Influence of Some Agricultural Extension Television Elements on Diffusion of Agricultural Information, Rural Knowledge and New Technologies to Tenants in the Gezira Province

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ABSTRACT

Agricultural extension and rural information services provide rural people with information and rural knowledge which they need in order to increase their production, incomes and consequently improve their standard of living. Therefore, rural information systems must involve rural communities and local needs must also be of prime importance. Field surveys were used to collect data from 120 tenants in the Gezira Province in 2003/2004 growing season selected from a total population of 120000 tenants distributed in eight extension areas in the province by using the simple random sampling technique. The collected data were statistically analyzed using percentage and frequency distributions. The results showed unsuitability of some elements of extension television with tenants conditions and preferences in the Gezira Province. It could be concluded that the inconvenient time of broadcasting of extension television programs and their improper presentation negatively influenced diffusion of agricultural information, rural knowledge and new technologies to tenants in the Gezira Province. Thus, more attention should be given to planning, producing and time of transmitting of extension message through effective use of extension television elements.

INTRODUCTION

Extension is an educational process for bringing about the maximum number of desirable changes among the people using some methods commonly known as extension teaching methods. These methods can be classified according to their use and nature of contact into individual، (1989) group and mass contact (media) methods (Albrecht *et al,* 1989), Agricultural extension has been identified as

one area in which mass media or information and communication technologies (ICTs) traditional or new, can have a particularly significant impact. They bring information and new technologies to fanning communities, allowing them to improve their production, incomes, and standard of living (Ballantyne and Bokre, 2003).

Traditional and new ICTs have played a major role in diffusing information to rural communities and have much potential. Traditional media have been used very successfully in developing countries. Prints video, television, films, slides, pictures, drama, dance, folklore, group discussions, meetings, exhibitions and demonstrations have been used to speed up the flow of information (Munyua, 2000).

The challenges with the ICTs in developing countries is to use them effectively for sustainable and rural development and especially for improved food security (FAO, 1998).

Agricultural extension television can be considered as one of the important traditional mass media used in agricultural extension to play a substantial role in diffusion of agricultural information, rural knowledge، new technologies and in almost other aspects of rural life in developing countries. It can provide rural people with knowledge and information they need to increase productivity and sustainability of their production systems and improve the quality of their life.

The Gezira State Rural Television Station was established in 1973 in collaboration with the German Government to serve the Gezira Scheme tenants through communication and diffusion of agricultural information and knowledge they need to improve their productivity, incomes and welfare. But today, due to concentration of efforts on political and entertainment programs, agricultural extension television programs have been diminished to only three programs namely: Elgezira Elkhadra، Elmajala Elziraia and Ni'am wa An'aam.

The main objective of this study was to determine the influence of some agricultural extension television elements "times of broadcasting and presentation of message" on diffusion of agricultural information، rural knowledge and new technologies to tenants in the Gezira Province.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in the Gezira Province. The total number of tenants in this province for 2003/2004 growing season was 120000. The province was divided into eight extension areas. One percent of the population was used, 15 tenants from each extension area, by using the simple random sampling technique. The population was used to determine the influence of some agricultural extension television "time of broadcasting and presentation of message" on elements diffusion of agricultural information, rural knowledge and technologies to tenants in the Gezira Province. A questionnaire consisting of 6 questions was developed and the personal interview technique was used to implement. the questionnaire. The collected data was statistically analyzed using percentage and frequency distribution.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Gezira State Agricultural Television Programs

The Gezira State Rural Television Station broadcasts three weekly agricultural extension programs as mentioned before. The results showed that the majority of tenants (64%) were watching all of these extension programs (Table l).

Table l. Distribution of tenants according to agricultural extension television programs watched by them.

Television program	N0.	(%)
l/ Elgezira Elkhadra	40	33.30
2/ Elmajala Elziraia	14	11.67
3/ Ni'am wa An'aam	02	1.67
4/ All these programs	64	53.33
Total	120	100

Time of broadcasting

The best time for broadcasting extension programs as indicated by other extensions research is in the evening but the exact time was left according to the conditions of tenants. The results showed that the majority of tenants (83%) reported that broadcasting extension programs at 5.30 0'clock was not suitable (Table 2), and that the

convenient time for broadcasting extension programs was 7 0'clock (Table 3).

Table 2. Distribution of tenants according to their opinion about time of broadcasting extension television programs.

Time of broadcasting	No.	(%)
l/ Suitable	37	30.83
2/ Not suitable	83	69.17
Total	120	100

Table 3. Distribution of tenants according to their opinion about convenient time of broadcasting extension television messages.

Convenient time of broadcasting	No.	(%)
l/ 5 0'clock	00	00
2/ 5.30 0'clock	00	00
3/ 6.00 0'clock	00	00
4/ 6.30 0'clock	00	00
5/ 7 :00 0'clock	83	100
Total	83	100

Presentation of extension television message

Agricultural extension message can be presented in many forms like drama, answers for tenants questions, dialogues and multi-feature programs. The results showed that the majority of tenants (96%) reported that the presentation of extension message was not suitable for them (Table 4).

Table 4. Distribution of tenants according to their opinion about presentation of extension television message.

Presentation of message	No.	(%)
l/ Suitable	24	20
2/ Not suitable	96	80

Also, the results showed that the same tenants (96%) reported that the convenient presentation of extension message for them was in the form of multi-features program (Table 5). This result agrees with similar findings (Aboud, 2000).

Influence of extension television elements on tenants knowledge

Table 5. Distribution of tenants according to their opinion about convenient presentation of extension television message.

Convenient presentation of message	No.	(%)
l/ Drama	8	8.33
2/ Answers of farmer questions	13	13.54
3/ Dialogues	15	15.63
4/ Multi-features program	60	62.50
Total	96	100

In general, the findings of this study on agricultural extension television as mass media used in the Gezira Province agrees with those of (Katowezhi, 2001) but are contradicting with the findings of Arokoy (2004),NARO (2003) and Charles (1995).

During interviews, tenants reported some factors they believed that they can positively influence their watching of the Gezira Rural Television Station extension programs:

l. Time of broadcasting

Broadcasting time should be changed from 5 to 7 0'clock so as to enable the tenants to watch these programs because in this period of the evening, almost all tenants come back from their fields.

2. Presentation of extension television messages

Presentation of extension television message should be in multi-features program format, so as to provide information needed for the majority of tenants in various sectors of agricultural production in the province e.g. vegetable tenants, cash crop tenants in the Gezira and Rahad schemes and rainfed tenants.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study:

I. The inconvenient time of broadcasting extension television message for tenants in the Gezira Province negatively influenced diffusion of agricultural information, rural knowledge and new technologies for them.

2. The results of this study may help extension television programers to consider carefully all elements of agricultural extension television that in turn may improve production, incomes and welfare of tenants in the Gezira Province.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The authors recommend that more attention should be given by extension television programers in the Gezira Province to planning، producing and time of transmitting of extension messages through effective use of extension television.

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