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# INCREASING THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION PROGRAMS IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND WIDE PROMOTION IN THE ECONOMY

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**Abstract:** This article aims to review research on the role of agricultural extension programs in poverty alleviation. Various approaches and tools used in agricultural extension program implementation were discussed and ways to enhance their contribution to poverty alleviation were highlighted.

**Keywords:** Agriculture, poverty reduction, farmers, agrarian sector, economic development, food markets.

Extension programs have undergone many changes over the years in response to the changing needs of farmers and the markets in which they operate. Extension programs in rural communities play an important role in connecting farmers and other actors in the rural development agenda. The relevance of these programs in agriculture largely depends on their ability to meet the needs of farmers, who are the primary stakeholders.

According to the World Bank (2017), about 80% of the world's population living in poverty are agricultural or rural dependent. Thus, increasing agricultural production is considered one of the most powerful tools against poverty. A number of



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studies clearly show that the agricultural sector is a key factor in poverty alleviation and the ultimate achievement of economic development in many countries. It is estimated that 50 to 80 percent of the staple foods consumed in Third World countries are produced by farmers, fishers, and pastoralists, many of whom are underserved by research, extension, and extension services.

Agricultural professionals and other actors in rural development will need to better access technical information, knowledge and advice and connect with other actors in agri-food markets and value chains to improve their livelihoods. Agricultural, fisheries and aquaculture extension programs are seen as linkages between farmers, fishermen and other actors in rural development programmes. In a broad sense, extension refers to the non-formal education function of any organization that disseminates information and advice for the development of education, although it relates to agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture and rural development in general, changes became more necessary with the accumulation of scientific knowledge about new technologies and production efficiency. Research and adoption of improved technologies are key to expanding agricultural productivity and production, while alleviating rural poverty for sustainable livelihoods.

Many studies have examined the role of agricultural extension programs in poverty alleviation. For example, Dube (2017) found that these programs play an important role in raising awareness among farmers by improving business performance and improving technology leading to sustainable livelihoods. Zaid (2015) argues that agricultural extension accelerates the transfer and adoption of new crop varieties and other innovations, as well as improves the management skills of farmers. It also advocates the effective use of existing technologies by increasing the technological expertise of farmers. Therefore, the role of agricultural extension is to facilitate the transfer of technology and embedded training to assist farmers with marketing approaches in their farming business. Agricultural expansion plays an important role in the development of society. Its role in testing and disseminating research-based agricultural knowledge and technologies to rural populations will lead to improved agricultural sector. According to Suvedi (2011), extension facilitated the dissemination of information on new crop varieties, fish and livestock species and related production and management practices leading to improved socio-economic status of rural communities.

Despite these important roles played by rural extension programs, Kabura (2014) argues that extension service delivery methods and delivery mechanisms have

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little impact unless linked to farmers' production agendas to reduce rural poverty. does not show. This is because it has been found that farmers need information on the best technological application for agricultural productivity, as well as post-harvest information including handling, storage, processing and marketing. , relevant and scientifically validated information on specific challenges such as processing and market opportunities, livestock and plant pest and disease control to overcome these challenges working against good farming techniques, as well as the impacts of a changing climate. Need proper information. Taken together, these studies show that the effectiveness of extension services largely depends on meeting the needs of the beneficiaries, in this case farmers. Hence, identifying the needs of farmers is an important step in the success of rural extension programs in poverty alleviation.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Rural extension programs are very important in poverty alleviation programs because they have been the impetus for increasing productivity in farming activities in many countries. They keep the farmers updated with new knowledge and skills to solve the problems that arise in their farming activities and at the same time enable the researchers to develop suitable technologies to meet the requirements of the farmers. However, the most challenging task for an extension program is to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world that poses new challenges for farmers. Different approaches to the delivery of extension services are used in different situations. Therefore, extension programs must be flexible enough in approach to remain relevant and sustainable. We recommend that future research focus more on recent demand-based approaches that allow farmers to participate in finding solutions to their problems.

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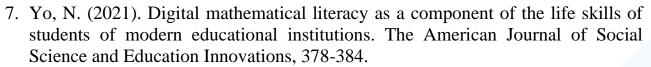
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