EXPLORATION OF APPROPRIATE MEDIA FOR SATISFYING THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF FUTURE COMMUNITY OF AFRICAN FARMERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

By

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Success in almost all life’s endeavors depends on access to the right information at the appropriate time and format.

Access to reliable, timely and relevant information can help significantly and in many ways to reduce level of risk and uncertainty and empower one to take good decisions.
Farming, as part of agriculture, has been the major means of livelihood and the mainstay of the economy of African countries.

During the colonial and post-colonial era

- Provided employment for more than 60% of the labour force
- Accounted for over 65% of the GDP of the economy
MAINSTAY OF THE ECONOMY IN THE 1960s

**Nigeria**
- 1st - Agriculture
- 2nd - Services sector
- 3rd - Petroleum

**Ghana**
- 1st - Agriculture
- 2nd - Gold mining
The oil Sector became more prominent than the other sectors in Nigeria.

- Agricultural sector including agricultural output by farmers had continued to decline.

- Agriculture is now seen as the business of the poor and less privileged in the Sub-Saharan African countries.
Agriculture was the mainstay of the sub-Saharan African economy until the 1970s following oil discovery and activities in other sectors such as servicing and industrialization.

The need to revive the Agriculture sector propelled the government in both Nigeria and Ghana into taking remedial steps of instituting new policies and programs aimed at restoring the agricultural sector to its former place of pride in the economy.
These efforts including the available vast agricultural information have not helped the situation instead, the problem is majorly attributed to lack of access to basic agricultural knowledge and information.

The need to proffer solution led into this study focused on exploring the most appropriate format and media for providing and communicating agricultural information to future community of African farmers.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Establish agricultural information needs of the farmers in Nigeria and Ghana
2. Identify the available sources of agricultural information to the farmers
3. Ascertain the extent of use of these agricultural information sources by the farmers
4. Establish factors militating against effective utilization of the agricultural information sources
5. Identify formats and media preferred by the farmers for agricultural information communication
Significance of the study

Will expose factors affecting adequate utilization of agricultural information by the African farmers

Outcome on their information needs will equip the government, Agric Extension Officers, libraries, etc. with the knowledge of their needs thereby serving as a guide in their packaging of information for them

Overall outcome of the study will enable the achievement of improved agricultural output by future community of African farmers.

Will also be useful to researchers and students who will want to carry out further research in this area of study
SCOPE OF THE STUDY

NIGERIA

GHANA
Reviewed literature on the information needs, sources, format and media for communicating agricultural information to farmers.

Review shows dearth of literature on study(ies) focusing on exploring the most appropriate format and media for providing and communicating agricultural information to future community of African farmers.

It is this gap in knowledge that the study is covering.
Exploratory research design was adopted

Multi-stage sampling technique was also adopted in selecting the sample:

i) Purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting plant and crop farmers

ii) Simple stratified random sampling technique was employed in selecting 10 farmers each from 10 different villages in Nigeria and Ghana, respectively

Sample size for the study is 200

Questionnaire complemented with oral interview were instruments for data collection

Data was analysed using simple percentages and frequency count and presented in tables
## RESULTS

### INFORMATION NEEDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information needs</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Varieties of seeds/ plants</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of fertilizers</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weed control</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pest control</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant diseases and control</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidy availability</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanized system of farming (New trends)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit facilities (Loan)</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government policies</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sources of information accessed via interpersonal communication were mostly patronized by the farmers both from Nigeria and Ghana, e.g. Family members and fellow farmers.

Sources accessed via the new technologies shows that it is only mobile phones with over 100% acceptance value. Social media and the Internet are rarely utilized because of high cost of data.

Television as a sources of information received low acceptance.

Libraries rarely serve as source of information for both Nigerian and Ghanaian farmers.

Agricultural Extension workers are not also effective.

Others sources not benefiting them include NGOs and participation at workshops and seminars.
### FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST EFFECTIVE USE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>SA (%)</th>
<th>A (%)</th>
<th>D (%)</th>
<th>SD (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiteracy</td>
<td>22 (11)</td>
<td>48 (24)</td>
<td>57 (28.5)</td>
<td>73 (36.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language of presentation</td>
<td>14 (7)</td>
<td>52 (26)</td>
<td>80 (40)</td>
<td>54 (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>46 (23)</td>
<td>78 (39)</td>
<td>46 (23)</td>
<td>30 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unavailability of information materials in audio-visual format</td>
<td>64 (32)</td>
<td>102 (51)</td>
<td>34 (17)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High cost of Agricultural information materials</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>138 (69)</td>
<td>59 (29.5)</td>
<td>3 (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent power supply affecting utilization of TV and Radio</td>
<td>27 (13.5)</td>
<td>78 (39)</td>
<td>69 (34.5)</td>
<td>26 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient agricultural Extension officers</td>
<td>63 (31.5)</td>
<td>137 (67.5)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exorbitant cost of data subscription for Internet access</td>
<td>81 (40.5)</td>
<td>119 (59.5)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREFERRED FORMATS AND MEDIA FOR AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION COMMUNICATION

- Audio-visual format
- Oral media preferred
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase in number of Extension workers
- Agricultural information repackaging
- Collaboration between Extension workers and Librarians
- Provision of mobile public address system to avert information access limitation by electric power supply
- Provision of loan facilities for farmers
- Provision of highly illustrates magazines, manuals and pamphlets
CONCLUSION

- Information undoubtedly is relevant in the achievement goals.

- This is because it does not only help in reducing level of risk and uncertainty but empowers one to take the right decisions.

- If the above recommendations are adopted, farmers in Africa will experience increase in their agricultural output.
Thank You