FACTORS AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF VILLAGE EXTENSION AGENTS (VEAs) IN THE WESTERN ZONE OF THE BAUCHI STATE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (BSADP)

BY

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DEDICATION

To Mrs. Rahmatu Muhammad and her children; also to Shehu Inuwa, Iro Yusuf, S. Dajin, Sagir and the M.A. Jibrins.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis was written by me and it is a record of my own research work, except where reference was made to published literature which has been duly acknowledged. It has not been presented before in any degree programme.

BARBA DEEN MUHAMMAD

Date: 23-4-99

The above declaration is confirmed

Professor Jacob P. Voh

Date: April 24, 1999

CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled "Factors Affecting the Performance of Village Extension Agents (VEAs) in the Western Zone of the Bauchi State Agricultural Development Programme (BSADP)" by Garba Deen Muhammad, meets the regulations governing the award of the Degree of Master of Science of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contribution to scientific knowledge and literary presentation.

Chairman, Supervisory Committee	April 24/1999 Date
Member, Supervisory Committee	24/04/99 Date
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One of the key units of the agricultural sector is the extension services network. This is all the more important in a developing country like Nigeria where crop production is still dominated by a large number of small scale peasant population. The agricultural sector depends on the effectiveness of a functional extension services network for spreading new and improved farming techniques to farmers where ever they live, which will in turn boost agricultural production to the desired level. The extension services system in turn depends on the competence of its village level extension agents, who form the link between the agency and the farmers; between research and laboratory results and practical experiment at the farm situation. Thus in a sense, the success of any agricultural organization depends on the competence and effective performance of the village level extension agents. In Nigeria, the performance of extension agents is generally regarded as below expectation. A number of factors ranging from poor or inadequate planning to lack of motivation have been identified as responsible for this unimpressive situation. This study examines the performance of the village level extension agents as seen by the farmers; focusing on those variables that define the personality of the individual with a view to determining the kind of influence that these variables have on the job performance of the village level extension agents. Results obtained show that more than 80% of

the farmers in the study area were not satisfied with the performance of their VEAs. The results also show that all the variables tested were positively related to job performance, with age, education and attitude as the most important variables in explaining VEA job performance, when tested at the 0.05% level of significance.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the basis of man's existence. It supports human beings through the provision of food and raw materials. The importance of agriculture therefore cannot be overemphasized.

In the 1960's Nigeria was not only self sufficient in agricultural food production, but the agricultural sector accounted for about 64% of the country's foreign exchange earnings (Awoyemi, 1980), and provided employment for over 70% of the country's population (Idris, 1980). However, the oil boom period in the 1970s caused a long term negative effect on the agricultural sector so that by the 1980s Nigeria was importing food worth over $1.2 billion and the agricultural sector's contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) had declined to an unimpressive 18% from 63.4% in 1960 (Awoyemi, 1980).

In the beginning, the crash of the agricultural sector was attributed to neglect caused solely by the oil boom period. But the continuous failure of government's attempt to revamp agriculture through the injection of large sums of money into agricultural projects and programmes such as the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP, 1972), the Operation Feed the Nation Campaign (OFN, 1976), establishment of the River Basin Development Authorities

(RBDA) and the still existing World Bank Assisted Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs, 1979), proved that it was no longer a question of neglect alone. Consequently, the government shifted emphasis and started giving more attention to the different units within the agricultural sector, such as research centres, agricultural credit schemes, extension services etc.

One of the key units of the agricultural sector is the extension services network. The agricultural extension system is the agricultural sub-sector responsible for taking out research findings in the different fields of agriculture, from the research stations to the millions of small scale farmers located in the rural areas that form the bulk of the country's farming population.

Nigeria today operates the unified agricultural extension services system along with the Training and visit (T&V) approach. Considering the sensitivity of adult education and the traditional values involved, it is necessary for an agricultural extension agency to adopt a method that will be effective and dynamic. For this reason the T & V system of extension was introduced in 1988 to replace the Training and Demonstration (T&D) system (BSADP, 1992).

The basic feature of the T & V system is to provide a systematic programme of training for village extension agents (VEA) along with regular visits to farmers in their farms (about once every fortnight). The programme provides the VEA

with intensive training every fortnight. The training covers fundamental areas such as seed selection, planting, weeding, fertilizer application etc. In the field, the VEA shows farmers how to implement recommended practices, motivates them to adopt same and evaluate production constraints and advice farmers on how to overcome them. For effective performance the VEA is furnished with suitable technical and supervisory guidance.

In the state ADPs such as the BSADP where this study was conducted, the extension unit is headed by a Deputy Director (Extension) who co-ordinates the unit's activities through a chain of subordinates viz: The Assistant Director, (AD), the Zonal Extension Officer (ZEO), Subject Matter Specialists (SMS), sub-zonal Extension Officer (SZEO), Block Extension Supervisor (BES) and finally the village Extension Agent (VEA) who is in direct contact with the farmers.

The subject of this study is the village extension agents. The importance of this category of extension staff cannot be overemphasized. The extension agency and indeed the ADP itself depends on the competence of the village extension agent for the implementation of its programmes. The village extension agent constitutes the final link between programme design and implementation; between research and laboratory result and practical experiment at the farm situation. This study examined this lower level, which is a vital category of extension staff, focusing on farmers assessment of his/her

performance, his/her attitude to job and the client system (i.e. the farmers) and such other personal characteristics of the village extension agent like age, education, job satisfaction and training. The study investigated how these factors influence the job performance of the village extension agent.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

One of the crucial factors that determine the success or otherwise of an agricultural project is the existence of a functional and effective extension network with a problem solving rather than a service approach (Akinbode, 1976). It is through the extension network that government's agricultural policies and objectives are explained, in simple terms, to the millions of small scale farmers located in the nooks and corners of the country. It is also through the extension services network that farmers are educated on the fundamental aspect of farming, such as latest and suitable farm technology and efficient utilization of resources. Again, farmers' reactions to these services are fed back to the policy makers through the extension services system. Thus, apart from being an important and necessary component of any agricultural organisation, the extension system can be seen as a "very powerful tool in the administration of rural development programmes" (Adeyeye and Igben 1986:1) The link between the extension agency and the farmers is the village extension

agent (VEA). Because he is in direct contact with the farmers, the VEA's role becomes crucial to the overall success of the agricultural development project's aim and objectives.

In communicating between two social institutions, the VEA is likely to face certain constraints or problems, often from both institutions. Considering the wide gap that exists between awareness and adoption of improved agricultural practices in all parts of the country, the "impression is being created that extension systems in developing countries are sick babies that have not been able to generate much adoption of improved agricultural technologies..." (Atala and Voh 1987:2). What is/are the cause/causes of this poor performance and assessment?

Ekpere (1973:158) in a comparative study of agent performance under two approaches observed that "the general extension service had not given adequate attention to developing the competence of its extension workers to a level necessary and sufficient for effective performance". Similarly Atala and Voh (1987:323-4) found that: "Limited resources which characterizes extension services in Nigeria hampers the development and promotion of programmes that would further enhance the agent's understanding and performance of extension roles in addition to what personal agent characteristics such as education and job tenure might provide".

Akinbode (1976), Collins (1980), Uwakah (1981), Atala et al (1993) and Madukwe (1993) had also identified over-emphasis

on formal reporting, excessive work load, low morale, lack of incentive, poor or negative attitude, inadequate professional training and low educational qualification as some of the problems hindering village extension agents' effective performance in the Nigeria extension services system. "This situation suggests that the role performance of agents is problematic and contribute to the general malaise in Nigerian agriculture" (Atala and voh, 1987:306).

Using the western zone of the BSADP, this study examined the influence of VEA personal characteristics such as age, education, attitude, job satisfaction and training on VEA job performance. The study also examined farmers' assessment of VEA performance in their area. Specifically the study tried to answer certain critical questions such as:

1. How do VEA's personal characteristics affect VEA job performance?
2. What do the VEAs think of their jobs?
3. What do the VEAs think of the farmers?
4. What is the opinion of farmers on VEA's job performance?
5. How can VEA's performance be improved?

1.2 Objective of the Study

The broad objective of this study was to investigate the influence VEA personal characteristics on VEA job performance as well as examine farmers' opinion of VEA performance. The specific objectives are:

1. To analyse the influence of VEA personal characteristics on VEA's job performance.
2. To find out what VEAs think of their job.
3. To find out what VEAs think of the farmers.
4. To determine farmers assessments of the performance of VEAs in their area.

1.3 Justification of the Study

The agricultural extension services system as a whole is an area that should be continuously studied and analyzed because of its involvement with two dynamic social institutions; the government and the research centres on the one hand and the rural farming community on the other. In Nigeria, as in most developing nations of the world, agricultural extension service is the most important public service institution with the widest range of responsibilities for agricultural and rural development (Ekpere, 1973).

Inspite of this "it appears that the government at various levels in Nigeria is not quite aware of the crucial role that extension agents can play in the effective implementation of rural development programmes and projects" (Adeyeye and Igben, 1986:2). The need to study and highlight the role of the extension agent at every level, therefore, is as important as the programmes they are expected to promote.

Within the extension services system, the village extension agent is the only extension staff with the most

regular and direct contact with the farmers. Since it is an established fact that proper, sustained agricultural development cannot be achieved without integrating farmers, the village extension agents who deal directly with the farmers is a subject worthy of study, so that a picture of how they carry out this integration process can be better understood, problems areas identified and addressed. The gap that exists between awareness and adoption of improved agricultural technologies, exist partly due to communication problems between the extension agency and the farmers (Voh, 1979, Atala, 1980). Since the local level extension staff is the link between the agency and the farmers it can be concluded that in general "... the variety of services provided by the agent, the economic and social consequences of the agent's efforts to reach the farmers and the environmental factors influencing the extension agents role are legitimate factors for study if better extension result is required" (Atala, undated). It is in the light of this that this study was undertaken.

Finally a clear understanding of the role of the VEA, the constraints he faces and how his services can be improved will help in making optimum use of the huge amount of capital that government, non-government and international organisations invest in their attempt to improve agricultural production in Nigeria and elsewhere.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Role and Role Performance

Role is the sum total of behaviour expected of an individual occupying a certain position, formal or informal (Haralambos 1980). Providing security, food and shelter are some of the roles expected of a husband while the role of a wife or mother is to take care of the home and the children. Role performance therefore is the extent to which an individual fulfil the different functions expected of a person occupying that position (a wife, husband or extension agent). In essence social and institutional roles regulate and organize behaviour (Haralambos 1980:8).

Role performance of individuals in different organisations has received considerable attention. The measurement of role performance is relatively easy to conduct in some organizations while it remains very difficult in others.

In industry for example, role performance can be quantified easily by means of the input-output comparison. In agriculture, it is a complex phenomenon to measure. This difficulty arises, among other reasons, due to the unpredictability of human nature and the uncertainties associated with natural condition upon which agriculture depends. Whether simple or difficult, the fact remains that "in any organization, the need for assessing the worth of

individual employees in relation to total work force is recognised as a necessary exercise if the organization is to achieve its desired objectives" (Ekpere, 1973:42-3).

Generally, role performance is a dependent variable that is determined by a number of factors ranging from A.H. Maslow's need theory approach in which he argued that individuals perform better according to the satisfaction of their needs which he identified, according to their importance as: physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness needs, esteem needs and the need for self actualization (Maslow, 1943:320-6); to organizational factors such as involvement in decision making, personnel, skill, attitude etc (Etuk, 1985).

Role performance in agricultural extension has been linked to different factors.

Motivation, which is the inner desire to act has been identified as a strong determinant of role performance (Ekpere, 1973). Individuals' performance may be negatively or positively influenced depending on motivational factors such as job security, job satisfaction and financial rewards. Individuals who feel satisfied with such factors, are likely to display a high level of performance (Etuk, 1985). Conversely, lack of job satisfaction, excessive control, wrong assignment and setting too high a standard could lead to poor performance (Ekpere, 1973).

In another study on role performance of extension agents in Kaduna state, Atala and Voh (1987) found that role

perception (the individuals perception of the responsibilities expected of him) age of agents, and agents perception of decision making process of the organization are critical to agents role performance. They concluded that "any extension programmes' effectiveness will be determined by the extent to which it can manipulate those factors influencing the performance of extension agents" (Atala and Voh, 1987:324). Job performance appraisal therefore will depend to a large extent on the extent to which factors affecting performance are identified and appropriately measured. In the areas of extension, this can be very difficult to achieve because "performance indices in this area.. are often more qualitative in nature and become a matter of subjective rather than objective measurement" (Ekpere 1973:51). The best that one can do under the circumstances is to strive for accuracy and objectivity in measuring whatever variables are deemed important in determining performance.

2.2 Role of Village Level Extension Agent (VEA)

The village level extension agent, the principal subject of investigation in this study, provides the final link between the extension system and the farmers. He functions essentially as a teacher and provides a two-way communication link between his organisation and the clientele" (Uwakah 1981:13). In most organizations, the duties of an individual often determines the position or status of the individual in

that organization (Haralambos 1980:13).

In the case of the VEA, his role as a mediator between the organization and the farmers places him at the lowest position in the administrative structure of the extension services system. But his administrative status contradicts sharply with the variety and importance of the roles he is expected to perform. The village level extension agent finds himself involved in as many activities as there are in an extension programme. Maunder (1973) identified some of the activities that the VEA is involved in as including marketing distribution, and utilization of farm products, resource conservation, family adviser, youth development etc. Similarly Atala (undated:9) associates the VEA with the following duties:

i) Advisory service to farmers in agricultural production
ii) Village council meetings
iii) Crop demonstration programmes
iv) Farm settlement schemes
v) Institute research experiments
vi) Rural or community development projects
vii) Collecting research data and agricultural information
viii Special crop production programmes
ix) Assisting farmers with marketing produce
x) Writing reports

xi) Extension demonstration unit programmes etc.

Inspite of these diverse roles with which the village level extension agent is associated, it is possible to identify some specific major roles which are:-

i). Educator

This is probably the most important role of the village extension agent. As observed by Maunder (1973:9). "The development of human resources through education offers.. the greatest possibilities for economic advancement and is a pre-requisite to the application of the technology required to increase agricultural production". However we must note that the educational role of the VEA is not the same with the formal meaning of education. The difference being that extension education is informal and involves no coercion. According to Leagans (1963:3). "The central tool (for effective extension agent's work) is education, for economic gains and by the people themselves. To act, the people must first change their level of knowledge... if such changes are to be important economically and permanent physically....

As an educator, the VEA has to provide farmers with information, scientific and technical, which will enable them to solve their identified problems. But providing farmers with information has to be complimented by practical demonstrations where technical skill is required, as in the case of new technology, use of chemicals and pesticides. Indeed the VEA has an educational role to play in each of the services and

programmes which the extension system provides (Maunder, 1973:5).

ii). **Attitude and Action Changer**

"Attitudes are predispositions to behave favourably or unfavourably towards persons, situation, ideas, objects or the behaviour of others" (Etuk, 1985:190). It is almost impossible to influence attitude without direct contact. The village extension agent enjoys a face-to-face contact with the farmers. It is therefore one of his major roles to shape the attitude of the farmer so that he views extension as a system established to assist him in solving his own problems and using his available resources, improve his well-being. "Inspiring rural people and creating a desire for more efficient production, and better living in the rural communities is an important role of the VEA (Atala, undated 13). It has been suggested that if extension agents will devote more effort to the creation of a desire for information farmers would come and ask for it rather than wait for it to be brought to them (Maunder 1973). This, no doubt will facilitate the functions of the agents and enhance the possibility of meeting the objectives of the extension agency. But it must be pointed out that this part of the agents duties i.e. attitude and action changer is one of the most difficult of his responsibilities. "The Nigerian farmer is surrounded by many deep-rooted social and cultural factors which hinder him from accepting change" (Williams 1978:4). The local agent

therefore has to make serious effort in understanding such socio-cultural factors as the land tenure system, extent of group cohesion, the family system the beliefs and values of the people in the area where he works. "It is essential to realize how deep-rooted these factors are" (Williams, 1978:4). Understanding what he can change and what he cannot, will guide the local level extension agent towards a successful promotion of extension programmes.

iii). **Administration and Service**

The administrative responsibility of the village extension agent is essentially that of writing official reports. Although this is a necessary exercise, in most cases, it detracts the agent from his major role of developing with the farmers a truly educational program that will help them solve their recognized problems (Maunder 1973). Among his administrative-cum-service duties, the VEA has to monitor and present progress reports on on-going experimental projects which incudes scientific data on soil, crops, climatic conditions and farmers reactions. Such information is to be used for research purposes, extension methods and policy decisions and planning (Atala and Voh 1987). Additionally Williams (1978) also found that village level extension agents are involved in the supply of inputs such as fertilizers, chemicals, seeds etc. These administrative and service functions of agents will limit their effectiveness on the field where they are most needed. Thus Williams (1978)

suggested that agents should work themselves out of these responsibilities because too much time and effort is used to the detriment of the farmers.

iv). **Organizer**

"Farmers are unorganized therefore powerless" (Atala, undated: 16) it is therefore necessary for the local agent to organize farmers into groups that will provide conductive atmosphere for effective communication. "This role of organizing farmers varies from non-directive, unobstructive to playing a very overt, active and direct role (Atala, undated:16). This role of organizing farmers can be a very delicate process. In the process of organizing farmers, the village extension agent must be sensitive to the socio-cultural set up before attempting to move any plan into action stage. He should identify local leaders and use them effectively. "in view of the social milieu in which the agent are working, where formal and informal voluntary organisations play important roles the agent should identify and make contact with such groups in the community where he is working" (Atala undated:17).

v). **Involvement with the People**

This involves analyzing with the farmers the problems extension programmes are designed to solve, explaining why such programmes are desirable and pointing out the human and material resources at their disposal which they could use to solve those problems. It also involves obtaining the views of

the farmers on ways of making these programmes most effective under local conditions and training leaders for local administration as well as obtaining commitment from them, gaining their confidence, interest and co-operation (Maunder 1973:5). In doing so, that agent must be careful not to undermine local talent or emphasis the superiority of his ideas on local practices.

vi) Vacuum Filler

Farmers often expect too much from the local extension agent. They expect him to have solutions to all problems. They may call him to prune their fruits, inspect their seeds, spray their crops, vaccinal their animals and ask what drugs to use for body pains. This is a dilemma for the VEA who in some cases is ill trained for such service. Maunder (1973) noted that even if the agent can administer these services, it negates the basic principle of the extension system which is to teach the farmer how to do these things himself.

The role of the village level extension agent as outlined above are by no means the exhaustion of the myriad of responsibilities with which he is involved. It is rather a selection of some of his roles. Considering the diversity of his roles, the village extension agent will require a lot of training in different aspects of agriculture. Ekpere (1973:54-5) cited the prerequisites developed by Leagans (1957) for effective performance of the VEA as necessary ingredients: Leagans (1957) had identified the following:-

1. Understanding the role of the extension service and how it operates as a public educational institution.
2. Skills in human relation.
3. knowledge and understanding of technical subject matter appropriate to ones job.
4. Ability to plan and to clarify objectives so that they are useful in guiding extension activity.
5. Ability to organize people and things
6. Skill in communication
7. Skill in seeing the relation of principle and practice
8. Skill at enquiry
9. Ability to provide learning experience or to teach
10. Ability to evaluate.

Although widely accepted as crucial to job performance, Ekpere (1973:55) noted that these competencies cannot be expected from all individuals. Part of the solution lies in the training of agents to develop such skills. Thus proper training of the local agent should be made a top priority by the extension agency. Studies conducted in different parts of Nigeria have shown that village extension agents are not adequately trained for the job. Williams (1978:101), Atala and Voh (1987:325) Uwakah (1981:13), Onazi (1973) have all emphasized the importance of proper training of all extension agents. This is an indication that the area of training has not been given the desired attention; "Where agents receive professional training, the emphasis is often on the

theoretical aspect of their training programme. This situation leads to agents finding themselves seriously handicapped when they go into the field" William (1978:101).

In addition to training, Uwakah (1981:13) also noted that "A majority of the junior staff were poorly motivated and generally dissatisfied with their conditions of service". Thus, for VEA to fulfil their roles effectively they need to be motivated through opportunities as ".. job advancement, job security..... and participation in the decision making process of the extension organization ..." (Atala and Voh 1987: 325). Also identified as a major factor that affects the role of the VEA is the availability of technology. Ekpere (1973: 158) found that: "Where differences in the level of performance existed, they were due to the availability of a steady stream of economically viable and ecologically adaptable technology supported by an appropriate system (Ekpere: 1973: 158).

The criticisms that "VEAs are lazy, corrupt and favour well-to-do farmers" (Adeyeye and Igben 1986: 3) may not be justified if viewed against the circumstances under which they operate. Unless extension agents are well trained, well motivated, unless there is a steady supply of the appropriate, affordable technology and other inputs such as fertilizers, chemicals, seeds and machines, the village extension agent will continue to find "himself working in a vacuum with no source of subject matter at his disposal and no authority to

assist the farmer in obtaining seeds fertilizer implements and other requisites of production" (Maunder 1973: 4).

2.3 Problems Facing Village Extension Agents (VEAs)

One of the most perennial problems to effective extension delivery in Nigeria is the problems of sufficient, well trained and committed extension agents.

Williams (1987) Akinbode (1980), Adeyeye and Igben (1986) Uwakah (1981), Atala and Voh (1987) have identified poor and inadequate training, excessive work load, lack of incentive and low morale as the major problems which limit agents from effectively implementing extension programmes to the rural communities. Mobility too is another problem which agents frequently complained about. "A basic complaint of agents is that they are unable to get essential requisites to the farmers they served, at the right time and at a reasonable cost..." Williams (1978: 82) Uwakah (1981) attributes the negative attitude of extension staff to lack of proper incentive. "The adverse effect of poor attitudes and inadequate training were further confounded by ... slow advancement on the job, lack of adequate transportation, lack of essential office equipment and field demonstration tools". (Uwakah 1981: 13) Ekpere (1973) noted that poor motivation affects agents performance. If an agent feels he is not properly rewarded by the organization he may "leave his job or attempt to achieve what he wants through behaviour inimical to

effective job performance" (Ekpere 1973: 49). The perception of agent responsibilities of his job could also lead to poor performance and thus poor presentation or promotion of extension objectives. It was reported that agents with wider range of perception of their job requirement are likely to have greater role consensus (i.e. agreement with their officially defined duties). This will consequently lead to positive promotion of the extension programmes (Atala and Voh 1987).

Lack of subject matter specialists is another agent related problem of extension system in Nigeria. As observed by Williams (1978: 82). "With the low level of background training most village extension staff have, there is a clear need for a cadre of well-trained specialists in major areas to support them. Without this it is very doubtful that the extension services can get to the root of the matter".

The ratio of VEA to farmers is also very low. In the Western zone of BSADP the ratio of VEA to farmers is about 1:1500. In the same zone while the minimum qualification for VEAs is OND, a study conducted there showed that about 60% of VEAs have no OND while 40% of those without OND had no basic admission requirement to OND courses (BSADP 1992).

For any extension agency to realise its objectives it must endeavour to solve all identified problems particularly as they affect the village extension agents and other field staff of the agency. Equally important is the development of

an affordable and useful technology. Agents and indeed the extension system as a whole will be powerless if there is no technology to extend. In addition to organisational adjustments, there is the need to: "Develop a land tenure system that will ensure the producer his rightful share of benefits from any improvement he may institute, marketing of fair prices, credit at reasonable cost availability of improved planting materials, good roads and an efficient transport system good schools, adequate medical facilities" Williams (1978: 85); and of course provision for adequate induction and in-service training programme and other incentives such as promotion, prompt payment of salaries, transport allowances and clear definition of roles (Adeyeye and Igben 1986). The problem of extension organisation like most organisations are interrelated. Half hearted solutions will only weaken the extension services further (Williams 1978).

Inspite of the problems facing extension however, it is only fair to state that the organization has had relative success in changing the farmers outlook about the prospects of agriculture. Most farmers have now become more commercially oriented and prudent in the way of resources (Onazi 1978). Their desire for credit is also evident from their complaints in the mass media for the government to make credit available to them. Also there is now no doubt that the use of fertilizer and the improved variety of maize seedlings has now

been generally accepted. "Even though farmers may have alternative sources of information extension plays a dominant role in changing the farmers out look from a static situation to a dynamic one" (Maunder 1973: 4).

The government too has not been totally insensitive to expert advice from researchers even though there is still much to be desired. "In service training schemes have .... been stepped up" reported Williams (1978: 81). Courses in the philosophy, principles and methods of extension and Rural Sociology have been added in the curricular of various Faculties, for which the establishment of extension liaison section of the Institute for Agricultural Research at Ahmadu Bello University has been highly commended (Williams: 1978: 85)" It is an excellent model for the extension services of other states in Nigeria" (Williams: 1978: 84).

2.4 The T and V System

Once it has been established through scientific evidence that there is a gap between what farmers can potentially achieve and what they actually do achieve (as is the case with Nigeria's farming population) it is then the task of extension first to bridge this gap and then to be the prime initiator of additional know-how.

Considering the sensitivity of adult education and the traditional values involved, it is necessary for an agricultural extension agency to adopt a method that will be

effective and dynamic. For this reason the T and V i.e. Training and Visit system of Extension was introduced in 1988 to replace the training and Demonstration (T & D) system (BSADP 1992).

The basic feature of the T & V system is to provide a systematic program of training for VEA (Village Extension Agent) along with regular visits to farmers in their farms (visit each cell at least once every fortnight).

The VEA receives intensive training every fortnight called FNT (i.e. fortnightly training). The training covers fundamental areas such as seed selection, planting, weeding etc.

In the field the VEA shows farmers how to implement recommended agricultural practices, motivates them to adopt same and evaluate production constraints and advise farmers how to overcome them. For effective performance the VEA is furnished with suitable technical and supervisory guidance.

Officially the system provides for at least one field visit by the VEA once every fortnight, on a fixed day known to all the farmers and the BEA (i.e. Block and Early Adopters) through whom technical advice spreads to a large number of farmers in a particular region or area. It is worth noting that the T & V system has been quite successful where it has been tried, where over half of the farmers are aware of, and following some of the newly recommended practices (Benor 1984).

2.5 Summary of the Literature Reviewed

The literature reviewed has shown the development of extension from a general term of taking knowledge or teaching out of formalised institutions of learning to the outside community into an educational concept with agricultural bias.

The Literature review has also examined some of the methods of extension delivery and centred on the T & V which is presently being adopted in Nigeria.

The literature has also shown the complexity involved in measuring performance because performance is a dependent variable which is influenced by so many factors ranging from the personality of the individual to his attitude, ability, job knowledge and commitment, to organizational factors such as motivation, planning and co-ordination.

There has also been discussion on the role and role performance of the village level extension agent. The literature reviewed shows that the VEA is associated or involved with almost all aspects of extension programmes. And the VEA in trying to fulfil these roles faces a number of problems which include too much responsibility, inadequate training, poor motivation, which leads to negative attitude and dissatisfaction with the job; concluding that a clear definition of his role, better condition of service and relevant training will help to limit the amount of problems he encounters in the discharge of his duties.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The Village Extension Agent occupies a strategic position in the extension agency and is expected to perform certain roles which are officially defined by the extension agency. This study was conducted within the role theory framework. The basic assumption of role theory is that it assumes two positions: The focal position and the counter position. The focal position is the particular position being studied while the counter position is the position to which the role of the counter position relates (Atala 1986). For the purpose of this study the focal position is represented by the VEA while the counter position is represented by the farmers.

Role theory further assumes that in any organization every individual occupies a position which assumes certain given roles expected to be performed by an incumbent of a given position. Thus every individual while trying to meet the expectations imposed on him by his status or role position, behaves according to his "definition of the situation". In this respect therefore the individual occupying a particular role position becomes a very important element in the success of organizational goals and objectives. Indeed ".....the behaviour and attitude of the individual are of great importance to the organisation" (Atala, 1986:30). The factors that normally influence the individual's definition of the situation and conduct of his role functions are varied but are generally categorised into two: (1)

Endogenous or within the system ones such as staff quality and promotional opportunities and (2) Exogenous or external to the system ones like policy and client situation (Atala, 1986). Ideally therefore a researcher should take account of all these factors. However, due to the time and resources at the disposal of the researcher this study however concentrated on the endogenous factors. Specifically those qualities that define the personality of the individual such as age, educational qualification, job satisfaction, attitude to job and client etc; on the assumption that an individual that is well disposed towards a certain task will go a long way in surmounting formidable obstacle to achieve desired goals and objectives. It is posited that those factors individually and collectively influence the role performance of the village extension agent (VEA) as shown in the diagram below:

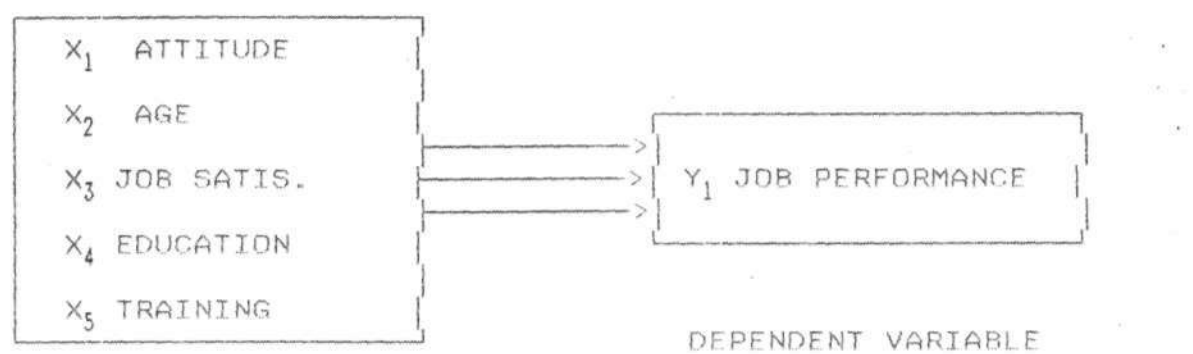


Figure 1: A model showing the factors (Independent variables) posited as influencing the job performance (dependent variable) of VEAS.

1.4 HYPOTHESIS 1 Age of VEA is not related to VEA job performance.

HYPOTHESIS 2: VEA educational qualification is not related to VEA job performance.

HYPOTHESIS 3: VEA attitude is not related to VEA job performance.

HYPOTHESIS 4: VEA level of job satisfaction is not related to VEA job performance.

HYPOTHESIS 5: In-Service training of VEA is not related to VEA job performance.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Study Area

(a) Bauchi State Agricultural Development Programme (BSADP) Western Zone

The study was conducted in the Bauchi State Agricultural Development Programme (BSADP) Western Zone.

Established in 1987 the BSADP is divided into four operating zones with Bauchi as the Programme Headquarters. The four zones of the BSADP are:-

i) Northern zone Azare (Zonal Headquarters)
ii) Western zone Nabardo (zonal Headquarters)
iii) Central zone Miya (Zonal Headquarters)
iv) Eastern zone Gombe (Zonal Headquarters).

Each zone is headed by a project manager (ZPM) who is assisted by the sub-zonal project manager (SZPM). The head of extension in the zone is the zonal Extension Officer (ZEO) who reports directly to the Zonal Project Manager and is assisted by the Block Extension Supervisor, and finally, is the Village Extension Agent (VEA) who reports to, and is supervised by the Block Extension Supervisor (BES).

The Western zone of the BSADP has a total of 115 VEAs and 21 BES, covering six local governments of the state (Alkaleri, Kirfi, Bauchi, Dass, T/Balewa and Bogoro). For extension operation, these six local government areas were divided into block extension areas. There are 22 blocks each headed by a

BES. The blocks are further divided into cells. The number of cells in each block varies according to the population density of the area but on the average there are about 5 cells per block. The criteria used for demarcating a cell is also on population density of the area. Each cell contain about 1000 farming families and it could be a single village or a number of villages located closely together. Thus accordingly there are 115 cells and 115 VEAs, i.e. one VEA per cell. For operational purposes each VEA is required to draw a map of his cell and subdivide it into 8 subcells and each VEA is expected to visit each sub cell at least once in a fortnight. Thus officially to pay a total of 16 visits to his cell per month.

The area is located between latitude 9^0N and 130^0-145^0N and longitudes 30^0E and 120^0E. The predominant vegetation is the sudan savannah. Rainfall starts June/July, and the duration of the growing season is from 95 to 140 days. The annual rainfall is 1000mm. The dominant crops are sorghum, millet, maize, acha (wild rice), sweet potato, groundnut, rice, cotton, yam and coco yam and in Fadama lands, sugar cane and rice. The average farm size is 3.9 ha while the average farm family size is six. The topography is dominated by the crystalline rocks of the basement complex with relatively coarse-textured soils.

3.1.1 Sampling procedure

(A) VEAs: There are 115 village Extension Agents operating in the study area (BSADP, Western Zone). In order to improve the chances of obtaining as high a response rate as possible, the whole of this VEA population (115) was taken as the subject for this study. However 23 of the VEAs were not avaliable either because they were on course outside Bauchi or they had left the job and have not been replaced at the time of interview. Thus 72 VEAs were interviewed and the response was 100%

(B) Farmers

In order to obtain authentic information on the performance of the VEAs in the study area a group of farmers from each cell were interviewed. Three farmers in each cell in the zone were selected from the register at the village heads office. The selection was done using a simple random technique. The tax register at the village head's office was used. From the first 10 names on the register a name was randomly selected; from middle 10 names another name was selected and a third name from the last 10. The village head or his assigned representative was then asked to verify if the names selected were presently in the village. Where it is found that they were not or not available a new selection is made from the affected group on the register. Altogether a total of 345 farmers out of about 92,000 households were selected.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure and Instrument

To collect data for the study two sets of questionnaire formats were designed. One questionnaire format was designed and used to obtain information from the sample of farmers in the study. The second questionnaire was used to obtain information from the VEAs. The VEA questionnaire instrument contained two measuring scales which were tested and used to measure VEA job satisfaction level and VEA attitude to job and the client system.

The farmer questionnaire format provided information on farmer's background characteristics such as name, sex, age, land tenure status etc., as well as farmers assessment of VEA performance over the past one year (i.e. during the previous cropping season). To assess the VEAs, farmers were asked to rate VEA performance on ten selected items officially obtained from the BSADP headquarters in Bauchi. Their responses were recorded along a 5-point rating continuum as: No opinion (N.O) = 0, Not performing (NP) = 1, performing below average (BA) = 2, performing averagely (A) = 3, performing above average (AA) = 4. Thus, the higher the total score for each respondent the higher the performance rating. The minimum score would be 10 points while the maximum score would be 40 points.

The VEA questionnaire format elicited background information of the respondents such as age, sex, job tenure, educational qualification (length of time spent in formal school) and number of in-service training attended since

joining the agency. The VEA questionnaire also contained a job performance rating scale identical with that administered on the farmers sample group. The farmers' rating was used for the correlation calculations.

To measure VEA job satisfaction level, a 15 item likert-type scale was constructed with most of the items adapted from Robinson and Shaver (1970). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with each item along a 5-point continuum as: Very satisfying (VS) = 4; satisfying (S) = 3, Not satisfying (NS) = 2, Very dissatisfying (VD) = 1, No opinion (NO) = 0. The instrument was pretested on 42 VEAs at the BSADP Western zone during a fortnightly training (FNT meeting). The test result showed a reliability coefficient of .924. In addition, a second test, the interaverage correlation technique (Smith, 1975) was conducted using the pretest result. Items with less than the significant .524, r value were dropped. Five items were so affected. Thus the final job satisfaction scale contained 10 items. The result was item analyzed and presented in a table of percentages.

In measuring VEA attitude to job and the client system, an attitude measuring scale was constructed. The 5-point likert type scale, initially contained 31 items that were adapted from previous attitudinal studies (Robinson and Shaver 1970), (Uwakah 1981) and in consultation with some members of the BSADP extension unit. The instrument was pretested simultaneously with the job satisfaction scale where 42 VEAs

participated. The pretest result correlated significantly at the 0.5 level (r = .304). After a second test, the interaverage correlation technique was conducted, 9 items with r value lower than the significant .324 were dropped. The final attitude scale thus contained 22 items. Twelve of the items measured VEA attitude to extension job while the remaining ten items measured VEA attitude to farmers. In both sub scales half of the items were stated positively while the other half were stated negatively. To minimise pattern responses both positive and negative items were listed randomly. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement/disagreement with each statement along a continuum of strongly agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (DA) = 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, No opinion (NO) = 0. The result was presented in a table of percentages with Agree/Disagree as major categories, so as to facilitate item analysis.

In order to distinguish respondents' attitude to job from their attitude to the farmers, the scores for each subscale were calculated separately. Respondents were awarded points from 4 to 1 according to whether their response was favourable or unfavourable respectively. However in order to correlate VEA attitude with other variables in the study, the total score for each respondent in both subscales were combined as single scores.

3.3 Operational Definitions of Variables

Agent Characteristics

X_1 Age:-

studies have shown that age has an important bearing on role performance (Ekpere 1973). Age of an extension agent has been reported to affect his role perception which in turn affects role consensus and hence role performance (Atala and Voh 1987). The age variable was recorded as that given by the respondents.

X_2 Education:-

In this study education is defined as the knowledge acquired by the agent in the formal institutions of learning or schooling. This variable is considered important for the study because "there is overwhelming evidence that education affects individual extension worker's performance on the job" (Atala and Voh 1987: 4). The variable was recorded as the length of time the respondent has spent in formal school.

X_3 Training:-

Training is defined in this study as it was defined by Filippo: that training is the act of increasing knowledge and skills of an employee in doing a particular job" (Filippo 1965: 226). This definition implies that the VEAs possessed formal

education and that training is a deliberate attempt to provide agents with specialized skills and knowledge required to perform effectively on the job. Williams (1978) Ekpere (1973) Maunder (1973) and Atala and Voh (1987) have conducted studies which indicated that pre-service and in-service training programme have a positive influence on the performance of extension agents. The variable was measured by asking respondents to state the number of in-service training they have attended up to the time of the study.

X_4 Job Satisfaction:-

Job satisfaction is the amount of pleasure individuals derive from performing their officially assigned roles. It involves their satisfaction with their status, type of assignment, being in the work group and in general how well they enjoy doing what ever it is they do (Atala and Voh 1987). Job satisfaction is reported to be an important factor in job performance appraisal (Ekpere 1973). The variable was measured using a ten item scale. The respondents were asked to state their level of satisfaction. Their response was recorded along a 5-point continuum as: Very satisfying = 4, to No opinion (N.O) = 0.

X_5 Attitude:-

Attitude is an individual's orientation towards persons, objects or ideas (Etuk 1985) Attitude can be positive or negative depending on individual feelings. Negative attitude is known to have negative influence on performance (Etuk 1985). Uwakah (1981) found that attitude plays an important part in determining the performance of all categories of extension agents. Ekpere (1973) and Williams (1978) also reported that role performance of extension agents is positively related to their attitude towards their job and the extension agency. To measure this variable a list of statements was presented to the respondents. Agreement or disagreement with each statement indicated a positive or negative attitude respectively (Uwakah 1981).

3.4 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to describe the findings of the study. This involved the use of analytical tools such as mean, mode, median, percentages and ratios.

Also Pearson's correlation procedure was employed to test the type and significance of relationship (if any) that exist between the dependent and independent variables as well as among the independent variables used in the study.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

Measurement of job performance is always a complex process. This is so due to the number of factors involved in determining performance. These factors include organisational factors such as policy, decision making process of the organisation, planning and co-ordination. They also include factors relating to the personal characteristics of the individual as well as the nature or conditions of the environment under which he operates i.e. environmental factors. Ideally therefore a researcher should take account of all these factors in studying the performance of individuals in any organisation. Due to the time and resources at the disposal of this researcher, this study concentrated on the personal characteristics of the VEA on the assumption that an individual that is well disposed towards a certain task will go along way in surmounting formidable obstacles to achieve desired goals and objectives. Farmers' opinion which is one of the strongest elements in the environmental situation was however used to determine the performance of VEAs used in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 FINDINGS

4.1 Socio-economic Characteristics

4.1.1 Village Extension Agents (VEAS)

Majority of the respondents (84%) were male compared with 16% female. Seventy six percent of the respondents fell within the age bracket of 26-35 years. Only 44% of the respondents possessed the minimum qualification for the position of VEA i.e. Ordinary National Diploma (OND) and 9% of those had additional qualification of HND/B.Sc. Forty percent of the respondents had the Agricultural Assistant Certificate (AAC) obtained from the Bauchi State Polytechnic, College of Agriculture. The remaining 16% of the respondents had only secondary school education and did not have the basic qualification for OND remedial admission. Sixty percent of the VEAs interviewed had put in 8-11 years on the job while 29% had been on the job for 12 years and above. The rest (11%) had been on the job for 2-5 years only. Only 36% of the respondents had undergone in-service training for up to 30 days and above mainly at the training centre established by the State Agricultural Development Project while the remaining 64% had attended workshops, seminars and conferences of between 1 week to 4 weeks only once.

4.1.2 Farmers

All the 345 farmers interviewed were male and over 95% of them said they had been living in the study villages for more than 30 years. More than eighty percent of the sample of farmers said they owned their own farms and their mean age was 43 years. Over 90% of the sample of farmers said they had spent up to 7 years in formal Quranic schools, while only 15% said they had spent in addition, up to 5 years in formal western education schools.

4.2 Farmer's Assessment of VEA Performance

Ninety eight percent of the farmers interviewed admitted that they were aware of the existence of agricultural extension but only 44% said they had ever used the services of extension compared with 56% who had not. Of those that had ever used extension services 79% said they were not satisfied with the services they received, complaining mainly of number and regularity of VEA visits, usefulness of VEA recommendations, and unfulfilled promises of assistance by the VEA in securing farm inputs such as seeds and chemicals. More than 80% of the farmers said they had never witnessed a single demonstration of any kind organised by the VEA and that the VEAs serving their area had not attended any of their meetings throughout the last cropping season. More than two thirds (76%) of the farmers interviewed put the performance of the VEAs in their area at below average, 12% said the VEAs were

not performing at all while only 14% said the VEAs were performing averagely. An overwhelming 91% however said they were generally dissatisfied with the activities of the VEAS serving in their area.

4.3 VEA Attitude to Job and Clients

Table 4.3.1 summaries VEA responses to 12 attitude to extension work related issues. Ninety seven percent of the VEAs interviewed agreed that extension work provides them a variety of exciting tasks that allows them to use their skills and knowledge, while 17% agreed that extension has no future for VEAs. All the respondents agreed that working with farmers in the field is a pleasant experience but 64% found most of the supervisory staff difficult to work with. Less than half (46%) said that they would remain on the job until retirement age compared to another 46% who disagreed while 6% expressed no opinion. Only 45% of the respondents agreed that there is no new worthwhile technology to extend compared with 71% who disagreed while 4% expressed no opinion on the item. More than half of the respondents (55%) agreed that hard work is neither recognised nor encouraged by the agency compared with 35% who disagreed while 10% remained neutral. An overwhelming 91% agreed that with time extension will provide solution to farmers problem but only 19% however agreed that they would still choose extension as a career if given a second chance. The table below (Table 4.3.1) displays in

greater detail the percentage distribution of respondents on attitude to extension scale.

TABLE 4.3.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY PERCENTAGE ON ATTITUDE TO EXTENSION JOB

n = 72

S/No	Item	Agree		Disagree		No Opinion	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Extension offers a variety of exciting tasks that provide a chance to use knowl. and skills	70	97%	2	3%	-	-
2.	Extension has no future for VEAs	12	17%	60	83%	-	-
3.	Working with farmers is a pleasant experience	72	100%	-	-	-	-
4.	Most supervisory staff are difficult	46	64%	26	36%	-	-
5.	Would remain on the job until retirement	33	46%	33	46%	6	8%
6.	No new worthwhile technology to extend	18	25%	51	71%	3	4%
7.	Hard work neither recognised nor rewarded by agency	40	55%	25	35%	7	10%
8.	Present extension problem beyond agency	46	64%	26	36%	-	-
9.	No prestige in extension compared to other jobs	27	38%	45	63%	-	-
10.	Feel relieved if farmers fail to turn up for schedule meeting	20	28%	47	65%	5	7%
11.	Would still choose extension as a career if given another chance	14	19%	58	81%	-	-
12.	With time extension is the solution to farmers problems	66	91%	6	9%	-	-

When the scores on the attitude to extension job were tabulated as shown in Table 4.3.2, 24% of the respondents were found to have favourable attitude towards their job. Fifty six percent revealed moderate attitude while 19% showed unfavourable attitude toward extension job. This result indicate that about 80% of the VEAs interviewed had moderate to favourable attitude towards their job while about 20% had an unfavourable attitude towards extension job.

TABLE 4.3.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY SCORES ON ATTITUDE TO EXTENSION JOB

Attitude to Extension Job	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Unfavourable Attitude	14	19.44%
Moderate Attitude	41	56.94%
Favourable Attitude	17	23.61%
Total	72	100%
Mean	19.4	54%

4.4 VEA Attitude to Farmers

Table 4.4.1 shows the responses of VEA to 10 attitude to farmers related statements. Sixty one percent of the respondents agreed that rural farmers are generally hostile to change. Fifty six percent agreed that too much teaching effort is required before rural farmers can learn anything while 78% agreed that VEAs do not spend enough time to understand the rural farmers ways of life. An overwhelming 92% of the respondents agreed that farmers expect too much from the VEAs. More than half (53%) were of the opinion that agency, rather than farmers was responsible for the slow development of agriculture. Sixty four percent agreed that farmers usually have no genuine reason for resisting change while less than half (41%) agreed that most farmers are willing to adopt recommended practices compared to more than half 59% who disagreed. While a large majority (71%) of the respondents agreed that finance, rather than farmer's

attachment to tradition is responsible for farmers slow acceptance of new ideas, only 39% believe that most agricultural development efforts fail because farmers' opinion was not taken seriously. The table below (Table 4.4.1) summarises in greater detail the percentage distribution of VEAs interviewed on attitude to farmers.

TABLE 4.4.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON ATTITUDE TO FARMERS

n = 72

		Agree		Disagree		No opinion	
S/No	Item	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Rural Farmers generally hostile to change	44	61	28	39	-	-
2.	Agency rather than farmers is responsible for slow development of agricultural development	28	39	24	33	20	28
3.	Too much teach effort required before farmers learn anything	40	56	32	44	-	-
4.	Finance rather than farmers attachment to tradition is responsible for farmers slow acceptance of new ideas	51	71	21	29	-	-
5.	Most farmers are not intelligent enough to understand what extension is all about	39	54	27	36	6	8
6.	Farmers have no genuine reason for resisting change.	46	64	26	36	-	-
7.	VEAs do not spend enough time to understand rural farmers problems and needs	56	78	16	22	-	-
8.	Farmers expect too much from the VEA and extension agency	66	92	12	8	-	-
9.	Most farmers are ready to adopt recommended practice	30	41	42	59	-	-
10.	Most agricultural development effort fail because farmers opinions are not taken seriously.	28	39	31	43	13	18

When the scores on attitude to farmers was tabulated as shown on table 4.4.2, 12% of the respondents were found to

have favourable or positive attitude towards the farmers while 33% displayed unfavourable attitude. More than half (54%) however were found to have moderate attitude towards the farmers. Thus this result indicates that a majority of the VEAs 67% had favourable to moderate attitude towards their clients while 33% had unfavourable attitude towards the farmers.

TABLE 4.4.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY SCORES ON ATTITUDE TO FARMERS

Attitude to Extension Job	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Unfavourable Attitude	24	33.33%
Moderate Attitude	39	54.16%
Favourable Attitude	09	12.9%
Total	72	100%
Mean	14.8	

When correlated with other variables attitude showed a positive correlation with job performance (r = .109). Attitude also correlated positively and significantly with education (r = .370) and age (r = 0.277) all values tested at the 0.05 level of significance. One interpretation of these results is that agents with higher educational qualification, agents who are older tend to develop favourable attitude towards their job and their clients.

4.5 Job Satisfaction

Entries in table 4.5.1 show the responses on VEAs with respect to 10 job satisfaction related items. The entries show a high level of dissatisfaction among the VEAs interviewed in the study.

An overwhelming 92% and 72% expressed dissatisfaction with their monthly salary and overtime/hazard allowances respectively. All the respondents however expressed satisfaction with their relations with colleagues. Sixty five percent of the respondents said they were dissatisfied with transportation facilities while 62% said they were dissatisfied with housing (accommodation) facilities provided by the agency. More than half (54%) expressed satisfaction with regular flow of relevant technology from the research centres. The overall entries in the job satisfaction Table revealed that more than 70% of the respondents were generally dissatisfied with various items on the job satisfaction scale, complaining mainly of lack of regular promotion, inadequate remuneration, lack of supporting input and poor health facilities. Surprisingly, job satisfaction showed positive even though weak correlation with job performance ($r = 0.165$). This low value was probably due to measurement errors i.e. non-inclusion of some other job satisfaction items considered more relevant by the respondents.

TABLE 4.5.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON THE JOB SATISFACTION SCALE

n = 72

		Satisfied		Not Satiafied		No opinion	
S/No	Item	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Monthly Salary	6	8	66	92	-	-
2.	Overtime/Hazard Allowance	20	28	52	72	-	-
3.	Relation with colleagues	72	100	-	-	-	-
4.	Housing Facility	27	38	45	62	-	-
5.	Health Facility	26	36	46	64	-	-
6.	Regular promotion	26	36	46	64	-	-
7.	Office Accommodation	43	60	29	40	-	-
8.	Transportation facility	25	35	47	65	-	-
9.	Regular flow of relevant technology	39	54	33	46	-	-
10.	Availability of supporting imp.	35	49	37	51	-	-

4.6 Education, Training and Age

The most significant variable for influencing role performance in this study was found to be education (r = 0.292) followed by Age (r =0.278) both tested at the 0.05 level of significance. This result means that agents with a higher level of education, agents who are older, were more likely to perform well at their jobs than agents who were younger and had little education. The study also revealed that only 36% of the VEAs interviewed in the study had undergone adequate in-service training as compared to 64% who had not. This variable also showed a positive correlation with job performance. Table 4.5.2 (Correlation Matrix) showed in detail the relationship between the dependent variable (job performance) and the independent variables (age, education, attitude, job satisfaction and training) as well as among the independent variables used in the study.

TABLE 4.5.2: CORRELATION MATRIX SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE (Y = JOB PERFORMANCE) AND THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES IN THE STUDY

		Y	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4	X_5
Job Perf	Y	1.0					
Age	X_1	.276*	1.0				
Educ.	X_2	.292*	0.073	1.0			
Atti.	X_3	.109	0.277*	0.370**	1.0		
Job Sat	X_4	.165	0.197	0.169	.101	1.0	
Train	X_5	.206	0.127	0.106	.274*	.142	1.0

Critical values of r at 0.05 level of significance = 0.272 and at 0.01 level = 0.354.

* Significant at 0.05 level

** Significant at 0.01 level

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Discussion

The objective of this study was to find out the attitude of VEAs to extension job and to the client system i.e. the farmers and to analyze the influence of the said attitude as well as other agent related factors such as age, education, training and job satisfaction on the job performance of the VEAs in the study area. Another important objective of the study was to find out farmers own assessment of the performance of the VEAs in the study area.

The findings in the study had revealed that a large majority of the VEAs (84%) interviewed were male. This seems to be a common feature in most extension organisations in the country particularly in northern Nigeria where this study area is located. This is supported by the findings of Atala et al (1993) in a study of professional competencies needed by extension staff in three northern states of Nigeria where they found that 93% of the extension staff were male while only 7% were female. This is a serious development, more so in an environment where the female population form a substantial part of the agricultural labour force and where tradition restricts the interaction between male and female. This means that a sizeable population (women) of the potential beneficiaries of extension packages were excluded from the

advantages and opportunities that extension normally provides. Studies have indeed shown that extension services and information in most developing countries do not easily get to women as reported by Bukh (1979) and Safflios-Rotschild (1983).

The study has also revealed that over 80% of the VEAs interviewed had moderate to favourable attitude towards extension job while 67% were found to have moderate attitude towards the farmers. Attitude showed a positive correlation with job performance, and a stronger and positive correlation with education ($r = 0.370$) and age ($r = 0.279$). The implication of this is that favourable attitude by itself does not necessarily ensures high rate of job performance. To positively influence performance, favourable attitude of the VEAs has to be complimented by other factors that directly affect performance such as maturity (age) and educational qualification, both of which were found to significantly and positively influence performance in this study.

The findings in this study also revealed that the most important variable for predicting job performance was education ($P < .05$). This result is consistent with the findings of Madukwe (1993) which found significant correlation between educational qualification of extension agents and their job performance effectiveness. The result also agreed with the findings of Atala et al, (1993) which attributed poor agents performance in three northern states of Nigeria to,

among other factors, poor educational qualification.

A second important predictor of job performance in this study was age ($P<.05$). This finding correspond with the finding of Atala and Voh (1987) which found significant and positive relationship between age of agents and agent job performance. Thus, in this study, since both age and education were found to significantly affect performance, the implication is that older agents, having had more opportunities for higher education (and relevant training) and have acquired considerable experience and are more interested in making a career out of extension job tend to perform better than agents who were younger, who have had fewer opportunities for higher education and considerably less experienced on the job. Again this observation is reinforced by the fact that in this study, age had a significant correlation with attitude ($P<.05$), meaning that older agents had a more favourable attitude towards their job, and as it was statistically supported in this study, it was reported by Uwakah (1981) that attitude has a positive correlation with job performance.

The study had also revealed that only 36% of the VEA's interviewed had undergone significant in-service training mainly at the training centre established by the state ADP. It was also found that majority of the agents (94%) expressed dissatisfaction with various aspects of their working condition particularly monthly salary (92%) overtime allowance (72%) and transportation (66%). Under such condition of

inadequate training and poor motivation, agents were not likely to perform effectively. This observation is supported by the findings of Ekpere (1973) Uwakah (1981) and Madukwe (1993) which reported that motivation, training and job satisfaction were significantly and positively related to agents job performance. Thus although training, job satisfaction and attitude as defined and measured in this study showed positive though weak correlation with job performance, it is likely that the impact of these factors could have been weakened by measurement errors (i.e. non-inclusion of other relevant variables or indicators) and the problem of multi-collinearity. It could also have been "moderated by the personal orientation, circumstances, experiences, ideosyncracies and even habits of the agents themselves" (Atala and Voh, 1987:16).

The interview with farmers in the study area with respect to the performance of VEAs serving them also showed a very low rating for agents performance. Ninety eight percent of the farmers interviewed put the performance of the VEAs below average. They expressed dissatisfaction with the general activities of VEAs in the study area. Complaining mainly of inadequate number of contact with VEAs, irregular VEA visits and usefulness of VEA recommendations. Thus it is likely that farmers complaints on the usefulness of VEA recommendations is a reflection of the poor training that VEAS in the study area received, in which it was found that only 36% VEAs interviewed

had attended in-service training more than once. It is also likely that the irregular and inadequate number of VEA visits that farmers in the study area receive from the VEAs is caused by the poor transportation facilities provided by the agency. This was in fact supported by the BSADP survey report (1993) which reported that 87% of the agents serving in the organisation had no means of transport and most of them walked a distance of 5km and above to meet their contact farmers.

Finally, the study revealed a wide gap between farmers awareness of the existence of VEAs covering their area and their use of services offered by the VEAs. The fact that 90% of farmers in the study area were aware of extension activities but only 44% have had any dealings with VEAs means that extension coverage in the study area was wide but effectiveness was low. This discrepancy might have been caused by the fact that farmers had other sources of information apart from interpersonal contact with VEAs as reported by Wanaso (1993) who reported that more than 50% of the sample of farmers he studied in Plateau state obtained farm information through radio and only 26% said they get their information through contact with VEAs.

5.2 Recommendations

From the findings of this study it is hereby recommended that the following factors should be taken into consideration in formulating policy bearing on village extension agents:

i) The minimum educational qualification fixed for VEA's i.e. OND should be maintained and should be more firmly enforced. Village extension agents serving without such basic qualification should be made to acquire it through in-service and those without the basic requirement for OND admission should be converted to some other cadre of employment more suited to their educational level. Also subsequent employment of VEA's should emphasize on the minimum educational qualification set by the agency.

ii) The agency should take steps to improve the welfare and working conditions of VEA's particularly the areas of renumeration, overtime/hazard allowances, housing and transportation facilities and provision of essential tools such as audio-visual aids, overhead projectors, supporting farm inputs such as seeds and chemicals. Also the opportunities that older agents had, such as relevant in-service training should be extended to younger agents as well.

iii) Finally, it was observed in the course of this study that the officially specified role function for the Village extension agents in the study area is comprehensive. However, what is required is mass education of farmers on the specific role of the village extension agents as distinct from other officers of the agency such as subject matter specialists or other officials of government operating in the rural areas. This will go a

long way in making farmers expectations from VEA's more realistic, and will thus afford the village extension agent a conducive atmosphere to build trust and confidence in their relationship with farmers.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion this study had revealed that farmers were generally dissatisfied with the performance of VEAs in their area. The VEAs themselves have a positive attitude towards their job and their clients, while the VEA job satisfaction scale shows that the VEAs were generally dissatisfied with their condition of service. It is concluded that the poor performance of VEA was caused by the poor conditions of service that under which VEAs operate. It was also found that through the VEAs displayed a moderately favourable attitude towards their job, it is not enough to guarantee effective performance. That the apparent positive attitude of the VEA towards their job and their clients has to be complimented by other factors such as experience and maturity (age) education and favourable working environment.

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FACTORS AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF VILLAGE EXTENTION (VEAs) IN THE WESTERN ZONE OF THE BAUCHI STATE AGRICULCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (BSADP)

VEA QUESTIONNAIRE CONFIDENTIAL

AREA OF STUDY:

LOCATIONS:

L.G.A.:

DATE:

A. IDENTIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

1. NAME:.....

AGE: ☐

SEX: M ☐ F ☐

RANK: i. (VEA) ☐

ii. AA (Agric Assistant ☐

iii. Block Ext. Supervisor (BES) ☐

2. EDUCATION:

How many years have you spent in formal western school?

☐ .....

3. TRAINING:

Have you had any Training since you have been employed?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, what type?

		No of Times	Duration:
i.	In-Service:.....	.....	.....
ii.	Short Courses:.....	.....	.....
iii.	Conference W/Shops:.....	.....	.....
iv.	Any Other (specify):.....	.....	.....

What Type of Training would you prefer?

(i) ☐ (ii) ☐ (iii) ☐ (iv) ☐

4. ATTITUDE TO EXTENSION JOB:

Answer Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (DA) Strongly Disagree (SD) or No opinion (NO) to the list of Statements presented below:

	SA Strongly agree 4	A agree 3	DA Dis-agree 2	SD Strongly Disagree 1	NO No opinion 0
(i) Extension provides a variety of exciting task that provides a chance to use knowledge and skills.					
(ii) Extension has no future for village Ext. agents					
(iii) Working with farmers is a pleasant experience.					
(iv) Most supervisory staff are difficult.					
(v) Would remain on the job up to retirement.					
(vi) No new worthwhile technology to extend.					
(vii) Hard work is neither recognised nor rewarded by agency.					
(viii) Present extension problem can not be solved by the agency alone					
(ix) No prestige in extension work.					
(x) Feel relieved if farmers fail to turn up for scheduled meetings.					
(xi) Would still choose extension if given another chance.					
(xii) With time extension is the solution to farmers' problems.					

5. ATTITUDE TO FARMERS:

From the list of statements below indicate how you feel about each statement by writing Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (DA) Strongly Disagree (SD), or No Opinion (NO).

	SA Strongly agree 4	A Agree 3	DA Disa-gree 2	SD Strongly Disagree 1	NO No Opinion 0
(i) Rural farmers are generally hostile to change.					
(ii) Agency rather than farmers is responsible for slow development of Agriculture.					
(iii) Too much teaching effort is required before farmers can learn anything.					
(iv) Finance rather than farmer attachment to tradition is responsible for farmers' slow acceptance of new ideas.					
(v) Most farmers are not intelligent enough to understand what extension is all about.					
(vi) Farmers have no genuine reason for resisting change.					
(vii) VEAs don't spend enough time to understand farmers' problems and needs.					
(viii) Farmers expect too much from the VEAs and the ext. agency.					
(ix) Most farmers are ready to accept recommended practices.					
(x) Most agricultural development efforts fail becouse farmers' opinions are not taken seriously.					

6. From the items listed below, what aspect of your job gives you the greatest satisfaction and motivates you to do more? Indicate by writing:

	JOB SATISFACTION: ITEMS	REACTION				
		VS Very Satisfying 4	S satisfying 3	LS Least Satisfying 2	NS Not Satisfying 1	NO No Opinion 0
1.	Monthly Salary					
2.	Overtime allowances					
3.	Relation with Colleagues					
4.	Housing Facility					
5.	Health Facility					
6.	Regular Promotion					
7.	Office Accommodation					
8.	Transportation Facility					
9.	Farmer's Response					
10.	Regular flow of new relevant technology					

THANK YOU.

FARMER QUESTIONNAIRE

VILLAGE:

L.G.A.:

DATE:

1. NAME:.....

2. AGE:.....

3. SEX: M ☐ F ☐

4. (A) Did you attend formal school? Yes ☐ No ☐

(B) If yes what type of formal School Quranic ☐ Western ☐

(C) For how long?.....

5. What is the size of your farm?

6. Are you engaged in any other occupation apart from farming?

7. Have you heard of, and do you make use of the extension service?

Heard of	Hear of and Use	
Yes ☐	Yes ☐	No ☐

8. (A) On the average how many visits do you recieve from the VEA per month?.....

(B) Per Year?.....

9. How many demonstrations has the VEA in your area conducted during the last cropping season?

10. Does the VEA use Audio visual Aids frequently?.....

11.a) Do you hold farmers meetings in your village?.....

11.b) If yes does the VEA attend such meetings?.....

12.a) Has your VEA trained any local leaders in your area?.....

12.b) If yes can you say how many?.....

13. Can you recollect specific changes the VEA advised you to make during his visits to your farm?.....

14. Which of those changes have you affected?

15. As a result of these changes would you say that your income has:

.....

(i) Increased? (ii) Decreased (iii) Not Changed?

16. How satisfied are you with your VEA with regardsto the following activities?

		VS Very Satisfying 4	S Satisfying 3	NO Not Satisfying 2	VD Very Distisfying 1	NO No Openion 0
(i)	Number and regularity of VEA visits					
(ii)	VEA recommendations					
(iii)	VEA response to your specific requests					
(iv)	VEA knowledge of your farming practices.					
(v)	VEA understanding of rural life.					

17. When did the VEA in your area last visited you?.....1.....

THANK YOU.