

ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY AMONG RURAL FARMERS IN NIGERIA

Oba Abdulkadir La'aro (PhD)
Department of Mass Communication
University of Ilorin
obalaaro@yahoo.co; laaro.aa@unilorin.edu

Imran Toyin Zakariyau
Department of Mass Communication
Federal polytechnic offa, Kwara State
Zakariyauimran@gmail.com

Ahmad Fahmi Mahamood (PhD)
School of Human Development & Technocommunication
University Malaysia Perlis
fahmi@unimap.edu.my

Abdul Jalil Ramli (PhD)
School of Human Development & Technocommunication
University Malaysia Perlis
jalil@unimap.edu.my

Abstract: *The study is set against the background of the current federal government of Nigeria's use of communication strategies to market its flagship poverty alleviation programme. The objective of the study is to appraise the effectiveness of the strategies among rural dwellers of Kwara state. It investigates how the federal government used its communication plan to push for policy adoption among rural farmers. The populations of interest are rural areas of the Kwara South. The specific objectives were to: (i) measure the level of awareness of the programme; (ii) examine the channels of awareness of Federal Government's Agricultural Promotion; and (iii) determine the level of adoption of Agricultural Promotion Policy messages among the rural farmers in Kwara South. Quantitative research design with the survey method was adopted for this study. A Sample size of 384 was drawn from Kwara South, with a population of 706,848, using both stratified and systematic sampling approach. The study was guided by four research questions and four hypotheses. The analysis of the results using both descriptive and inferential statistics indicates high level of awareness of the Federal Government's Agricultural Promotion Policy programme among rural farmers but the communication strategies face challenges in adoption of the messages. This points to a number of issues bordering on effectiveness of message strategies and complexity in message contents (i.e. required efforts to implement the contents). These findings led to the recommendation of the need to deepen the involvement of interpersonal channels in the communication strategies such as the extension services in rural areas.*

Keywords: *Channel, Extension Agent, Agricultural Extension*

1. Introduction

The Federal Government of Nigerian has regarded agriculture as a business that can provide a reasonable basis for further wealth and job growth in Nigeria (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), 2016). Considering the potential of the country and her achievements in the sector before the discovery of the oil, Price Water House Coopers, (PwC) (2017) revealed that agriculture accounted for 57.9% of Nigeria's GDP and generated 67.55% of the country earnings from 1960 to 1969. Nwankpa (2017) recalled that agriculture was major source of funds for the implementation of the first national development plan in the 1960s.

However, Nigeria had suffered from policy instability driven by high rate of turnover of programmes and personnel, which in turn has made the application of policy instruments unstable (FMARD, 2016). The World Book (2013) posited that despite the fact that Nigerian farmers grow crops throughout the country and leading producer of cassava and yams, the country does not grow enough food that sustained its teeming population and must import much of its food. Yet, a former Nigerian President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo was reported by Abu (2018) to have expressed optimism that Nigeria will be one of the greatest countries of the world agriculturally, provided the country is able to implement its Agricultural policies.

To move the country back on track, the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari in June, 2016 launched the Agriculture Promotion Policy otherwise referred to as Green Alternative and has since continued to guide the development initiatives in the sector. According to FMARD (2016) the initiative is strived to consolidate on the successes of the Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) of the administration of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan's administration that windup in 2015, close the policy gaps and reposition the sector for greater investment and increased diversification in order to accelerate economic recovery reduce poverty and enhance food security in Nigeria.

The policy gaps identified by FMARD (2016) are the inability to meet domestic food requirements of Nigeria and inability to export at quality levels required for market success. The policy document noted that the inability of Nigeria to meet is domestic food requirement is a productivity challenge driven by an input system and farming model that is largely inefficient. As a result, FMRAD (2016) claimed that aging population of farmers do not have enough seeds, fertilizers, irrigation, crop protection and related support to be successful. The inability to export at quality levels required for market success is a challenge driven by an equally inefficient system for setting and enforcing food quality standards, as well as poor knowledge of target markets.

To this end, the federal government released policy thrust that centered on food security, import substitution, job creation and economic diversification. According to FMARD (2016) the policy would be achieved through: first, productivity enhancement with emphasis on access to land, soil fertility improvement, access to information and knowledge, production management, storage, processing, marketing and trade. Second, private investment expansion with emphasis on access to finance and agribusiness investment development. Third, institutional realignment for improved service delivery and development outcomes with

emphasis on greater inclusiveness, participation of youth and women, infrastructure, research and innovation, climate change as well as food and nutrition security.

In achieving this, FMRAD (2016) noted that “the right information is required at the right time for planning and decision-making” that is relevant to all stakeholders in the sector, including farmers, input suppliers, processors, traders, policy makers, development partners, and researchers. Thus, communication has been acknowledged for playing, a prominent role in the success of agricultural production and adoption of innovations.

The policy document dubbed, the Agriculture Promotion Policy (2016-2020) Policy and Strategy Document reviewed the mistakes of the past whereby stakeholders were sidelined in the policy implementations. However, the FMARD (2016) noted that the policy is built on Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) of the administration of former President Goodluck Jonathan which it described as “a good platform to re-engage key stakeholders in Nigerian agriculture to shift focus towards how a self-sustaining agribusiness focused economy could be built” (p.7).

FMRAD (2016) identified constraints that hampered the communication flow of the past policies to include the following: disjointed and non-accessible information for planning, decision making and innovation; limited awareness and capacity to manage information and knowledge at federal, state and local level; Poor ICT infrastructure to serve many stakeholders; poor information exchange and delivery mechanism for farmers, research, private sector, policy makers; ineffective research to extension delivery system i.e. limited commercialization of knowledge created.

The Communication Strategy

Government adopts the combination of interpersonal, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the mass media strategies into a fold, in order to get the best from their communication efforts by eliminating their weakness and maximizing their potentials and strengths. The agency in charge of the programmed, the Federal Ministry of Rural and Agricultural Development (FMRAD, 2016) specifically noted that this communication approach was adopted in the belief that it will enhance availability of information and knowledge for farmers, agribusiness and policymakers. The implementation combines the Information Communication Technology and Knowledge Management (ICT/KM) Framework by developing agricultural information systems; standards and institutional mechanisms for content generation, policy support, stakeholder dialogue, innovation and learning. It focuses on disseminating information designed to help farmers make the best choices with respect to input costs, equipment leases, agronomic practices, crop prices, and weather; experimenting with new devices to enhance ICT/KM capacity in the sector; reviving regional farm radio broadcasts designed to provide farming communities with timely advice on planting, weeding, harvesting and key prices; promoting the emergence of specialized agricultural information and knowledge from targeted research to address farmer priorities; enhancing reach, effectiveness and efficiency of the extension delivery system through the use of various methods that include more extension workers and electronic extension services via Short Message Services (SMS).

Olomola and Nwofor (2018) in their review of Nigeria 2017 Agriculture Joint Sector, observed that rural areas that constitute the domain of agriculture have been ignored in the provision of basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and water over the years, adding that a modern agro-industry, which should be the basis for diversifying the Nigerian economy for improved food and nutrition security, cannot thrive in an environment where infrastructure is non-existent or has woefully deteriorated. Similarly, Leadership Newspaper Editors (2018) were of the view that a workable agricultural policy is not only key for the attainment of food sovereignty and poverty alleviation but is necessary for job creation and improved citizens' welfare.

In most poor countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, large majorities of the population live in rural areas and earn their livelihoods primarily from agriculture (Gollin, as cited in Oyakhilomen & Zibah, 2014). Thus, agrarian sector has a strong rural base; hence, concern for agriculture and rural development become synonymous with the advancement of the society.

In the light of the foregoing, it is no gainsaying to assert that the adoption of the government innovative messages on agriculture in rural communities depends largely on effective communication among stakeholders. It will also require the upliftment of rural infrastructure to make living in villages attractive so that they can live in villages to listen to whatever messages targeted at them. No matter how well developed a policy or an innovation is if not adopted and utilised, it will be perceived as insignificant or useless (Gathecha, Bowen & Kochomey, 2012).

It was on this premise that this research work attempt to unravel how government has been able use communication to push for the adoption of Federal Government's Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) among rural farmers.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to determine the effectiveness of communication strategy of ICT/KM encapsulated in the Federal Government Agriculture Promotion Policy among rural dwellers. Specific objectives are:

1. To measure the level of awareness of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy among farmers in rural areas in Kwara South.
2. To examine the channels of awareness of the Federal Government's Agricultural Promotion programmes among farmers in rural areas of Kwara South.
3. To determine the level of adoption of the Federal Government's Agricultural Promotion Policy messages among the rural farmers in Kwara South.

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy on the basis of gender of the rural farmers in Kwara South

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in channel of awareness of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy which the rural farmers considered most effective on the basis of gender in Kwara South

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in level of adoption of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy on the basis of gender of the rural farmers in Kwara South

2.0. Population of Study

Kwara South is one of the three senatorial districts of Kwara State in the North central of Nigeria. The choice of the population is informed by the fact that it has substantial number of rural areas. In fact only two towns, Offa and Omu-Aran; can claim to be urban area. Although large part of the study population are estimated to be living in rural area; the increasing penetration of the mobile phone is making it possible for the youth in the area to be connected to the new media culture. The communication strategies of the federal government include the use of both the new media, the conventional mass media and interpersonal channels. The study was therefore carried out in rural areas of Kwara South senatorial district in Kwara State with the population of **706,848**(NBS, 2013).

3.0. Method of Study

3.1. Sample Size

A standard and efficient method of determining the sample size needed to be representative of a given population is the Sample Technique Table given by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Krejcie and Morgan noted “that as the population increases the sample size increases at a diminishing rate and remains relatively constant at slightly more than 380 cases”. Having identified the population of the Kwara South based on 2006 Census report to be **706,848**, the samples size needed for representation of the population going by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), is 384. Therefore, 384 respondents who are farmers in rural areas were selected for this research work.

3.2 Sampling Procedure

The researchers adopted Multi-stage sampling techniques. This method was selected in order to enhance the empiricism of this study, improve its objectivity, and guarantee representation and inclusiveness. The first stage of sampling adopted was Stratified sampling procedure. Stratified sampling technique is generally applied in order to obtain a representative Sample in a situation where population from which sample is drawn does not constitute a homogeneous group. Under stratified sampling the population is divided into several sub-populations that are individually more homogeneous than the total population (the different sub-populations are called ‘strata’) and then items were selected from each stratum to constitute a sample (Kothari, 2004). Therefore, Kwara South is a heterogeneous population, as it has the Ekiti block, the Igbomina stuck and Ibolu axis. This distribution is thus referred to as heterogeneous. Table No.2.1 contains distribution of the population according to the share of the total population.

Table 3.1: Proportionate distribution of Sample Size according to Local Government

Districts	Local Government	Sample Size	Total%
Ekiti	Ekiti	31	8
Igbomina	Ifelodun	111	29
	Irepodun	80	21
	Isin	31	8
	Oke – Ero	31	13
Ibolo	Offa	50	8
	Oyun	50	13
TOTAL	7 LGAs	384	100

Table 2.1 contains the distribution of sample size in local government areas. This was arrived at by dividing percentage representation of each local government by 100, multiplied by sample size, that is, $\frac{n}{100} \times 384$. The stratum (Local Government) is further breakdown to villages (Strata) as follow:

Table 3.2: Sample Frame of Local Governments' Villages in Kwara South

Districts	Local Government	Villages
Ekiti	Ekiti	Ajuba, Araromi-Opin, Aare-Opin, Ejiu, <u>Epe-Opin</u> , Etan, Eruku, Ikerin-Opin, <u>Isare-Opin</u> , Isolo-Opin, Obbo-Aiyegunle, Obbo-Ile, Osi, <u>Oke-Opin</u> , Owaatun-Opin, Isapa
	Oke – Ero	Iloff, Odo-Owa, EkanNla, Ayedun, Ilale, Erin Mope, Egosi, Imode, Idofin and Odo-Ase.
Igbomina	Ifelodun	Agunjin, Babanlomo, Idofin, Idofihan, <u>Igbaja</u> , Ile-Ire, Koko, Oke-Ode, Omupo, <u>Ora</u> , and Sanmora
	Irepodun	Ajase-Ipo, Arandun, Agbam, Aran-Orin, <u>Esie</u> , iludun-Oro, Ipetu, Oko, Oro and <u>Rore</u> .
	Isin	Eleyin, Iji-Isin, Olla- Isin, Kudu-Owode, <u>Owu-Isin</u> , Oke-Onigbin, Oke-Aba, Iwo, Isanlu-Isin, <u>Ijara-Isin</u> and, Pamo
Ibolo	Offa	Adeleke, Aperun, Igbo-Idun, Kere-Aje, <u>Igba-Were</u> , Igbo Tele, GaaOlomiFunfun, Gbosun, Jango, <u>Kanmonu-Alayin</u> , Ogakunrin, Mansun
	Oyun	Ahogbada, Eleku, Erin-Ile, Igosun, <u>Igbona</u> , Ikotun, Ilemona, Ipee, Irra, <u>Ojoku</u> , and Inaja.

Sampling is thus used to select villages in each local government using villages in the sample frame. Kothari (2004) wrote that an element of randomness is usually introduced into this kind of sampling by using random numbers to pick up the unit with which to start. According to Kothari (2004) in such a design the selection process starts by picking some random point in the list and then every n th element is selected until the desired number is secured. From the foregoing, sample units (Villages are) were randomly picked by using 5th term as shown in Table 3.3. Sample unit distributed to each local government is further divided by the number of the villages selected in each local government in Table 2.3:

Table 3.3: Distribution of Sample Unit in Selected Villages

Districts	Local Government	Sample Unit	Villages	Sample Unit (Farmers in each Village)
Ekiti	Ekiti	31	Epe-Opin, Isare-Opin,	10
			Oke-Opin,	10
				10
Igbomina	Ifelodun	111	Igbaja,Ora	55
				55
	Irepodun	80	Esie,Rore	40
				40
	Isin	31	OwuIsin,Ijara-Isin	15
				15
	Oke – Ero	31	Ilale,Odo-Ase	15
				15
Ibolo	Offa	50	Igba were,Kanmonu-Alayin	25
				25
	Oyun	50	Igbona,Ojoku,	25
				25
Total		384		≈ 380

So far our sample is discrete variable which cannot be divided in subpart (Wimmer& Dominick, 2011), to have equal representation of villages in each local government the sample size will be modified to ≈ **380**. Based on the Table 3.4, sample unit drawn from each unit were distributed systematically by counting 5th houses in each street of each villages selected for the study.

3.4 Data Collection and Variables Measurement

Creswell (2012) described an *instrument* as a tool for measuring, observing, or documenting quantitative data. Cresswell stressed that instrument usually contain specific questions and response possibilities that you establish or develop in advancing a study. Survey questionnaire is apt and thus selected for this study. Bhattacharjee (2012) described questionnaire as a research instrument that consist of a set of questions intended to capture the respondent's response in a standardized manner. To achieve the foregoing, the researcher settled for the use of questionnaire. The questionnaire designed for this study was divided into nine parts. Part A contains demographic questions which were multiple choice and the other parts were placed rating scale of five.

3.5 Data Analysis

The method of data analysis should always reflect the methodology used in any study. Therefore, in this study, descriptive statistical approach with the help of graphical data representation and tables was used to present the result of demographic characteristics of respondents while inferential statistics approach was adopted on research hypotheses formulated with five percent (5%) level of significance using t-test statistics. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0.0.400) was used to process the data gathered for presentation, interpretation and discussion.

4.0. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1: Socio-economic and Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percent
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	198	57%
Female	148	43%
Total	346	100%
<i>Age Bracket</i>		
Under 25yrs	42	12%
25 - 34yrs	101	29%
35 - 44yrs	124	36%
45 - 54yrs	62	18%
55yrs & above	17	5%
Total	346	100%
<i>Additional job</i>		
Civil servant	54	16%
Trader	31	9%
Artisan	132	38%
Student	49	14%
Clergy	21	6%
No	59	17%
Total	346	100%
<i>Level of Education Attainment</i>		
Primary school	66	19%
Secondary school	124	36%
HND/B.Sc.	81	23%
MSc and above	21	6%
Did not attend a formal school	54	16%
Total	346	100%

Table 4.1 indicates the sex distribution of respondents with the female 148 female constituting 43% and male 198 which constitute 57%. This implies that male respondents were more than the female respondents.

Table 3.1 also contains the age bracket of respondents. The Respondents whose age were < 25 years of age (42) constitute the 12% of the total respondents, respondents between age 25 - 34yrs (101) constitute the 29% respondents between age of 35 – 44yrs (124) constitute the 36%, respondents between age 45 – 54yrs (62) constitute the 18%, while respondents between age 55yrs and above (17) constitute the 5% of the population . The result shows that farmers between ages 35 – 44yrs were more participated in the exercise.

The table indicates that (132) constituting 38% respondents combined artisanship with farming, respondents who are farmers with no other job are (59)17%, Civil servant that have farmland are (54)16%, respondents who are Student farmers are (49)14%, (31) 9% are traders, and Clergy (21) who also engage in farming constitute 6% respondents.

Level of Educational: Distribution of the Respondents According to Level of Educational Attainment as shown in table 4.2 indicate that (66) 19% respondents have primary school certificate, (124) 36% have O’level Certificate, (81) 23% respondents have either HND/BSc., ND/NCE certificate, only (21) 6% had MSc and above while (54)16% respondents do not have formal education.

4.2 Level awareness of Federal Government’s Agriculture Promotion policy on the basis of gender of the rural farmers in Kwara South

Table 4.2: Difference between level of awareness of Federal Government’s Agriculture Promotion policy on the basis of gender of the rural farmers in Kwara South

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Gender - Aware of the federal government’s agricultural programme	1.159	1.779	.096	1.347	.971	12.116	345	.000
Pair 2	Gender - The programme is designed to alleviate poverty among the rural poor.	.910	1.792	.096	1.100	.721	9.449	345	.000
Pair 3	Gender - The programme is to empower the smallholder farmers to increase their productivity	1.049	1.782	.096	1.238	.861	10.948	345	.000
Pair 4	Gender - The programme is to bring about self-sustainability in food production	1.095	1.883	.101	1.295	.896	10.818	345	.000
Pair 5	Gender - The programme is aimed at diversifying the economy	1.035	1.673	.090	1.212	.858	11.504	345	.000

	Gender - The federal government want								
Pair 6	smallholder farmers to see agriculture as business, not hobby	1.009	1.681	.090	1.186	.831	11.161	345	.000

The result of the findings in table 3.2 shows that P-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 then we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant difference in level of awareness of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy between Male and Female respondents. This implies that the rural farmers (M =1.159), are aware of the Federal Government's agricultural programme, of which (M= 1.049) farmers are convinced that the policy was designed to empower the smallholder farmers to increase their productivity, farmers (M = 1.095) believe that the policy is to bring about self-sustainability in food production, farmers (M = 1.035) are of the opinion that the programme is aimed at diversifying the economy. While (M = 1.009) farmers were convinced that with the policy the federal government want smallholder farmers to see agriculture as business, not hobby and (M = 0.910) farmers in rural settlement in Kwara State are convince that truly programme is designed to alleviate poverty among the rural poor.

4.3 Channels of awareness of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy which the rural farmers considered most effective on the basis of gender in Kwara South

Table 4.3: Differences between channels of awareness of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy which the rural farmers considered most effective on the basis of gender in Kwara South

		Mean	Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
			Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Gender - Radio	.393	.489	.026	.341	.445	14.948	345	.000
Pair 2	Gender - Television	.206	.490	.026	.344	.448	15.038	345	.000
Pair 3	Gender - Newspaper	.017	.488	.026	.336	.439	14.767	345	.000
Pair 4	Gender - Magazine	.023	.488	.026	.336	.439	14.767	345	.000
Pair 5	Gender - Social media	.009	.489	.026	.341	.445	14.948	345	.000
Pair 6	Gender - GSM phones	.000	.488	.026	.339	.442	14.857	345	.000
Pair 7	Gender - Extension workers	.011	.490	.026	.344	.448	15.038	345	.000

The result of the findings in table 3.3 shows that P-value is less than 0.05 therefore we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant difference in the channels of awareness of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy which the rural farmers considered most effective between Male and Female respondents. This shows that the channel

of communication has significant impact on Federal Government’s Agriculture Promotion Policy. Radio is the most preferred channel of communication among rural farmers in Kwara South (M = 0.393), followed by the Television (M = 0.206), Newspaper (M = 0.017), Magazine (M= 0.023), Extension workers (M = 0.011), Social media (M = 0.009), and GSM phones (M = 0.000) is the least use medium of communicating the federal Government’ agricultural innovation messages to the farmers.

4.4 Level of adoption of Federal Government’s Agriculture Promotion policy on the basis of gender of the rural farmers in Kwara South

Table 3.4 Difference between the level of adoption of Federal Government’s Agriculture Promotion policy based on gender of the rural farmers in Kwara South

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper				
Pair 1	Gender - Knowledge gained from the messages is what I used in running my agric business	-.916	1.748	.094	-1.101	-.731	-9.747	345	.000
Pair 2	Gender - My approach to agricultural production is informed by the message of the federal government.	-1.116	1.812	.097	-1.307	-.924	-11.449	345	.000
Pair 3	Gender - With the knowledge gathered I do away with the old way of farming	-.960	1.752	.094	-1.145	-.774	-10.185	345	.000
Pair 4	Gender - I encourage other farmers to adopt the new methods	-1.029	1.819	.098	-1.221	-.837	-10.521	345	.000
Pair 5	Gender - I cannot go back to the old ways of farming	-1.090	1.792	.096	-1.279	-.900	-11.308	345	.000

The result of the findings in table 3.4 shows that there is significant difference in the level of adoption of Federal Government’s Agriculture Promotion Policy between Male and Female respondents. Since P-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. This shows that Knowledge gained from the messages of the federal government’ on agricultural innovation enhanced agricultural production of farmers (M = -0.916), farmers (M = -0.960) who have adopted the innovation messages of the government have abandoned the old ways of farming, of which (M = -1.090) farmers have encouraged other farmers to adopt the new methods of farming, farmers (M = -1.029) have abandoned the old ways of farming, of which farmers (M = -0.916) now use the knowledge gained to run their business.

5.0 Discussion of Findings

This study, as stated earlier, was basically set to evaluate the effectiveness of the Federal Government's Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) message strategies among rural farmers in Kwara South. This could only be achieved by answering earlier articulated research questions and hypotheses formulated after presenting and interpreting the results above. It is, therefore, in line with that, the above results presented in tables are further explained in more details below.

5.1 Awareness about the messages of the Federal Government on Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP).

The finding of the study shows that there significant level of awareness of the federal government Agricultural Promotion Policy among rural farmers in the Kwara South on the basis of gender. From the data presented and analysed in table 3.2, it is vividly clear that the level of awareness of the APP is high among the farmers in Kwara South. The level of awareness of rural farmers in Kwara South shows that the farmers are aware that the programme was designed to bring about self-sustainability in food production and alleviate poverty among the rural farmers.

5.2 Awareness of government innovation messages on various agricultural programmes

The second finding of the study indicates that there is significant difference in knowledge of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy on the basis of gender of the rural farmers in Kwara South as presented in table 3.3 which shows that the most popular of the all the programmes of the Federal Government on agriculture among the rural farmers in Kwara South is Bank of Agriculture single Digit interest rate loan, followed by Agriculture Equipment Hiring Enterprise, River Basin Development Authorities Commercial Agriculture Revitalization, Presidential Fertilizer initiative/subsidy, National Irrigation Policy and Strategy, Federal Government financial credit to rice, wheat, ginger, maize and soybeans farmers, Livelihood Improvement Family Enterprises, and Anchor Borrower's Programme is the least known among rural farmers in Kwara South.

5.3 Channel of awareness of the Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy considered most effective by the rural farmers

The channel through which the rural farmers aware of the various components of the Federal Government Agricultural Promotion innovation messages mostly is radio. Table 3.4 shows that there is significant difference among the channels of awareness of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion policy which the rural farmers considered most effective on the basis of level of gender of farmers Kwara South.

The result of the finding shows that Radio recorded highest mean value with ($M = 0.393$), and it is the most popular medium among the 'lettered' and 'unlettered' in the rural areas. Though the Television has audio-visual capability capable of demonstrating how to do the farming, television ($M = 0.206$), trailed behind radio in disseminating the agricultural policy drive of the federal government. Newspaper, Magazine, Extension workers, Social media, and GSM phones is the least use medium of communicating the federal Government' agricultural innovation messages to the farmers. This confirm the study conducted by Ani, Umunakwe, Ejiogu-Okereke, Nwakwasi, and Aja (2015); Ango, Illo, Abdullahi, Maikasuwa and Amina

(2013); Ariyo, O.C, Ariyo, M.O, Okelola, O.E, Aasa, O.S, Awotide, O.G, Aaron, A.J, and Oni, O.B (2013) which revealed that radio is the most used mass media among farmers through which they obtain information because it is the media that is most accessible to them. Omenesa (2017) observed that radio programmes are usually timely and capable of extending messages to the audience no matter where they may be as long as they have a receiver with adequate supply of power. Ango, Illo, Abdullahi, Maikasawa and Amina (2013) wrote that the implication of this is that majority of the farmers in the study area enjoyed the agricultural programmes aired and it helps them improve their level of productivity. However, Saleh, Burabe, Mustapha and Nuhu (2018) wrote that the success of agricultural development programmes largely depends on the nature and extent of utilization of mass media for development. In respect of this finding, Radio and Television are the most effective media suitable for diffusing the federal government innovation programmes to the farmers in rural areas.

5.4 Significant difference in the level of adoption of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion Policy on the basis of gender of the rural farmers

Lastly, the fourth finding of the study revealed that there is significant difference in level of adoption of Federal Government's Agriculture Promotion Policy on the basis of gender of the rural farmers in Kwara South as indicated by Table 3.4 the adoption of the federal government messages on agricultural innovation is low among the rural farmers in Kwara South. The farmers that approach to farming based on the innovation message of the federal government record negative mean value of -0.916. A segment of farmers ($M = -1.090$) who have adopted the innovation messages of the government have abandoned the old ways of farming, of which a few of the farmers ($M = -1.029$) have encouraged their colleagues to adopt the new methods of farming, and the farmers ($M = -1.029$) who were encouraged have abandoned the old ways of farming, of which farmers ($M = -0.916$) now use the knowledge gained to run their business. This implies that despite the awareness and the knowledge of rural farmers in Kwara South about the Agricultural Promotion Policy programme of the Federal government, Majority of the farmers have not adopted the messages of awareness.

6.0. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research as succinctly summarized, farmers in the rural communities in Kwara South are aware of the federal government's agricultural promotion policy programmes. They were convinced that the programme is aimed at self-sustainability in food production, diversification of the economy and eradication of poverty among rural people.

These farmers are predominantly found in rural communities where there are inadequacies of basic infrastructure including poor power supply; distance to newspaper, poor internet service network, the only means of receiving media information is through the radio. And to them radio is 'culture'. Radio is the medium the rural farmers understand; it is their companion both at home and in their farmland. It can be deduced that, this fact accounts for the adoption of radio as most effective means of reaching the rural farmers with agricultural innovations messages. However, it has been established that the level of change that the mass media can make is minimal; there is need for integration of interpersonal communication embedded in extension service which the APP is yet to be effectively integrated

The absence of extension service has hindered farmers' access to link up information that will enable them to act or use the message or benefitted from the programme. Somewhere else, rural farmers depend on ICT for their farming activities from land preparation to produce marketing but the situation is not the same with the rural farmers in the area of study, government has not been able to create an ICT platform that will serve as situation room using Social media or software application that will be available to the farmers.

The APP is a laudable policy programme, that its testimony has resulted in production of and dependent on homegrown food and the government has received accolades on this giant step. However, the communication thrust articulated in the policy document of the government on the programme has not been well implemented and executed. Notwithstanding, strengthening communication strategies adopted for the programme, and creating access to the programme incentives will go a long way in diffusing the adoption of the programmed.

6.0. Recommendation

1. There should be continuous sensitization of the rural farmers on the benefit of the programme.
2. There should be resuscitation and revitalization of extension services in rural areas while their offices are moved closer to rural farmers who are the target of their (extension workers') activities.
3. The Federal Government should monitor the programme to ensure that target groups are the actual beneficiary of the policy.
4. Community, opinion leaders and farmers' association in every settlement should be integrated into the programme to ensure the programmed benefits trickle down to the least suppose beneficiary.

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