



# Extension Delivery Methods Preferred by Women Farmers in Nigeria

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## Introduction

Agriculture continues to be a predominant sector in Nigeria. The sector will face a greater challenge in the near future since food requirements will be doubled due to the continued population growth of 3 percent annually. Agricultural contribution to GDP has been 50 percent and the sector employs 85 percent of the total work force, of which over 50 percent are women, most of them engaged in unpaid work (World Bank 1989).

Women have been described as the invisible work force and unacknowledged backbone of the family and national economy (FAO, 1993). In agriculture, the contribution of women farmers is said to be central and pivotal. It is in this context that the well known conclusion about women farmers emerged namely, that they contribute 60 percent of the labour force and produce 80 percent of the food, earn 10 percent of the money and own 1 percent of the assets (Tanko, 1995).

The crucial importance of women's contribution to food security in developing countries is widely recognized. In most developing countries, rural women are the mainstay of small scale agriculture, the farm labour force and day to day family subsistence. Yet rural women face a number of constraints. They have more difficulties than men in gaining access to credit, land and extension services (Achamyelesh, 2000).

This study was intended to provide answers to the following research questions, viz., :

- i. What are the extension delivery methods (EDMs) in use by the extension agents in the study area?

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- ii. What are the extension delivery methods (EDMs) preferred by women farmers?
- iii. Attitude of women farmers towards EDMs preferred.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of the study were to :

- (i) Describe the personal characteristics of women farmers in the study
- (ii) Ascertain the extension delivery methods in use by extension agents and women's preference of extension delivery methods
- (iii) Establish relationship between selected variables and preference of extension delivery methods
- (iv) Determine the attitude of women farmers towards extension delivery methods (EDMs) preferred.

## **Methodology**

The study was carried out in Surulere Local Government Area of Oyo State in Ogbomoso Agricultural Zone located on latitude 4°N and longitude 8°E, within the tropical rain forest zone with its characteristics of wet and dry season.

The population of the study comprised of women farmers. Five cells were randomly selected out of eight cells in the study area. Two villages were selected randomly from each cell and ten women farmers were purposively selected from 10 villages making a total sampling size of 100 women farmers. Data were collected with the aid of an interview schedule administered to selected women farmers. Data analysis was carried out using frequency, percentages and mean as descriptive tools and Pearson product moment correlation as inferential statistical tool.

## **Measurement of Variables**

The Extension Delivery Method Preference was measured on a 4 point scale including never = 0, least = 1, somewhat = 2 and most = 3. Similarly the

attitude of women farmers towards EDM was assessed on a 5 point Likert type scale, with 10 attitudinal statements (5 positive and 5 negative) ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

## Results

### A. Profile of Women Farmers

1. Table 1 shows that less than half (41.0 %) of the women respondents were elderly while about 31.0 % were middle aged (36-45) years and 28.0 % of them were young. This implies that majority of the sample farmers are in their active years.
2. A larger percentage (83.0 %) of the women farmers were married, while 13 % of them are widowed and a negligible percentage (4.0 %) of sample women were divorced or separated.
3. Majority (64%) of the respondents had an average family size of 5-8 members while 19 % had a small family size of 1-4 members, 17 % of the women farmers had more than 9 children. The implication of this finding is that majority of women farmers had an average family size.
4. Over half (62%) of women farmers have education ranging from adult literacy to above secondary school education while 38% of them had no formal education. This finding shows that there were more literate women farmers in the study area who would be able to comprehend and use technical information as related to agriculture.
5. Majority (90 %) of women farmers were small holders of land (cultivate less than 3 acres of land).
6. Most (82 %) of women farmers had contact with extension agents on a monthly basis, 7.0 % had contact with extension agents fortnightly, while 11% did not have contact with extension agents at all. These results indicate that the women (sample) had frequent contact with the extension agents.
7. A large number (69%) of women farmers were members of different farmers organizations with farmers cooperative societies having the highest members.

**Table 1 : Distribution of respondents according to personal characteristics**  
**N = 100**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age (Years)</b>		
26-35 (Young)	28	28
36-45 (Middle Aged)	31	31
46 and above (Elderly)	21	21
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	-	-
Married	83	83
Divorce	04	04
Widowed	13	13
<b>Family Size</b>		
1- 4 (Small)	19	19
5-8 (Medium)	64	64
9 and above (large)	17	17
<b>Level of Education Attained</b>		
No formal education	38	38
Adult literacy	05	05
Primary education	36	36
Secondary education	18	18
Above secondary education	03	03
<b>Frequency of Contact</b>		
Fortnightly	07	07
Monthly	82	82
No contact	11	11
<b>Farm Size (Acres)</b>		
Less than 3	90	90
3-5	06	06
> 6	04	04

### **B. Extension Delivery Methods (EDMS) preferred by women**

The data presented in Table 2 shows that women farmers preferred group discussions (52%); farm and home visits (46 %); result demonstration (38 %); personal contact (30 %); method demonstration (27 %) SPAT and Poster / Plantlet (1 % and 2%) respectively.

**Table2 : Frequency distribution of respondents according to preference of extension delivery**

Extension delivery methods	Not preferred		Least preferred		Somewhat preferred		Most	
	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)
i) Farm visit / home visit	40	(40)	0.5	(05)	09	(09)	46	(46)
ii) Personal contact	43	(43)	07	(07)	20	(20)	30	(30)
iii) Small plot and adoption trial	98	(98)	01	(01)	-	(-)	01	(01)
iv) Group discussion	17	(17)	15	(15)	16	(16)	52	(52)
v) Extension drama and playlet	93	(93)	02	(02)	05	(05)	-	(-)
vi) Agricultural show	96	(96)	03	(03)	01	(01)	-	(-)
vii) Field trip	98	(98)	02	(02)	-	(-)	-	(-)
viii) Poster / bulletin / pamphlet	81	(81)	10	(10)	07	(07)	02	(02)
ix) Method demonstration	28	(28)	06	(06)	39	(39)	27	(27)
x) Result demonstration	42	(42)	08	(08)	12	(12)	38	(38)

### Attitude of women farmers towards Extension Delivery Methods (EDMs)

The result in Table-3 reveals that majority (58%) of women farmers were favourably disposed to extension delivery methods while other (42%) respondents are unfavorably disposed to Extension Delivery Methods.

### Pearson correlation between selected personal characteristics and Extension Delivery Method preferred by women farmers

The result in Table-4 shows that educational level ( $r=0.570$ ), contact with extension agents ( $r = 0.370$ ) are positively and significantly related with Extension Delivery Methods Preferred by women farmers while age ( $r=-0.10$ ) ( $r=-0.11$ ) and family size show negative and non significant relationship with EDM. This implies that education and frequency of extension contact has influence on the preference of extension delivery methods by women farmers.

**Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to their attitude towards extension delivery method preferred**

Categories of response	Frequency	Percentage
Favourable (31-50)	58	58
Unfavourable (10-30)	42	42
Total	100	100

**Table 4 : Pearson correlation analysis between selected variables and extension delivery methods preferred by women farmers**

Variables	r	Remark
Age	-0.08	NS
Marital status	-0.10	NS
Family size	-0.11	NS
Educational level	0.57*	S
Frequency of extension contact	0.37*	S

**Note :** \*S = Significant at 0.05 level

S = Significant

NS = Not significant

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The study reveals that among extension delivery methods for receiving agricultural information women farmers in the study area have the most preference for group discussions, farm and home visits, personal contact , demonstration. There is also a positive and significant relationship between educational level and frequency of contact of extension agent with preference of women farmers for extension delivery methods. Attitude of women farmers towards EDM is found to be favourable, therefore it is recommended that women should be provided with educational opportunities through adult literacy programme in the study area and extension institutions should intensify the use of the extension delivery methods preferred by women farmers in disseminating relevant information to their clientele.

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