

## **Study on Major Constraints and Problems Facing the Agricultural Extension Workers in Iraq**

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### **Abstract**

Extension worker is considered as a teacher, philosopher, leader, guide and colleague for the community and on the basis of his special qualities he is able to carry on developmental programmer successfully. It is undoubtedly true to say that the success and failure of development programmers depend upon the qualities of extension workers. Therefore the objectives of this research are to determine the most important problems and constraints facing by the agricultural extension workers in their work in Iraq and then arrange them according to relative importance. The sample size of 180 was taken from Iraqi agricultural extension organization and administered questionnaire. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages and frequencies. Results revealed that the percentage of respondents who were affected by the problems were very high. It was shown that most workers were affected by the problem of wages and work incentives (86%) followed by lack of support (72%) and the absence of justice (67%). It can be concluded that there is the success of extension work depends on two main factors: development of power of motivation and capability to organize workers.

**Keywords: Agricultural Extension Workers, Major Constraints, Problems Facing, developmental programmer successfully.**

Agricultural extension has been the topic of much efforts and discussions over the decades (Khalil. et al., 2008; Muktar. et al., 2016). According to kamarulzaman. et al., (2016), since agriculture is being brought as the main agenda in today's socioeconomic development, the agricultural extension needs to move at the same pace and attention that it deserves (Birmingham. et al., 1999; Saleh et al., 2016). However, different countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia and Denmark, which have very advanced agricultural sectors, have always appreciated strong extension services (Lafta et al., 2010; Anaeto. et al., 2012). Yet, a reflection of this reality is lacking in most of the developing countries such as Iraq (Lafta et al., 2012; Lafta et al., 2016).

In Iraq agricultural extension has passed several historical stages, this has therefore influenced the nature of its works, tasks, applications and what it tries to achieve (World

Bank, 2008; Lafta et al., 2017). As mentioned by (Bilgic. et al., 1998; Madukwe. et al., 2006), that the crucial role of agricultural extension that is farmer education in the social and economic growth of the country has been highlighted in all these stages. On the other hand, Ridha et al., (2020) confirmed to the desired improvement of productivity and consequent agricultural development in a country is heavily dependent upon efficiency and performance of extension workers in their works.

The extension workers' efficiency has an impact on succeeding of the extension organization since they perform great tasks in the changing of knowledge and attitudes of farmers and create the desire to improve the lifestyle through developing their agricultural skills (Black. et al., 2000; Timothy. et al., 2001; AH Lafta, 2011). As mentioned by Tiraieyari. et al., (2010), in order to develop extension workers and to make them become effective contributors to the goals of an organization, we need to have a clear view of what an effective contribution would look like in their work. In the same context, (Vande. et al., 2006; Abdul Ommami, 2014; Challob et al., 2020) confirmed that the use of personal capacities can be very helpful in describing the way in which an effective extensi

In line with the above, agriculture extension service is the bedrock of agricultural development; however, the development of the sector cannot be achieved without an efficient extension workers system (Zickar. et al., 1999; Chi. et al., 2008). In the same context, (Blackburn. et al., 1994; AH Lafta et al., 2012) pointed that the extension service started experiencing some challenges in the last decade due to socio-economic changes and agriculture sector reforms taking place. So, the extension process may fail to achieve its goals and this will put all effort and investments put into extension services in vain (Vanden. et al., 1988; Drummond. et al., 2000; AH Lafta, 2009). Therefore the objectives of this research are to determine the most important problems and constraints facing by the agricultural extension workers in their work in Iraq and then arrange them according to relative importance.

### **Material and Method**

This research is taking a quantitative approach, hence a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The research area is choice of extension workers were purposively targeted at the agricultural extension organization, since the research is aimed at identifying the major constraints facing by agricultural extension workers. Using the total population of agricultural extension workers of three hundred and sixty. fifty percent of the extension workers were administered questionnaires randomly. The Kcjerie and Morgan table was used to get the sample size of one hundred and eighty respondents for the research.

According to (Luu, et al., 2008) questionnaires include different types of data collection in which each respondent is asked to answer the same set of questions in a predetermined

order. Gable (1994), described ordinal scale as the most ideal scale for questionnaires where the viewpoints and attitude of individuals are solicited or requested. So, the ordinal scale was chosen as the most appropriate scale for this research.

### Results and Discussion

**Table 1** besides the view from the workers, this study also studied on the problems and constraints facing the agricultural extension workers in their work. Percentage and descriptive analysis were used to determine the problem and its priority. Table 1 shows the results of the analysis.

**Table 1 : Major Constraints Facing by Agricultural Extension Workers**

No.	Problems	Frequency agree	Percentage	Frequency disagree	Percentage
1.	Increasing work pressures .	88	49	92	51
2.	Lack of feedback .	111	62	69	38
3.	Lack of support and assistance and encouragement.	129	72	51	28
4.	Lack of honesty and openness in the work.	96	53	84	47
5.	The decline of autonomy at work.	112	62	68	38
6.	The absence of justice.	121	67	59	33
7.	The complexity of the goals of the organization guide way.	81	45	99	55
8.	The incompetence of the heads of departments and supervisors work	95	53	85	47
9.	The deterioration of services provided.	115	64	65	36
10.	Lack modern guide way.	117	65	63	35
11.	Poor quality of buildings and lack of suitability for use Low.	90	50	90	50
12.	Wages and work incentives.	155	86	25	14

Table 1 shows the percentage of respondent who were affected by the problems. It was shown that most workers were affected by the problem of wages and work incentives

(86%) followed by lack of support (72%) and the absence of justice (67%). In the other hand, only 45%, 49% and 50% of the workers affected by the problem of complexity of goal, increasing work pressure and poor quality of work place respectively. Below relative importance of the problems faced by the extension workers in table 2.

By looking into internal and external factors that motivate employees' behaviour, to practice perform the works in their organization, a depth understanding, an effective strategy for handing the performance the works problems can postulate and developed agricultural in a sustainable manner.

**Table 2 : Ranking importance of the problem faced by the extension workers**

No.	Problems	Sum	Mean	Ranking
1.	Wages and work incentives.	655	3.6	1 <sup>st</sup>
2.	Lack of support and assistance and encouragement.	1047	5.9	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3.	The absence of justice.	1079	6.0	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4.	Lack of honesty and openness in the work.	1109	6.1	4 <sup>th</sup>
5.	The incompetence of the heads of departments and supervisors work.	1138	6.3	5 <sup>th</sup>
6.	The deterioration of services provided	1145	6.4	6 <sup>th</sup>
7.	Lack modern guide way .	1201	6.6	7 <sup>th</sup>
8.	The decline of autonomy at work.	1224	6.8	8 <sup>th</sup>
9.	Lack of feedback.	1277	7.0	9 <sup>th</sup>
10.	Poor quality of buildings and lack of suitability for use Low .	1325	7.3	10 <sup>th</sup>
11.	Increasing work pressures .	1344	7.4	11 <sup>th</sup>
12.	The complexity of the goals of the organization guide way .	1430	7.9	12 <sup>th</sup>

Table 2 shows the relative importance or the priority of the problem, faced by the agricultural extension workers. It explains the same thing as explained earlier for table 1 most workers were affected by the problem of wages and work incentives (mean = 3.6) followed by lack of support (5.9) and the absence of justice (6.0). While the three less problematic issues were the problem of complexity of goal (7.9), increasing work pressure (7.4) and poor quality of workplace (7.3).

## Conclusion

Agricultural extension is taking a new dimension because of a global movement for reforming the national extension systems in developing countries that started late in the twentieth century. Agricultural extension in the developing countries indeed has a very new role to play and needs the serious attention of policy-makers for its meaningful reform and modernization. Extension workers could constitute a formidable force in this

in reforming agricultural extension systems.

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