The Extent of the Obstacles to Extension Communication From thePoint of View of Agricultural Employees in Salah al-Din Governorate 2.

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Abstract

The research aimed to identify the size of the obstacles to extension communication from the point of view of agricultural employees in Salah al-Din Governorate, as well as to identify the variation in the respondents' point of view in determining the size of the obstacles to extension communication according to personal factors (age, gender, educational attainment, and upbringing). A questionnaire was prepared. A questionnaire consisting of two sections. The first section included some independent factors related to employees, while the second section included (54) statements representing obstacles to guidance communication distributed among the research areas represented in (obstacles to individual communication, obstacles to group communication, obstacles to mass communication).

The research community included all agricultural employees in the Salah al-Din Governorate Agriculture Directorate and its affiliated agricultural divisions. A simple random sample of (50%) was selected from the agricultural divisions, bringing the number of divisions included in the final research procedures to (13) agricultural divisions that include (230) employees. A percentage (50%) of the employees of each division was selected, so that the number of respondents became (103) after excluding the employees of the Tuz Khurmatu Agriculture Division, who numbered (31) employees, as a survey sample.

The results showed that the size of the obstacles to guidance communication is large, tending to the average. It was also found that the obstacles to group communication ranked first from the point of view of the respondents in Salah al-Din Governorate. It also showed that there was a discrepancy in the viewpoints of the respondents regarding the size of the obstacles to guidance communication according to the personal factors of the respondents. The two researchers concluded that the counselors Agriculturalists suffer from major obstacles that affect their implementation of extension activities in the research area

The researchers recommend overcoming the obstacles to guidance communication and providing the necessary capabilities to implement guidance activities, taking into account the personal factors that showed a significant difference in the size of the obstacles to guidance communication when assigning counselors to implement guidance activities.

Keywords: 1- Communication, 2- Extension, 3- Technology.

Introduction:

Communication plays a vital role in shaping a person, and this is done by placing specific and clear symbols in his mind through which he learns and thinks. Through communication, he tries to overcome the difference between himself and others. Communication is considered one of the cognitive fields from which agricultural extension work emerges (Rahma, 2006).

Agricultural extension is one of the important devices that simplify information, formulate and transfer the findings of scientific research

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in terms of knowledge and agricultural sciences to the targeted people in an applicable manner (Al-Subaie, 2011: 51). Communication is an essential element in agricultural extension and its workers, as through it ideas, knowledge, facts and information are transferred between two or more people, which leads to understanding and exchanging common information and the content of the extension message exchanged between them. The success of the communication process depends on several factors, the most prominent of which are the communication equipment and the ability of the sender. On persuasion and influence in the future (Sever, 2014: 33) .

One of the most important qualifications for agricultural extension workers is that they have high communication capabilities and skills with farmers to create a positive impact and convince them of modern agricultural recommendations. The agricultural extension's possession of communication skills that accelerate the delivery of the extension message efficiently, accurately and effectively increases the confidence of the extension workers. Agricultural guide. One of the most important characteristics required of agricultural extension workers to perform their duties efficiently is that they possess effective communication skills, including following appropriate guidance methods when communicating with farmers to bring about the desired changes in them (Ransom. W. Brik, 2006;72).

(Swanson, 2010:185) pointed out that most agricultural extension workers in developing countries have weak communication skills. Therefore, the Extension and Training Department seeks to raise the performance of employees working in the extension system through developing communication processes, as the performance of employees working in agricultural extension is affected by many factors related to their qualification, training, experience, age, the nature of their work, the target audience's view of their service, and the extent of their desire to continue this service (Abu Shanab ,43:2010) Due to the importance of communication in extension work in order to bring about the desired changes among farmers in Salah al-Din Governorate, it is necessary to determine the size of the communication obstacles facing agricultural extension workers when they implement extension activities. Therefore, the idea of the research came to answer the following research questions:

1- What is the extent of the obstacles to extension communication from the point of view of agricultural employees in Salah al-Din Governorate?

2- What is the order of the research areas (obstacles to individual communication, obstacles to group communication, and obstacles to mass communication) in descending order according to the size of communication obstacles from the perspective of the respondents?

3- Is there a difference in the obstacles to counseling communication from the point of view of the respondents according to the personal factors represented by (age, gender, educational attainment, upbringing)?

Research Objectives :

1- Determining the extent of obstacles to extension communication from the point of view of agricultural employees in Salah al-Din Governorate.

2- Arranging the research areas (obstacles to individual communication, obstacles to group communication, and obstacles to mass communication) in descending order according to the size of communication

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obstacles from the perspective of the respondents.

3- Determining the variation in the extent of obstacles to counseling communication from the perspective of the respondents according to the personal factors of (age, gender, educational attainment, upbringing)

Materials and methods:

Research Methodology:

The descriptive approach was adopted to achieve the research objectives, in order to accurately describe the topic to be studied through a correct scientific methodology, through which the results reached by the researcher are transformed into numbers expressing the characteristics of the phenomenon, and one of its advantages is that it gives real information that helps in interpreting human and social phenomena (Al-Bahili, 64: 2021) quoted from (Al-Mahmoudi, 2019: 46)

Search area:

Salah al-Din Governorate, which is located in central Iraq and has a land area of 24,363 km², was chosen. It is famous for growing all field crops, fruits and vegetables, and there are (26) agricultural divisions distributed among all the districts and districts of the governorate, in addition to the governorate's Agriculture Directorate. There is no study, according to the researcher's knowledge, to explain The extent of the obstacles to guidance communication, represented in (individual communication, group communication, and mass communication). This governorate was chosen as an area to conduct the research.

The research community and its sample:

The research population is defined as the sum of units to be studied that share the basic characteristic to be analyzed, and the statistical population is required to be precisely defined (Sabrina, 2018: 13). Accordingly, the research community included agricultural employees in the Directorate of Agriculture and the agricultural divisions affiliated with the Directorate of Agriculture in Salah al-Din Governorate, who numbered (385)* agricultural employees distributed among (26) agricultural divisions. 50% of the number of agricultural divisions in the governorate was taken randomly, and thus the number of subject divisions became The research includes 13 divisions that include (230) agricultural employees. As shown in Table 1 -

Table (1): Research population and sample

	Area name	Number of farmers	
1	Tikrit	13	7
2	Samarra	21	11
3	Science	17	9
4	Peggy	14	7
5	Al-Sharqat	13	7
6	Alsaahil alaysir	14	7
7	Talawl albaj	15	8
8	Aldulueia	19	10
9	Aldor	18	9

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10	Hamrayn	10	5
11	Al-Tawz	31	Exploratory sample
12	Alhajaaj	25	13
13	Alsahl al'akhdar	20	10
	Tolal	230	103

*Saladin Governorate Agriculture Directorate 2023

Search tool:

In order to achieve the research objectives, the researcher relied on many sources to prepare the initial outline of the research tool, and the questionnaire tool was used, which is considered one of the important tools for obtaining accurate information related to the circumstances and reality (Abdel Hafeez and Mustafa, 2001: 146). After reviewing literature, previous studies, personal interviews with specialists, and research related to the current research, a questionnaire form was designed, consisting of two parts, as follows:

part One:

It includes a number of questions to obtain data related to the independent variables related to the respondents, which are as follows (age, gender, educational attainment, and upbringing)

The second part:

It included (54) phrases, each of which expresses a communication obstacle, distributed among the research areas represented in (obstacles related to communication with individuals, obstacles related to communication with groups, and obstacles related to mass communication) as shown in Table (2).

Table (2) shows the distribution of statements across research areasMeasuring test stability:

No.	the field	Number of paragraphs
1	Obstacles related to communicating with individuals	**18**
2	Obstacles related to communicating with groups	**18**
3	Obstacles related to mass communication	**18**
	Total	**54**

Measuring honesty:

1. Apparent validity: It was achieved by presenting the questionnaire in its initial form to a group of experts in the field of agricultural extension and psychology for the purpose of identifying the extent to which the test measured the purpose for which it was apparently developed. (Ebel ,1979: 45) indicated that the preferred method for measuring apparent validity is to Experts decide the number of items and phrases for the characteristic to be measured.

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2. Validity of the content: It was achieved by presenting the form to a number of specialists in the Department of Media at the College of Arts, Tikrit University, and based on their comments and suggestions, some paragraphs were modified and arranged so that the form became ready for the initial test.

Measuring reliability and validity:

The split-half method was used to find the value of the correlation coefficient between the odd items and the even items. The value of the correlation coefficient was (0.79), and this represents the reliability for half of the scale. To obtain the reliability coefficient for the entire scale, the Spearman-Brown correction equation was used. The value of the reliability coefficient for the entire scale was (0.88), so it is The reliability coefficient is scientifically acceptable and meets the purposes of research. As the value of the reliability coefficient reached more than (0.70) is considered acceptable (Murad, 2002: 260), and to obtain the validity of the scale, the square root of the reliability coefficient was taken. The value of the validity coefficient reached (0.93), which is acceptable, and thus the questionnaire became ready to collect the final data for the research.

Measuring independent variables:

The independent variables were measured as follows:

1- Age: It was measured by the number of years the respondent was at the time of data collection.

2 - Gender: It was measured through the two alternatives (male, female) and values were given (1,2) respectively.

3 - Academic achievement: It was measured through four alternatives: (preparatory school, institute, college, graduate certificate), and the values were given (1, 2, 3, 4) respectively.

4. Growth: It was measured through the two alternatives (Rabf, Hadar) and the values were given (2, 1) respectively.

- Measuring the dependent variable

The size of the obstacles to extension communication was measured from the point of view of agricultural employees through a scale consisting of (54) items distributed over the research areas. In front of each of them were alternatives (large, medium, few). Values (1, 2, 3) were given respectively, and thus they were limited. Values expressing the extent of obstacles to guidance communication range from (54-162) degrees.

Statistical methods:

The statistical analysis was conducted using the statistical analysis program (SPSS) for the social sciences through the following statistical methods:

1- Range: to divide the dependent variable and some independent variables into categories.

2- Frequency distribution: It is a summation and arrangement of data that has previously been collected and classified, divided into a number of groups, each of which is called a category. These categories may be arranged ascending or descending according to the nature of the data (Karsh et al., 2014: 85).

Results and discussion

Overall obstacles

The values for the obstacles to counseling communication ranged between (86-146) with a mean of (116.17) and a standard deviation of (11.937). The respondents were distributed into three categories and the results were as shown in Table -3-

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Table -3- Distribution of respondents according to the size of communication obstacle

	Obstacle effect	Frequency	%	$\overline{x}$
1	Low (85 – 105)	14	13.60	95.071
2	Medium (106 – 125)	61	59.22	144.557
3	High (126 – And more)	28	27.18	130.25
4	the total	103	100	369.878

It is clear from Table 3 that 59.22% of the respondents fall into the medium category, followed by the high category. Therefore, the size of the obstacles to extension communication is described as medium and tends to be high. The reason may be the weak communication skill of agricultural extension workers and the lack of capabilities, means and extension aids available to extension workers to clarify the message.

Obstacles aspects

The research areas were arranged in descending order according to the arithmetic average of the size of communication obstacles, and the results were as in Table 4.

Table -4 - Arranging the research areas in descending order

	Communication aspects	$\overline{x}$	Rank
1	group communication	39.50	1
2	mass communication	39.29	2
3	individual communication	37.38	3

It is clear from Table 4 that the number of obstacles to collective communication ranked first. The reason may be the difficulty of gathering farmers in a suitable place to implement the extension activity and the lack of capabilities necessary to carry out field explanations and clarify the skills required to be implemented in the field by the farmers, which makes it difficult to clearly communicate the message to the farmers.

Obstacles and respondents characteristics:

1.Age:

The ages of the respondents were limited to (23-54) years. They were distributed into 3 categories table 5 gausing the range law into three categories to show their point of view about the extent of the obstacles to counseling communication in Salah al-Din Governorate.

While the obstacles to individual communication ranked last, the reason may be that most of the guides are rural people and carry the same values, social customs and dialect, which makes it easier for them to get to know the farmers and form social relationships with them, which makes them get to know their agricultural problems and find solutions to them in a form that is understood by the farmers.

It was found that the highest average was in the category of the elderly. To demonstrate the significance of the differences between the averages of the age categories, an analysis was used. One-way variance and the results were as in Table 5-

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Table-5- Results of analysis of variance according to age groups

Categories	The number	%	$\overline{X}$	F	Probability value	Statistical significance
(23 - 33) Low	49	47.57	116.12	0.157	0.855	Not significant
Intermediate (34 – 44)	41	39.81	115.71			
High (45 and above)	13	12.62	117.85			
Total	103	100%	116.17			

Table 5 shows that there are no differences in the effects of communication obstacles according to respondents' age.

2- Gender:

Result in table 6 shown that average score of obstacles effect among male was higher that among female, and there is significant deference between them .

Table - 6 - shows the results of the t-test according to gender categories

Gender	The number	%	$\overline{X}$	t	Probability value	Statistical significance
male	56	54.37	121.59	5.697	0.000	Significant
feminine	47	45.63	109.72			
Total	103	100%	116.17			

The reason may be that male employees are assigned to carry out more activities than females, which makes them face more communication obstacles than females.

3.Academic achievement:

The respondents were distributed according to academic achievement into four categories.

Obstacles effects tend to be increased with increased in respondents academic achievement, table 7. Result in table 7 shown there are a significant differences in the effect of communication obstacles according to respondents academic achievement.

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Table - 7 - shows the results of the analysis of variance according to the categories of academic achievement

No	Gender	The number	%	$\overline{x}$	F	Probability value	Statistical significance
1	Preparatory	14	13.60	112.31	3.122	0.029	Significant
2	certificate	16	15.53	112.70			
3	college	37	35.92	120.70			
4	postgraduate certificate	36	34.95	114.58			
5	Total	103	100%	116.17			

It is clear from Table 7 that (0.029 = p.v). Therefore, we reject the statistical hypothesis that states (there are no statistically significant differences in the size of obstacles to counseling communication from the point of view of the respondents according to academic achievement). The reason may be that middle school graduates are children of The countryside and they have the same customs and trends as the rural people, in addition to the dialect and meanings of words used among the people of the rural community, which facilitates communication with them and the delivery of the guidance message clearly. To find out the source of the variance, the LSD test was used, and the results were as in Table 8.

Categories	Difference in averages	Probability value	Moral
Preparatory: certificate	0.402	0.925	Not significant
Preparatory: College	7.988*	0.030	Moral
Preparatory: Higher Certificate	1.869	0.610	Not significant
certificate: College	8.390*	0.017	Moral
Certificate: Higher Certificate	2.271	0.516	Not significant
College: Higher Certificate	6.119*	0.026	Moral

Table - 8 - shows the results of the LSD test

It is clear from Table - 8 - that the source of the discrepancy in the difference in means between the level of academic achievement may be that employees who hold higher degrees may prepare the extension message at a high academic level, but they do not have the communication skills that enable them to communicate with farmers and deliver the extension message clearly.

4. Growing up:

The respondents were distributed according to origin into two categories, as shown in Table - 9 - It was found that the urban group obtained a higher average than the rural category, and to test the significance of the differences between the averages of the two categories, a (t) test was used, and the results were as in Table - 9-.

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Table - 9 - shows the results of the t-test according to the categories of upbringing

Gender	The number	%	$\overline{x}$	t	Probability value	Statistical significance
Urban	41	39.81	119.80	2.688	0.008	Significant
Rural	62	60.19	113.77			
Total	103	100%				

The reason may be that the customs and traditions carried by the rural employees are similar to the customs and traditions prevailing in the rural community in which they work, which makes them accepted by the members of the rural community. Also, the dialect used by the rural employees when carrying out the extension activity is understood by the farmers, or they may be He is from the same village where he works, which makes him make friends with the farmers and this enables him to communicate with them and deliver the guidance message easily.

Conclusions:

1. agricultural extension workers in Salah al-Din Governorate suffer from real obstacles that affect the performance of their extension work and the implementation of extension activities in the research area.
2. obstacles to group communication ranked first among the types of communication.
3. there were significant differences in the size of the obstacles to extension communication according to gender, educational attainment, and upbringing. From this we conclude the importance of these factors when assigning people to implement extension activities in the research area.

Recommendations:

1. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Salah al-Din Governorate Agriculture Directorate work to solve the obstacles to extension communication and train agricultural extension workers to increase their communication skills.
2. Providing the necessary capabilities for the work of agricultural extension workers for the purpose of implementing extension activities in the research area.
3. Taking into account the personal factors that showed a significant difference in the extent of obstacles to extension communication when assigning agricultural extension workers to implement extension activities.

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