COMMUNICATION AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF TARABA STATE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN ASKEAN COMMUNITY

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DECLARATION

I Nyatse Iririben Danladi declare that this dissertation has been written by me in the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts under the supervision of Dr. Emmanuel Jegede and Dr. Victoria Lagwampa.

The information derived from other literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of reference provided. There is no part of this dissertation that was previously presented for another degree

_____ _____

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CERTIFICATION

The dissertation entitled *Communication and Women's participation in Agricultural Development: A study of Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme in Askean Community* written by Nyatse Iririben Danladi in the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of MA (Development Communication) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and it is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentations.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedication to the memory of my departed lecturers Prof. Jenkeri Zakari Okwori, Prof. Samuel Ayedime Kafewo, Dr. Martins Adegbe Ayegba. May Almighty God continue to fill your hearts and may his unconditional love grant you all unending peace in his bosom.

Amen.

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ABSTRACT

Agricultural development has been a major concern to most developing countries within the last two decades. A review of current response to food crisis across the world has shown that there is a need for agricultural development, expansion, increased production per acre of cropped land or per head of livestock, agricultural growth and agricultural transformation. The significance of the role of women in agriculture is prominent; however the paucity of agricultural information has remained one of the factors militating against women's active and productive participation in agriculture in Nigeria regardless of the existence of women friendly agricultural programmes. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to study the influence of communication on the agricultural participation of women in Askean community of Ussa Local Government Area of Taraba State. The study deployed Gender and Development Theory and Reflect Theory as theoretical framework and a comprehensive questionnaire was prepared and administered to women farmers in Askean community in Taraba State. In view of this, 381copies of questionnaire were administered while 372 copies were retrieved. In addition, Key Informant Interview (KII) and |Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were also used to elicit data for the study. Thus, it was revealed that the participation of women in agricultural activities in Askean community was high as a result of various communication strategies deployed by Taraba Agricultural Development Programme (TADP) over time. It was discovered that factors such as poor funding, low level of education, and health challenges affected women's participation in agriculture in Askean community. Furthermore, it was found out that radio and local media of communication with local contents were mostly effective among the various communication channels deployed by TADP to enhance women's participation in Askean community. The study recommended that TADP should initiate sustainable communication strategies to further improve the level of participation in the community and that government and non-governmental agencies should make efforts to provide funding to women farmers in rural communities with a view to increasing agricultural output as well as addressing the issue of poor health and illiteracy through adult and non former education of women farmers.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Agricultural development has been a major concern to most developing countries in the last two decades. A review of current response to food crisis across the world has shown that there is a need for agricultural development, expansion, increased production per acre of cropped land or per head of livestock, agricultural growth and agricultural transformation. The increasingly growing population of the world especially in developing countries has brought the need for increased agricultural productivity to fore and rural dwellers remain the driving force of agriculture in developing countries. However, the paucity of labour has been identified as one of the high ranking factors militating against agricultural development in the world especially in developing countries like Nigeria. The steady rise in global demand for food and agricultural commodities presents an opportunity for increased food production and agriculture has been deemed as an answer tothis demand hence increased labour especially with regards to women inclusion becomes imperative.

Developing countries such as Nigeria fall in the categories of low income food deficit countries. This situation remains an irony because Nigeria is endowed with every resource it needs to float a leading agricultural economics.Ogen (2007) asserts that Nigeria is endowed with 68 million hectares of arable land, fresh water resources covering about 12 million hectares, 960 kilometres of coastline and ecological diversity, which allows the country to produce a wide variety of crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries products.The oil boom of the 1970s became the major source of revenue for Nigeria and to a large extent, it affected the interest and participation in agriculture (Ogen, 2007). In spite of the presence

of petroleum and the foreign earnings it has generated to the nation, Nigeria is undoubtedly an agricultural economy with tremendous potentials and resource for providing food and agricultural raw materials for export and domestic industries. With all the potentials that Nigeria as a nation possesses, Olagbaju and Falola (1996) view Nigeria's economy as a "mono" economy, having one direction without diversification. It has been opined that the root of the crisis in the Nigeria economy lies in the neglect of agriculture and the increased dependence on a mono-cultural economy based on oil. In 1996, agricultural sector accounts for less than 5% of Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product due to its neglect (Olagbaju and Falola, 1996).

It is important to note that much of the foods consumed in Nigeria are still being produced largely by small scale farmers who are illiterate with low access to the necessary resources and information. They need necessary information on agriculture as it helps them participate more in agricultural production activities. Women participation is a fundamental militating factor to agricultural development in Nigeria. A ranking of the socio-economic activities of the women studied, indicated that their most important activity was the care of children, followed by house-keeping and then trading. A ranking of the women's preferred socio-economic activity revealed that the women would like to spend less time on home-related activities to increase time spent on farming, processing and trading. In other words, trading and farming were two significant occupations that women in Nigeria engaged in outside the home. In addition, Obinne (1995) observed that the Yoruba women of Western Nigeria were more into trading. The Igbo women of Eastern Nigeria were predominantly engaged in trading activities while the Hausa/Fulani women of Northern Nigeria sustained interested in both farming and trading. In specific terms, about 65 % of Nigerian women are

involved in cash crops, arable and vegetable gardening. It was observed that women's participation in post-harvest activities and agro forestry were rather low (between 16 % and 15 % respectively). This situation is prevalent as a result of the fact that their male counterparts owned lands and employed labour, limiting women's contributions to family obligations, which becomes detrimental to women participation in agriculture even in present day Nigeria (Scorecard, 2013).

However, the highlighted position of women in agricultural strata is not as result of their passive involvement. Ansari and Sunetha (2014) support the assertion that women have always been an important workforce in agriculture. Emphatically, women are involved in all the stages of crop production, from seed selection to post harvest activities as well as allied enterprises such as diary, cattle management, fish and poultry farming.

In addition, women in Rural areas have taken over the production and processing of arable crops and are responsible for as much as 80% of the staple food items. Estimates of women's contribution to the production of food crops range from 30% in the Sudan to 80% in the Congo contributing substantially to national agricultural production and food security (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD), 1992). Rural areas are the mainstay of agriculture in Nigeria and most farmers operate on the subsistence and smallholder level in an extensive agricultural system. Therefore, a country's food security lie in their hands and women farmers are the principal labour force on small holder farms and perform the largest share in land preparation, weeding, transporting, processing and marketing of agricultural products. Women therefore contribute greatly to agricultural production in Nigeria they make up to 60-80 percent of the labour force (Sharon, 2008).

The significant roles they play in meeting the challenges of agricultural production and development are quite dominant and prominent. (Odebode 2012 and OECD, 1992).

Therefore, the roles of women in the agricultural development of developing countries have become prominent and have remained topical in global discourse. Despite the prominence, women in the Nigerian agro-sector seem not to be effective as sole owners of agricultural enterprise. Scholars have argued that the agricultural policies of developing countries playa militating role in women participation in agriculture but the paucity of information and agricultural communication ranks higher than other prevailing factors. Osuman (1997) affirms that agricultural extension services are mostly staffed by men and are inclined to helping men folk.

Being that women have played crucial roles in agricultural development in Nigeria since inception and that presently several efforts have been made by government to boost agriculture by improving the level of participation in agriculture, it is imperative that if women must be seen as active participants and partners then, empowerment is vital (Sharon, 2008). This is important because majority of women who are involved in agriculture are handicapped by social and economic factors. Therefore, demanding women's participation requires information and that is the point at which communication becomes an essential aspect of this study. It is imperative to note that communication cannot be over-emphasized, as it is the bedrock upon which societal systems are formed. It plays a pivotal role in shaping the way people perceive their environment (Baran, 2004).

Considering the important nature of women's contributions to the growth and development of the agricultural sector in Nigeria, one can only imagine the extent of input if various socio economic barriers can be removed through effective communication.

Obinne (1995) is of the opinion that women have been constrained by their inability to access vital information and necessary resource. For instance, Obinne (1995) further observed that women farm managers have inadequate access to agricultural information from extension services. Since they (women farmers) are engaged in both on-and off-farm activities they do not have time to enjoy the extension service offered. In the same vein, Protz (1997) posits that due to the multiple roles women play in the rural household (including caretakers of children and the elderly), they do not fully benefit from extension services, particularly, when the time of delivery (of extension service) conflicts with their other household responsibilities. The above assertions make the area of this research worthy of study as it seeks to appraise the influence of agricultural communication on the women in Askean communityof Ussa Local Government Area, Taraba State under Taraba State Agricultural Development programme (TADP).

Taraba State Agricultural Development programme (TADP) is the extension wing of the state ministry of Agriculture, established in 1991 and the takeoff funds were jointly provided by the World Bank, Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) and Taraba State. Now, the exit of the World Bank from this tripartite funding alignment has now left the programme for the Federal and State Government to fund. The aim of the women empowerment programme by the TADP is to help improve their source of livelihood which will extend to their families in Askean community of Ussa Local Government Area of Taraba state. In view of the above, this study therefore investigates how TADP's agricultural communication has influenced the empowerment programme of TADP in Askean community of Ussa Local Government of Taraba state.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

A lot of programmes have been designed to boost agriculture in Nigeria such as the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA, 1967), National Accelerated Food Production Project (NAFPP, 1972), River Basin Development Authority (RBDA, 1973), Agricultural Development Project (ADP, 1975), International Food Policy Research. The need for women inclusion in agriculture also birthed women friendly agricultural programmes like Women-In-Agriculture (WIA) in Nigeria which is a branch of the Agricultural Development Projects (ADP) (Odurukwe *et al.*, 2006). Report has shown that they have made important progress in different States of the Federation by incorporating gender in agricultural extension but this progress still leaves much to be desired.

Despite the establishment of these women friendly programmes aimed at fueling women's participation in agriculture, vital tools like agricultural information remains a prevailing factor militating against women's participation in the Nigerian agriculture. The issue has remained topical especially when the current situation of the Nigerian agro-industry and the increase in food prices cum are considered. The significance of the role of women in agriculture is prominent; however the paucity of agricultural information has remained one of the factors militating against women's active and productive participation in agriculture in Nigeria regardless of the existence of women friendly agricultural programmes. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to study the influence of communication on the agricultural participation of women in Askean community of Ussa Local Government Area of Taraba State.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the communication strategies deployed by TADP in Askean community in Taraba state with a view to enhancing participation and empowerment in agricultural development.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The following objectives will guide the study:

1 To examine the nature of agricultural activities undertaken by women in Askean community under study.

2 To ascertain the level of women's participation in Agriculture in the community under study.

3 To identify the factors militating against women's participation in Agricultural development project within Askean community under study.

4 To examine the communication strategies deployed by TADP in facilitating women's participation in Agriculture in the community under study.

5 To devise ways through which effective communication strategies can be used to enhance women's participation in Agricultural development projects in Askean community.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the agricultural activities undertaken by women in Askean community of Ussa L.G.A
2. What are the levels of women's participation in Agriculture in the community under study?

3. What are the factors militating against women's participation in Agricultural projects within the selected community in Ussa L.G.A?
4. In what ways are the communication strategies deployed by TADP in facilitating women's participation in Agriculture in Askean community of Ussa L.G.A?
5. In what ways can effective communication strategies be used to enhance women's participation in agricultural development projects in Askean community?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Availability of food is a central issue, as human life depends on the ability to find enough food to eat (Sen, 1987). The discourse on how to increase rural women's capacity to food production will continue to be a recurring one, as it affects the well-being of the world population. According to FAO (2012c), nearly 870 million people of the 7.1 billion people in the world, or one in eight, have been known to be experiencing protracted undernourishment in 2010-2012. This implies that about a billion people are food 17 insecure globally. About 85 per cent of these hungry people live in less developed countries, particularly those of Africa. This number represents 15 per cent of the population of developing countries, hence they are grouped as 'the continent of the hungry' (Weis, 2007).

A lot of communication efforts in agriculture have been carried out by TADP in recent times and other research organizations but the extent of involvement and empowerment by women remains uncertain. Therefore, findings from this study will contribute to the numerous agricultural communication strategies deployed by TADP and perhaps other research institutions in Nigeria. This will go a long way in empowering Nigerian women for improved agricultural productivity and sustainability.

This research is equally important because the present government has been making frantic efforts towards the transformation of the agricultural sector through several means

such as Agricultural Transformation Agenda, thus, the findings and recommendations of this study can add value to improve upon already existing communication modalities to enhance active women participation in agriculture.

Furthermore, the findings from this study will enable government and Non-Governmental Organizations as well as agricultural communication experts/interventionist to focus more on effective communication to boost women's participation and empowerment in agriculture especially at the rural level.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study is limited to Taraba State Agricultural Development programme (TADP) and its activities in Askean community of Ussa L.G.A. However, the study is limited to the appraisal of women's contribution to agriculture especially with regard to improving food production, food processing and market oriented practices, and food security. The work also explores how proper communication approaches have been deployed to empower women for effective agricultural development in the community under study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews related literature in accordance with the variables of the study such as communication: concept and context,overview of global trends in food security and production, agricultural development in Nigeria, Women's role in agricultural development, women empowerment, factors restraining women Participation in agricultural development, extension service and communication strategies, participatory communication and agriculture education, theoretical framework. Reviewing these variables assisted the researcher to examine various contributions of scholars. It also assisted the researcher to identify possible gaps in the works reviewed and the extent to which the present study has filled the gaps identified.

2.2 Communication: Concept and Context

Communication is a multi-faceted phenomenon. It is vast and diverse, as such it has various views and definitions but basically, Communication is generally believed, in its simplest term means a means by which information is imparted and shared with others. Put more formally, it is the transfer of information between a source and one or more receivers; a process of sharing meanings, using a set of common rules (Northouse and Northouse, 1998). However, Communication experts define communication as a process through which ideas, innovation or messages are transferred from source to the ultimate user for modifying the behavior of receivers in the desired direction. This suggests that communication itself is a process which has distinct elements where we have the communicator, the message, i.e. new discoveries, innovations, new ideas and its treatments – all directed towards achieving

a particular goal or arousing some response from the recipient. Communication is a two way process. It involves giving as well as receiving information and direction (Moemeka, 2002).

Moemeka (2002) sees communication as an inalienable right of every human being, a right without which man cannot be man. Since communication has been described as a two-step flow, where there is a sender and a receiver therefore, the radio drama should not be seen as a means of distribution but rather a means of communication which is capable not just for transmitting to, but also receiving from the people thereby, allowing the listener not only to hear but also to speak.

Communication is a process whereby information is enclosed in a package and is channeled and imparted by a sender to a receiver via a medium. The receiver then decodes the message and gives the sender a feedback. All forms of communication require a sender, a message, and an intended recipient; however the receiver need not be present or aware of the sender's intent to communicate at the time of communication in order for the act of communication to occur. Communication requires that all parties have an area of communicative commonality. There are auditory means, such as speech, song, and tone of voice, and there are nonverbal means, such as body language, sign language, paralanguage, touch, eye contact, through media, i.e., pictures, graphics, sound and writing.

We communicate information in many different ways. In humans, it is frequently done through spoken and/or written language, but non-verbal communication also plays a significant role in our interactions. We constantly communicate information, intentionally or unintentionally, about our perceptions, intentions and feelings, as well as about our very identity. Communication is central to our everyday functioning and can be the very essence

of the human condition (Hargie and Dickson, 2004). As so aptly put by Hybels and Weaver (1998), 'To live is to communicate. To communicate is to enjoy life more fully'. Without the capacity for sophisticated channels for sharing our knowledge, both within and between generations, our advanced civilization would not exist (Hargie and Dixon, 2004).

The basic communication model consists of five elements of communication: the sender, the receiver, the message, the channel and feedback. The sender plays the specific role of initiating communication. To communicate effectively, the sender must use effective verbal as well as nonverbal techniques. Speaking or writing clearly, organizing your points to make them easy to follow and understand, maintaining eye contact, using proper grammar and giving accurate information are all essential in the effectiveness of your message. You will lose your audience if it becomes aware of obvious oversights on your part. The sender should have some understanding of who the receiver is in order to modify the message to make it more relevant.

It is important to state that the receiver stands for the party to whom the sender transmits the message. Succinctly stated, a receiver is someone that a message is sent to. It can be one person or an entire audience of people. In the basic communication model, the receiver is directly across from the speaker. The receiver can also communicate verbally and nonverbally. The best way to receive a message is to listen carefully, sitting up straight and making eye contact. Don't get distracted or try to do something else while you're listening. Nodding and smiling as you listen to the sender speak demonstrate that you understand the message.

The message may be the most crucial element of effective communication. A message can come in many different forms, such as an oral presentation, a written

document, an advertisement or just a comment. In the basic communication model, the way from one point to another represents the sender's message traveling to the receiver. The message is not necessarily what the sender intends it to be. Rather, the message is what the receiver perceives the message to be. As a result, the sender must not only compose the message carefully, but also evaluate the ways in which the message can be interpreted.

The message travels from one point to another via a channel of communication. The channel sits between the sender and receiver. Many channels, or types, of communication exist, from the spoken word to radio, television, an Internet site or something written, like a book, letter or magazine. Every channel of communication has its advantages and disadvantages. For example, one disadvantage of the written word, on a computer screen or in a book, is that the receiver cannot evaluate the tone of the message. For this reason, effective communicators word written communications clearly so they don't rely on a specific tone of voice to convey the message accurately. The advantages of television as a channel of communication include its expansive reach to a wide audience and the sender's ability to further manipulate the message using editing and special effects. The last element of effective communication, feedback, describes the receiver's response or reaction to the sender's message. The receiver can transmit feedback through asking questions, making comments or just supporting the message that was delivered. Feedback helps the sender to determine how the receiver interpreted the message and how it can be improved.

Be that as it may, communication is not only the exchange of news and messages. It is also an individual and collective activity which embraces the transmission and shearing of ideas, facts and data. By doing this, society is informed about political affairs, local events and innovations, issues concerning population growth, harvests and the provision of

urban and rural infrastructure. This information is necessary especially at the grass-roots because they enable individuals to make informed choices about their future. It also enhances their chances of effectively participating in the development of their innate abilities and their society. Participation is the whole work of the enthronement of democracy.

Effective communication is when the message as sent by the sender is clearly understood by the receiver through adequate medium which is clearly understood and appreciated by the receiver. However, there can be various barriers that can limit the effectiveness of communication. Barrier is an obstacle or impediments to achieving a set goal or purpose. According to Eisenberg (2010), there are four types of barriers that impede communication namely: physical barriers, semantic barriers, and psychosocial barriers.

It is important to note that physical distractions can interfere with the effectiveness of communication, including a telephone call, drop-in visitors, and distances between people, walls, and static on the radio. People often take physical barriers for granted, but sometimes they can be removed. For example, an inconveniently positioned wall can be removed. Interruptions such as telephone calls and drop-in visitors can be removed by issuing instructions to a secretary. An appropriate choice of media can overcome distance barriers between people.

The words we choose, how we use them, and the meaning we attach to them cause many communication barriers. The problem is semantic, or the meaning of the words we use. The same word may mean different things to different people. Words and phrases such as efficiency, increased productivity, management prerogatives, and just cause may mean

one thing to a school administrator, and something entirely different to a staff member. Technology also plays a part in semantic barriers to communication.

Psychosocial is another aspect of communication barrier which often involves a psychological distance between people that is similar to actual physical distance. Three important concepts are associated with psychological and social barriers: fields of experience, filtering, and psychological distance (Antos, 2011). Fields of experience include people's backgrounds, perceptions, values, biases, needs, and expectations. Senders can encode and receivers decode messages only in the context of their fields of experience. When the sender's field of experience overlaps very little with the receiver's, communication becomes difficult. Filtering means that more often than not we see and hear what we are emotionally tuned in to see and hear. Filtering is caused by our own needs and interests, which guide our listening.

2.3 Overview of Global Trends in Food Security and Production

It is pertinent to begin with the concept of food insecurity. This term is often associated with risk; hence food insecurity portends a situation of ‘food at risk’. According to the World Food Conference, this risk could be stimulated by ‘widespread crop failure, natural or other disasters’ (UN, 1975). Maxwell and Smith (1996) elaborated on this by adding other factors such as variability in crop production and food supply, risk in employment and wages, and risks in health and morbidity, market and price variability. Conflict is very notable here as it is capable of interrupting markets, cause withdrawal of labour from productive activities, and in extreme cases disrupt and displace entire communities. Dowler (2003) notes that 'food poverty' is a similar word for referring to food insecurity. This observation brings in a broader thinking about food security as beyond

physical efficiency of food consumption but also including the ability to access and consume an adequate quantity or quality of food in socially acceptable ways, or the doubt that one will be able to do so.

The initial stage in the use of the concept of food security was mainly restricted to national analysis of food supply. However, in recent years, there has been a shift to household level analysis. Household food security describes the ability of household food structures to withstand crises threatening to reduce the achieved degree of food consumption. In a nutshell, food security is the availability of food which individuals are entitled to and which they can actually access in the expected proportion and at the right time.

The concept of food security emerged in the 1970s following the recognition of food as a vital determinant of well-being by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and, especially the global food crisis of 1972-74. Its popularity in the 1980s was engendered by three forces. The first was the experience of African famine in 1984-85; the second was the shift in policy debate from food demand to food supply during the structural adjustment programme (SAP) as a proxy term for poverty and the third force was the departure from nutritional planning anchored on the entitlement theory to household food security (Anyanwu, 1992). The term was used mainly in the 1970s with national and global food supplies. The 1980s, however, witnessed a shift in the use of the term to questions of access to food at household and individual dimensions. There was yet another paradigm shift in the 1990s with concepts such as flexibility, adaptability, diversification, and resilience becoming the frequent terms (Hendriks, 2005; Maxwell & Smith, 1996; UN, 1948).

According to Maxwell (1996), the proliferation and progressive development of food security definitions reflects an international shift in thinking about food security. It further presents a clue in the difficulties associated with an attempt to adequately describe and measure the varying and multiple contributing elements leading to hunger and malnutrition. In addition, progressive in definitions reveals a diversion of focus from objective to subjective measurement scales such as cultural adoption of foods and fears of experiencing hunger. It is evident that food security constitutes a vital parameter for the measurement of wellbeing but it does not encompass all aspects of poverty. Definitions of food security are varied in numbers and context; hence by 1996 more than 250 definitions of the concept existed. Hendriks (2005) asserts that such definitions usually revolve around food supply, access, adequacy, utilization, safety and, in some cases, cultural acceptability of food for all people at all times. Thus, food insecurity is simply the lack of food security that can culminate in hunger (Hendriks& Maunder, 2006).

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) disaggregates food security into three pillars; food production, food access and food utilization. No doubt, food security requires household activities for both caloric production (and processing) and gaining income to purchase food, but women must consider and adapt to new opportunities and constraints while ensuring their families basic food availability (Agarwal, 1985; IFPRI, 2005a; Quisumbing, Brown, Feldstein, Haddad, & Pena, 1995; Mgonja, Kuwite, Mushi, Mduruma, &Mmbaga, 2000).

Food security has been generally agreed to be a global challenge. It, therefore, requires the efforts of every community as well as individuals, especially in the invention of technologies that will immensely boost efforts in this regard (FAO, 2003). The development

of technology for women in agriculture is also available on a national platform with some government and non-government agencies, such as Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi (FIIRO) and National Centre for Agricultural Mechanization (NCAM). Evidence shows that the aforementioned assistance has been highly inaccessible to rural women. Where it is available, the social compatibility with the knowledge base of the women is usually lacking, thus rendering the effort futile (FANTA, 2002; Akanji, 2001). This, therefore, provides an explanation for the low returns witnessed in farming by smallholder farmers, despite their enormous degree of involvement in farming, which in the long run produces a decline in household food security, and global food availability to tackle hunger.

2.4 Agricultural Development in Nigeria

Renewed and emerging consensus from global and continental institutions, policy makers and the society at large show that rural development and transformation is essential to pushing the African continent forward (NEPAD, 2001; 2003; World Bank, 2007, 2012a; ACBF, 2012). Agriculture plays a focal point in this development because it is a central source of employment and a catalyst in the GDP and wealth creation process in many African countries including Nigeria (World Bank, 2007; Chuhan-Pole and Angwafo, 2011; World Bank, 2012a). The National report for 2004 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development indicates that at least 40% of Agricultural production activities and 85% of agricultural produce, processing and marketing are performed by women.

Women have a predicament that is quite appalling, they constitute the majority of the poor and the illiterate in both urban and rural areas in Nigeria, whose productive roles are regarded as part of their domestic roles (Egbugara, 1990), categorized as a homogenous

group distinguished only by their gender. Men still make most of the key management decisions despite the fact that women make up to 60 to 80 % of the agricultural labour force in Nigeria and produce two third of the food crops (Mahmood, 2001,World Bank, 2003; Ogunlela and Muktar, 2009).

Women are most times ignored, underestimated and voiceless in influencing production and management decisions even within the household (Ogunlela and Muktar, 2009). When women lack access to land, they are not eligible for credit, membership of farmers' organizations, extension training and services (ICRW, 2013), their heavy workloads and lack of improved inputs also hinder them. In Nigeria, their participation is yet to be fully appreciated (Abiola and Omoagugan, 2001). Women are also less educated compared to men in Nigeria, disease ridden and occupy the lowest social, political and economic status (Fabiyi et al., 2007).

Government and key players show no sufficient will to meeting the needs and interests of women. In Nigeria, despite several policies and laws supporting gender equality, these have not translated into better living and working conditions for women. National development is being hampered by excluding the perspectives, skills, capabilities and dynamism of half the population seeing that women constitute a crucial group in the productivity equation (Emansion, 2012). This is reinforced by IFAD's framework (2012:8) which posits that rural development "programs are more relevant and sustainable if both men and women are able to participate in rural institutions and express their needs and priorities in decision-making processes". Given that these disparities and inequalities run through rural systems, action is required at all levels from household and community up to national, regional and international levels.

Several studies have explored empowerment of women through education, increasing credit access, empowerment interventions through cooperatives, microfinance among others (Kabeer, 2005; Fapohunda, 2011, DFID, 2014, Ekundayo and Ama, 2014). This paper examines critically and identifies the several dimensions and key indicators of rural women empowerment, capturing empowerment as a multidimensional process (Ibrahim and Alkire, 2007). This makes it relatively easier to target urgent areas for intervention and policy making. It thus provides a clear understanding of the concept of women empowerment and proves useful in providing information that will be helpful in designing programmes and interventions that are gender responsive, addressing the felt needs and aspirations of women in rural Nigeria. This will be more effective and contribute immensely to overall better living conditions for rural women, agricultural growth and fulfillment of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) or empowering women

Despite the dependence of Nigeria on oil, Nigeria is still predominantly an agricultural society. Approximately 70 percent of the population engages in agricultural production at a subsistence level. Agricultural holdings are generally small and scattered. Agriculture provided 41 percent of Nigeria's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 1999. This percentage represented a normal decrease of 24.7 percent from its contribution of 65.7 percent to the GDP in 1957. The staple food crops include cassava, yams, corn, coco-yams, cow-peas, beans, sweet potatoes, millet, plantains, bananas, rice, sorghum, and a variety of fruits and vegetables. The leading cash crops are cocoa, citrus, cotton, groundnuts (peanuts), palm oil, palm kernel, and rubber. They were also Nigeria's major exports in the 1960s and early 1970s until petroleum surpassed them in the 1970s. Chief among the export destinations for Nigerian agricultural produce are Britain, the United States, Canada,

France, and Germany. A significant portion of the agricultural sector in Nigeria involves cattle herding, fishing, poultry, and lumbering,

However, there was a decline in agricultural production in Nigeria and it began with the advent of the petroleum boom in the early 1970s. The boom in the oil sector brought about a distortion of the labour market. The distortion in turn produced adverse effects on the production levels of both food and cash crops. Governments had paid farmers low prices over the years on food for the domestic market in order to satisfy urban demands for cheap basic food products. This policy, in turn, progressively made agricultural work unattractive and enhanced the lure of the cities for farm workers. Collectively, these developments worsened the low productivity, both per unit of land and per worker, due to several factors: inadequate technology, acts of nature such as drought, poor transportation and infrastructure, and trade restrictions, as food production could not keep pace with its increasing population, Nigeria began to import food. It also lost its status as a net exporter of such cash crops as cocoa, palm oil, and groundnuts (Gbolohan 2011)

In order to restore Nigerian agriculture back to its state, since 1974 the commercial and agricultural banks have committed 1.2 billion U.S. Dollars on Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) to increase farm productivity and welfare among smallholders in Nigeria. Furthermore, Agricultural Technical Assistance Project (ATAP) was implemented between 1979 and 1990 but only two of the six projects had satisfactory outcomes. Macroeconomic conditions, some national policies, and particular design and implementation problems prevented a more significant impact. Low-cost irrigated development of lowland areas (Fadama) was, however, quite successful. (World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, 2012)

The ADPs were designed in response to a fall in agricultural productivity, and hence a concern to sustain domestic food supplies, as labour had moved out of agriculture into more remunerative activities that were benefitting from the oil boom. On the other hand, domestic recycling of oil income provided the opportunity for the government, with Bank support, to develop the ADPs. The projects provided agricultural investment and services, rural roads, and village water supplies. The government's adoption of the ADP concept put the smallholder sector at the center of the agricultural development strategy, and marked a clear shift away from capital-intensive investment projects for selected areas of high agricultural potential. (World Bank Independent Evaluation Group 2012)

All efforts since the late 1970s to revitalize the agricultural sector and make Nigeria food self-sufficient again and to increase the food export of agricultural products have produced only modest result. The Obasanjo administration however made agriculture the highest priority of its economic policy (World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, 2012). The Transformation Agenda of the Jonathans' Administration also aimed at increasing a sustainable income for smallholder farmers and rural entrepreneurs that are engaged in the production, processing, storage and marketing of the selected commodity value chains. The direct beneficiaries are the 45,300 economically active smallholders living in the rural areas who are already participating in commercial agriculture. The number is expected to increase significantly when other economically active value chain entrepreneurs enlist in the Program. The indirect beneficiaries include existing or potential small, medium and large-scale entrepreneurs and business associations who provide services to rural households. Among the target group are the women and youth who play a major role in crop and animal production, processing, small enterprises operation and marketing (Scorecard, 2013). The

ATA aimed to transform the Nigeria agricultural sector with significant multiplier effects on the entire economy.

2.5 Women's Role in Agricultural Development

Agricultural development is a complex and challenging process and rural women farmers play a vital role in food production and food security. They account for 70% of agricultural workers, 80% of food producers, and 100% of those who process basic foodstuffs and they undertake from 60% to 90% of the marketing (Fresco, 1998). Four of ten agricultural workers in the world are women (U.N., 1986).Nigeria however have over 167 million inhabitants to feed daily, in addition to about 70 million neighbouring countries that depend on her for food and other essentials. Its huge population and big 'brother posture' place a heavy burden on her, especially as it tries to move beyond food insecurity for its ever-expanding population, in the wake of deteriorating natural resource base, persistent energy crisis, and a growing exposure to climate change risks in the form of drought, floods and diseases-all these combine in a complex fashion, thus, many development workers have posited that agriculture should be accorded top priority in the country's quest to grow its economy and reverse the poverty tide, since it is one of the most input-responsive sectors of significant economic importance. (NAERLS, 2010; IITA, 2012).

The estimation of United Nation Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA, 1996), shows that African women are responsible for production of 60-80% food. In Africa, the contributions of women are much greater than that of men, in this system women were the dominant figures of the practice of farming whereas men's roles were only confined to clearing the land. Women prepare the soil, sow, and do the weeding, harvesting, and

threshing and transporting farm products. Though, undertaking different economic activities more than men rural women in developing countries have less property right, have little role in the economic input and they have remained economically insecure. Rural women have played significant role in livestock production and management in developing countries and they are active participants in the livestock management such as supply of food, milking, protecting animals (Boserups, 1970).

Women take part actively in farming activities and in processing farm products, in addition to their domestic and reproductive responsibilities. It is often stated that women are responsible for more than half of the world's food production overall and produce up to 60 to 80% of basic foodstuff in Africa (Fresco, 1998). According to the World Bank participation source book, in Nigeria, women play a dominant role in agricultural production, this was confirmed by the findings of a study financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in which the study revealed that women make up 60-80 percent of the agricultural labor force in Nigeria, depending on the region, and they produce two-thirds of the food crops. Yet, despite these facts, widespread assumptions that men-and not women-make the key farm management decisions have prevailed.

As a result, agricultural extension services in Nigeria (as in other African countries) have traditionally been focused on men and their farm production needs, while neglecting the female half of the production force. Most extension messages targeted at women emphasized their domestic role with topics on child care and family nutrition. It became clear that despite a decade of Bank assistance in building up Nigeria's agricultural extension service, women were receiving minimal assistance and information from extension agents (World Bank).

In West Africa, up to 80% of the labour force in all trade is female. Yet, the role of women in these activities, so important economically, has remained obscure for long because women seldom played any major roles in political activities or decision making processes. Despite the fact that women produce much of the food in the developing world, they also remain more malnourished than most men are (Roodkowsky, 1979).Women provides one half of the labour in rice cultivation in India (Stanford, 1986). In the plantation sector women are the crucial labourers (Shivaram, 1988). Depending on the crops, women's contributions vary but they provide pivotal labour from planting to harvesting and post-harvest operations. In rural India, agriculture and allied industrial sectors employ as much as 89.5% of the total female labour.

Recently, Yahaya (2002) recorded that 76% of women from Oyo and Bauchi State are actively involved in farming activities or are engaged in their husband's farms. In Nigeria women supply most of the needed labour in agricultural activities and this is the most important factor of production to farmers, as it is needed at the stages of agricultural production. Even women in seclusion (Purdah) generate substantial income through food crop processing (Yahaya, 2002).

It has been reported by different authors that inadequate information about the improved technologies is one of the constraints in agricultural production. Women do not have adequate access to agricultural information and innovations. Saito and Surling (1993) in a research also states that most tasks connected with food production are performed by African rural women with the exception of tree felling. Similar investigation conducted in India showed that more than 60% of agricultural operations are performed by women farmers (Shiva, 1991).

2.6 Women Empowerment

Women empowerment is a process whereby women are able to organize themselves to increase their own self-reliance, to assert their independent right, to make choices and to control resources which will assist in challenging and eliminating their own subordination (Varghese, 2011).

Empowerment is both a process and an outcome. Depending on how it is used, the two are indistinguishable. Empowerment focused on issues of gaining power and control over decisions and resources that determine the wellbeing of one's life. Inherently, it is an ideology endowed with potential for assisting development growth, especially for women in developing nations (Karubi, 2006: 89). Empowerment is the representation of transformation of power relations throughout society, increased wellbeing, community development, self-sufficiency, expansion of individual choices and capacities for self-reliance. In a similar manner, Kabeer (2001) defines empowerment as the process by which women take control and ownership of their lives through the expansion of their choices.

Empowerment has for the most part remained rooted in the local communities, in the needs of the 'poorest of the poor' especially women. Women's empowerment is therefore more than simply a 'motherhood' term for development agencies (Desai and Potter, 2008). Women empowerment concerns itself with giving women the ability or opportunity to better their own lives and society in general. It has nothing to do with competition with men but rather partnering and complementing to ensure growth and prosperity for a nation. Buvinic (2006), posited that women empowerment is not only a holistic concept but also multi-dimensional in its approach and covers social, political, economic and social aspects. However, she concludes that of all these dimensions of

women empowerment, economic empowerment is of utmost significance in order to achieve a lasting and sustainable development of society. It is within this framework that there is the urgent need now more than ever in designing programmes aimed at empowering the women to look out for ways to channel strategies to promote the economic empowerment of women especially through agriculture. There is no doubt that agriculture is key in this respect since several researches have shown that women contribute effectively to the agricultural workforce.

Although African countries have adopted a number of Universal Declarations and Commitments but little has been done in translating those declarations into national policies (Economic Commission for Africa, 2005). Even where commitments have been implemented nevertheless African women are persistently marginalized in accessing information and information communication technologies (ICTs) due to problem of illiteracy, socio-cultural attitudes and lack of understanding of the resources and situational impediments experienced by women (African Development Forum, 2008). This is perhaps as a result of low access to productive information resources and wide gap between commitments and implementation (Economic Commission for Africa, 2005)

In this information society, whatever area of empowerment, access to information is very crucial and the African Union Gender Policy realized this, thus one of the policy frameworks is to "promote equitable access for both women and men to resources, knowledge, information and services including basic needs. The African Development Forum (ADF) (2008) averred that empowering women to participate in the information economy would bring about benefits such as increased creativity, expertise and competitiveness in technology sector and thus assist the information economy thereby

leading to economic growth. Women empowerment is a useful concept in development because it emphasizes the idea of women as active agents in development strategies, rather than passive recipients of development strategies.

2.7 Factors Restraining Women's Participation in Agricultural Development

There are several factors that affect women participation and empowerment especially in agriculture. Understanding the role of these factors illuminates the discussion and makes the research be able to engage the research tools in order to answer the research questions. In the view of the above, the following factors responsible for restraining women participation in agricultural development have been given thus:

Land ownership tends to be the major factor that limits women farmers from participating effectively in agricultural production in most Africa countries. For instance in Nigeria, Afghanistan and other patriarchal societies for instance, women lack independent rights to land. Land rights are only allocated through men, either sons or husbands. Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (2009) agrees with the sentiment that women be allowed to access land either directly or indirectly, as the majority have limited or no access to or control over land.

In some African countries, women are rarely allocated land in their own right, particularly in patrilineal areas. Land is allocated to men, who are the heads of household. Women in matrilineal societies on the other hand are allocated land in their own right, but the land is still commonly controlled by their husbands or male clan heads. African customary and/or traditional laws tend to give men management right to land, Women only come to fore in exceptional cases, depending not on custom and/or tradition, but on individual families who try to be reasonable in granting positions to their sisters or mothers.

Women are disqualified from the management of land because of the gender based division of labour that exists in customary and/or traditional communities. In such communities women's land rights are limited to user rights. This means that women are allowed to use their fathers or spouse's land but not to own it. However, these rights are lost once a woman gets married or once her husband dies. When a husband dies the land is returned to the family, and the family takes control of it. An exception can occur when a woman has a male child, to whom the land can be transferred. In such cases, the woman holds proxy of the land until the son is old enough to manage it.

Another factor limiting women participation in agricultural development is lack of finance to boost their production (capital/money), this is because many credit associations and export crop market cooperatives limit membership to household heads in many African countries, and Women face greater difficulties than men, particularly with regard to participation in rural cooperatives and access to credit, training and agricultural extension. These difficulties rarely flow from explicitly discriminatory norms, as legislation on these issues is in most cases gender neutral. Rather, they mainly arise from cultural practices and stereotypes (e.g. on women's role within the family and on interactions between persons of different sexes) and from socio-economic factors (e.g. as for access to credit, women's higher illiteracy rates, lack of information about available credit programmes, lack of land titles to be offered as collateral, more limited access to formal employment, and exclusion from credit cooperatives) (FAO, 2005:3). Onguonu (2010:5) notes that, in Nigeria women do not have access to resources such as finance for the execution of planned projects like their male contemporaries. In some Nigerian communities women are encouraged only to

produce food crops for sustaining the family, leaving men in control of the production of cash crops.

Berger and Buvinic (1990:102) note that there are various factors that limit women's access to credit. They argue that in some Mexican rural areas socio-cultural factors can be a major limitation to women's access to credit, for instance, women are not allowed to walk long distances between their homes in rural areas and the banks in town by themselves or to offer the occasional bribe to male officials in charge of credit applications. Furthermore, entering a bank may intimidate the women because they are unfamiliar with the environment and the procedures. In addition women are often excluded from social gatherings where males learn about how and where to access certain sources of credit and how to apply. This lack of financial support is one of the major factors that contribute to the invisibility of women in agricultural development. As a result of the lack of financial support, there is low development in community projects.

Lack of collateral security, illiteracy and mere gender discrimination can negatively affect women's access to credit. For example, the culture based idea that rural women are financially supported by males and that their only responsibility is to maintain the household is the reason financial organization fail to grant credit to rural women farmers, unless women are exposed to the relevant channels of credit distribution they will continue to be ignorant about many sources of loans and therefore they will continue to be at the disadvantage when it comes to accessing credit.

Education is one of the significant factors affecting the participation of women in agricultural development. Education is an important factor that helps development to be realized. The purpose of education (formal and informal) is to communicate accumulated

wisdom and knowledge from one generation to the next. Secondly, education enhances active participation in innovation and the development of new knowledge. Ani et al (2004:6) argue that education enhances the ability to derive, decode and evaluate useful information for agricultural production. The Food and Agricultural Organization/ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (FAO/UNESCO) note that: Better education and training have become essential for sustainable development and for rural economy to survive and lack of education and training has been identified as a key barrier to women's advancement in the society.(2012;12)

The affirmation above was also pointed out by Ravinder who posit that in Africa, female illiteracy rates were over 60 percent in 1996 compared to 41 percent of men. Certain countries have extremely high rates of low education on women. In many African countries, parents still prefer to send boys to school, seeing little need for sending girls. Hence, illiteracy is still evident in most African countries (Ravinderet'al2009). Illiteracy is a major constraint facing women in development. Women are unable to understand and utilize technical information because they lack basic formal education, because of these barrier women farmers are unable to read and understand the written material provided by extension programs that educate farmers, there is a positive correlation between education and communication, as it helps them to acquire new improved and effective information in the form of written material such as magazines, newsletters and farming instruction pamphlets, booklets and on packaged hybrid seeds, pesticides, fertilizers and many more (Penin, 1999:12).

In addition, as noted by Anselm *et al* (2010:128), education plays a significant role in positively influencing the status of women in farm decision-making. He states that highly educated women are likely to make a higher contribution to farm decision making than uneducated ones. A study conducted by Ani*et al* (2004:13) on the relationship between socio-economic characteristics of rural women farmers and their adoption of technology in Nigeria showed that educated women farmers adopt farm technologies at a higher rate than less educated people who continue to use more rudimentary technology. Therefore, the education of rural women is important for their progressive participation in sustainable development.

In a related survey of food processing and cottage industries by Simmons, (1973) in some villages, he observed that 90% of the women were involved in at least one food processing activity or the other. The men performed the tedious tasks of felling trees, gathering and burning of bush and making ridges while women were involved in planting of seeds particularly food crops, harvesting, transportation, processing and selling of farm products. In Nigeria, there are significant regional differences in women participation in agriculture. For instance, a study of women in the country revealed that on an overall basis, 40 per cent of the rural women surveyed regarded farming as their major occupation. On regional basis, 89, 10 and 6 per cent of those in the East, West and South respectively regarded agriculture as their main occupation (Lawanson, 2008).

In sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture accounts for approximately 21% of the continent's GDP and women contribute 60-80% of the labour used to produce food. Estimate of women's contribution to the production of food crops range from 30% in the Sudan to 80% in the Congo, while their proportion of the economically active labour force

in agriculture ranges from 48% in Burkina Faso to 73% in the Congo and 80% in the traditional sector in Sudan. The solution to overcome poverty, hunger and chronic food shortage in Africa, the leaders would need to focus on economic empowerment of the women, especially on the rural women. Rural women do not have equitable access to land and agricultural resources. They have low involvement in development activities and have low decision-making power. Their labour and contribution to the agricultural sector is invisible because of the gender division of labour in the society (UNECA, 1996).

The Nigerian woman has proved to be more than a mere "bench-warmers" spectator, even in the midst of the male-dominated professional congregation. If given the opportunity, women can effectively participate in policy-making and governance. The steady advancement of women in contributing to the nation's economic development and their progressive prominence in the national scheme of affairs has to a large extent impacted on many economies. On the basis of available evidence and statistics, the role of women in agricultural production in Nigeria cannot be taken for granted; they perform crucial roles in the domestic and economic life of the society. Both rural and national development can hardly be achieved with the neglect of these important and substantial segments of the society.

Women are strong pillars of the economy of any country as they are always engaged in more than one economic activity. Research has shown that women contribute to food production; and they have also been successful in managing human and economic resources in order to achieve optimum results; they are employers of labour through their agricultural activities, thereby reducing unemployment; and their output from the produce has contributed to reduction in food shortage crisis. By so doing, they contribute substantially to

national agricultural output, and food security. The low economic status of women limits their opportunities for broader participation in the society, African culture discriminates a lot against women and girls, especially in the area of inheritance (land). Culture is not static and in modern-day Nigeria, it is subject to pressure and influences. Modern education and the development of technology and information have introduced Nigerians to new cultural concepts and norms. Since culture is not static, the forces of social change may be expected to lowering the barriers against women's economic opportunities. Many women took to prostitution due to poverty and inadequate information and education. Access to education, extension services, information, land, credit facilities and other relevant agricultural innovations will entice many women to agricultural productions and will reduce poverty among women farmers.

In addition, culture stands as a factor that affects women lifestyles in a society. Culture has an influence on individual behaviors depending on one's' social values. Some of them could be religion, economic status, education, family, politics, cultural values etc. They are the facts and experiences that influence individuals' personality, attitudes and lifestyle, cultural factors involve both social and cultural elements of the society FAO (2009:12) sees culture in this perspective: The culture of a society is the accepted way of doing things in that particular society. It is the way in which people live, their customs, traditions, methods of cultivation and so on. The culture of a society is learned by each individual member of that society and later transmitted to offspring. Children are not born with this knowledge; they learn by seeing how older children and adults behave. As they grow up, older members of their family or kinship group teach them about the customs and traditions of the group and the society

It is observed that culture plays a role in the invisibility of women in agriculture; culture has a way of shifting the behaviour of individuals. Individuals act in a certain way because of what is expected of them by societal culture. Even though women contribute significantly to the socio economic development of countries through agriculture; they continue to face major socio cultural challenges which differ though from one community to another, tradition and cultural norms continue to limit the access of women to agricultural input, thereby leading to their invisibility in agriculture.

2.8 Extension Service and Communication Strategies

Extension service involves proactive and systematic communication of innovation to influence human behaviour in the design of agriculture and self-reliant projects and their objectivity (Ayange, 2009). Extension service is a medium through which new innovations on agriculture is passed to the farmer through the extension workers like the institutes of agriculture. Extension service is focused on bringing about rural development. Extension service is the rendering of assistance to farmers to help them identify and analyze their production problems and to become aware of the opportunity for involvement (Adams, 1982).

Extension service is a deliberate and systematic attempt of transferring knowledge and insight to someone in such a way that the person is able take decisions for the betterment of his/her wellbeing. It therefore means that extension is a conscious use of communication of information to help people form sound options and make good decision, it is all about developing the farmers' views and interest in order for them to live a meaningful life. Extension communication is a process whereby two or more people exchange ideas, facts, feelings, thoughts or impressions in manner that each has a common

understanding of the actual meaning , intent and use a given message. It is important for communication to be a two way affairs and vital and relevant information must be disseminated to achieve a success.

The practice of extension communication is a diffusion of innovations process, from government or a commercial firm to farms and farmer training centre, otherwise called a simple technology transfer. This is fairly mechanical process and was soon found to be highly defiant, unprogressive and insensitive to the communication audience, or the people who are the real change agents (Soola, 2003). The method is anchored on persuasion and education. Among the old paradigms of development communication, especially the mass-mediated messages were mainly seen as a means of winning hearts and minds' to the capitalist way of life. However, as time went by, there was need to evolve a more participatory approach to communication in order to sustain agriculture especially in agriculture in the rural communities.

According to Soola (2003), the Extension Communication Strategies is meant for training and characterized by regular and continuous training of extension agents and visits of farmers usually on a fortnight basis. It also involves demonstration whereby emphasis is on macro-demonstrations which were used to conduct group meetings and field days. Furthermore, it encourages the use of subject Matter Specialist (SMS) - This involved the use of experts in various fields e.g. agronomists, animal scientists, etc, to teach farmers on the use of particular technology or innovation. One aspect that Soola (2003) emphasized is On-Farm Adaptive Research (OFAR) which is a multi-disciplinary team saddled with the duties of planning, monitoring and evaluation of OFAR trials.

However, there have been repeated calls for more effective communication strategies to increase women farmers' access to agricultural education and adequate information for proper empowerment. No doubt, this has evolved out of many controversial issues surrounding women in agriculture and the impending dangers it poses to food productions in Nigeria. In view of this, this study examines a few communication strategies initiated by TADP in Taraba to see to what extent it has empowered women in the community under study. They include: Community Information Board (CIB) and Interactive Workshop.

Community information board is a communication strategy deployed to improve the wellbeing of people in rural communities. This strategy was developed and initiated in Nigeria as far back as 2007 by the Nigeria government with support from UNICEF. The essence of this strategy was to locate the process of behaviour change and community development in the hands of household heads and community leadership. It captures basic social and development data that communities can deploy to improve their knowledge on agriculture and other salient issues such as health.

TADP has adopted this communication strategy to disseminate important information to the women farmers in Askean community in Taraba State. It has been observed that local language, images, colors, illustrations and maps have been used for easy understanding by the women farmers in this community and to a large extent, it has helped in creating awareness about the importance of women's contributions in farming. Asides that, it has also assisted them in decision making which has always been seen as reserved for their male counterparts.

Furthermore, interactive workshop is a forum to bring about participation of women who are in one way or the other involved in farming. The essence is to disseminate new agricultural information and to also entertain questions from the women on areas that they require interventions. In this instance, the extension officers from TADP interact with the women one on one and invariably, this approach brings about confidence and sense of responsibility in the women. It has been observed that in certain occasions, women who have success stories in agriculture are invited to share a few tips with the women. This approach also helps to create self-confidence and re-enforcing the fact that they can make progress with agriculture. Making information sharing and interactive affair is departure from the known top-down transfer of messages and information. This approach enables empowerment for women and the society at large.

2.9 Participatory Communication and Agriculture Education

Communication is an old concept that has been with man from inception. It is organic in nature because it keeps improving and people define it in various ways. George Gerber defines communication as "social interaction through messages" (quoted in Mcqail1994; 10). This implies the coming together of people to exchange ideas and have common interaction leading to understanding of common issues. Resengren (2006) in agreement with this assertion states that "communication is inter-subjective, purposive interaction by means of doubly articulated human languages based on symbols". This scholar stresses the essence of interactive nature of communications which is required for mutual benefits and elimination of doubt and suspicion.

When we talk about communication, we mean making things common in the real sense of it. Another important definition, which is necessary for this study is that which is

posited by McBride (1980), saying that "communication has become a vital need for collective entities and communities." Therefore, it is imperative to submit that every society needs to communicate to have or share ideas, culture, history and development in order to make meaningful progress. Also, Tom et al (1994) assert that communication is a "negotiation and an exchange of meaning in which messages, people, culture and reality interact so as to enable meaning to be produced or understanding to occur". Here, again the aspect of interaction is further stressed and it is not uncommon to know that without interaction, communication is meaningless an inexistent.

Participation and communication in all development strategies especially in the rural areas has the quality of raising the standards of living of the rural people. But it was realized that this goal was too ultimate and comprehensive. There are a number of other sub goals which were more immediate and needed to be met in order to achieve the ultimate objective of raising the quality of life. These goals range from long time objectives which have to do with:

1. Increased incomes in rural areas through agriculture, commerce and industry.
2. Improved level of social, physical, and mental well-being such as better health, nutrition and sanitation practices
3. Increase self-generating development of rural people through increased self-determinism, self-reliance, and capacity to sustain continuing growth and development.

Participatory communication is synonymous with development communication. This is because scholars argue that Participatory Development Communication actually originated from Development Communication or Communication for Development.

According to Quebra (2006), "Development communication is the process of multilevel exchange within a society of information whose intent is to advance human development and which is channeled through selected media…" the meaning of this is that communication is widely participatory in terms of process, leading to social change; intended to bring about social and material advancement, including greater quality, freedom for the majority of people through their gaining control of their environment (Rogers (1976, Servaes, 2003).

In the same vein, World Bank (2006) reiterated that Development communication involves creating mechanisms to broaden public access to information on reforms; strengthening clients' ability to listen to their constituents and negotiate with stakeholders; empowering grassroots organizations to achieve a more participatory process; and undertaking communication activities that are grounded in research. Similarly, Bassette (2004) defines Participatory Development Communication as "a planned activity, based on the one hand on participatory processes, and on the other hand on media and interpersonal communication, which facilitates a dialogue among different stakeholders, around a common development problem or goal, with the objective of developing and implementing a set activity to contribute to its solution, or its realization, and which supports and accompanies this initiative".

Based on the above, it is anticipated that participatory communication must function as a 'means' because, every development project must produce some output, but it must also function as an 'end' inasmuch as empowerment is viewed as a necessary outcome. In addition, it can be submitted that participation as a means does not address power differentials, while participation as an end has an emancipatory component in that, it seeks

to redress unequal power relations. This implies that taking participation as a 'means' only does not guarantee genuine participation as it ignores the process and is most often used for a short period of time. Therefore, the use of participation both as a 'means' and as an 'end' seems to be essential for the effectiveness of development programmes. Hence, it is aimed at people's liberation and emancipation with due respect and careful thought to local cultures and basic needs. Participatory models also see people as the nucleus (focus or centre) of development where development focuses on education and the stimulation of people to be active in self and communal improvement with due consideration to their culture, intellect and maintenance of the environment (Yahaya, 2008).

In view of the necessity of participatory communication in development, it is pertinent to relate it to Agricultural education. Does participation has a link with education? The answer is emphatic. First and foremost, for rural farmers to be able to participate in issues of agriculture at any level, they need to have sufficient knowledge and also be able to communicate the knowledge effectively. Lack of participation in most cases crops up as a result of ignorance, rural farmers would shy away from gatherings that require that expression and exhibition of skills and experience, and the notion that they are uneducated, is capable of creating feelings of resentments. On the contrary, if that inferiority complex is removed by adequate education, then they are more likely to interact and participate effectively. That is why agricultural education is vital for rural participation. With viable information, rural farmers can see the need to go for more knowledge and experience.

2.10 Empirical Studies

Several studies have been carried out by scholars in the related areas and it is pertinent to examine them in order to know the extent and the gaps inherent in the research.

In view of the above, a study was carried out by Ayevbuomwan, Popoola, & Adeoti on Analysis of Women Empowerment in Rural Nigeria: A Multidimensional Approach. This study assessed the empowerment status of women in Rural Nigeria. Following Alkire and Foster (2007) multidimensional poverty measure, we constructed the multidimensional women empowerment index across selected dimensions and indicators using the 2013 Demographic and Health Survey data (DHS). The legit regression was used to profile its determinants. The multidimensional women disempowerment index was 0.427. The study finds that when the empowerment cut-off k=2, approximately 43% of the rural women were disempowered. The education and resource dimensions had the highest relative contributions of 33.59% and 31.61% to the overall multidimensional disempowerment index.

The study revealed that while age of the women, age of the household head and employment in skilled and unskilled sector significantly increase the probability of rural women's empowerment, gender of household head, employment in agriculture and allied sector, household size, and location of rural women in the Northern region of Nigeria reduce the probability of women economic empowerment in rural Nigeria. It is recommended that efforts must be directed at these individual indicators to improve on the empowerment, inclusion and agency of rural women especially in planning intervention strategies. This should be backed up with enforcement of policies that will ensure rural women enjoy the same potentials, rights and privileges as men in society in order to ensure and achieve sustainable rural development.

Furthermore, a study was conducted by Ozoya Mercy Ibharhokanrhowa on Empowerment of Rural Women Farmers and Food Production in Esan West Local

Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. The study asserted that agriculture, when properly harnessed, can generate food security. The avenue through which the potentials of agriculture are unleashed to become beneficial to the wellbeing of the people is through food production. The study went further to state that the comprehensive advocacy for the advancement of women's issues from international and national contexts has achieved some level of success. Consequently, the status of women, no doubt, has witnessed some degree of alterations. However, change has not always been progressive. The broad aim of the study was to examine the extent to which rural women farmers in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State are empowered and the effect of the empowerment on food production.

This study revealed that Esan rural women farmers are grossly disempowered in their efforts at food production. The cause of the state of disempowerment was not found to be significantly connected to patriarchy but mainly as an outcome of rural infrastructural scarcity engendered by institutional role failures. However, patriarchy was not found to be completely absent among the constraints faced by Esan rural women farmers as land ownership and access are found to be aspects of it. It must be stated that patriarchy has a limiting factor for women farmers because it grants them only right of access to land and not the right of land ownership. This was evident in the findings of this study as only 17.9% of the women owned land and 71.8% of the women got their farmland from their husbands. It becomes clear that only men are entitled to land ownership as dictated by the rule of primogeniture, which permits only the male children to have access to property inheritance.

However, it was observed that Esan rural women farmers are beginning to overcome the challenges of patriarchy associated with land ownership by engaging in personal

purchase of land, which grants them right of ownership to land. Those who accessed land through personal purchase was among 50% of the population who claimed to have a piece of land of their own. This constitutes 9% of the total population of the respondents. Ownership of land is necessary for increased food production (although it may not lead to change in the type of crop produced among Esan rural women farmers), but land ownership needs to be complemented with modern technologies for cultivation and trainings if food production is to increase. Otherwise a woman may own 10 acres of land and cultivate only 2 acres due to the hardship involved in the production, but where farming technologies are available, a small size of land can yield much increase in production. The absence or insufficiency of these complementary agricultural productive inputs including farm machines, improved seedlings, agricultural extension trainings and credit facilities, was found to be the major challenge besetting Esan rural women farmers, thereby hampering them enormously in food production.

Various researchers have carried out research in the area of agriculture and communication and it is appropriate this study to examine a few of such related works and their findings. In view of this, Bolaji, AdebukolaTemitope carried out a study in 2017 on "An Appraisal of Unicef communication approaches on infant and young child feeding (IYCF) programme in Benue state. The issue at hand was that addressing the present challenges of child malnutrition through IYCF in Nigeria has been one of the activities carried out by UNICEF and communication has been at the fore of these activities and that IYCF programme has deployed several communication approaches to reduce the level of malnutrition in Nigeria. As a result of that, the study aimed at appraising UNICEF's

communication approaches for the Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) programme in Benue state.

The research was anchored on the Health Belief and the Northouse and Northouse model health communication theoretical framework, to know the extent to which the communication approaches have been utilized. Hence, Survey Design research method was used on a sample size of 224 respondents from Oturkpo and Makurdi Local Government Areas using questionnaire, Focus Group Discussion and Interview to elicit information. From the analysis of the data and information, the study found that the communication approach was effective with 66.6% of the respondents across the 4 communities in the 2 Local Government Areas agreeing that there was a significant change in the nutritional state of their children after they participated in the programme.

However, it was discovered on the programme that the economic factor which had the highest rank score of 205 and timing which had the least rank score of 135 were challenges uncovered during the course of the research. It was also discovered that the use of different communication approaches without the involvement of the participants to give feedback reduced the chance of sustaining the programme. From this result, it is recommended that optimal behaviour change can be achieved by delivering mutually reinforcing and frequently repeated messages across multiple channels, delivered at a time and place when the user is most receptive. Hence, the study a combination of different communication strategies has a greater effect in addressing the issues of malnutrition.

In the same vein, Joseph Maria in 2016 carried out a study on "Communication and Women Empowerment for Agricultural Development in N.A.E.R.L.S. Adopted Village Sakadadi, Zaria. The purpose of the study was to increase women farmers' access to

agricultural education and communication processes in order to enhance their well-being and reduce poverty. In view of the above statement, agricultural communication approaches adopted by NAERLS were examined. Also, the level of participation of the Sakadadi adopted women group in NAERLS intervention programme was also investigated. The research was built on the Harvard theoretical framework which emphasizes effective gender participation in development activities and at the same time advocating for the understanding of the difference between men and women participation in the economy and policy making process. Furthermore, four focus groups of women and two focus groups of men were formed. Key informant interview was conducted with five selected women farmers from Sakadadi, and three members of staff of NAERLS were also interviewed.

The findings indicated that NAERLS applied more than one communication approaches to disseminate agricultural information to Sakadadi women in the adopted village. It was also discovered that the communication approaches have imparted significantly on the status of the Sakadadi women group, thereby providing them with entrepreneurship skills that have helped in the establishment of small scale businesses. However, challenges such as lack of resources, time management, finance, and lack of effective participation of the women from the initial stage of intervention were found out. This has impacted negatively on women farmers' empowerment. The majority of the respondents recommended that NAERLS's focus should be more on participatory communication in order to sustain the success of the development in adopted villages. It was also observed that NAERLS still operates more of top-down development and communication approaches. It is a submission of this study that inasmuch as this approach is keenly followed, impressive result will not be achieved. Furthermore, NAERLS should

adopt more participatory communication approaches, and the women group should be carried along in the processes, especially from the base-line research to the evaluation stage of development. Therefore, this research posits that women farmers should not be seen as mere passive informants or respondents in NAERLS intervention programme, but should be seen as agents of social change especially in Sakadadi Community.

Onagwa Godfrey Ife carried out an appraisal on the communication strategies of the National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services, Zaria in 2016 with the aim of examining the extension communication strategies of NAERLS, using its adopted villages as case study, and in the light of Federal Government's drive to improve agricultural productivity nationwide through a communication-anchored agricultural sector. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to study 104 respondents, comprising 82 farmers from three selected adopted villages (Tudun Iya in Kastina State, Nwogi in Niger State, and Okolo in Oyo State), 20 staff of NAERLS, and 2 policy makers. The instruments for data collection were 3 sets of questionnaire, 2 sets of Key Informant Interview and naturalistic observation.

The results showed, among others that NAERLS practised group, mass-mediated and individual extension communication approaches, but with the group approach being the foremost; access to NAERLS communication channels was low for selected villages; however, it was higher in Tudun Iya than in Okolo and Nwogi. Communication approaches, channels and messages were also found to be uniformly used for the various adopted villages without consideration for audience peculiarities and needs. The study also found that impact of the Institute's extension activities on farmers' productivity was low; and that farmers were not adequately and sufficiently involved in the agricultural communication

matters and initiatives. Moreover, the study found significant level of communication barriers to technology adoption in the selected villages. Other barriers to technology adoption included the top-down approach to agricultural technology development and issues regard to insufficient funding and government's policy inconsistency.

However, despite the finding on adequate level of trust by farmers for the competency of NAERLS as agricultural communication partner, the absence of a working strategic communication guide created an apparent gap between NAERLS extension tenets and actual field practice; this gap led to the production and dissemination of media packages in a largely unorganised form. The study therefore, recommended, among others, that NAERLS should deploy the communication strategy designed by the study to enhance agricultural productivity in the study locations; and that the Federal Government, through the working of key stakeholders, should formulate a pluralistic policy that will legislate for the leadership, funding and coordination of the nation's extension activities.

In the same vein, Nwankwo Sunday Ekwere carried out a study in 2017 on *Radio as a mobilisation tool for youth participation in agriculture in Nigeria: a study of NAERLS Adopted Schools in Zaria, Kaduna State.* The aim of increasing youth participation in agriculture for enhancement of productivity and self-empowerment through the use of radio. The study made use of qualitative and quantitative research approaches and as such data was generated through the questionnaire and key informant interview. The study revealed that students participated in agriculture and that agricultural practices have gained significant prominence and thus created avenue for student's involvement at the secondary level.It went further to state that there was high level of awareness on agriculture among students through the intervention of NAERLS. In addition, it was revealed that poor signal

is a constraint in listening to radio. The study advocated or recommended the inclusion of radio drama to improve listenership programmes on agriculture.

However, the afore review shows that there has been several researches in the area of communication, participation on people in agriculture, but the failed to limit the scope of the study to women's participation and this worked fills the gap.

2.11 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is crucial to every research work and as such it cannot be over emphasized. Asmah (2009) categorically accepts the submission that theories are formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomena in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the units of critical assumptions. In explicating this, theory, apart from providing relationship, also explains the variations in phenomena, thus serving as a guide for researchers. From the above statement, theoretical framework constitutes a structure that can hold or support a theory of research. This research will employ Reflect Theory which talks about strengthening people's capacity to communicate.

There are various development theories that focus directly on the issues of participation of women in development activities and empowerment and development in rural communities. This study is anchored on two theories. The first is the Gender and development theory which calls for a balanced dimension to empowerment by explaining that the women's concerns can best be addressed by empowering both male and female through equal access to resources. The second, Reflect Theory, It is believed that these theories can provide a firm basis upon which the reviews and findings of this research can be discussed and appropriate recommendations made.

2.11.1 Gender and Development Theory

Gender And Development (GAD) Theory is an offshoot of the liberal feminist theory (Aina, 2012). According to Lengermann & Niebrugge (2003), the focal point of this theory is that:

- All human beings have certain essential features: capacities for reason, moral agency,
- Self-actualization; the exercise of these capacities can be secured through legal recognition of universal rights;
- Inequalities between men and women assigned by sex are social constructions having no basis in nature;
- Social change for equality can be produced by an organized appeal to a reasonable public and the use of the state.

The origin of GAD Theory is traceable to the women's rights movement instituted in the late 18thcentury. Having increased in number across many countries, these movements still agitate for complete social, economic and political equality for women and men. The position of this theory is that women have unequal position in society with men. They also operate from the perspective that the structure of society benefits men economically, politically, and socially to the detriment of women (Lengermann & Niebrugge, 2003). According to Aina (1998), the Gender and Development Theory recently emerged to correct the inadequacies of Women in Development (WID) because gender equality is not just as a matter of social equity, but as a cost to the development process. It aims at closing the gender gap for sustainable national development. It is set to accomplish this in two ways: Women empowerment and gender equality goals. The theory incorporates

such words as gender mainstreaming and women empowerment in its policy framework (Aina, 2012).

Relating GAD theory to the African context where patriarchy has continued to place women in a secondary position in society, thereby ignoring their contributions to societal development. Overall, the choice of this theoretical framework is to help the study identify the communication channels that TADP has deployed to passed across information capable of empowering women in the area of agricultural development projects. Patriarchy directly affects agriculture in Nigeria and other Africa countries because the males own land, capital and means of production. They also employ labour force for all farm activities. This system makes women's contributions and participation to be passive and perhaps less productive. Thus, the deployment of this theory for this study helps in discussing various factors that limit women's participation in agriculture in the local government areas under study.

2.11.2 Reflect Theory

Reflect is a structured participatory learning process which facilitates people's critical analyses of their environment, placing empowerment at the heart of sustainable and equitable development. REFLECT is an acronym for Regenerated FreireanLiteracy through Empowering Community Techniques (Chambers, 1983; Freire, 1985; Fuglesang, 1982; Wagner, 1995). The theory was originally developed through pilot projects in Bangladesh, El Salvador and Uganda; *Reflect* is now used by over 500 organizations in more than 70 countries, in each case adapted to the local context (Wagner, 1995). It was awarded UN Literacy Prizes in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2008, for the way in which it has revolutionized adult learning.

Reflect Theory brings together the theories of Paulo Freire a Brazilian Educationalist in a theory propounded by John Dawey 1933. The theory recognized the major and very big gaps between rich and poor, those that have and those that have not and he wanted to ensure that all of us had a chance to be educated. His empowerment ideas were based on 'conscientization' (the world and the word) so that people could question about where they come from and he designed training around people analyzing the issues in their life, creating individual change which would lead to changes at home/family, which would then have an impact on changes in the community, and then an impact on changes in society.

Central to the theory is an awareness of power dynamics and relationships, and the effect of this on participation and learning. This is the interest of this study in the adoption of this theory. The theory's approach requires a transformation of traditional classroom roles, placing learners at the centre of their own learning process. The teacher becomes facilitator, his role transformed from one of directing or transferring knowledge to one of facilitating, sharing, enabling and catalyzing, as well as learning and reflecting themselves. The participants therefore set their own agenda, identify their own issues, prepare their own learning materials and act on their analysis. In the context of development, the application of this theory lies in the re-enactment of a classroom setting in allowing participants understand and engage with development programmes. This will allow them have a first-hand understanding and then engage with the process from a very informed position (Chambers, 1983).

This approach involves the use of several participatory tools and techniques. Prominent among these are visualization tools such as calendars, maps, matrices, rivers, and

trees, which enable participants to communicate their knowledge, experience and feelings without being restricted by literacy and language barriers (Fuglesang, 1982). The construction of the graphics involves discussion on a key issue in the learners' lives, generating vocabulary that is relevant and practical. Other participatory tools such as role-play are introduced to give learners the opportunity to rehearse real situations.

Reflect is based on a series of core principles and elements, derived both from the theoretical foundations in Freire and Participatory Rural Appraisal, and from evolution of the approach through practical application and experience (Freire, 1985). Reflect is a process that aims to strengthen people's capacity to communicate by whatever means most relevant to them. Although part of the process may be about learning a new language, the focus is on using this in a meaningful way (Fuglesang, 1982). It is through focusing on the practical use that real learning takes place.

The main concepts underlying the Reflect approach are dialogue (discussion), participation, empowerment, development, literacy, sustainability; contextualization and action(Wagner, 1995). The process enables people to participate in discussing the issues that affect them and empowers them to take action (Rahman, Rahman, 1995). Because it empowers people to sometimes challenge very sensitive issues and to confront conflict, it is not always a peaceful process. What it does, however, is create a democratic space for learning and developing (Street, 1993). However, the choice of Reflect Theory for this research work is to enable the researcher to examine the communication channels that leads to women participation in agricultural development projects in the selected community under study.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology is the organized inquiry which includes the planned and the systematic data collection, presentation, analysis and interpretation for solving identified problems (Ihemeje, 2006:15). The importance of methodology cannot be over emphasized, as it is essential for a researcher to always have a guideline structure on how he/she intends to carry out the research. This study followed systematic steps in carrying out the research with the aim of achieving accurate result.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is a plan or blueprint that specifies how data relating to a given research problem can be collated and analyzed. In other words, research design has to do with the methods, approaches, procedures and techniques deployed in the execution of a research (Crestwell, 1994). In view of the above, survey design is adopted for this study using both quantitative and qualitative research instruments. The essence of deploying both tools is to generate both numeric and in-depth information to answer the research questions earlier stated.

According to Best and Khan (1995), survey is a data collection technique in which data is collected from individuals by administering questionnaire to them. These methods of inquiry are observed to have been employed in different academic disciplines to gather in-depth information and study human behavior and perhaps also examine reasons governing such behavior. Qualitative research does not only investigate the when, where, what, but also investigates why and how of decision making. It is about exploring issues,

understanding phenomena and answering questions by analyzing and making sense of unstructured data.

Quantitative method is an "investigation into a social problem, by analyzing a theory made up of variables, measured with numbers and analyzed with statistical procedure, with the aim of determining whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true" Creswell (1994:105). On the other hand, a qualitative research is mainly characterized by in-depth text and explanation of the study results, instead of just using figures and illustrations to present the data (Desai.V 2005). Both research approaches are efficient in this study to enable the researcher acquire detailed information about women farmers in the area of study.

3.3 Study Population

A study population refers to a group of people which a researcher intends to obtain information (Creswell, 1994). The study engaged women farmers in Askean community and also staff of Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme who are directly connected to the adopted community (Askean).They cut across different specializations e.g. agricultural communication expert, economics, agronomy, rural development and food and nutrition. The population of women in Askean community in Ussa L.G.A of Taraba state is 44,678 (National Population Commission, 1995)

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Sampling is a process in which a portion of a population is carefully selected and taken as being representative of the entire population (Creswell, 1994). Rasoft Sample Size Calculator was used to acquire the sample size for the study. Based on the population of

women in Askean community, which is 44,678, the sample size is 381. However, the study deployed Simple Random Sampling as a technique.

3.5 Instruments of Data Collection

In order to produce data for analysis, the following instruments were deployed: Questionnaire, Key Informant Interview (KII) and |Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

3.5.1 Questionnaire

According to (McLeod, 2008) the questionnaire is a set of printed questions, meant for respondents to answer which is often require for a survey as this. The questions in the questionnaire contain answers which allow responses to be graded and either in a Yes or No format or Likert where respondents choose from a given answer (McLeod, 2008). It comprises four-response ratings of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. For purpose of this study, a total of 381 copies of questionnaire were administered randomly to respondents in Askean community.

3.5.2 Key Informant Interview Method (KII)

Key informant interview refers to individual interviews that are conducted with people who have specialized knowledge about a topic of interest (Babbie and Mounton, 2001). This is a conversation carried out with the definite aim of obtaining certain information. It is designed to gather valid and reliable information through the response of the interviewee to a planned sequence of questions. The interview can be either structured or unstructured, depending on the extent to which the content and procedures involved are prescribed and standardized in advance (Osuala, 2001:255). In view of the above, the following key informants from Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme were chosen for the study: The Director, Information Officer and Head, Extension Service

Department, Chairperson, Women Farmers Association in USSA Local Government Area. This method was used to source information from the key officers mentioned above in order to have their general views on mode of communicating agricultural innovations to women as a means of empowerment. The essence of deploying KII was to get in-depth knowledge about the subject matter and for the purpose of interacting more intimately with participants, the study adopted face to face interview giving room for exchange of information.

3.5.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

This is a form of group interview designed for between 6 – 12 respondents and one of the purposes of using this technique is "to learn through discussion about conscious, semiconscious, and unconscious psychological and socio-cultural characteristics and processes among various groups" (Berg 2001:111). Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted with farmers in Askean community. This was important because by engaging the women in a group, they were able to express their views without fear or favour. Thus, this instrument assisted the researcher to gain more insights into the subject matter.

3.6 Secondary Sources of Data

The researcher also made use of secondary sources of data such as Textbooks, Newspapers, Publications, Research Reports, Internet Materials, Journals, Magazine Articles, Scholarly Papers, Documented Seminars, Speeches, Presentations, and relevant publications. The secondary sources of data collated provided the introduction and background of the study, the research problem and also provided the theoretical framework upon which this study was anchored upon. Furthermore, the information garnered from these secondary sources were used to review related literature in the study.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis/Presentation

The method of data analysis is imperative for this study because after gathering the required data from the field, presentation and analysis become imperative (Ihemeje, 2006). For the purpose of this study, descriptive statistics was used as method of analysis for the quantitative data (e.g., percentages and frequencies for categorical variables). Quantitative data was computed using the Statistical Package for Social Science-SPSS. Simple narrative of recorded information from the Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were deployed to analyze the qualitative data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data gathered from respondents through the instrument of data collection deployed in the study as discussed in the earlier chapter. The respondents comprise women farmers. It is noteworthy to state that the study used mixed method for data analysis. The quantitative data gathered from questionnaire was analyzed first while the qualitative (In-depth Interview (IDI) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were used to support or refute the findings of the quantitative data. Furthermore, the quantitative data collected was interpreted and analyzed in line with the objectives of the study which are earlier stated in the study.

A comprehensive questionnaire was prepared and administered to women farmers in Askean community in Taraba State.381copies of questionnaire were administered while 372 copies were duly field and returned. Data generated from the questionnaire were statistically analyzed using the SPSS 16.0 Version.

4.2 Data Presentation

A comprehensive questionnaire was prepared and administered to women farmers in Askean community in Taraba State.381copies of questionnaire were administered while 372 copies were retrieved. Data generated from the questionnaire were statistically analyzed using the SPSS 16.0 version

In view of this, Descriptive Analysis was used to provide a summary of the responses and information presented numerically. The results were displayed using tables of frequency and percentages. Interpretation was done based on the data presented as well as

the transcription of recorded information. Importantly, the questionnaire had six (6) sections as stated below:

i. **Section A:** Respondents' Socio-Demographic Characteristics in Askean Community.

ii. **Section B:** Nature of agricultural activities undertaken by women in Askean Community.

iii. **Section C:** Level of women's participation in agriculture in Askean community

iv. **Section D1:** Communication strategies deployed by TADP to facilitate women participation in agriculture development in Askean community.

v. **Section D2:** Level of women's participation in the communication strategies for agricultural developments in Askean Community.

vi. **Section E:**Factors militating against women's participation in agricultural development project in Askean community of Ussa L.G.A

vii. **Section F:**Ways effective communication strategies can be used to enhance women's participation in agricultural development projects in Askean community

Table 4.2.1: Respondents' Socio-Demographic Characteristics in Askean Community.

S/N	Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	**Marital Status**	Single	60	(16.1)
		Married	280	(75.2)
		Widowed	32	(8.6)
		Total	**372**	**(100.0)**
2.	**Age**	15-20	97	(26.0)
		21-26	100	(26.8)
		27-32	175	(47.0)
		Total	**372**	**100.0**
3.	**Occupation**	Farming	160	(43.0)
		Trading	106	(28.4)
		Civil Servant	40	(10.7)
		Student	66	(17.7)
		Total	**372**	**(100.0)**
4.	**Educational Qualification**	FSLC	110	(29.5)
		SSCE/WAEC	203	(54.5)
		Diploma	39	(10.4)
		Degree	20	(5.3)
		Total	**372**	**(100.0)**
		Total	**372**	**(100.0)**

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2019

From the table above, 75.2% was the population of married women, while 16.8% was for single women and 8.6% was for widows. The implication of this statistics is that women farmers in Askean community are predominantly married women, which implies responsibilities to their families. This points to the possibility that subsistent farming might be the major agricultural activity in the community. By age, respondents between the ages of 15-20 were 26.0%while 21-26 had 26.8% and 27-32 took 47.0%. These show that the

women are matured and capable of understanding current matters in farming and that they can take decisions on their own or with the consent of their husbands regarding information on agriculture. Furthermore, 43.0% of the respondents are fully into farming, while 28.4% are into trading; 10.7% are civil servants and 17.7% are students. It is deducible that majority of the respondents are farmers. Therefore, it is expected that the answers they have provided are valid and can be relied upon for analysis. The study took into consideration the 28.4% percent of women who are into trading because the study is also interested in the number of traders in agricultural produce.

Also, 17.7% of the respondents were students. The age range indicates that by the time they grow into adulthood, illiteracy would have been reduced. The other angle is that, they may decide in future to venture into other occupations and not into farming, which might reduce the number of women farmers who are educated. This is worrisome in the sense that many are of the opinion that quality education and better opportunities exist in the urban areas. On education, 29.5% had First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC), which implies that their level of education may or may not affect perfect comprehension of vital information on agriculture. 54.5% had SSCE, which also means that they can read and write in English language. 10.5%had Diploma Certificates while 5.3% had Degree Certificates. Considering the population of women in the community, this percentage is insignificant and women with higher certificates are not into farming but civil servants. If they were farmers, that would be on part-time basis. Women with higher certificates who are not into full time farming might not contribute significantly to agricultural practices in the community.

Table 4.2.2: Nature of agricultural activities undertaken by women in Askean community.

S/N	Nature of Agricultural Activities	Degree of Agreement				Total (%)
		Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	
1	Cash crop farming	70	58	120	124	372
		(18.8)	(15.5)	(32.2)	(33.3)	(100.0)
2	Food crop Farming	124	98	73	77	372
		(33.3)	(26.3)	(19.6)	(20.6)	(100.0)
3.	Fadama Farming	46	54	140	132	372
		(12.3)	(14.5)	(37.6)	(35.4)	(100.0)
4.	Poultry Farming	48	54	130	140	372
		(12.9)	(14.5)	(34.9)	(37.6)	(100.0)
5.	Fish Farming	52	48	140	132	372
		(13.9)	(12.9)	(37.6)	(35.4)	(100.0)
6.	Processing of agricultural	41	59	138	134	372
	produce	(11.0)	(15.8)	(37.0)	(36.0)	(100.0)
7.	Storage of agricultural	136	136	40	60	372
	produce	(36.5)	(36.5)	(10.7)	(16.1)	(100.0)
8.	Harvesting of crops	89	102	122	59	372
		(23.9)	(27.4)	(32.7)	(15.8)	(100.0)
9	Marketing of agricultural	141	138	38	55	372
	produce	(37.9)	(37.0)	(10.2)	(14.7)	(100.0)

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2019

The table above shows the nature of agricultural activities that women in Askean community undertake. In view of this, 18.8% of the respondents strongly agree and 15.5% agree (making a total of 34.4%0 that cash crop production is the agricultural activity in the community. This is below 32.2% and 33.3% which disagree and strongly disagree

respectively (total of 65.6%) with this submission. It can be deduced that planting of cash crops is not a regular activity in Askean community. The opposite is the case for food crop farming which had 33.3 % of respondents who strongly agree while 26.3% agree (making a total of 59.6%) that farming of food crops is regular in the community. Furthermore, 73.0% of respondents disagree that Fadama Farming is one of the farming activities that women engage in the community. More so, 72.5% disagree to poultry farming being the farming activity. Furthermore, 73.0% of the respondents disagree to the option of fish farming as agricultural activity in the community. Also, 73.0% of the respondents went against processing of agricultural proceduce as farming activity in the community. FGD participants explained that:

> To venture into processing of agricultural produce is expensive due to the machines that farmers must procure such as grater, cracking, grinding machines and generator for power supply. These machines require constant light to function effectively. And, if one must embark on processing, it must be in large scale to meet commercial quantity. Obviously, market for cash crop is not readily available here. But the issue is not the market per se, but the capital to start such a venture considering the economic situation in the country today *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba State, 2019).*

However, 74.9 % of the respondents accepted that selling or marketing of agricultural produce is an essential activity in the community. To this end, an FGD participants reiterated that:

> Of course, almost all the women in this community sell their farm produce to get money for the family up keep and to buy a few more seedlings to plant for the new planting season. This is one of the means of survival in this community. We don't just sell our food produce but we also eat them as well. We have special market days for selling *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba State, 2019).*

Furthermore, 51.3 % agreed to storage of agricultural produce and harvesting of crops constitute part of the agricultural practices. Thus, the interpretation above indicates that subsistent farming, selling of the agricultural produce are more in practice than cash

crop farming and harvesting/storage of crops in the community. This position further proves that subsistent agriculture is the mainstay in the community. The implication of this is that women farmers are not buoyant enough to venture into mechanized system of agriculture and consequently, they cannot meet current demands of commercial agriculture.

Table 4.2.3: The communication strategies deployed by TADP to facilitate women participation in agriculture in Askean community.

S/N	Communication Strategies	Degree of Agreement				Total (%)
		Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	
1	Radio	101 (27.1)	142 (38.9)	69 (18.5)	60 (16.)	372 (100.0)
2	Television.	46 (12.3)	60 (18.5)	121 (32.5)	145 (38.9)	372 (100.0)
3.	Community Dialogue	60 (18.5)	52 (13.9)	120 (32.2)	140 (40.3)	372 (100.0)
4.	Information Educational Communication (IEC) Materials like Posters, Fliers, Billboards, etc.)	25 (6.7)	30 (8.0)	167 (44.8)	150 (40.3)	372 (100.0)
5.	Women Group Meetings	89 (23.9)	59 (15.8)	102 (27.4)	122 (32.7)	372 (100.0)
6.	Local Communication Channels	94 (25.2)	102 (27.4)	91 (24.4)	85 (22.8)	372 (100.0)

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2019

The table above shows the communication strategies deployed by TADP to facilitate women's participation in agriculture in Askean community. Respondents gave 66.0% to radio;71.4% rejected television; 72.5% also rejected the use of community dialogue, 85.1% further rejected the use of information educational communication (IEC), and 52.6% accepted the use of local communication channels. In support of radio as a communication

strategy deployed by TADP, the Projects' Matter Specialist in Agro-forestry of TADP stated thus:

> We have deployed radio extensively to bring about information to women famers. We have programmes on farming. Television is a bit of luxury to women here, but when it becomes absolutely necessary, we use it for sensitization purposes on a larger scale. The use of fliers and handbills is not new to people in this community. When we have programmes and visitations, we ensure we go with educational materials to remind participants after the programme. Whether they like it or not, these materials have a way of reminding them of one or two points and it becomes increasingly necessary that we continue to make information available when there is any opportunity*(Key Informant Interview with the Projects' Matter Specialist in Agro-forestry of TADP, Taraba, 2019).*

From the interpretation, it becomes obvious that radio and local communication are the two main communication strategies that TADP deploys in facilitating the participation of women in agriculture in Askean community.

Table 4.2.4: Level of Women's Participation in Agriculture in Askean Community

S/N	Level of Participation in Agriculture	Degree of Agreement				Total (%)
		Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	
1	Participation of Women in agriculture is very high	209 (56.1)	129 (34.6)	21 (5.6)	13 (3.4)	372 (100.0)
2	Participation of Women in agriculture is high	98 (26.3)	95 (25.5)	86 (23.1)	93 (25.0)	372 (100.0)
3.	Women's participation in agriculture is very low	22 (5.9)	45 (12.0)	140 (37.6)	165 (44.3)	372 (100.0)
4.	Women's participation in agriculture is low	45 (12.0)	56 (15.0)	128 (34.4)	143 (38.4)	372 (100.0)
5.	Women do not participate at all in agriculture	7 (1.8)	12 (3.2)	186 (50.0)	167 (44.8)	372 (100.0)

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2019

The table above shows the level of women's participation in agriculture in Askean community. 90.7% of the respondents attested that participation of women in agriculture in the area is very high. 81.9% rejected the assumption that women's participation in agriculture is very low. However, 94.8 rejected the option that women do not participate at all in agriculture. From the foregoing, it is clear that the level of women's participation in agricultural in Askean community is very high. This makes Askean an agrarian community.

Table 4.2.5: Extent of women's access to communication outlet for agricultural development in Askean community

S/N	Level of Women's Participation	Degree of Agreement				Total (%)
		Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	
1	Women have access to radio medium encouraging them to participate in agricultural development	112 (30.1)	129 (34.6)	69 (18.5)	62 (16.6)	372 (100.0)
2	Women are accessible to the TV medium facilitating their participation in agricultural development	10 (2.6)	15 (4.0)	180 (48.3)	167 (44.8)	372 (100.0)
3.	Women have access to community dialogue platform encouraging them to participate in agricultural development	131 (35.2)	131 (35.2)	45 (12.0)	65 (17.4)	372 (100.0)
4.	Women are accessible to IEC materials motivating their participation in agricultural development	45 (12.0)	56 (15.0)	110 (29.5)	116 (31.1)	372 (100.0)
5	Women have access to women social groups/meetings encouraging them to participate in agricultural development	101 (27.1)	102 (27.4)	85 (22.8)	84 (22.5)	372 (100.0)
6	Women are accessible to indigenous communication platforms motivating them to participate in agricultural development	100 (26.8)	128 (34.4)	73 (19.6)	71 (19.0)	372 (100.0)

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2019

The table above indicates the level of women's access to communication strategies for agricultural development in Askean community. To this end, 64.7% of the respondents accepted that women have access to radio medium thereby encouraging them to participate in agricultural development, 93.1% of the respondents disagree that women are accessible to TV medium of communicating agricultural developmental projects, thereby hindering their participation in agricultural development through this medium to some extent. 70.4% agree that women have access to community dialogue platform to communicate agricultural development thereby encouraging them to participate in agricultural development. Also, 60.6% of the respondents rejected the assumption that women are accessible to IEC's materials needed to motivate their participation in agricultural development. In the same vein, 54.5% of the respondents agreed that women have access to women social groups and meetings which go a long way in encouraging them to participate in agriculture development, while 63.2% agreed that women are accessible to indigenous communication platforms which motivate them to participate in agricultural development.

From the interpretation above, it can be deduced that women's access to the use of radio to communicate agricultural development is high. It is also clear that radio is an acceptable medium of communication in the community because it is cheap, portable, and affordable; and has a wide area coverage in terms of frequency. This is unlike television, which respondents rejected as a favorable communication strategy that women are associated with to participate in agriculture. Television is expensive and require constant power supply for effective access. Therefore, it becomes a challenge to the rural women.

Table 4.2.6: Factors Militating against Women's Participation in Agricultural development projects in Askean Community of Ussa L.G.A

S/N	Militating Factors	Degree of Agreement				Total (%)
		Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	
1	Poverty and financial crises	146 (39.2)	143 (38.4)	13 (3.4)	70 (18.8)	372 (100.0)
2	Illiteracy	156 (41.9)	142 (38.1)	26 (6.9)	48 (12.9)	372 (100.0)
3.	Religious beliefs	97 (26.0)	118 (31.7)	64 (17.2)	93 (25.0)	372 (100.0)
4.	Cultural barriers	101 (27.1)	150 (40.3)	121 (32.5)	0 (00.0)	372 (100.0)
5	Health challenges and Diseases	138 (37.0)	87 23.3	74 (19.8)	73 (19.6)	372 (100.0)

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2019

The table above indicates factors that militate against women's participation in agriculture in Askean community. In this regard, 77.6% of the respondents were in support of poverty and financial crises as a militating factor. 80.0% accepted that illiteracy affects women's participation in agriculture, while cultural barriers attracted 67.4%. Also, 60.3 % agreed to health challenges as a contributing factor to women's inability to participate effectively in agriculture. 57.7% of the respondents accepted the assumption that religious belief is a militating factor to participation of Askean community in farming.

On poor financial supply, an FGD participant stated that:

> Despite the fact that poor funding presents a challenge, the women should not completely rely on external intervention since it has taken too long and no one is sure of when such will come. The best thing for women to do here is to rely on contributions from association or better still, the association can provide loan facilities to women so that they can afford to improve their agricultural productions.

> Often times when loans are provided and not used properly, it can also become a big issue. Most women would not collect loan if they do not know what exactly to do with it *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba State, 2019).*

The above can be considered as valid because, indecision can affect access to loan facilities even if it is made available to women. This indecision can be linked to several issue of which ignorance is major.

On health as a challenge to women, respondents accepted it as a militating factor to reasons women do not participate effectively in agriculture. In this regard,aparticipant during the FGD observed that:

> Women constitute a large labour force in agriculture. In every agricultural activity, women constitute 75-80% and thus, the importance of women in agriculture is crucial. Where health becomes an issue for women, it affects the entire process. Often times, women can go through health challenges and still engage in farm work. With this, you cannot expect any meaningful output. It is important that the health of women should not be taken for granted *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba State, 2019).*

Based on the interpretation above, poor financial supply, poor access to information, illiteracy and ill health are some of the militating factors against women's participation in agriculture in Askean community. This finding supports the submission of Ogunlela and Muktar (2009); (ICRW, 2013) which states that when women lack access to land, they are not eligible for credit, membership of farmers' organizations, extension training and services.

Table 4.2.7: Ways effective communication strategies can be used to enhance women's participation in agricultural development in Askean community.

S/N	Ways to Enhance Effective Communication for Agricultural Development	Degree of Agreement				Total (%)
		Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	
1	Cultural &indigenous channels of communication should be strengthened	129 (34.6)	218 (58.6)	25 (6.7)	00 (0.0)	372 (100.0)
2	Development agents should deploy local languages of host community to communicate messages on agriculture.	147 (39.5)	121 (32.5)	46 (12.3)	58 (15.5)	372 (100.0)
3.	Development agents should carry out more advocacy visits to women groups/association for the purpose of enhancing women's participation in agriculture.	156 (41.9)	143 (38.4)	31 (8.3)	42 (11.2)	372 (100.0)
4.	Women leaders from various fronts such as market women, women youth wing and religious groups should be invited for discussion on the need to sensitize women to participate in agriculture.	138 (37.0)	87 23.3	74 (19.8)	73 (19.6)	372 (100.0)
5	Religious/Worship centres should be used to sensitize women on agricultural activities of TADP	97 (26.0)	118 (31.7)	64 (17.2)	93 (25.0)	372 (100.0)
6	Loan and credit facilities should be made available to women farmers in the areas	146 (39.2)	143 (38.4)	14 (3.7)	69 (18.5)	372 (100.0)
7	Adult education of women should be effectively privileged and utilized to empower & build their capacity in order to break ignorance and illiteracy among them.	129 (34.6)	218 (58.6)	25 (6.7)	00 (0.0)	372 (100.0)
8	Social media platforms and mobile phones short messaging services should be utilized by TADP to sensitize women on agricultural interventions in the areas.	48 (12.9)	26 (6.9)	156 (41.9)	142 (38.1)	372 (100.0)

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2019

From the table above, 34.6% of the respondents agree and 58.6% strongly agree that cultural &indigenous channels of communication should be strengthened. It is deducible that respondents' opinion is in favour of deployment of what can be called local medium of communication. To corroborate this statement, the extension staff of TADP observed that:

> Communication approaches which do not take into consideration local medium of communication stands of rejection by the people. Thus, instead of predominantly using alien communication media, why not also use the ones that the people are familiar with. Sometimes even when the people ought not to pay attention to the message but because their local media are used for the communication process, they yield unconsciously *(Key Informant Interview with extension staff of TADP, Taraba, 2019).*

In the same vein, 39.5% of respondents strongly agree and 32.5% agree that development agents should deploy local languages of host community to communicate messages on agriculture. This implies that 72% of the respondents, which is on a high side, see the use of local languages as a plus to communication especially to women in Askean community. Furthermore, 80.3% of the respondents agree that development agents should carry out more advocacy visits to women's groups/associations for the purpose of enhancing women's participation in agriculture. To support this claim, a participant in Focus Group Discussion (FGD) stated that:

> We usually see agents from development agencies come to talk to women in this community and it usually attracts a large number of women especially when their visit is announced on time. The importance of having agents to come and talk to women is practical. The first impression that women in this community get is that the project or initiative is of utmost importance and that is why development agencies sent delegations. The other angle is that the physical presence of agents affords women the opportunity to ask questions and receive direct answers instead of seeing posters or listening to programmes on radio. That is why we prefer advocacy visits when there is an important message for women especially in agriculture *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba, 2019).*

Also, 60.3% of the respondents agree that women leaders from various fronts such as market women, women youth wing and religious groups should be invited for discussion

on the need to sensitize women to participate in agriculture. In response to this issue, when it was raised during FGD, a participant objected to that by asserting that:

> Although, it is important to send women leaders to represent the entire women in the community, it should not be seen as a viable avenue to educate us all. We have had instances where leaders have misrepresented us in the past. Apart from that, it is not every woman that can get information and pass it across to everyone without bias. Sometimes, if the information is very vital, they might keep it to themselves and use it to better their lots. So, it is better that everyone who can be available should receive information directly. In my opinion, it is much better than sending a few representation on behalf of the entire women's group *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba, 2019).*

On religious/worship centers to be used to sensitize women on agricultural activities by TADP, 57.7% of respondents accepted the option. The margin between 57.7% and 42.2% is not so wide. Thus, we can deduce that the issue of using religious centers to talk to women might not be seen as an effective communication approach. To corroborate this point, a participant during FGD observed that:

> Using religious centers might not be equally acceptable because even if development agents are accorded a few minutes to talk to women during service, it will not be adequate because of time factor. And the fact that most people come in to church to worship God will defeat the aim of such visitation. Besides, how free can such agents be to stand in the public or before a church audience to discuss agricultural issues? I don't think it is proper. Although, it can be a good opportunity to have access to a large majority of women in one attendance *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba, 2019).*

On the issue of making available loan and credit facilities to women farmers in the areas, 77.6% accepted that it can be an effective medium of communication to enhance women participation in agriculture. To this end, Aji Washuku, Head of Women in agriculture stated that:

> Availability of loan to women constitutes severe challenges. This is because women do not have workable capital to plunge head long into profitable agriculture apart from subsistent farming which is just to feed the family and take care of household needs. But, if we have loan facilities, then we can take full advantage of various

> opportunities available to us in the community*(Key Informant Interview with, Aji Washuku, Head of Women in Agriculture, Taraba, 2019).*

Another participant during FGD stated that:

> The issue of loan can be problematic because husbands are always to stand in as guarantors when loans are to be taken by their wives. As a matter of fact,a loan facilities to women is as good as given to their husbands; and oftentimes, they might want to divert the money into other projects and since we are under their care, we yield to them and the effort becomes a waste *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba, 2019).*

Furthermore, another participant during FGD succinctly stated that:

> Apart from the fact that women hardly get loan facilities, the issue of interest becomes threatening. Women are afraid to collect loans from the banks because of high interest rates. Sometime, one is not so sure of the outcome of large scale farming and collecting loan seems like a risk. That is one of the reasons why most women do not subscribe to loan facilities. But if government can afford to give loan facilities at almost zero interest rate, then it would be a risk worth taking *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba, 2019).*

93.2% of respondents agree to educating women to build capacity in order to break ignorance and illiteracy. It can be argued that illiteracy is a major setback for women in agriculture. To corroborate this point, Aji Washuku, Head of Women in agriculture of Askean community during an In-depth Interview explained that:

> In this community, women are not entirely illiterate. A good number of women here can, at least, read and write. The major challenge is that women here hardly build or improve themselves. That, I mean, to keep track on new happenings around them and that is the real illiteracy. Some of them are stocked to the same practice even when it is clear that there is need to change attitude; they find it difficult because getting involved in a particular way of doing something can frustrate any change of activity*(Key Informant Interview with, Aji Washuku, Head of Women in Agriculture, Taraba, 2019).*

On using social media platforms, mobile phones and short messaging services (SMS) by TADP to sensitize women on agricultural interventions in the areas, 80% of the respondents did not accept the option as an effective approach. To enhance women's participation in agriculture in the community. From this, it could be inferred that women in

the rural areas are yet to accept or engage in social media activities. Although, mobile phones are now available to a good number of women, but to use it for the purpose of sensitizing them on agriculture is not seen as a welcome idea.

From the interpretation above, it is pertinent to note that cultural & traditional channels of communication should be strengthened. Development agents should carry out more advocacy visits to women's groups/associations for the purpose of enhancing women's participation in agriculture. Also, loan and credit facilities should be made available to women farmers in Askean community.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

This part of the study discusses the findings made from the presentation and analysis of data collected from the field. The essence of this is to discuss salient issues as raised in the objective of the study. The first objective of the study was to determine the nature of agricultural activities undertaken by women in Askean Community of Ussa L.G.A. From table 4.2.2, it was indicated that subsistent farming, selling of agricultural produce were agricultural practices that women engaged in; cash crop production was not supported. Other activities include: harvesting and storage of farm produce. These were the major agricultural activities in this community. However, from the findings, 56.5% of the respondents attested that farming activities revolve around subsistent agriculture which is not a commercial activity but rather to sustain the family and perhaps to generate income to continue the business without much profit. This is considered as a petty form of farming business with no plans for expansion and growth.

Furthermore, it is pertinent to note that subsistent farming takes place in most rural communities where farmers lack the capacity to venture into cash crop production, which

has more commercial value. Indeed, cash crop farming implies that the farmer plants crops that generate foreign earnings. In a nutshell, the crops planted are such that can be sold in the open market in large quantity. Such crops include: soya beans, cocoa, millet, maize, etc. These crops are in high demand in the international market. Thus, cash crops are always on high demand and must be in good state, which brings in another challenge of storage to farmers.

The last requirement, which is that the crops must be in good state demands that from the planting season to harvesting, the farmer must be ready to put in extra efforts which requires adequate information and capital. The farmers must be knowledgeable about modern agricultural system such as application of the right fertilizer at specified intervals and the right treatment of pests and diseases in the event that they occur. Secondly, the farmer needs funds to procure large expanse of land to be able to grow enough of these crops, provide labour force, fumigation, storage facilities and deployment of the right harvesting and storage; such that the crops are not in bad state. This requires a lot of inputs from the farmer. Although the farmer stands to gain but he/she needs to have other sources of income while the harvest and final sale of the crops is awaited. In view of this, 101 (32%) of the respondents strongly disagree and 103 (34%) disagree that the Askean community is into cash crop production. This infers that cash crop production is not a regular agricultural activity in Askean community. To corroborate this data, a participant during FGD observed that:

> To venture into cash crop farming requires huge capital for land, buying of crops, hiring work force, etc. To adequately do this, a lot of money is needed and women in this community cannot afford such luxury. Women in this community do not have enough land to cultivate crops for consumption let alone for cash crops. Women here are under their husbands and most of the farming activities belong to the family; where the husband is the head. If your husband is not buoyant enough to

invest in cash crop production, then the woman is helpless *(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Askean Community, Taraba, 2019).*

Subsistence farming, on the other hand does not place too much demands on farmers. It requires farm land, seedlings, and labour, which are often taken by the farmers themselves. Or occasionally, a few hired hands could be used.

The reason for engaging in subsistent farming is because of poor funding, availability of enough information to boost agricultural knowledge, basic mechanized implement, availability of land and support from extension service agencies who represent government to encourage agriculture in rural areas. As far as the aforementioned issues continue to linger, the zeal or passion to venture into mechanized farming will become recurrent issue. In Askean community, there is evidence of lack of funds, availability of vital and goodwill to embark upon commercial farming activities.

Another objective of this study was to ascertain the level of women's participation in agricultural activities in Askean community of Taraba State. The essence was to see how communication was able to enhance that level of participation. In order words, the study was interested in examining the contributions. Hence, findings show that the level of participation is high. This could be perhaps as a result of the communication strategy of TADP so far. It is expected that after deploying the instrumentality of radio, television, community dialogue, instructional materials (fliers, handbills, etc.) as well as local communication, participation of women in agriculture should certainly increase. 64.7% attested to the fact that women can effectively access radio to get agricultural development information. To corroborate this, The TADP Principal Executive Officer, Administration, in an In-depth Interview (IDI) stated thus:

> It is true that women participate in various radio programmes that have been designed to boost agriculture. We have several phone in programmes in Hausa and most women contribute meaningfully through questions and suggestions and this is a plus because the programme is virtually intended to sensitize women farmers. We actually encourage more women to participate and that requires the use of phones, which we encourage women to allow their children to teach them on how to use it effectively*(Key Informant Interview with Principal Executive Officer, Administration, TADP, Taraba, 2019).*

93.1% of the respondents did not agree that women are effectively accessible to television for agricultural information. The issue here is that television is not as common as radio. Rural communities do not favour television in the sense that it is expensive and requires electricity supply and most of the rural communities do not have constant power supply. As a result, such agricultural programmes on television can hardly be accessible in the rural communities. However, 70.4% of the respondents asserted that women are effectively accessible to community dialogue to get information on agricultural development. This finding supports the account of Fresco(1998) which says that women account for 70% of agricultural workers; 80% for food producers; and 100% for those who process basic foodstuffs and they undertake from 60% to 90% of the marketing.

In this instance, various women's groups are used as a forum for discussing agriculture and encouragement on participation. Through this means, women deploy local communication channels and social groups effectively. The women that have knowledge of improved farming techniques use this opportunity to share with others who do not have. Every woman stands to benefit irrespective of her educational status because of the language of communication is Hausa.

For TADP to worry about low participation in Askean community to the extent that intervention programmes were initiated to address it, it thus means that there are issues that must have contributed eventually. This study was to extricate such militating factors. In

response to this, few factors were identified to include: Poverty, illiteracy, religious beliefs, cultural barriers, health challenges, and poor access to information on agriculture. In this regard, 77.6% of the respondents were in support of poverty and financial crises and a militating factor. This finding tallies with the submission of Joseph (2016) which supports empowerment of women farmers in rural communities.

Also, findings made it obvious that women's participation in agriculture was grossly impeded as a result of poor funding. From the first phase of agricultural activity, plowing to harvest and storage requires finances to enhance a smooth transition; and in a case where access to funds is challenging, the entire exercise is affected. According to the submission from participants of FGD, poor finance is the reason why subsistent farming is popularly practiced in the community. The FGD participants made submissions that, subsistence farming is easy to engage in because they do not have to pay for labour, they do it themselves. And the seedlings needed for the next season of planting they take out from the previous harvest. They also stated that the major challenge is access to fertilizer and chemical for treating pests and diseases, which occasionally gives hard times.

80.0% accepted the fact that illiteracy affects women's participation in agriculture, while cultural barriers attracted 67.4%, and 60.3 % agreed to health challenges as a contributing factor to low participation of women in agriculture. 57.7% of the respondents accepted the assumption that religious belief is a militating factor to participation of women in agricultural activities in Askean community. Based on the interpretation above, poor financial supply, poor access to information and illiteracy are some of the militating factors to women's participation in agriculture in Askean community. With this finding, the

assertion of Ani et al (2004:6) is supported which says that education is one of the significant factors affecting the participation of women in agricultural development.

With these factors, it becomes increasingly difficult for women to make use of new and vital information on farming and this, invariably could have grave consequences on agriculture productivity in communities that share the same characteristics as Askean. This finding supports the assertion of Joseph (2016) that social factors affect participation of women in agriculture.

It was discovered that TADP deployed some communication strategies to enhance women's participation in agricultural activities. Communication strategies are usually geared towards solving a problem and in the case of Askean community, the low participation of women was considered as a development challenge especially to agriculture, which is the main stay of the community. Allowing the situation to persist was tantamount to allowing the community's major activity to dwindle. In view of the above various communication channels were deployed by TADP and they included: radio, television, community dialogue, educational instructional communication (IEC) materials like posters, fliers, billboards, etc., women group meetings and local communication channels. Out of these channels, 66.0% agreed to radio as a strategy. After careful consideration, it was discovered that television was not viable with 71.4% who were against it and 81.5% who did not subscribe to educational instructional communication (IEC) materials (posters, fliers, billboards, etc.).

From the findings, it is clear that radio was effective because it is cheap, portable, easy to maintain and has strong/wider signal, which can be accessed in the rural areas. The used of local communication channels was also effective because they suit the people's way

of life (culture). In order words, television, IEC materials, were not considered as effective and thus, emphasis should not be on them, to avoid waste of resources, time and energy by TADP.

Another objective was to suggest ways through which effective communication strategies could be used to enhance women's participation in agricultural development projects in Askean community. It is imperative to note that initiating communication strategy does not mean that they can automatically function effectively. Thus, from findings, not all strategies were considered as effective in the community; because it did not work efficiently in one community does not necessarily mean that it cannot work in a different community. The peculiar nature of a community can defeat the essence of a workable communication strategy.93.2% of respondents subscribe to strengthening cultural & traditional channels of communication as a way of women's' participation. This finding is in line with Ekwere (2017) which advocates for people centered communication channels in agriculture to be tailored towards deploying local communication mediums.

The essence of using local communication medium such as (storytelling, folklore, town crier and town hall meetings) to disseminate information is to gain acceptance basically because those media are culturally inclined and thus close to the heart of the people (women in this instance). Another angle to view this point is from the understanding that women are familiar with the workings of the traditional modes of communication; being that it is part of their culture, and thus, it becomes easier for them to relate with them. Thus, strengthening this strategy will, to a large extent, sustain women's participation in agriculture in Askean community.

Furthermore, 72.0% of respondents advocated for agricultural development agencies (TADP) to deploy local languages of host community to disseminate information to farmers in the community. This submission coincides with the position of Onagwa (2016) which supports the use of local content in passing agricultural information to rural farmers in Nigeria.

Also 77.6% of respondents suggested that loan and credit facilities should be made available to women farmers in the community as a way of strengthening the communication strategies of TADP. The point is that, after, women must have had information on agriculture as a result of several communication strategies, the issue of funding can truncate or defeat the purpose entirely. This point validates the advocacy for loan facilities to be granted to women in Askean community.

In addition, 93.2% of respondents approved the idea of embarking on adult education for women in order to eradicate illiteracy and therefore, empower and build women's capacity to excel in agriculture and other endeavours. This suggestion is apt because considering the level of education of women in Askean (see table4.2.1), it could be deduced that more education is required. With 29.5% having FSLC, 54.5% having SSCE/WAEC and 10.4% and 5.3% having Diploma and Degree respectively, there is need for adult education. This is important because most of the women would find it difficult to enroll in regular academic institutions for one reason or the other. Perhaps, the level of education in the community also contributed to 80.0% of the respondents who rejected social media platforms, mobile phones and Short Messaging Services (SMS) as communication medium for disseminating agricultural development by TADP. We can see that in certain communities, social media and SMS can be effective but in a community

where the level of education is low, it can be entirely ineffective. To corroborate this fact, the Extension staff of TADP observed that:

> We cannot make use of the social media or SMS to transmit information to women because they would not be able to understand. The level of education of women is the challenge here. Ordinarily, text messages would have been a fast means of reaching out to women but, we have eliminated that as an option. Instead, we have direct contact and often times we use staff who understand Hausa language to communicate. This, to a large extent has its own challenges because we often had to made physical contacts. May be with time, we might be able to introduce this measure but for now, it is not an option *(Key Informant Interview with Mrs. Altine Audu, Extension staff of TADP, Taraba, 2019).*

On the whole, TADP intervention channels of communication cannot be said to be entirely ineffective. The ones that are considered effective and impactful have in no small measure affected the participation of women in agriculture positively. From the theoretical points, Gender and Development Theory has been expressed in the light of women empowerment through communication's effectiveness and Reflect Theory obviously inundated the level of participation as a result of understanding the medium of communication towards motivating women farmers for optimal participation and contributions.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, findings, recommendations and conclusion drawn from data generated from the research instruments deployed and analyzed in line with research objectives.

5.2 Summary of the Study

Low participation of women in agriculture in rural communities in Nigeria has reduced the level of productivity and caused food insecurity in the country. To address low participation of women, extension agencies in Nigeria deployed several measures of which communication strategy was given attention. The use of communication strategy was imitated in rural communities and Askean community in Taraba. Although, there are some studies done on participation and communication channels, but no study has been carried out to appraise TADP communication strategy with specific reference to Askean community in Taraba state.

The study used mixed-method survey research design which made it possible for the use of both quantitatively and qualitatively approach to data gathering. A total of 372 copies of the question were analyzed in line with the objectives of the study. Structured questionnaire in Likert format was used together with In-depth Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The population of the study were women farmers in Askean community. Reflect Theory was used as the theoretical framework.

5.3 Key Findings

From the analysis of data obtained from the research instruments mentioned above, the following were the summary of findings:

i. It was discovered that the subsistent farming was the main agricultural activity in Askean community. Although, there was evidence of other activities such as storage and sale of agricultural produce.

ii. It was further revealed that the participation of women in agricultural activities in Askean community was high as a result of various communication strategies deployed by TADP over time.

iii. It was discovered that factors such as poor funding, low level of education, and health challenges affected women's participation in agriculture in Askean community.

iv. Furthermore, it was known that radio and local media of communication with local contents were mostly effective among the various communication channels deployed by TADP to enhance women's participation in Askean community.

5.4 Recommendations

i. Since subsistence farming was the main agricultural activity in Askean community, it is thus recommended that TADP should carry out extensive initiative to promote and encourage commercial farming in the community.

ii. Taking into consideration the level of participation of women farmers in the community, it is important that TADP initiate sustainable communication strategies to further improve the level of participation in the community.

iii. Furthermore, it is recommended that TADP, government and non-governmental agencies should make efforts to provide funding to women farmers in rural communities with a view to increasing agricultural yields as well as address the issue of poor health and illiteracy through adult and non-former education of women farmers.

iv. Based on the finding that radio and local medium of communication with local contents were mostly effective, TADP and stakeholders in agriculture should make these channels object of focus across rural communities.

5.5 Conclusion

The issue of low participation of women in agricultural activities necessitated the federal extension services to initiate various programmes with the aim of boosting participation of women who according to Onguonu (2010) constitutes 80% of work force in the sector. The study ascertained that communication strategies were deployed by TADP to ensure that the level of participation of women in agriculture in Askean community increased significantly. It was discovered that the level of participation of women in agriculture in the area increased as a result of the deployment of communication strategies by TADP. Based on the foregoing, the study concluded that effective communication strategies can lead to equitable participation of women in agriculture in Nigeria. To this end, it is important that more effort should be focused on establishing effective communication to resolve issues of sustainability of development in the society.

5.6 Contributions to Knowledge

i. With current statistical data and findings on communication strategy towards the enhancement of women's participation in agriculture, this study has thus provided

vital information that could assist government, policy makers, corporate organizations, extension agencies and scholars to address the issue of low participation of women in agriculture in rural communities in Nigeria.

ii. In addition, this study has shown that effective communication strategy can enhance participation of rural women in agriculture and development issues generally.

iii. Furthermore, this study has contributed to enriching the area of communication strategy towards effective participation in the agricultural sector of Nigerians economy.

5.7 Suggestions for Further Research

The essence of the study was to appraise the level of participation of women in agricultural activities in Askean community in Ussa L.G.A as a result of communication strategies deployed by TADP. This was done with a view to further enhancing women's participation in Agriculture. Since it was discovered that women's participation in the community has increased significantly, it will be of immense importance for further studies to be embarked upon in the following areas:

a) Sustainability of women's participation through communication strategies

b) It is also important that further study should focus on the impact of participation. A comparative study can be carried out to find out the level of impact between the times that communication strategies were not initiated and after initiation of such strategies.

c) Furthers studies could be directed towards eliminating challenges to women's participation in rural communities.

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Interviewees

Mr. Iliyasu Mustapha, head of extension services, Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme(TADP)

Aji Washuku, Head of women in agriculture, Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme (TADP)

Sanusi Misa, project matter specialist Agro-forestry, Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme (TADP)

Godswill Isaac, principal executive officer Administration, Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme (TADP)

Bala Shugaba, extension staff, Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme (TADP)

Ubandoma Rimamnde, extension staff, Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme (TADP)

Altine Audu, extension staff, Taraba State Agricultural Development Programme (TADP)

Focus Group Discussion

Kande Joseph, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Waatsi Yusufu, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Wanderiman Andekun, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Fyentirimam Elisha, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Irisim Maliki, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Glory Rimamnde, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Blessing Maiangwa, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Fyafa Sabo, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Betheba Rimamsanati, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Tsimtop Mudi, Participated in Focus Group Discussion, women group, Askem community, held 25th May, 2019.

Appendix I

Department of Theatre and Performing Arts
Faculty of Arts
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
Postgraduate Thesis Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am a postgraduate student undertaking this research on **Communication and Women's Participation in Agricultural Development: A Study of TADP inAskean community in UssaL.G.A. ofTaraba State** as part of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts (M.A) in Development Communication.Your response to the questions forms the basis for primary findings of the research. The researcher therefore attaches a high level of confidentiality to your response and assures that it will be used for research purpose only.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,

Iririben D. Nyatse
P16ARTP8021 (MA/ARTS/9835/2011-2012)

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATELY AS INSTRUCTED

Section A: Respondent's Demographic Data

1. Marital Status a. Married [ ] b. Single [ ]c. Widowed [ ]
2. Age: a 15 - 20 [ ] b. 21 - 26 [ ] c. 27 – 32 [ ] d. 35 and above [ ]
3. Level of Education. A. FSLC [ ] b. SSCE/WAEC [ ]c. Diploma [ ]d. Degree [ ]
4. Occupation. a. Farming [ ] b. Trading [ ] c. Civil Servant [ ] d. Student [ ]
5. Have you participated in any agriculture project before? a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]

Section B: The nature of agricultural activities undertaken by women in Askean community (TICK YOUR OWN AREAS)

6. a. Cash crop farming [ ] b. Food crop farming [ ] c. Fadama farming [ ] d. Poultry farming [ ] e. Fish Farming [ ] f. Processing of agricultural produce [ ] g. Storage of agricultural produce [ ] h. harvesting of crops [ ] i. marketing of agricultural produce [ ]

Section C: The communication strategies deployed by TADP to facilitate women participation in agriculture development in Askean community?

S/No.	The following communication strategies are deployed by TADP to facilitate women participation in agriculture in Askean Community.	Answer	
		Yes	No
7.	Radio		
8.	Television.		
9.	Community dialogue		
10.	Educational Instructional Communication(EIC) Materials like Posters, Fliers, Billboards, etc)		
11.	Women group meetings		
12.	Local communication channels		

Section D1: On the Scale of 1-4, indicate your level of agreement on the level of women's participation in Agriculture development in Askean Community.

S/No.	Level of women's participation in Agriculture in Askean community?	Level of Agreement			
13.	Participation of Women in agriculture is very high				
14.	Participation of Women in agriculture is high				
15.	Women's participation in agriculture is very low				
16.	Women's participation in agriculture is low				
17.	Women do not participate at all in agriculture				

Section D2: On the Scale of 1-4, indicate your level of agreement on the level of women's participation in Agriculture development in Askean community.

S/No.	Level of women's participation in the communication strategies for Agricultural developments in Askean community?	Level of Agreement			
		SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1
18.	Women participated effectively in the use of radio to communicate agriculture development				
19.	Women participated effectively in the use of television to communicate agriculture development				
20.	Women participated effectively in the use of community dialogue to communicate agriculture development				
21.	Women participated effectively in the use of IEC's to communicate agriculture development				
22.	Women participated effectively in the use of women social groups and meetings to communicate agriculture development				
23.	Women participated effectively in the use of local communication channels to communicate agriculture development				

Section E: Factors militating against women's participation in Agricultural development within Askean community of Ussa L.G.A

S/No.	The factors militating against women's participation in Agricultural development project within Askean community of Ussa L.G.	Answer	
		Yes	No
24.	Poverty and financial crises		
25.	Illiteracy		
26.	Religious beliefs		
27	Cultural barriers		

28.	Health challenges and Diseases		
29.	Poor access to information		

Section F:Waysin which effective communication strategies be used to enhance women's participation in Agricultural development in Askean community?

S/No.	Ways effective communication strategies can be used to enhance women's participation in Agricultural development projects in Askean community	Level of Agreement			
		SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1
30.	Cultural & traditional channels of communication should be strengthened				
31.	Development agents should deploy local languages of host community to communicate messages on agriculture.				
32.	Development agents should carry out more advocacy visits to women groups/association for the purpose of enhancing women's participation in agriculture.				
33.	Women leaders from various fronts such as market women, women youth wing and religious groups should be invited for discussion on the need to sensitize women to participate in agriculture.				
34.	Religious/Worship centres should be used to sensitize women on agricultural activities of TADP				
35.	Loan and credit facilities should be made available to women farmers in the areas				
36.	Adult education of women should be effectively privileged and utilized to empower & build their capacity in order to break ignorance and illiteracy among them.				
37.	Social media platforms and mobile phones short messaging services should be utilized by TADP to sensitize women on agricultural interventions in the areas.				

Appendix II

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview/ Focus Group Discussion

Please **ANSWER** these questions objectively.

1 **Objective One**: **To examine the communication strategies deployed by TADP in facilitating women participation in Agriculture in Askean Community of Ussa L.G.A**

- What are the communication strategies that TADP often deploysto enhance women's participation in agriculture inAskean community?
- Can you explain how these communication strategies are deployed?
- How have these strategies impacted the lives of women and motivated active participation in agriculture?

2 **Objective Two:To identify factors militating against women's participation in Agricultural development project within Askean community of Ussa L.G.A**

- What are the factors militating against women's participation in Agriculture?
- Can you mention the ones that you are aware of?
- Can you explain the possible implications of the barriers against women's participation in agriculture?

3 **Objective Three:To ascertain the level of women's participation in Agriculture in Askean community of Ussa L.G.A**

- Do women participate in agriculture in this community at all?
- What is the extent of participation?

4 **Objective Four:To devise ways through which effective communication strategies can be used to enhance women's participation in Agricultural development projects in Askean community.**

- So far from your experience havethe communication strategies deployed by TADP enhanced women's participation in agriculture?
- In what ways do you think communication strategies can be used to enhance women's participation in agriculture?

TRANSCRIPTION FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) WITH WOMEN IN ASKEAN COMMUNITY

Date: 25th May 2019

Language use: Hausa

Duration: 2hrs

Location: Askean Community

Objective One: **Communication strategies that TADP often deploys to enhance women's participation in agriculture inAskean community?**

5th Participant:

They TADP staff uses radio, local communication channels, Women group meetings fliers and handbills. The use of television I don't really think that channel is useful here in this community because we do not have television sets and light to even see what is there.

3rd Participant:

The communication strategy that I know is radio because I have been listening to programmes on radio although I have not been following up all due to time constraints. There is so much to do in order to cater for the family needs.

Question: Can you explain how these communication strategies are deployed?

Answers:-

1st participant:

For instance, the TADP staff usually come to the communities with fliers whenever they come for community dialogue with various women groups. I can remember when they came to meet women farmers in the community to speak to us about new planting style for cassava and how to apply fertilizer. We were taught so many things concerning how to plant new cassava stems and when to apply fertilizer to boost yield.

3rd participant:

We usually see agents from development agencies come to talk to women in this community and it usually attracts a large number of women especially when their visit is announced on time. The importance of having agents to come and talk to women is practical. The first impression that women in this community get is that the project or initiative is of utmost importance and that is why development agencies sent delegations. The other angle is that the physical presence of agents afford women the opportunity to ask questions and receive direct answers instead of seeing posters or listening to programmes on radio. That is why we prefer advocacy visits when there is an important message for women especially in agriculture

Question: How have these strategies impacted the lives of women and motivated active participation in agriculture?

Answers:

6th Participant:

In actual fact, the strategies used by TADP has brought about new knowledge and has motivated us to work better because we can see that things can be done differently and the results so far motivates us as farmers. The other aspect is the fact that you see government agents take out time to visit us and discuss with us shows to a large extent that government is interested in what we are doing and that we are not left out completely.

11th Participant:

I totally agree with what she has said in the sense that we had a platform to lay complains to government and we get interventions. It is better that not having anything contact with government. It shows that we matter to government. Besides,

we contribute a lot to feed the nation and we think emphasis should be placed more in this area.

10th Participant:

I think the strategy that works for women is the direct community meeting where we have the opportunity of meeting them face to face. This provide us with the opportunity to ask questions and get direct answers. It is better that listening to programmes on radio where we cannot ask questions. Because most of the women here cannot afford to call while the programmes is on and the issue of language also affect women. Most women are very busy and do not have time.

7th Participant:

It is true that the strategies deployed by TADP has added value to women farmers in this community to a large extent. For instance, during community meetings, we learn a lot about different aspect of farming. When they have new information they pass it to us through this medium and it has gone a long way in helping us. But all these new techniques require that we use money and that becomes a serious challenges. Because if you have the knowledge and you don't have the money to put it to practice of what benefits is that.

OBJECTIVE TWO:To identify the factors militating against Women's Participation in Agricultural Development Project within Askean Community of Ussa L.G.A

Question: What are the factors militating against women's participation in Agriculture?

Answers:

4th Participant

There are different factors that affect women's participation in this community but the major one I know cuts across almost all the women in this community is financial constraints. What I mean by that is, women do not have enough capital to initiate viable projects in agriculture such

9th Participant

Apart from the fact that women hardly get loan facilities, the issue of interest becomes threatening. Women are afraid to collect loans from the banks because of high interest rates. Sometime, one is not so sure of the outcome of a large scale farming and collecting loan seems like a risk. That is one of the reasons why most women do not subscribe to loan facilities. But if government can afford to give loan facilities at almost zero interest rate, then it would be a risk worth taking

8th Participant

Still on capital, without financial help or loan, it becomes difficult to venture into cash crop farming require huge capital for land, buying of crops, hiring work force, etc. To adequately do this, a lot of money is needed and women in this community cannot afford such luxury. Women in this community do not have enough land to cultivate crops for consumption let alone for cash crops. Women here are under their husbands and most of the farming activities belong to the family; where the husband is the head. If your husband is not buoyant enough to invest in cash crop production, then the woman is helpless

2th Participant

Despite the fact that poor funding present a challenge, the women should not look forward to external intervention since it has taken too long and no one is sure of when such will come. The best thing for women to do here is to rely on contributions from association or better still, the association can provide loan facilities to women so that they can afford to improve their agricultural productions. Often times when loans are provided and not used properly, it can also become a big issue. Most women would not collect loan if they do not know what exactly to do with it.

12th Participant

To venture into processing of agricultural produce is expensive due to the machines that farmers must procure such as grater, cracking, grinding machines and generator, for power supply. These machines require constant light to function effectively. And, if one

must embark on processing, it must be in large scale to meet commercial quantity. Obviously, market for cash crop is not readily available here. But the issue is not the market per se, but the capital to start such a venture considering the economic situation in the country today.

5th Participant

Education is important and most women here did no go to school. If we have adult education to programmes in the community I think it will go a long way to help our understaffing of mechanized or commercial farming. With basic education we can begin to appreciate the drive and knowledge that we are getting from TADP

Question: Can you explain the possible implications of the barriers against women's participation in agriculture?

Answers:

8th Participant

For instance lack of capital has made women to engage in subsistent farming just to provide for the family needs and to sell in order to acquire other things that we need. Imagine that we had enough money to buy new seedlings that are available and acquire larger expands of land, will be far productive than what we are doing now.

OBJECTIVE THREE:To ascertain the level of women's participation in Agriculture in Askean community of Ussa L.G.A

Question: Do women participate in agriculture in this community at all?

Answer:

5th Participant

Yes women participate to some extent in agriculture but if we had what we want in surplus it would attract more women into farming. A lot of women are into trading farm produce for farmers. Some other women are into harvesting and doing menial jobs in

the farm because they don't have farms and the capital to own their own farms. You know if you don't have a large portion of land to cultivate the moving crops you have to find something else to do in order to make a living.

Question: What is the extent of participation?

Answer:

3rd Participant:

As far as we have seen, I think the level of participation is high not because of the incentives given to women here but because that is one of the ways to generate income to the family and also trade. But if we women can be empowered through loads and adult education it would go a long way to boost participation in this community and beyond.

OBJECTIVE FOUR:To devise ways through which effective communication strategies can be used to enhance women's participation in Agricultural development projects in Askean community.

Question: So far from your experience have the communication strategies deployed by TADP enhanced women's participation in agriculture?

Answers:

2nd Participant

Of course I can say yes the knowledge we gained from women meeting, fliers and radio programmes have gone a long way in making us realize new methods of approaching agricultural business. It has empowered us so much because knowledge is power and as we have knowledge we are empowered in one way or the other. We can do what we didn't know how to do before. For instance, we know that we can get loans from the cooperative to expand our farming and that we can do more than subsistent farming even with the meager resources.

3rd Participant:

We now know how to process our farm produce and store our harvest, before now we lost so much to pest and we didn't understand that there are ways we could keep pest away from storage without using chemicals which causes adverse effect to crops and are actually harmful to consumers at the same time.

5th Participant:

Through the communication strategies we have been able to understand the standard that is obtainable outside the community. Most of us have not been to other places to see what new development in agriculture they practice. But through several teachings, we have been able to see what other are doing that we are not doing. And with the change in attitude, I believe that in no times agriculture will be a very lucrative for women in this community.

QUESTION: In what ways do you think communication strategies can be used to enhance women's participation in agriculture?

Answers:

3rd Participant:

They TADP should intensify efforts toward getting women in the community loan facilities apart from the teachings and providing knowledge. This is because the knowledge we have is somehow useless without the reasonable capital to put it to practice.

2nd Participant:

Programmes on radio is good, but most of the programmes should be done in indigenous languages so that the people in the community can comprehend. This is because most women here are not literate enough to understand what is being said and starting a programme on agriculture in our local language might be a bit difficult. But doing that would go a long way in encouraging participation of more women in agriculture in the community.

7th Participant:

Since they agents do not come regularly, I think it is important for representative to be sent to represent women and bring back feedback to us. This is important because every woman cannot attend such meetings

6th Participant:

To respond to what she has said, although, it is important to send women leaders to represent the entire women in the community, it should not be seen as a viable avenue to educate us all. We have had instances where leaders have misrepresented us in the past. Apart from that, it is not every woman that can get information and pass it across to everyone without bias. Sometimes, if the information is very vital, they might keep it to themselves and used it to better their lots. So, it is better that everyone who can be available should receive information directly. In my opinion, it is much better than sending a few representation on behalf of the entire women's group.

11th Participant:

TADP can bring the idea of participation to women by using worship centres and special gathering to talk to women and I think that would endear more women into farming.

4th Participant:

From what she has said, using religious centres might not be equally acceptable because even if development agents are accorded a few minutes to talk to women during service, it will not be adequate because of time factor. And the fact that most people come in to church to worship God will defeat the aim of such visitation. Besides, how free can such agents be to stand in the pupil or before a church audience to discuss agricultural issues? I don't think it is proper. Although, it can be a good opportunity to have access to a large majority of women in one attendance.

Of course, almost all the women in this community sell their farm produce to get money for the family up keep and to buy a few more seedlings to plant for the new planting season. This is one of the means of survival in this community. We don't just sell our food produce but we also eat them as well. We have special market days for selling

2nd Participant:

Loan and credit facilities should be made available to women farmers in the areas to help us take subsistent farming to the commercial level so that our agricultural produce can be more than what it is now. Loans will go a long way to alleviate our suffering in this community

7th Participant:

To add to what she has said, if it is possible for the interest rate to be free it will attract more women to commercial farming. This is because most of us would have loved to collect loans from the bank but the interest rate is high and we cannot afford it.

9th Participant:

Also the issue of collateral should be removed for farmers because that is one of the major requirement before we get loan facilities and we don't often have those collaterals required. And also let us be able to collect loans without asking our husbands to sign or stand in for us because most times they divert the money into other things. But let them know that we can manage the resources given to us because we are prudent.

Appendix III





Calculation of sample size for the study

Appendix IV



Key Informant Interview with Mr. Iliyasu Mustapha,
Head of Extension Services TADP



Key Informant Interview with Bala Shugaba



Key Informant Interview with Sanusi Misa, Project Matter Specialist,

Agro Forestry TADP



Key Informant Interview with Godswill Isaac,
Principal Executive Officer Administration



Key Informant Interview with Altine Audu,
Extension Staff,



Key Informant Interview with Ubandoma Rimamnde, Extension Staff



Focus group discussion with women farmers in Askean community



Key Informant Interview with Aji Washuku, Head women in Agriculture