication is the farmers, his needs, attitudes, perceptions and behaviours. Any communication strategy must be based on an understanding of the farmers perspectives, the hidden constrains a farmer might encounter in trying an innovation and to understand the incentives that will promote or inhibit adoption.

2.3 Empirical Review of Literature

Balogun, (1990), Dare, (1990), and Ballantyne and Bokve, (2003), have tried to examine the nature of agricultural development in our nation, particularly how communication can be effectively employed to promote agricultural development as well as the role of the mass media, its agents and other stakeholders in promoting this of economy, amongst others. Udomisor (2007) in his paper titled, Communication, Agriculture and Rural Development, examined among others, the relationship between development communication and development journalism and explains what they are and what each aims to accomplish. He also examines the use of communication in accelerating the pace of agricultural and rural development in Nigeria.

Umar (2007) in his research work, titled, the Extension Communication, examines the roles and importance of extension workers in providing education to the rural farmers. He looked at the principles of extension communication, effective communication in extension work, use of appropriate communication channels by the extension worker to reach their target audiences as well as the overall use of the extension communication for rural development, especially as it relates to agricultural development in Nigeria. In his conclusion, Umar (2007) found that extension service has not been accorded the priority attention it deserves, thus the need for the greater attention to be paid to it by respective stakeholders such as communication training institutions and centres.

Oyekunle (2011) looked at 'Media Factors Associated with Farmers Participation in the Second National Fadama Development Project Activities in South West Nigeria. He examined the accessibility of rural famers to information and media channels and their perception of multimedia information as well as the communication barriers and constraints affecting farmers participation in the Fadama Project activities. Among the findings by Oyekunle is that, age, farm size, education, as well as, sex, played significant roles in farmers participation in Fadama project activities and the facilitators are most preferred as the source of information. He recommended that the agricultural information needs of the farmers should be determined before information dissemination and that farm broadcast and extension publications should be tailored towards such information needs.

Mboho (2009) in his study, Promoting Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Nigeria through Broadcasting, focused on the importance of indigenous knowledge in rural communities. He looked at the access to new agricultural innovation and the role of broadcasting. He examined the Nigeria agricultural situation, as well as, the various challenges confronting the development of agriculture in Nigeria. The researcher found that broadcasting can play several roles in promoting sustainable agricultural practices in Nigeria. He noted that, its educational role lies in its ability to teach good farm skills and preach against deleterious (harmful) practices.

Obidike (2011) in her study on 'Rural Farmers' problems in accessing Agricultural Information in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria, examined the common sources of agricultural information which the rural farmers in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State are more likely to access for better crop

production and improved animal husbandry as well as the constraints that these rural farmers encounter in their efforts to access agricultural information. Her study revealed illiteracy and lack of good roads (preventing regular visits by Extension Agents), as part of the challenges hindering farmers' access to agricultural information. She also found out that there is need for the establishment of agricultural information centers in all rural communities in Nigeria for easy access and effective utilization of agricultural information in this digital age so as to help the rural farmers' access agricultural information for optimal farm production.

Amosun (2013) stated that the provision of sufficient food at affordable costs is crucial to the survival and well being of the people in any society. Similarly, any efforts directed at tackling poverty will result in naught if food shortage is not properly addressed. It is however true that the ability of a society to produce enough food, at least for the consumption of its local population, depends on the methods adopted. This is why government all over the world are devising new and improved methods of agricultural production in order to feed their teeming population.

However, the responsibilities of passing information on all these methods to the farmers, especially rural farmers in their various communities lies on the shoulder of the Agricultural Extension workers. They are the ones that are responsible for the empowerment of these farmers with necessary information needed by them on their farms.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Diffusion of Innovation theory propounded by B.Ryan and N. Gross (1943); Everett Rogers (1960). According to Anaeto, Osifeso and Onanbanjo (2008), some of the assumptions of the diffusion of innovation theory as

it relates to this study are; Diffusion research centres on the conditions which increase the likelihood that a new idea, products or practice will be adopted by members of a given culture. It predicts that media as well as interpersonal contacts provide information and influence opinion and judgement. Opinion leaders exert influence on audience behaviour via their personal contact, but additional intermediaries (called change agents and gatekeepers) are also included in the process of diffusion; and the information flows through networks; the nature of networks and the roles opinion leaders play in them determine the likelihood that the innovation will be adopted.

According to Rogers (1995), the innovation decision process is a mental process which an individual or other unit making decision passes and the process consists of five stages;

i. Knowledge: Exposure to an innovation and some understanding of how it functions;
ii. Persuasion: formation of an attitude towards the innovation;
iii. Decision: activity resulting in a choice to adopt or reject the innovation;
iv. Implementation: putting innovation to use; and
v. Confirmation; reinforcement or reversal of the innovation decision made.

McQuail (2010) argues that Everett Rogers model of information diffusion envisaged four stages; Information, persuasion decision or adoption and confirmation. He noted the roles of the media on the first two stages, (information and awareness) after which personal contacts, organized expertise and advice and actual experience take over in the adoption process.

The mass media serves as agents of development by; disseminating technical knowhow, encouraging individual change and mobility and promoting consumer demand amongst others. (McQuail 2010:488). Daramola (2003) notes that the diffusion of innovation theory is a theory that seeks to disseminate information about new discoveries to the masses of a social set up. According to him, certain factors such as lack of mass media, lack of access to the media systems, the code (language) of the mass media, hinders the effectiveness of the role of the media in the diffusion of the innovation process.

In this diffusion of innovation theory, the sources of messages are the inventors, change agents and opinion leaders. The messages are the innovations and its perceived attributes, the channels, interpersonal or mass, while the receivers are members of the society. The theory is related to the study in the sense that it is more tilted towards dissemination of information to farmers. Moreso, as the assumptions of the theory suggests, new ideas and information about improved seedlings, mechanizations, fertilizers etc, need to be properly passed to the farmers for their adoption in order to achieve improved productivity. And in doing this, the extension agents, whose responsibilities it is to educate these farmers adopt several communication strategies to pass the message across. Here the second assumptions comes in as these extension agents make use of several methods such as interpersonal contacts, group contacts as well as mass groups to transmit their information and influence opinion and judgement. To be able to carry out all these responsibilities successfully, all the stages of the adoption processes must be followed; awareness-interest-evaluation-trial-adoption.

The diffusion of innovation theory is also very relevant in the sense that Agricultural Research Centres keep looking for ways of improving the agriculture sector and as more ideas, new innovations, as well as new technologies to improve this sector are being discovered, there will continue to be the need to pass (or diffuse) such to farmers (who are the end users) so that they can adopt them for the much needed development of the sector.

The Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) also represents an important advancement over the limited effect theory, which says, the media does not have the impact we think it does. However, according to some scholars, the DOI is not without its weakness. Among these is the fact that it underestimates the power of the media by saying the media only create of the new innovations. It failed to realize that the media can also be used to provide a basis for group discussion, led by change agents.

2.4.1 Critique of DOI

According to Folarin, (2005), and Dominick, (2009), it has been noted that in the adopter's categories of this theory, a set of adopters is omitted. Roger did not realize that some adopters may have the features of innovators/early adopters but may not quickly adopt an innovation due to some personal reasons.

For example, a farmer may not adopt a new innovation that has to do with fertilizers application, because of a certain belief about 'new fertilizer'. This means that the attitude or belief of the farmers can shape the adoption or rejection of such innovation, or ideas. In the case of OGADEP, the Extension Agents are working majorly with rural farmers, who mostly cannot read and write, and are old, age wise, with long years of farming experience, thus selling new ideas to these set of people, convincing them to adopt new ideas, can be a vigorous exercise.

Critics of this model also concluded that it is an overly simplified representation of a complex reality. Adopters often fall within different categories for different innovations; a current laggard can be an early adopter the next time around.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3:1 Introduction

This chapter outlined the necessary steps taken or methods adopted by the researcher in carrying out the study. It involves listing the essential considerations to be followed in the research undertaking. It is in other word, a general arrangement or planning of the manner in which the research exercise was conducted.

3.2 Research Design

This study analyses the relationship between Agricultural Communication Strategies and improved productivity. In the study, the communication strategy is being held as an independent variable, influencing improved productivity in Agricultural sector. The study adopted the use of triangulation or Mixed Methods Research. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011: 49), triangulation refers to the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to fully understand the nature of a research problem. Bryman (2000) explains that triangulation sometimes refers to all instances in which two or more research methods are employed. Thus it may be used to refer to multimethod research in which both a qualitative and a quantitative research method are combined to gather data.

For this study, Survey Research Method was employed. In this approach, two or more variables are usually examined to investigate research questions or test research hypothesis. The results allow study to examine the inter relationship among variables and to develop explanatory inferences. According to Kerlinger (2008:96), survey research deals with the incidence, distribution and inter-relationship of sociological and psychological variables. Survey research is the most suitable procedure capable

of eliciting responses required in finding solutions to a research problem. Also, 'face to face' interview was used for the second and third categories of the population.

3.3 The Study Area

The study was carried out in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State. The Local Government Area is bounded in the west by Abeokuta North Local Government Area and to the east by Obafemi Owode Local Government Area.

According to the report of the NPC (2006) National Population Census, Odeda local government has a total population of One Hundred and Nine thousand, five hundred people. Odeda Local Government Area is endowed with favourable climate and good rain pattern for all year round cultivation of various cash and food crops as well as lives stock farming. The mean annual rainfall distribution in Ogun State is about 1300mm. (Lawal-Adebowale, 2002). Rainy season in the state averages eight months in a year. Rain normally starts in Ogun state around March and last till around September.

The people of the Local Government engage in both crops and livestock production, while others engage in other forms of economic activity like trading and clothes dying known as Adire. The LG has a total of ten wards under it, and has an Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme, OGADEP office, headed by a manager with a team of specialists in different areas ofAgriculture, as well as four to eight Block of Extension offices. Each of these Block office is manned by a Block Extension Supervisors (BES), who in turn supervises 4-8 village Extension Agents (VEAs). These people disseminate information to the rural farmers through their different communication strategies/ methods. The ten wards that make up Odeda

Local Government Area of the State are; Odeda, Balogun Itesi, Olodo, Alagbagba, Ilugun, Osiele, Obantoko, Alabata, Obete and Opeji.

Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme (OGADEP) was launched in February 1986. It is the only Agricultural Extension Agency of the State Government, charged with the responsibility of improving Farmers' technical knowledge and skills, promoting the adoption of improved agricultural production practices along the entire value chain, provision of rural infrastructures that support Agriculture thereby facilitating increased agricultural production and industrialization in line with the agenda of the Government (OGADEP, 2011).

Like many other Agricultural Development Programmes (ADP), in the Country, Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme (OGADEP) is a multi-laterally funded Agency that is jointly funded by the Federal Government of Nigeria, the state Government and International Donors Agencies like, International Funds for Agricultural Development (IFAD), African Development Bank (AFDB), and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The Mission of OGADEP is to increase Agricultural production, farmers' productivity and income along the commodity value chain; through dissemination of improved and proven technologies using international best practices and innovations in an environmentally sustainable manner. Its vision is to become the centre of excellence and point of reference for Agricultural Extension delivery and rural transformation in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa.

OGADEP operates a seven sub-programme structure to facilitate the accomplishment of its set goals. These are; Administration and Supplies, Finance

and Account, Extension Services, Technical Services, Engineering Services, Research and Training, and Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME).

Under its extension service sub-programme, it has the following components; Extension, Women in Agriculture, Communication in Extension and Rural Institution Development (RID). The Programme operates in the three Senatorial Districts of the state, with its headquarters at idi-Aba, Abeokuta. It has Zonal Offices in; Kotopo (Abeokuta), Sagamu, Ijebu and Ilaro. One of the major strategies being employed by the Agency to achieve its goals includes; result based extension services with critical appraisals indicators.

3.4 Population of the Study

There are three classes of populations for this study; the farmers, the Extension Agents as well as the OGADEP information officer. The first class, the rural farmers are 3,155 in number (OGADEP,2013), while the second class, Extension Agents are five in number and one information officer. The population consists of rural farmers in ten wards of Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State as well as the officials of the Ogun State Agricultural Development Agency, specifically five Extension workers covering ten wards under Odeda LG and one information officer of the OGADEP office in the State.

3.5 Sample Size

According to Razaq and Ajayi (2000), the essence of sampling is to pick a small portion of a population (depending on the size of the population, in case it's too large to handle), that can be used to generalize. However, such sample must be reflective of the population and must have all elements inherent in the population for it to be a good representation. A total number of 315 farmers were used as sample (for the first class of population) in this study, while five extension agents manning the ten wards

under Odeda LGA of the state as well as one information officer of OGADEP were interviewed.

Though, OGADEP is yet to have exact figure of the actual population of farmers in each of the local government, but there are various farmers' groups in Ogun State. They are categorized under the following groups; Production groups, cooperative groups as well as women group. It is through these groups that OGADEP work with all the farmers in each of the Local Government Areas of the State. In Odeda LGA alone, there are twenty-one of these registered farmers groups. Their areas of production specialization range from maize and cassava, watermelon, cassava out growers processors, crop production Processing and marketing, piggery and poultry, fishery, and vegetables, among others (OGADEP,2013). Members of these groups will form the first set of population for this study.

3.6 Sampling Procedure

The study adopted the stratified sampling technique under the probability sampling method for this research. Stratified sampling is a probability sampling procedure in which the target population is first separated into mutually exclusive segments (Strata), and then a simple random sample is selected from each segment (stratum). These are then combined into a single sample (Razaq and Ajayi, 2000).

The study thus adopted probability sampling since the major part of the researcher's population is divided into groups (farmers groups) based on their area of specialization. This enable the researcher to spread the sample among the twenty one farmers groups in Odeda Local Government Area, so that members of each of the group can be represented in the study. In determining the sample size for each of the strata, proportionate stratified sampling was adopted. This is because; there is an

average of 150 members in each farmers group. Ten percent (10%) of this number, which is, 15, was taken from each of this group.

Thus in each of the twenty one farmers group in all the ten wards in the local government, fifteen copies of the questionnaires were administered to randomly selected rural farmers based on their membership of the twenty-one farmers groups existing in the Local Government. This gave a total of 315 farmers that constituted the first part of respondents for the study. This was in order to ensure that all the specialized areas of the agricultural practices in the local government area are adequately covered. Thus, 315 copies of questionnaire were shared among the twenty one farmers groups in all the ten wards of the local government. This gave; 315/21= 15.

For the second category of the population, there are five extension agents of the Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme (OGADEP) in charge of the rural farmers in all the ten wards in Odeda Local Government Areas: Odeda, Balogun Itesi, Olodo, Alagbagba, Ilugun, Osiele, Obantoko, Alabata, Obete and Opeji wards. Thus, because of the small number involved already, the researcher picked all the five to interview for the study. Also for the third category, there is only one information officer for OGADEP in the state and he was interviewed. Thus, the population was divided into three groups, namely, the rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area, the extension workers in the local government as well as the information officer of the OGADEP in the state. A total of three hundred and fifteen questionnaires were administered to the rural farmers.

3.7 Methods of Data Collection

The data for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources of information. For primary sources, scheduled interviews were conducted with five

Extension officers assigned to the wards under Odeda Local Government Areas as well as the Information officers of the OGADEP office in the state. Copies of questionnaires were administered to the rural farmers in this local government area. As for the secondary data, the study relied on information gathered from the Library, other scholars' works (all acknowledge in this study) as well as internet materials**.**

3:8 Research Instrument

The researcher made use of questionnaire and structured interviews to collect the necessary data for the study. Copies of questionnaire were administered to rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area. Also, structured interviews were conducted with three extension workers in the local government and the information officer of OGADEP in the State. These were used to gather primary data for this study. Questionnaire is an important instrument for collecting data in surveys. This instrument was used to elicit information from the respondents. This is extremely important as the findings of a survey are determined by the questions asked and the answers given. The questionnaire was precise, concise, without any form of ambiguity that will confuse the respondents and thereby attract the wrong responses from the respondents.

3.9 Validity of the Instrument

The validity of the instrument was based on the final assessment and approval of the research instruments by the two researcher's supervisors (the approval of the questionnaire and the questions for those to be interviewed). Their suggestions and observations were utilized to enhance the validity of the instruments.

3.10 Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the test of the instrument was conducted. The research instrument was pretested by administering copies of the questionnaire to 30 randomly selected

respondents who were not part of the actual study population. Based on the results, the Researcher made some corrections and changes in the questionnaire for the Study.

3.11 The Study Variables

The study consists of two variables, dependent and independent variables; that is, improved productivity and the Agricultural Communication.

Also, the key variables in this study included the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, sources of agricultural information, accessibility to agricultural information, preferred methods of communication as well as barriers / challenges to farmers' access to this information, thus; socio-economic characteristics of the respondents are; the age, sex, marital status, educational background, years of farming.

The Agricultural Communication include; the type of media the farmers have access to, the sources of agricultural information for the farmers, the adequacy of these channels, the challenges encounter in accessing the information, as well as the preferred sources.

3.12 Methods of Data Analysis

Qualitative approach for deductive reason was used for the analysis of the interviews. Descriptive statistics tools such as tables, frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the data collected. From the data gathered, the researcher was able to know whether the agricultural communication strategies being adopted for farmers in rural areas are actually playing an effective role in improved productivity in agricultural sector, as well as preferred methods.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The result of this study is presented and analysed in this chapter. The section includes personal characteristics of the farmers, their accessibility and otherwise to information as well as their challenges. Out of the 315 copies of questionnaire administered to farmers, a total number of 309 were retrieved, out of which five of them were invalid due to inappropriate filling. Thus, the analysis of the questionnaire was based on 304 copies of questionnaire.

4.2 Data Presentation

Here, selected characteristics of the respondents like gender, age, marital status, educational background, and years of farming experience are explained.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Socio- economic Characteristics

Socio-Economic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	187	62
Female	117	38
Total	**304**	**100**
Age Group		
20-25	42	14
26-35	80	26
36-45	104	34
46-above	78	26
Total	**304**	**100**
Marital Status		
Single	51	17
Married	223	73
Widowed	23	8
Divorced	7	2
Total	**304**	**100**
Educational Background		
Primary School	65	21
Secondary School	81	27
Tertiary Level	38	13
None	120	39
Total	**304**	**100**
Years of Experience		
1-5 Years	38	13
6-10 Years	49	16
11-15 years	62	20
16-20 years	48	16
21-25 years	21	7
26-30 years	24	8
31-35 years	43	14
36- above	19	6
Total	**304**	**100**

Table 4.1 shows the socio- economic characteristics of the respondents, the gender, age, marital status, educational background as well as the years of farming experience. Majority 62% were male while 38% were female respondents. This indicates that there are still more of male farmers than female farmers in the rural areas. All the five Extension Agents interviewed were also male, and the only information Officer of OGADEP was also male. Also, 14% of the respondents fell within the age range of 20-25, 26% fell within the age of 26-35, 34% fell within 36 to 45 years of age while 26% of the respondents were above 46 years of age. This further collaborated the assumption that majority of the farmers in the rural areas were either middle age or aged, as a total of 60% of the respondents were within the age range of 36years and above, while the youth represented only 40% of the farmers from age 20 – 35. This further confirms the assumption that most of our farmers in the rural areas are old and we need injection of new blood.

Majority of the respondents (Farmers) were married (73%), 8% and 2% were widowed and divorced respectively while 17% were still single. The educational backgrounds of the respondents indicates 21% of the respondents (farmers) had only primary school certificates, 27% had secondary school certificate, 13% had tertiary education while the remaining 39% had no formal education. The implication of these findings is that majority of the farmers in the rural areas (those with no education, 39% and those with primary education 27%, making a total of 66% can be said to have little or no education. This could be said to be responsible for the claims by the extension agents that they are most times very sceptical in accepting new ideas (believing it is white man's ways) due to their level of education. Thus it takes time and lots of efforts to convince them.

Furthermore, majority of the farmers had been farming for as long as between 16 to 36 years and above. This represents 51% of the farmers, while 49 % had between 1 and 15 years of farming experience. It shows that majority had long years of farming experience. Same goes for the Extension Agents, all the EAs interviewed disclosed that they had been on the job as far back as 1995, which indicates long years of working experience.

4:2 Farmers Access to Agricultural Information

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by the type of media most available in their Locality

Type of Media	Frequency	Percentage
Radio and TV	164	64
Telephone	116	28
Newspapers	4	1
All of the above	20	7
Total	**304**	**100**

Table 4.2 shows the distribution of respondents based on the media most available in the localities. Majority (64%) of the farmers had radio and Television in their area, 28% had telephone available in their areas, while 1% and 7% had newspapers and all media mentioned respectively. This shows that majority of the farmers have access to radio and Television. The Extension Agents further confirmed this, saying that even with the problem of electricity, most of the farmers go about with their small transistor radio (using batteries), radio is one of the major media that these farmers have access to in their areas.

Table 4.3: Views of Respondents by opinion on the best Medium of Communicating Agricultural Information to Farmers

Suggestions on best medium	Frequency	Percentage
Mass Media	80	26
Extension Agents	221	73
All of the above	3	1
Total	**304**	**100**

Table 4.3 shows the farmers opinion on what they considered as the best medium to disseminate agricultural information to farmers. Majority (73%) of the farmers said the best medium is through the extension agents, 20% were of the opinion that the mass media is the best while 1% believed that all of these put together is better. This was buttressed by the claim by all the Extension Agents and the OGADEP Information Officer interviewed, according to them, the farmers benefit more from getting information from the Extension Agents, as this afford them the opportunity to have one on one discussion with the Agents to clarify issues that are ambiguous to them or confirm authenticity or otherwise, of information gotten from other sources. This also enables them to get instant feedback.

Table 4.4: Views of Respondents on Advice to Government for reviving Agricultural Sector

Reviving Agric Sector in Nig.	Frequency	Percentage
Improved communication	152	50
Better funding	11	4
Improve the Extension Services	22	7
All of the above	119	39
Total	**304**	**100**

Table 4.4 shows the farmers advice to the government and other stakeholders on the best way to revive agricultural sector in Nigeria. 50% suggested improved communication, 4% said better funding will go a long way, 7% advocated for improving the extension services while a significant proportion (89%) claimed that all the options (improved communication, Better funding and improving extension services) is the best way to go.

4.3 Agricultural Information for Rural Farmers in the Research Areas

4.3.1: Availability of Agricultural Information for rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State.

In determining the availability of agricultural information for the rural farmers in the area, the following questions were put out to the first respondents (Farmers); Do you have any form of Agricultural Information in your area?, What are the Agricultural Communication Strategies being adopted by OGADEP in your area? And; do you think these sources are adequate for you vis a vis your need for improved productivity?

Table 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by their views on availability of Agricultural Information in their area

Availability	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Available	250	82
Not Available	54	18
Total	**304**	**100**

Results presented in Table 4.5 also shows that 82% of the respondents confirmed that there is the availability of Agricultural Information in their areas while 18% said they do not have.

Table 4.6: Distribution of respondents by methods of Communication adopted by OGADEP

OGADEP Methods for Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Radio Programme	48	16
Television Programme	25	8
Visits by EAs (Individual contacts)	112	37
Visits by EAs (Group Methods)	39	13
All of the above	71	23
None of the above	9	3
Total	**304**	**100**

Table 4.6 shows that the methods being adopted by the Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme (OGADEP), to communicate information to farmers in the State. According to 5% of the farmers, OGADEP pass relevant information to them through visits by the Extension Agents (through individual contacts and group contacts). OGADEP get through to 16% of them through its Radio programme, 8% through Television programme, 23% said that OGADEP adopt all of the above to pass Information to them while 3% said none of the above. This implies that one way or the other, majority of these farmers still get information from OGADEP through one or two or a combination of some of the organisation's communication methods.

In answering this question, the OGADEP Information Officer and the five Extension Agents interviewed listed Radio Programme, Television Programme, visits by Extension Agents (Individual contacts and group methods), organising training for farmers, demonstrations of new methods or techniques (such as SPAT-Small Spot

and MTP-Management Training Plot) as some of the methods being adopted by OGADEP to pass information to the farmers.

Table 4.7: Distribution of Respondents by the Adequacy of the Sources of Information

Adequacy of sources of Agric Infor.	Frequency	Percentage
Adequate	160	53
Not Adequate	123	40
Don't Know	21	7
Total	**304**	**100**

The result shows that majority of the farmers (53%) agreed that the sources of their information were adequate, while 40% were of the opinion that the sources of these agricultural information were not adequate and 7% did not know whether the sources were adequate or not. This implies that there still need to do more, in order to reach the rest of the farmers. Responding to this question, the Extension Agent, known as the 'Akowe Agbe' by the farmers in Ogun State, said that more still need to be done to ensure the adequacy of the farmers' sources of information. They maintained that, the number of the EAs need to be increased, as well as being empowered for better reach. According to the Extension Agents, the available number cannot adequately cover all the villages, more so, with problems like mobility. The Information Officer was also of the opinion that the Extension services need to be improved upon.

4.3.2: The sources of Agricultural information to rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area (LGA) of Ogun State

This question was put to the respondents to test the second research objective, from which of the following channels of communication do you get information that assist you on your farm for improved productivity?

Table 4.8: Distributions of respondents by their sources of Agricultural Information

Channels of information	Frequency	Percentage
Mass Media (Radio and TV)	94	31
Extension workers	159	52
Friends and Family	21	7
All of the above	30	10
Total	**304**	**100**

Table 4.8 shows farmers' sources of agricultural information. Majority (52%) of the farmers got their Agricultural Information from their Extension Agents. Thirty-one (31%) got their information from the mass media, 7% from friends and family while 10% got the information from all the listed sources. This indicates that the extension agents, supported by the mass media, still play a significant role in ensuring that farmers are well informed to take appropriate actions that will ensure improved productivity. This was also supported by the explanations of the extension agents interviewed in this study. The Extension Agents and the Information Officer of OGADEP explained that majority of the farmer got their Agricultural Information from the Extension Agents as well as agric local Radio and Television programmes that OGADEP had on air (e.g; Agbe Afokosoro on Radio and Agbelere on TV). According to them, these farmers who majorly rely on information from the extension agents also got information from their friends and families as well as their children (especially those with educated children). They however explained that the farmers always ensure they confirm any information gotten from other sources from the extension agents before proceeding to utilizing such.

4.3.3: Challenges confronting rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State in accessing Agricultural Information

In determining the challenges confronting farmers in Odeda LGA in accessing Agricultural Information, the following questions were put to them; what are the challenges that are preventing you from getting access to information that can help you on your farm? And, how do you think such challenges can be overcome?

Table 4.9: Distribution of respondents by their views on challenges in accessing Agricultural Information

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Illiteracy	11	4
Lack of electricity & Bad signal	59	19
Inadequate agric programmes on air	24	8
Lack of access to media	6	2
Bad terrain preventing easy access by Eas	92	30
All of the above	112	37
Total	**304**	**100**

Table 4.9 shows the challenges confronting these farmers in accessing the information to use on their farms. 30% attributed inability to get enough information to bad terrain of their areas, which are mostly villages that are hard to reach. 4% linked it to illiteracy, 19% was due to lack of electricity and bad signal, 8% inadequate agric programmes on air, 2% lack of access to media, while the majority (37%) claimed that all of the above are the challenges preventing them from getting adequate information. This indicates that farmers face various challenges in accessing adequate information. Responding a similar question, the Extension Agents explained that in the effective passing of Information to the rural farmers, the EAs mentioned bad road networks into the villages, lack of funds and motivation,

mobility problem, difficulty in convincing farmers towards accepting new ideas (because of the fear of unknown) among others as some of their challenges. Also the Information Officer cited farmers' disposition to new ideas (most are sceptical in taking risks) as well as insufficient funds as some of their challenges.

Table 4.10: Distributions of Respondents on how to overcome the Challenges in accessing Agricultural information

Solutions	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Improved communication	53	17
Increased Number of Eas.	30	10
Improved infrastructure (Good Roads, Electricity & more local stations)	39	13
All of the above	182	60
Total	**304**	**100**

Table 4.10 shows farmers' suggestions on how their challenges of accessing adequate Information can be overcome. Seventh (17%) said improving communication in rural areas will solve the problems, 10% wanted increase in the number of Extension Agents, 13% advocated for improved infrastructure in rural areas, while a larger majority of them (60%) believed that adopting a combination of all these various solutions to tackle these challenges is the only way to solve it. The implication of the above is that various stakeholders in Agriculture still need to do a lot if the desired results in Agricultural sector are to be achieved. Also on what they are doing to overcome the challenges encountered in the delivery of their duties, the EAs explained that, they worked hand in hand with fellow colleagues (such as sharing the few available Motorcycles among themselves to overcome the mobility problem). Also the Information Officer said establishing and maintaining good relationship with the farmers, coming down to their level, eating and drinking with

them, which build trust, had been helping in gaining the trust and confidence of the farmers.

4.3.4: Preferred medium of communication by the farmers in Odeda LGA, as Source of Information

In determining the preferred medium of communication for the rural farmers in Odeda LGA, this question was put to the respondents. What source of information do you prefer to get your agricultural information from?

Table 4.11: Distribution of Respondents by preferred sources of Agricultural Information

Type of Media	Frequency	Percentage
Mass Media	69	23
Extension Agents	179	59
Friends	13	4
All of the above	43	14
Total	**304**	**100**

Table 4.11 shows the preferred sources of information by these farmers. Majority (59%) preferred one on one with the extension agents, 23% preferred the mass media, 4% friends while 14% preferred a combination of all these methods of communicating Agricultural Information to them. This implies that in order to reach these farmers with relevant information and achieved the desired results, a combination of all the methods of communication should be employed. Also the high preference for Extension Agents (59%) might be due to the fact that direct interaction with the agents help the farmers in getting instant information that guide and direct them properly. Such, one on one, gives them opportunity to ask questions and get instant feedback unlike radio, television or even newspapers. Even with the telephone they still need to pay for calls. Responding to this question, the EAs

mentioned Radio (because majority of the farmers have Radio which does not need electricity), meeting with Extension Agents (having one on one interaction with the agents which enables them ask questions and get instant response as well as confirm speculations on information heard from other sources). The Information Officer also collaborated this.

According them, OGADEP had one radio programme (Agbe a foko soro: meaning, farming as source of wealth for farmers). This programme comes up every Wednesday7:30pm on Ogun State Radio, Am Station (OGBC). Likewise, OGADEP also used to have a similar programme on Ogun State Television (OGTV) named: Agbelere, meaning, farming is profitable. This comes up every Tuesday 6:00pm. The two programmes are being transmitted in the local language of the people (Yoruba), for duration of 30 minutes each. They focused on new techniques for farming as well as teaching farmers on how they can have better yields. However, it was discovered that for the last two years now, the transmission of the television programme has stopped due to lack of funds.

Furthermore, the EAs and the information officer explained that, the farmers benefit more from getting information from the extension agents, as this afford them the opportunity to have one on one discussion with them to clarify issues that are ambiguous to them or confirm authenticity of information gotten from other sources, which enable them to get instant feedback.

4.4 Interpretation of Findings

The majority of the respondents (Farmers) were male (62%), while the larger proportion of the farmers sampled are between the ages of 36 and above (60%). The study also revealed that majority of the respondents had very little or no formal education (66%). Also 73% of the respondents were married, while 51% of the

respondents had between 16 to 36 years of farming experience. None of the Extension Agents interviewed had spent less than 18 years on the Job. Furthermore, majority of the farmers had one form of Agricultural Information in their area, 73% of the respondents believe that Extension Agents were the best Medium to get Agriculture Information. The following research questions were answered in order to identify the accessibility of agricultural information by farmers for improved rural productivity.

Research question one: Farmers were asked on the availability of agricultural information in the Study areas. Responding to question one for this study, 82% of the farmers confirmed the availability of the agricultural information in their areas; while 18% said otherwise. The Extension Agents were also of the opinion that majority of the rural farmers had one form of agricultural information or others available in their areas.

Research question two: What are the agricultural communication strategies being adopted by OGADEP for rural farmers in the study areas. In this question, a total number of 24% of the respondents confirmed that OGADEP used radio and television programme to pass information to them and 50% said that OGADEP passed information to them through the EAs. The EAs interviewed also confirmed this. Fifty-three (53%) of the farmers sampled were of the opinion that these methods of communication by OGADEP were adequate for them while 40% believed that more still need to be done. This suggests that most farmers depended on Extension Agents for agricultural information more than other sources of information like radio or television.

Research question three: Research question three identified the sources of agricultural information for farmers in the study areas. From the findings, 52% of

the farmers said they got their agric information from the Extension Agents, 31% got their own from the Mass Media, while 10% had access to different sources of information. This was further collaborated by both Extension Agents and Information Officer. This indicates that the Extension Agents supported by the mass media play a vital role in passing information to the farmers for improved rural productivity. Also the role of the mass media cannot be underscored, with 31% of the respondents getting their information from the Mass media, it suggests a combination of all these medium will go a long way in achieving the desired objectives. Mboho (2009) found that broadcasting can play several roles in promoting sustainable agricultural practices in Nigeria. He noted that, its educational role lies in its ability to teach good farm skills and preach against deleterious (harmful) practices.

Research question four: This question four identified the challenges confronting rural farmers in accessing agricultural information in the research areas. Responding to this question, majority were of the opinion that combination of forces such as, Illiteracy, lack of electricity, inadequate agric programme on air, lack of access to Media as well as bad road network in rural areas constitute challenges in accessing information that will help them in their farms. They were also of the opinion that all these can be overcome by; improved communication, increasing the number of EAs and ensuring infrastructural development in rural areas. This was also confirmed by the EAs and the Information Officer. This collaborated the findings of Obidike (2011). Her study revealed illiteracy and lack of good roads (preventing regular visits by Extension Agents), as part of the challenges hindering farmers' access to agricultural information. She also found out that there is need for the establishment of agricultural information centers in all rural communities in Nigeria for easy access

and effective utilization of agricultural information in this digital age so as to help the rural farmers' access agricultural information for optimal farm production.

Research question five: The Preferred communication medium by the rural farmers in the study areas. The study shows that majority of the Farmers (59%) preferred the EAs as their main source of Agric Information, 23% preferred the Mass Media, while 14% preferred a combination of the different sources. In conclusion the farmers believed that if the government and all other stakeholders in Agriculture can ensure better access to information, better funding of the sector as well as improve the Extension services, Nigeria can revive her ailing agric sector.

Furthermore most of the farmers agreed that the communication strategies being used by OGADEP had been able to ensure improved Productivity on their farms. The EAs also collaborated this, that their interactions, teachings and trainings adopted for the farmers had been yielding positive results in the farmers' income.

Interviews with the Extension Agents and the Information officer revealed that majorly, OGADEP adopted Radio and Television Programmes, visits by Extension Workers (Individual contacts and group methods), training, and demonstrations in passing information to farmers. They also believed that more still need to be done to ensure adequacy of these sources of information for farmers. According to them, their challenges were numerous ranging from inadequate number of EAs (for better reach), poor mobility and poor welfare packages among others. They however advocated for the empowerment of the Extension Agents and employment of more hands for better reach. This is in line with the finding of Umar (2007) that extension service has not been accorded the priority attention it deserves, thus the need for the greater attention to be paid to it by respective stakeholders such as communication

training institutions and centres**.** Therefore, Diffusion of Innovation theory is in agreement with the study here, because given attention for better sources of information to farmers will ensure adequacy of information and increase famers' productivity.

Furthermore, the interviews with the Extension Agents also revealed that majority of the farmers got their Agricultural Information from the Extension Agents as well as agric local Radio and Television programmes that OGADEP had on air. These, they consider as best sources (Extension Agents and Radio) for the farmers. This is in agreement with the finding of Oyekunle (2011) that the facilitators are most preferred as the source of information.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and the recommendations for the study. It focused on agricultural communication strategies used by OGADEP for the rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State.

5.2 Summary

This research work analysed Agricultural Communication and Rural productivity, with the Ogun State Agricultural Programme (OGADEP) as a case study. It specifically looked at the agricultural communication strategies being adopted by OGADEP for the rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State. The problem of the study was that, lack of information or poor communication is believed to be one of the major factors responsible for low agricultural production. The study identified the availability of agricultural Information in the area, examined the sources of agricultural information available to rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, identified the challenges confronting rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State in accessing agricultural information, and determined the preferred Medium of communication by the farmers in Odeda LGA, as source of information.

In getting the results, the study employed the use of ‘face- to- face’ interviews for Extension Agents of OGADEP, in charge of Odeda Local Government Area, and the OGADEP Information Officer. Also questionnaire was used as an instrument to elicit responses from a total of 315 farmers in the study area.

The study established that; 82% of the rural farmers have one form of agricultural information or the other, available in their areas, that OGADEP employed various

methods such as the Individual visits and Group methods (by Extension Agents to farmers), the Mass Media, (radio, television) and in passing Agricultural Information to the rural farmers. Furthermore, that most farmers relied on information from their Extension Agents for use on their farms for improved productivity among others. However, other sources such as the mass media also contribute in no small way in providing farmers with agricultural information. This suggests that if the EAs can be adequately combined with the Mass Media, the farmers will have more access to the necessary information for improved productivity.

The study also revealed the various challenges confronting the rural farmers in accessing agricultural information as well as the challenges hindering the EAs from passing information to the farmers. These range from, illiteracy, lack of electricity, inadequate agricultural programmes on air, as well as lack of access to media, among others. The findings confirmed that all these can be overcome by; improved communication (for instance, by increasing the number of agricultural programmes on air), increasing the number of EAs, (by employing more qualified extension agents to complement the ones on ground) and ensure infrastructural development in rural areas (for instance, ensuring provision of better rural roads, to ensure easy mobility for extension agents, and electricity to enable the farmers have access to information from radio and television). The study also revealed the preferred medium of Agricultural Information by the farmers as majorly the Extension Agents, and followed by the Mass Media.

5.3 Conclusion

From the study, it was established that the sources of the Agricultural information for farmers in Odeda LGA need to be further improved to ensure better reach, the communication strategies being adopted by the Ogun State Agricultural

Development Programme (OGADEP) for its farmers in the rural areas are good, there are still various challenges preventing the farmers from accessing the information, most of the farmers in the rural areas are aged, that majority of them have long years of farming experience, the EAs are also old hands (between 15 and 16years of working experience), a larger percentage of the farmers have very little or no formal education, the Mass Media still play a significant role in disseminating Information to rural people, the extension agents also played a big role in passing relevant Information to the farmers as farmers still preferred them as their source. A combination of different sources of information is also needed to reach a wider audience, the farmers and the extension agents still face various problems in accessing and passing information respectively.

Also the return of the good old days of extension services will bring better results, as the EAs and the Information Officer recalled not too long ago when OGADEP used to take OB Vans round villages to relay to farmers, clips that can be of help to them on their farms, also print and distribute fliers and posters, illustrating use of particular method and benefits.

5.4 Recommendations

Base on the Information and Data gathered in this study, the following recommendations are made;

1. Based on the research findings, which reflect that a large percentage of the farmers, 40% to be precise, are of the opinion that the communication strategies being adopted by OGADEP is not adequate enough, Improve the communication strategies for the rural farmers, through better empowerment of Agricultural Development offices in the State (e.g OGADEP), with necessary funds to enable effective planning and implementation of

communication strategies for the rural farmers is therefore recommended. For instance, more agricultural programmes need to be on air (both radio and TV), re-introduction of fliers, posters, etc.

2. Also, the findings revealed that 59% of the rural farmers preferred getting their information from the extension agents, and the extension agents interviewed also confirmed the EAs as the best source of information for the farmers, it is therefore recommended that improving the extension services will go a long way in achieving improved rural productivity. There is urgent need to bring in new hands into the services as most of the present agents are very old on the Job and the number keep decreasing as they retire from service. E.g, the number of villages and wards under each extension agents are too many.

   According to National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services (NAERLS) and Federal Directorate for Agricultural Extension (FDAE) (2013), the overwhelming problem of poor funding and its untimely release has grossly affected the staffing situation in most of the ADPs across the nation. Similarly, majority of the ADPs are heavily loaded at the top with aged personnel who are on their last lap of their service. To save the ADPs from collapsing the problem of staffing should be urgently addressed and funded to recruit more qualified frontline EAs. (NAERLS and FDAE; 2013:170).

3. Finding lasting solutions to the various challenges/barriers preventing farmers from accessing agricultural information such as provision of basic infrastructure in the rural areas like electricity and good roads, as well as increasing the number of agric programmes on air (both Radio and TV) and

ensuring that they are done in local language to break the barrier of illiteracy. Also for the Extension Agents, there is need to ensure provision of adequate logistic support for them (enough Motorcycles, good maintenance culture as well as replacing them before wearing out, for easy mobility) is also very paramount. Likewise training, good remunerations and motivation, as almost all the EAs interviewed complained of discrepancy in their salaries, poor welfare packages, lack of hazard allowance and inadequate capacity training.

4. As the research findings also revealed 18% of the farmers lack Agricultural Information in their areas, it is recommended that more should be done to ensure the spread of information to all the areas, and ensure that all farmers in the areas are captured in the OGADEP Agricultural Communication design.

5. 5 Contributions to Knowledge

1. The study has been able to establish the availability of agricultural information for rural farmers in Odeda LGA of Ogun State, the farmers' sources of this information, the challenges being encountered by both the farmers and the extension agents in passing and accessing agricultural information. It has called for improved communication for rural farmers.

2. The study has also, be able to establish the preferred sources of Agricultural Information for improved rural productivity. It has called for improved extension services as a major source of agricultural information for farmers in rural areas.

3. The study found that the necessary stakeholders need to do more in ensuring provision of basic amenities, such as good roads and electricity, in rural areas to ensure easy accessibility to agricultural information.

5. 6 Suggestions for Further Studies

Further research can focus on;

1. The effective use of other forms of communication to further enhance rural productivity; such as the Folk Media.
2. Analysis of the agricultural radio and television programmes to ensure better understanding and wider reach for improved rural productivity.
3. Improving the Extension Services as a means of ensuring improved rural productivity.

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Appendix I

Questionnaires for Farmers

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
Department of Mass Communication
Analysis of Agricultural Communication for Improving productivity among Rural Farmers in Odeda LGA in Ogun State.
QUESTIONERS FOR RURAL FARMERS

Dear Sir/ Madam,

1 am a Master Student of the above named University and Department. I am currently conducting a research on **Analysis of agricultural communication for Improving rural productivity among Rural Farmers in Odeda LGA**: (for my Thesis).I solicit your assistance to help answer the questions below to enable me reach a conclusion. Your name, identity or address is not required and the information you supply is purely for academic purpose. My tremendous appreciation for your understanding. Thank you.

Please tick as appropriate to indicate your response.

SECTION A. PERSONAL DATA

1. Gender *(a) Female ( ) (b) Male ( )*

2. Age range *(a) 20-25 ( ) (b) 26-35 ( ) (c) 36-45 ( ) (d) 46-above ( )*

3. Marital Status:*(a) Single[ ] (b) Married [ ] (c) Widowed [ ] (d) Divorced [ ]*

4. Educational background;
   (a)Primary School [ ] (b) Secondary [ ] (c) Tertiary [ ] (d) None [ ]

5. How long have you being farming?
   (a) 1- 5 years (b) 5-10years (c) 11-15 years (d) 16-20 years (e) 21-25years (f) 26-30 years (g) 31-35 years (h) 36 years and above

6. *What type of media do you have access to in your area?*
   (a) Radio (b) Television (c) Phone [ ] (d) Newspaper ( ) (e) Magazine (f) Internet (g) other , specify……

SECTION B: The Availability of Agricultural Information for Rural Farmers in the Study Area

7. *Do you have any form of agricultural information available in your area?*
   (a) Available (b) Not available

8. Which of the following channels of communication do you get information from that assist you on your farm for improved productivity?

(a) Mass Media (b) extension workers (c) friends & Families (d) All of the above (e) Others (Specify)……..

10. OGADEP is in charge of disseminating information to you through their extension workers, what methods do they adopt to pass information to you that you use on your farm?

***(a)** Radio Programme **(b)** Television Programme**(c)** individual contacts **(d)** Group method **(e)** Telephones (f)All of the above (g**)** Others Specify)……..*

11. Do you think this information channels are adequate for you vis a vis your needs for improved productivity?

***(a)** Adequate (b) Not adequate **(c)** Don't know*

12. . Which of the following sources of information would you rather prefer to get your information from?

***(a)** Mass Media **(b)** Extension Agents **(c)** Friends & Relatives (d) All of the above (e) Others specify……..*

13. What are the challenges that normally prevent you from getting access to or understand the information that is being passed to you?

***(a)** Illiteracy (b) Lack of electricity and bad signal **((c)** lack of access to any media channels **(d)** inadequate agric prog on air **(e)** Bad state of roads that prevent extension workers from reaching our communities **(f)** Inadequate Agricultural programmes on radio & television **(g)** all of the above (h) Others (Specify)……..*

12. How do you think such challenges can be overcome?

***(a)** Improved communication **(b)** Increase the numbers of extension workers for better coverage and reach **(c)** Improved rural infrastructure (d) All of the above **(e)** others (specify)……..*

13. Which of these do you consider as the best means to communicate agricultural information to rural farmers?

***(b)** Mass Media (b) Extension agents (c) all of the above (e) Others Specify)……..*

14. What is your advice to the government on how best to revive the agricultural sector in Nigeria? (a)Better access to information (b) Better funding (d) improve the extension services (e) All of the above (g) Others (Specify).

Appendix II

Structured Interviews for Extension Agents

QUESTIONS FOR EXTENSION AGENTS

1. How long have you been on the job?

2. What are the various Agricultural communication strategies that you have for the rural farmers in Odeda Local Government Area?

3. What are the various sources of information open to farmers in this local government?

4. Do you think these sources of information are adequate for these farmers in getting required and necessary agricultural information for improved productivity on their farms?

5. What do you consider as the preferred medium of communication by these rural farmers?

6. What are the challenges you face in passing relevant agricultural information to rural farmers in the local government?

7. What are you doing to overcome these challenges (if there are any)?

8. What do you consider as the best medium to pass relevant agricultural information to rural farmers in their various localities to ensure improved productivity?

9. With your experience with the rural farmers, what advice do you have for relevant stakeholders towards improving agricultural production in the state and in Nigeria in general?

Appendix III

Structured Interviews for OGADEP Information Officer

QUESTIONS FOR OGADEP INFORMATION OFFICER

1. What are the various Agricultural communication strategies that you have for the rural farmers in the state towards achieving the objectives of promoting farming and ensuring improved productivity in the agricultural sector?

2. To what extent would you say your approaches are working or adequate in terms of effective communication with your rural farmers?

3. What are the various sources of information open to rural farmers in this state?

4. Do you think these sources are adequate for farmers in getting necessary agricultural information for improved productivity on their farms?

5. Your various communication strategies have contributed to improved productivity among the rural farmers in the state, what were the secrets behind that?

6. Base on your experience with the farmers, what do you consider as their preferred medium of communication?

7. What are the challenges you face in passing relevant agricultural information to rural farmers in the state?

8. What are you doing to overcome these challenges?

9. What do you consider as the best medium to pass relevant agricultural information to rural farmers in their various localities to ensure improved productivity?

10. Would you link the level of agricultural development so far attained in the state to the success of your communication strategies?

11. Based on this, can you say your various methods of communication have been able to mobilize farmers in the state towards the acceptance of new innovations for increased yields and greater profits?

12. Do you think the farmers in the state are now better educated and informed with the communication strategies being adopted by you?

13. What other communication strategies is your agency adopting to meet the need of farmers and thus achieve the overall objective of agricultural development in Ogun state?

14. What advice do you have for other relevant stakeholders towards improving agricultural production in the State and Nigeria in general?