

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Analysis of agricultural extension service deliveries rendered towards facilitating rural entrepreneurship in Hong Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

The study analyzed agricultural extension service deliveries rendered towards facilitating rural entrepreneurship in Hong Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to: identify the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents; identify the available opportunities for rural entrepreneurship; identify the services delivered by agricultural extension workers towards facilitating rural entrepreneurship; and, identify the problems militating against rural entrepreneurship. Multistage random sampling technique was employed in selecting the districts, wards, villages and the respondents involved in the study. A validated, well-structured questionnaire was administered to the respondents. The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive (percentage) statistic. The major findings in the study revealed that the respondents are within the economically and agriculturally active mean age of 32 years. A total of 74% of them have attained a minimum of secondary school education. Results show that 28%, 40% and 32% are into farming, trading and civil service as their main occupations respectively. Results indicated that all the available opportunities studied more than 70% of the respondents have indicated that they are available except rich culture and availability of tall forest trees which 67% and 58% of the respondents indicated their availability in their villages. Agricultural extension services delivered had contributed greatly in facilitating rural entrepreneurship. The major problems identified in the study were: inadequate working capital for entrepreneurship; intermittent interference by government agencies and personnel because of some political or party differences; and, recurrent insecurity problems. It was concluded that agricultural extension services delivered by extension workers had facilitated rural entrepreneurship in the area of study. It was therefore, recommended, among others, that: government should strengthen the raw material base in rural areas and ensure that the funds required for rural entrepreneurship are made available on time; and, the agricultural extension service agency should be adequately funded, supported and given the desired attention to enable the agency scale up rural entrepreneurship.

**Key words:** Analysis, agricultural extension service deliveries, facilitating, rural entrepreneurship, Nigeria.

## INTRODUCTION

Agricultural extension is understood to be an educational process which promotes learning. It uses a combination of the knowledge of both biological sciences and the principles of social sciences to bring about changes in

farmers' knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices in an out of school setting. Agricultural extension services must be entrepreneurially minded in their efforts towards rural development. This is imperative because agricultural extension can play an important role in informing the rural population about the benefits of entrepreneurship as well as helping them to increase their skills and knowledge. Its role in the rural entrepreneurship initiative is likely to vary,

but a number of possibilities exist. The major role of agricultural extension agents and specialists is to act as facilitators and to assist rural communities in understanding agricultural activities (Scorsone, 2003). They must seek new entrepreneurial uses of land and other resources and support local initiative in this regard. The need for rural entrepreneurship envisages the possibilities for self-employment, employment generation and reduction of the disparities in income between the rural and urban dwellers, promoting balanced regional development, protecting and promoting art and creativity as well as economic development in the rural areas (Kumar, 2012).

According to Petrin (1994), rural development is more than ever before linked to entrepreneurship. Institutions and individuals promoting rural development now see entrepreneurship as a strategic development intervention that could accelerate the rural development process. Furthermore, institutions and individuals seem to agree on the urgent need to promote rural enterprises. On the other hand, development agencies consider rural entrepreneurship as an enormous employment potential; politicians see it as the key strategy to prevent rural unrest; farmers see it as an instrument for improving farm earnings; and women see it as an employment possibility near their homes, which provides autonomy, independence and a reduced need for social support. To all these groups, however, entrepreneurship stands as a vehicle to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities and to sustain a healthy economy and environment. The entrepreneurial orientation to rural development accepts entrepreneurship as the central force of economic growth and development, without which other factors of development will be wasted or frittered away (Tyson *et al.* 1994).

The acceptance of entrepreneurship as a central development force by itself will not lead to rural development and the advancement of rural enterprises. Therefore, what is needed in addition is an environment that can promote entrepreneurship in rural areas, and the extension agency has a very important role to play if this goal must be achieved. Currently, there is no official or empirical records or reports on what agricultural extension workers, under the Adamawa State Agricultural Development Programme, have done in this regard. In view of this, the situation on ground as regarding the services being delivered by agricultural extension workers in order to promote rural entrepreneurship in the study area still remains an illusion. Therefore, there is a need for the various rural development stakeholders to understand, among others, what agricultural extension have done or are doing as partners in the promotion of rural entrepreneurship in the state. This gap can be narrowed if the required and proper extension services are rendered. Therefore, it is against this backdrop that this study examined the types of agricultural extension

services delivered which can facilitate rural entrepreneurship in the study area.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The fact that there is an alarming population increase in both urban and rural areas cannot be overemphasized. The challenges being caused by climate change, global economic meltdown and the devastating natural catastrophes are some of the hurdles that must be overcome in order to attain sustainable and better living standard, especially in the rural areas. Thus, there is the urge to re-think the way that rural entrepreneurship, among other rural development factors, can be facilitated, promoted and sustained in order to attain a better living standard in the rural areas. Like all other nations, Nigeria has been concerned with the worries of how to attain sustained agricultural and rural development. Non-governmental organizations and other development experts have been working round the clock for quite a long time now to make rural life much better. This is especially imperative because until the rural people understand that rural entrepreneurship is a very important vehicle that can lead to the attainment of this goal, it may be difficult, if not impossible, for them to give it the desired attention and hence, difficult for the poverty alleviation goal to be achieved. Thus, extension workers must also have this understanding and hence, organize conscious extension services that can be delivered to promote rural entrepreneurship.

Since rural entrepreneurship is such an important means through which rural people can be empowered to overcome unemployment and its accompanying poverty-related problems, ideally, it should be widely advocated and promulgated by extension workers among the rural people. In spite of this necessity, there is no known research or study conducted in the area of this study regarding the types of services delivered by extension workers towards facilitating rural entrepreneurship. Therefore, this study was carried out in order to elicit the facts on the existing current situation of rural entrepreneurship. Therefore, the study was carried out in order to address the following specific objectives.

## Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to analyze the agricultural extension services delivered towards facilitating rural entrepreneurship in the study area. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. identify the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents;
- ii. identify available opportunities for rural entrepreneurship in the study area;
- iii. describe the types of agricultural extension services delivered by extension workers in the study area; and,

iv. identify the problems militating against rural entrepreneurship in the study area.

### Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are of great help when accessed and utilized by advocates of rural entrepreneurship, livelihood diversification and agricultural and rural development. The findings have provided vital information useful for planning rural entrepreneurship programmes and projects. Information in the document are very essential for policy makers, poverty alleviation organizations and rural development experts for making decisions. Rural dwellers in the study area can use some of the recommendations to promote entrepreneurship activities. The knowledge of the factors or problems impeding rural entrepreneurship can provide helpful ideas for avoiding the impediments to rural entrepreneurship in future.

### Scope of the Study

This study was limited to rural people (farmers, traders, business men and women, civil servants, those engaged in various handworks and artifacts) living within Hildi and Uba districts in Hong Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria.

## METHODOLOGY

### Area of the Study

Hong Local Government Area is one of the 21 local government areas of Adamawa State. It is located in the central senatorial district of the state. It lies between latitude  $7^{\circ}$ - $11^{\circ}$ N and longitude  $11^{\circ}$ - $14^{\circ}$ E. The local government area has a total land area of about 2,376.66km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 169,126. It has a common boundary with Borno State in the west and with Michika, Maiha and Gombi Local Government Areas to the north, east and south respectively. Annual rainfall records show that the amounts range from 700mm to 1000mm. The temperature in the area is typical of the West African Savannah climate, characterized by high temperature almost throughout the year due to high solar radiation, which is almost evenly distributed throughout the year (The Adamawa State Government Diary, 2017).

### Sources of Data and Methods of Data Collection

The data generated for the study were obtained from the primary source, elicited through the use of a well-

structured questionnaire. Secondary information was obtained from state records, textbooks, journals and the internet.

### Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Multi-stage random sampling technique was employed in the selection of the villages and respondents considered in the study. There are 7 districts in the study area. Out of these, 2 were randomly selected in the first stage. In the second stage, 2 wards were selected from each of the selected districts, giving a total of 4 wards. In the third stage, 2 villages were selected from each of the selected wards. This gives a total of 8 villages. In the fourth stage, the respondents were selected proportionately from each of the selected villages. Thus, the lists of registered rural people were obtained from each of the selected villages. The total number received was 397. Therefore, from the lists obtained, 30% of the people from each village were selected as shown in Table i.

### Methods of Data Analysis

The entire data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics namely, means and percentages.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of the Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents.

Table ii depicts the distribution of the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. The results show that 23% of the respondents were within the age range of less than 25 years, while 21% were 46 years and above. The results also show that many age categories that comprise the youth, middle aged and the old were involved in the study. The table also shows that both men and women have been adequately represented, being 60% and 40% respectively. This suggests that both males and females have been given proper attention in the study. The table also shows that there is a commendable level of literacy among the respondents. This is because, when added together, about 74% of them have attained above the secondary school educational level. This is a very important social asset and potential that can be useful for rural entrepreneurship. The results also show that 40% of the respondents are traders and 32% civil servants. Such people can be very productive in rural entrepreneurship if the government and non-governmental organizations give them the required assistance. In this regard, agricultural extension services through trainings, workshops and seminars will go a long way in promoting rural entrepreneurship.

**Table i.** Selected Districts, Wards, Villages and Sample Size(n = 120).

District	Wards	Villages	No. of Registered Farmers	Sample Size
Uba	Husara	Para	66	20
		Uba Central	53	16
	Dumde	Sabon Gari	73	22
Hildi	Hildi	Jalingo	26	08
		Zakwa	46	14
	Mararraba	Melinde	33	10
		Bakin Rijiya	60	18
		Kwarhi	40	12
<b>Total</b>		<b>397</b>	<b>120</b>	

**Source:** Field Survey, 2017.

Available Opportunities for Rural Entrepreneurship.

**Table ii:** Distribution of Respondents Based on Socio-economic Characteristics (n = 120).

Socio-economic Characteristics	Percentage	Mean
<b>Age</b>		<b>32</b>
Less than 25	23	
25-35	29	
36-45	28	
Greater than 45	21	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	60	
Female	40	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	30	
Married	55	
Divorced	15	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Level of Education</b>		
Non-Formal	08	
Primary	18	
Secondary	35	
Post-Secondary	39	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Main Occupation</b>		
Farming	28	
Trading	40	
Civil Service	32	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Household Size</b>		<b>13</b>
Less than 5	29	
5-10	25	
11-15	18	
16-20	15	
Greater than 20	13	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Source:** Field Survey, 2017.

Table iii presents the distribution of the various opportunities and potentials that can support and

facilitate rural entrepreneurship. The table shows that about 88% of the respondents have the potential skills for

craftsmanship. They have the skills, for instance, to weave elephant grass into beautiful mats and sell them for fencing or hedging backyard gardens, cassava farms as walls as for surrounding houses. They also weave the leaves of date palm trees into very good mats and also use the mid ribs to form brooms from which they generate a lot of income. These craftsmanship abilities in the respondents can be further developed by agricultural extension workers in order to enable rural people engage in various entrepreneurial activities that can change their lives and living standards positively.

The results in Table iii also show that 79% of the respondents are well connected to some natural resources that can be used for entrepreneurial purposes. For instance, there are rivers and streams close to their villages. These supply them with the water needed for some entrepreneurial and business activities that require water as one of the factors necessary for sustaining their enterprises. Some of them are using the rivers or streams as drinking water for their animals. They use the water also for irrigation during dry season farming of crops such as maize, rice, tomatoes, pepper, cabbage, garden eggplant and other leafy vegetables. The rivers also serve as sources of sand, fish and other useful aquatic creatures that can be processed and sold.

The table also shows that about 67% of the respondents have rich cultures and cultural traits that are potentials for facilitating rural entrepreneurship. For example, they have the expertise to use clay in building very beautifully shaped pots and containers for storing grains, groundnuts, tiger nuts, etc. They also make small clay pots which are used for cooking food. They also use some of the pots as local refrigerators for cooling drinking water. All of these provide one resource or the other that are required for rural entrepreneurship. The results further indicate that 83% of the respondents have access

to telecommunication facilities in their locations. These facilities make it easy for them to communicate easily as entrepreneurs. The table also shows that 75% of the respondents have indicated that there are different types natural resources which can support rural entrepreneurship. These include majorly tall trees, timber and edible fruits trees scattered in the vicinities of the respondents. The availability of these natural resources is a clear indication of the opportunities for rural entrepreneurship.

Concerning the readiness for taking of risks for rural entrepreneurship and businesses, the table shows that only 63% of the respondents possess the attribute of risk-taking required for rural entrepreneurship. This is also an important social attribute that can facilitate rural

entrepreneurship. It is especially true because without taking risks in businesses or entrepreneurship, the advantages associated with same can neither be accessed nor utilized. The decision not to take risk is attributed to the fear of the unknown. Thus, risk-taking helps in facilitating rural entrepreneurship and extension workers can make emphasis on this in the study area or other parts of the state and nation. Extension workers should emphasize the benefits of imbibing the principles of risk-taking for rural entrepreneurship.

Multiple responses were observed

### **Availability of Natural Resources**

The results of the study regarding the availability or otherwise of the natural resources that can be utilized to support rural entrepreneurship is depicted in Table iii. The table shows that there are streams, rivers and lakes as indicated by 79% percent of the respondents. The water and sand from the streams and rivers as well as the fish they cash from these bodies of water are essential natural resources that support rural entrepreneurship to a great extent. The results also show that 83% of the respondents have hills and mountains available within and around their villages. They usually break these rocks and reduce them into smaller pieces that serve as gravel which they sell to builders and road construction small companies for their various uses. This can and does facilitate rural entrepreneurship, since they usually obtain some money from the sales of the gravels. Exactly 58% of the respondents said that they have tall trees in their areas. Similarly, 71% have shown that they have fruit trees in their vicinities. These are important opportunities or potentials capable of boosting their entrepreneurial activities if properly utilized. The wood can be worked upon by carpenters to construct many things such as school tables and desks, chairs, cupboards, beds, doors, rafters, wardrobes, and various other furniture or wood works. These items, when formed or constructed, can fetch a lot of money for the rural entrepreneurs. The availability of some fruit trees such as mangoes, oil palm trees, bananas, oranges, guava, cashew and dead palms also suggests that, if properly used, the people of the study area can do well in rural entrepreneurship. Majority (92%) of the respondents have shown that they have very fertile agricultural soils that do not even require any chemical fertilizer to maximally support the growth of all the types of crops grown in their areas. Therefore, the study area is much endowed with natural resources that can facilitate and promote rural entrepreneurship if all other working conditions and equipment are provided.

### **Availability of Rural Infrastructure**

Table iii also presents the distribution of the respondents

**Table iii.** Distribution Based on Available Opportunities (n = 120).

<b>Opportunities for Entrepreneurship</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Skills for craftsmanship	88
Connectedness to natural resources	79
Rich culture	67
Access to telecommunications	83
Availability of natural resources	75
Streams, rivers and lakes	79
Mountains and hills	83
A forest of tall trees	58
Edible fruit trees	71
Electricity	82
Motorable rural roads network, bridges and Culverts	92

**Source:** Field Survey, 2017.

based on the availability of infrastructure in their rural areas. About 82% of them indicated that they have access to electricity, 83% indicate that they have relatively good roads and 92% have bridges and culverts constructed for them by the Adamawa State Government. These are great opportunities for the people to open up business centers for various rural entrepreneurial activities since there will be less transportation problems. They can engage in many economic activities that can be done using electricity. For instance, charging of handset batteries, barbing and hair dressing, selling of ice blocks and soft drinks, welding, fabrication of simple machines and farm tools, computer services, etc. are all possible entrepreneurial activities that the availability of these infrastructure can support, promote and facilitate.

#### **Agricultural Extension Service Deliveries Rendered**

Table iv shows the extension services delivered by extension workers capable of facilitating rural entrepreneurship. The respondents indicated that they have access to extension services through direct contacts with extension agents who visit them from time to time. They indicated that the extension services have resulted in promoting their farming activities and entrepreneurial activities. Some of these extension services carried out include, among others, giving assistance to the rural people in the identification of potential entrepreneurial resources, organizing trainings on various entrepreneurial skills and strategies as indicated by 89% and 83 of them respectively. Other services rendered were linkage between rural people and commercial banks or other money-lending institutions for loans or credits, sources of inputs and implements; creation of awareness and provision of information on existing entrepreneurial opportunities as well as rendering technical assistance as indicated by 63%, 67% and 61% of the respondents respectively. In this regard, the agricultural extension services delivered have

remarkably promoted rural entrepreneurship. Facilitation of cooperation among the respondents was also indicated by 61% as a service being received from extension workers. The cooperation spirit has also improved rural entrepreneurship. Multiple responses were observed

#### **Problems Militating Against Rural Entrepreneurship**

The various problems impeding rural entrepreneurship were identified as presented in Table v. The major problems identified were constraints due to cultural influences and low levels of education and inadequate capital with which to embark on entrepreneurial activities as indicated by 79% and 54% of the respondents respectively. Also, 83% have the problem of unnecessary interference by government officials rooted in political differences and the incessant insecurity challenges. This finding is supported by an earlier work done by Jayadatta (2017) in which he reported that lack of capital was a problem to entrepreneurship in India. Patel and Chavda (2013) also reported financial problems, low skill level workers and poor infrastructural facilities as challenges in India, which are some of the problems also identified in this study. Management problem identified in this study is also supported by the finding of Jabadurai (2013) in which he identified poor knowledge in both account maintenance and technical skills as some of the problems of entrepreneurship in India.

Multiple responses were observed

#### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Extension services delivered in the study area have contributed positively to rural entrepreneurial activities. Government, through agricultural extension workers of the Adamawa Agricultural Development Programme, have done a lot of work in the provision of agricultural

**Table iv.** Agricultural Extension Services Rendered (n = 120).

<b>Agricultural Extension Services Rendered</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Identification of potential entrepreneurial resources	89
Organizing training for rural people	83
Linkage between rural people and commercial banks	63
Information on available entrepreneurial opportunities	67
Facilitation of cooperation among rural people	78
Provision of technical assistance to rural people	61

**Source:** Field Survey, 2017.

**Table v.** Problems Militating Against Rural Entrepreneurship (n = 120).

<b>Constraints Faced by the Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Inadequate capital for entrepreneurial activities	79
Poor managerial skills	69
Bad or lack of infrastructural facilities	63
Cultural influences and low education	73
Inadequate access to needed information	54
High level of competitiveness	53
Interference due to political bias and insecurity	83
Irregular access to extension services and guide	67

**Source:** Field Survey, 2017.

extension activities which have facilitated and promoted rural entrepreneurship in the study area. Most importantly, extension services delivered had contributed immensely in the aspects of identifying opportunities and potentials for rural entrepreneurship, organizing trainings for entrepreneurs and would be entrepreneurs where they are being taught the benefits and advantages of rural entrepreneurship as well as facilitating cooperation among the rural people. There are many natural resources that can remarkably reduce poverty and unemployment among the people in the study area, especially, if agricultural extension trainings would be expanded to reach a larger number of the rural people. The human, natural and infrastructural resources available in the study area are currently being grossly underutilized. Though there is no direct connection between rural entrepreneurship and politics, political influences encountered by the respondents at various times had caused a lot of setbacks in the study area because of the ways politicians have been interrupting and interfering with business activities and natural resources.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

i. Greater awareness campaigns should be embarked upon by extension workers to advocate for rural entrepreneurship, encourage and persuade rural people to realize that rural entrepreneurship is now one of the major economic activities that provide broad ways out of poverty. This can partly be done through organizing trainings that can improve entrepreneurial

competencies and how to use modern entrepreneurial facilities in the rural areas.

ii. Government policies that can maximize the use of available natural resources, opportunities, human potentials and skills for entrepreneurship should be put in place. This can be achieved through adequate funding of extension services and rural entrepreneurship activities as a matter of policy.

iii. Locally fabricated machines or tools that can promote rural entrepreneurship should be provided by agricultural engineers and be made available to entrepreneurs at affordable prices.

iv. Government should strengthen the raw material base in rural areas and ensure that the funds required for rural entrepreneurship are made available in time.

v. Extension service deliveries should cover the generation of sustainable entrepreneurial business opportunities and also provide trainings and the motivation needed to ginger the rural people into practising entrepreneurship in the rural areas.

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