

**FACILITATORS' PERFORMANCE OF  
COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATIONAL  
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES OF FARMERS' FIELD  
SCHOOLS IN FAYOUM GOVERNORATE**

**By**

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**APPROVAL SHEET**

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## **SUPERVISION SHEET**

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### **Abstract**

**Farmer field schools** ( FFSs) have been used as an effective group learning approach in rural Egypt. In each FFS a number of farmers (20-25 males, females or mixed) meet regularly (on the weekly basis) with their facilitators, who perform the needed activities to make group learning easier by organizing the FFSs' communication and educational activities through organized and interactive discussions, participatory learning among farmers. The level of facilitators' performance, of these activities, is one of the most important determinants of the success of FFSs. This study investigated the levels of facilitators' performance of these activities, and the challenges facing them in this concern. The study was conducted in Fayoum Governorate. All the Ministry of Agriculture extension workers (47), who work, in 3 Districts of Fayoum, and function as facilitators in the investigated 20 FFSs, were personally interviewed by using a questionnaire designed and pretested for data collection. In addition, a sample of 196 farmers was selected from members of FFSs in the three districts from total of 400 farmers (representing 49%). Frequencies, percentages, average mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient were used for data presentation and analysis. The study results revealed that: a) For facilitators, the majority of FFSs' facilitators (around 72 %) demonstrated high and medium levels of performance, and, b) Statistically significant and positive correlations were found among the degree of performance and the following independent variables: FFSs' experience in FFSs, number of training courses attended,. Perceived benefit from training. Several challenges facing the FFSs' facilitators were revealed, including: lack of transportations facilities (as reported by 36.2%), lack of appropriate incentives for facilitators (34%) and lack of funds allocated by the Government for FFSs (32%). Facilitators' recommendations to face these challenges included: providing them with convenient transportation facilities and financial incentives. For farmers: a) the majority of FFSs (around 77 %) demonstrated high and medium levels of performance, and, b) Statistically significant and positive correlations were found among the level of performance and the following independent variables: opinion leadership, cosmopolitaness, participation in extension activities, informal social participation, exposure to sources of information. Several challenges facing FFSMs were revealed, including: high prices of inputs by (35.2%), lack of irrigation water at the ends of the canals (27.6%), lack of demonstrative fields for FFSs (19.9%), lack of incentives for farmers (13.8%). providing demonstrative fields for FFSs (as reported by 21.4%), visits to the distinguished farms (21.4%), and the encouragement of FFSs' farmers (18.9%), and providing inputs with appropriate prices.

**Keywords:** Performance, Facilitators, Farmer field school, Egypt.

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***The student***

*Reda Hosny Ibrahim Mohammed*

## **DEDICATION**

*I dedicate this work to my parents and my wife for all the support they lovely offered during my post-graduate studies. Also, I dedicate it for my son and my daughter.*

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## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

<b>FFS</b>	Farmers' Field School
<b>FFSFs</b>	Farmers' Field School Facilitators
<b>FFSMs</b>	Farmers' Field School Members
<b>AESA</b>	Agro-Eco System Analysis
<b>IPM</b>	Integrated Pest Management
<b>SADS</b>	Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy
<b>T&amp;V</b>	Training and Visits approach
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>GFRAS</b>	Global Forum for Rural and Advisory Services
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technologies
<b>EAS</b>	Extension and Advisory Services
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>ZEOs</b>	Zonal Extension Officers
<b>BESs</b>	Block Extension Supervisors
<b>EFW/F</b>	Extension Field Workers/Facilitators
<b>CAPMAS</b>	The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

# INTRODUCTION

Agricultural extension performs essential roles in achieving the sustainable agricultural development strategy (SADS) of 2030 which include food security, improving human capital, social capital and sustainable development of the natural resource base (Swanson and Rejalahti 2010).

During the last few decades, criticism was directed to the roles of agricultural extension service in many aspects especially the lack of national framework for extension, but recently, extension needs to reinvent itself and clearly articulate its roles in the rapidly changing rural and agricultural context in order to improve their relevancy (Magoro and Hlungwani, 2014).

Agricultural extension and advisory services are the function of the public sector in which agricultural extension activities in most developing countries are characterized by being top-down. In this approach, the government represented in the ministry of agriculture is seen as responsible for providing extension services and covering their expenses. Moreover, it provides the technical recommendations to enhance the production of agricultural production.

In the last decade, the public extension services in developing countries started to experience some challenges due to socio-economic changes and the agricultural sector reforms taking place (Zwane, 2012). For example, among generic challenges facing agricultural extension is insufficient governmental funding. This challenge hinders

improving the effectiveness of extension approaches (Albore 2018, p98).

Among the other challenges that face public extension is the lack of means of transportation for extension workers, the failure of adaptation of recommendations to farmers' local conditions, limited number of extension offices .....etc.

The World Bank introduced the Training and Visits system (T&V) from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s in order to speed up the diffusion of the green revolution technologies to farmers mainly in Asian and African countries (Benor and Harrison 1977 cited in Swanson and Rejalahti 2010).

Not only that, but the T&V approach was adopted by many African countries including Egypt to face the challenges of the public extension system or as a type of reform of this top-down approach.

The primary objectives of this approach were to strengthen the management of the extension system (top-down), improve the extension agent–farmer ratio by increasing the number of field staff, and provide basic support services to field extension staff members. Although T&V extension did not have much impact in rain-fed areas (due to the lack of relevant technologies), this approach did speed up the dissemination of Green Revolution technologies, especially in irrigated areas, and did have a short term positive payoff (Swanson and Rajalahti 2010).

Along with these challenges facing the public extension, the need appeared for more participatory approaches that make farmers

involved in the learning process by the active participation in the different stages of diffusion and adoption of innovations.

Participation means that the poor people themselves are involved in identifying the problems they face, determining ways to overcome them, designing realistic plans to achieve goals, and carrying them out. Solutions devised and fulfilled by the people in need are far more likely to prove successful than those imposed from outside. Participatory extension provides a framework for extension staff to participate with village communities in facilitating development planning and activity implementation (Kamalpreet Kaur and Prabhjot Kaur, 2018).

This approach ensures that the extension response becomes community driven and assists village communities implement their planned activities with routine monitoring and evaluation of activities. Importantly, as the name implies, the extension process is seeking maximum participation from women and men from all groups within the target village community. The aim of the approach is bringing about change in people's attitude which is critical on the part of the people involved towards their environment and adoption of interventions for agricultural development.

There were many participatory approaches which were introduced such as farmer to farmer extension, demand-driven extension, farmers-led extension and Farmers' field schools. Among these participatory approaches, the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in which the extension worker assumes the role of a facilitator rather than