



# Use of standard supervision practices among agricultural extension supervisors in southwestern Nigeria

Olushola Samuel Fadairo \*

*Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, University of Ibadan, Nigeria*

## Abstract

Supervisory responsibilities when performed as a routine may unsuspectingly vie off from the expected standards and jeopardize organizational goals. The need to evaluate how extension services in Nigeria fares in this regard prompted this study on use of standard supervision practices among agricultural extension supervisors in southwestern Nigeria. Using a multi-stage sampling procedure, data were collected through interview schedule from 54 extension supervisors and 81 extension workers in Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) and Fadama establishments. Data were summarized using descriptive statistics such as mean and percentages. Correlation tool was used to test the hypotheses. Supervisors from ADP (65%) had better job satisfaction than their counterparts (50%) from Fadama. A fairly positive perception of supervision exists among extension supervisees in the two establishments. Index of use of standard supervision practices was above average among 53.7% of the extension supervisors. However, 92.9% of Fadama supervisors complied with standard practices compared with only 40% from ADP. Apart from resistance to change by the extension agents, most of other critical constraints faced by supervisors in using standard practices were government centered. Significant improvement in compliance to standard supervision practices is achievable if efforts are made to improve staffing and reduce supervisors work load.

**Keywords:** Effective Supervision, Extension Workers, Standard Supervision, Staff Motivation

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background to the study

Although the Federal Government of Nigeria had been making several efforts since independence to increase farm production and welfare among farmers in Nigeria, yet the problem of low agricultural productivity, food insecurity, poor farmers' welfare among others still persists.

The Nigeria Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) was a recent national policy geared towards revamping the agricultural sector through an agricultural-led development approach which is aimed at achieving a hunger-free Nigeria amongst others. While the transformation agenda was lauded by many Nigerians as the way to go; other key leaders proffered suggestions on ways the program could be made painless and successful. It was in this vein that Adekunle (2013) emphasized the necessity of a strong agricultural extension services to the successful implementation of the Nigeria Transformation Agenda. The question however is whether agricultural extension agencies and its main actors have the required capacity to translate the successive government's agricultural transformation packages to a desirable outcome?

Workers turn over, poor welfare, worker burn out, and poor job satisfaction have remained key issues affecting the capacity and effectiveness of extension services in Nigeria (Ladele et al., 2015), and these have been linked to undesirable outcomes (Lloyd et al., 2002). For a long time, the evidence base has demonstrated the role frontline workers such as supervisors play in reducing the aforementioned constraints in this challenging field (Yankeelov et al., 2009). In similar vein, Collins-Camargo and Royse (2010) highlighted supervision practices denoted as "Evidence-Informed Practice (EIP)" that could enhance supervision performance for attaining a sustainable workforce and improve outcomes for workers and clients.

Supervision is, according to Laming (2003) the cornerstone of good social work practice; an opinion reiterated by the Wonnacott (2012). Generally, supervision standards is a framework that promotes uniformity, serves as a resource for issues related to supervision for the purpose of providing support and strength in supervision for professional social workers. According to Denis (2010), different aspect of agriculture has different standard practices such as standard practices in crop farming, livestock breeding, soil sciences, and extension services. Out of all these practices, supervision stands out as the mother arm which control and determine the level of outcome observed from each practice. Standard supervision is defined as the approved model of supervision which has been generally accepted as a basis of comparison. It is the style of supervision that has been proved to bring about the best out of workers (Lively and Pressey, 1923). For instance, a standard supervision requires that the supervisor not only be a content expert, but that they also accept the enormous responsibility of mentorship of subordinates, possess unique competencies and skills and ability to incorporate various models and interventions to facilitate supervisee development.

The question however is how aware and to what extent are these practices being employed in the Nigerian agricultural extension establishments as a step towards addressing its numerous constraints? It is also important to put into perspective that several past studies aimed at probing into the pitfalls of extension

services in Nigeria and improving its effectiveness have often focused attention on training needs of staff, funding issues, farmers background profile and others while the roles performed by supervisors or effective supervision in the attainment of organizational objectives have been rarely investigated. The need to provide answers to these questions as a step towards improving extension service delivery for agricultural sustainability prompted this study.

## 1.2. Relevance of effective extension supervision to agricultural development in Nigeria

Understanding the historical background of Agricultural Extension in Nigeria and the successive approaches used for service delivery is very important in order to better appreciate the relevance of effective supervision as the fixing link in the yearning for human development and the continuous improvement of the country's agriculture. Over the last few decades, extension in Nigeria has adapted to changing strategies and supervision approaches. According to Ilevbaoje (2004), the beginning of agricultural extension in Nigeria was in 1921 when a unified Department of Agriculture was established for the whole country, and 1954 when three separate regional governments were formed, each with a Ministry of Agriculture.

It is pertinent to note that agricultural extension service delivery at this time was domiciled in the ministry of agriculture. The ministry operated extension service in Nigeria was however bedeviled with many problems among which is the problem of duplication of extension efforts including poor and ineffective supervision as each department in the ministry had its own extension unit and workers (Obibuaku, 1983). Addressing the problems of the ministry operated extension service led to the establishment of Agricultural Development Projects (ADP) as a specialized institution responsible for extension services; the effort which started in the early 1970s as a pilot scheme and was later scaled up to cover the entire nation. The ADP as a new vehicle for extension service delivery in the country quickly adopted the Training and Visit (T&V) extension approach in order to remedy the weaknesses inherent in the previous approaches. The recognition of the importance of effective coordination and supervision to extension goal attainment by the ADP Training and Visit approach was evident from its first and last objectives which were to: improve the organization of extension by introducing a single line of technical support and administrative control; and reduce the duplication of services that occur when extension is fragmented among different ministries.

Therefore, the general organizational structure of the T&V system is based on the total number of farm families to be assisted in a given state or area, and in defining the number of farm families which one Village Extension Agent (VEA) can reasonably be expected to cover. The village extension agents are trained, guided and supervised in the field by Block Extension Supervisors (BES) who, in turn are guided and supervised by Zonal Extension Officers (ZEO). The zonal extension officers are supervised by Chief Extension Officers (CEO) via the Deputy Chief Extension Officer (DCEO) who are both located at Programme Headquarters. The organizational principle involved is to ensure that each level of the service has a span of control narrow enough (6-8) to afford close guidance and support for the level immediately below (Torimiro and Okorie, 2008).

### 1.2.1. Effective extension supervision as the fixing link for agricultural transformation: Lessons from Ghana

As seen in the case of Nigeria, experiences from Ghana are past approaches for extension service delivery has neither boded too well. This had seen the country's extension approaches metamorphosed through several strategies from the initial General Agricultural Extension Approach to Training and Visit (T&V) system, and the recently Decentralized Extension System (MoFA, 2002). The relevance of effective supervision for revolutionizing Africa's agriculture was further echoed by the lessons learnt from the success story of the "Supervised Enterprise Projects (SEPs)" in Ghana patterned after the Paulo Freire's Empowerment Educational Model (Freire, 2002). According to Kwadzo (2014), the SEPs which was initiated by the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Cape Coast, as an alternative strategy for extension services, with the aim of developing human capabilities of both local farmers and students from the public sector agricultural extension service have proved very effective.

### 1.3. Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the use of standard supervision practices among agricultural extension supervisors in southwestern Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- 1- Examine the perception of extension workers of their supervision,
- 2- Ascertain the respondents level of satisfaction with their job,
- 3- Determine the extent to which the supervisors in the ADP and Fadama use standard practices for project supervision; and
- 4- Identify factors that hinder the supervisors from using standard supervision practices in the study area.

### 1.4. Hypotheses of the study

- H01: There is no significant relationship between extension supervisor's job satisfaction and their use of standard supervision practices.
- H02: There is no significant relationship between constraints faced by extension supervisors and their use of standard supervision practices.

## 2. Theoretical and conceptual framework

This study was guided by the following theories:

### 2.1. Hierarchy of needs theory

The hierarchy of needs theory proposed by Maslow (2013) categorized human needs according to their priority as: physical, safety, social, self-esteem and self-actualization respectively. The theory though had its origin and initial application in psychology but has over the years gained popularity and application in several fields. The theory assumes that an organization where workers are satisfied with their job and so

have fewer unmet physical needs are in a good stead towards positive response to supervision. This assumption provided the basis for investigating extension supervisors' job satisfaction in this study. It also provided the basis for correlating supervisors job satisfaction and with their compliance with standard practices for supervision in order to observe whether respondents who had their physical needs met were more responsive to use of these standards than others who did not. While a number of studies have upheld Maslow's theory as accurate ([www.goodtherapy.org/blog/accuracy-maslow-hierarchy-needs](http://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/accuracy-maslow-hierarchy-needs)) (Irman, 2007; Kaur, 2013), some others have criticized its assumptions. For instance, a study conducted by some group of researchers on people's emotions resulting from various levels of needs such as food, shelter, money, respect social relations, and autonomy shows that more positive emotions were indicated by respondents who had most basic needs of food, shelter and money met (Yates, 2011). However, Nadler and Lawler (1983) have criticized the need theory of motivation, describing its assumptions as unrealistic since it implies that all employees and situations are alike and that there is only one best way to meet needs.

## 2.2. Theory Z

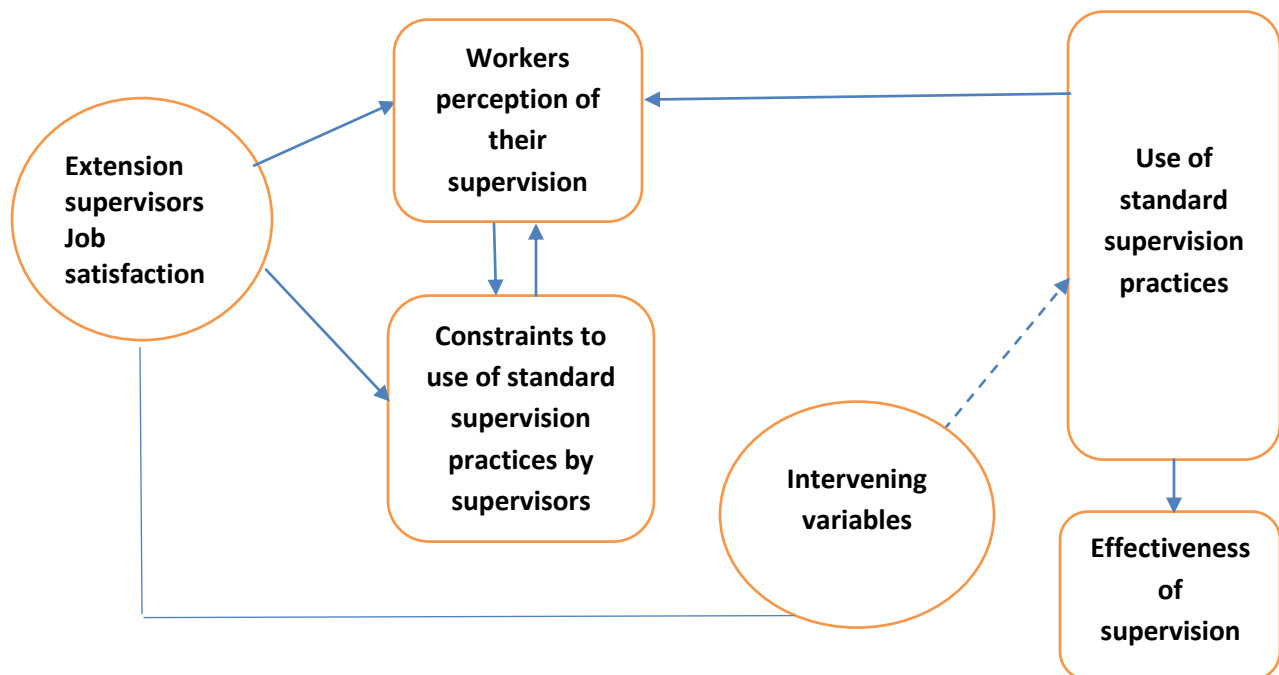
Theory Z was propounded by Ouchi (1981). The assumption of theory Z is based on shared responsibilities between the supervisor or the manager and the employees (workers). Managers (supervisors) make efforts to socialize the employees on the one hand while the workers make effort to personalize the organization on the other hand, thus implying that effectiveness of one is dependent on the other. Relating this theory to this study give credence to the study's *apriori* expectation that effective supervision which is enhanced using standard practices would stimulate better and a more rapid positive output from the extension workers in the establishments investigated. It is pertinent to state that Pascale and Athos (1981), and Peters and Waterman (1982) in a follow up studies on both Japanese and American corporations which utilize Theory Z management further established common characteristics among these corporations that could have implications for organizational management as propounded by Ouchi. In addition, in a paper which draws implications for the church as an organization from theory Z, Drushal (2008) established a scientific support for the efficacy of utilizing the four components of the theory's management philosophy – leadership, trust, communication and participative decision making to grow organizations.

## 2.3. Explanation of the framework

Figure 1 shows the interrelationship between the independent, intervening and dependent variables of the study. The independent variables include extension supervisors' job satisfaction, extension agents (supervisee) perception of their supervision by supervisors and constraints faced by supervisors in the use of standard supervision practices. The dependent variable is the use of standard supervision practices among the supervisors which determines the effectiveness of supervision in the organization while the intervening variables include organizational external factors such as government policy, political stability and socio-cultural psyche of the workers.

Extension supervisors' job satisfaction would likely affect the way their supervisees perceive their supervision and consequently affects the constraints faced by supervisors in the use of standard practices for

supervision. For instance, inferring from Maslow and Z theories assumptions, extension supervisors with satisfactory wage and job conditions would find it more convenient to put in his/her best into the organization and is likely to engineer a positive disposition towards their supervisees. The reverse is what would likely happen when job conditions or physical needs of the workers are poorly met. Also, the constraints the supervisors face is thought to directly affect the extent of use of supervisory standards which ultimately determines how effective the supervision of workers is in an organization.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework of the study

### 3. Methodology

The study was conducted in Osun and Oyo states which are geographically located in the south west of Nigeria. These states were randomly selected from the six states that make up the southwestern region of the country. The area enjoys a favorable climate, annual rainfall of 1000-1400mm and vast area of fertile land, hence about 70% of her inhabitants engage in farming. The population of the study comprised of all extension agents and supervisors within the Agricultural Development Programme and Fadama establishments in the states.

Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. Purposive sampling method was used to select all extension supervisors within the ADP [also known as Block Extension Supervisors (BES)] and Fadama establishments in the states. Therefore, 18 and 22 ADP supervisors including 8 and 6 Fadama III supervisors were sampled from Osun and Oyo states respectively.



Selection of the extension agents was done from the three and four administrative zones in Osun and Oyo States respectively. Using simple random sampling technique, 40% of the total extension agents in each zone of the states were selected giving 25 and 15 extension agents from Oyo and Osun States respectively. In similar vein, simple random sampling technique was used to select 20% of the Fadama extension agents (also known as Fadama facilitators) from each state. Thus, 21 out of 70 and 20 out of 65 Fadama facilitators were sampled from Oyo and Osun States respectively. On the whole, 54 extension supervisors and 81 extension workers from ADP and Fadama establishments were sampled from Oyo and Osun States to give a total sample size of 135 respondents. However, only 134 questionnaires were retrieved and reported in this paper.

Data were collected through the use of interview schedule on extension agents' perception of their supervision, extent to which the supervisors in the ADP and Fadama use standard practices for project supervision, constraints that hinders the supervisors from using standard supervision practices in the study area and respondents job satisfaction. Respondents' level of job satisfaction was gauged on the basis of contentment with salary, work conditions and other job benefits. Extension agents perception of their supervision was measured using perception statements measured using different ratings: some on the basis of Yes and No, some on a three points scale of regularly, occasionally and never and so on. The mean value of the responses was used to categorize respondents' perception of their supervision as favourable and unfavourable. Supervisors were assessed based on items on standard supervision practices adapted from Collins-Camargo and Royse (2010) for effective organizational supervision. The respondents were asked to indicate the percentage of time they use standard supervision practices using a five point scale of: Never, Up to 25% of the time, Up to 50% of the time, Up to 75% of the time, All of the time'. Scores of 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were awarded to the statements and mean of use score derived was used to categorize the respondents into high and low levels of use. Constraints faced by supervisors in using standard supervision practices were determined by asking respondents to tick from a list of possible factors as severe, mild, or not a constraint. Scores of 3, 2 and 1 were awarded to the options respectively. The mean values of each constraint items provided the basis for ordering the constraints based on their level of severity.

Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software and summarized using descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency counts and percentages. Person Product Moment correlation was used to test the hypotheses.

## 4. Results and discussion

### 4.1. Job satisfaction of extension supervisors

Table 1 (a) on extension supervisors responses to job satisfaction statements reveals that a fairly high proportion (53.7%) considered it better to work in the public than the private sector. However, only a few proportions (16.7% and 20.4%) were very satisfied with their salary and job benefits respectively. The table further reveals that an overwhelming proportion (88.9%) considered their job as fairly or very secure. The

foregoing suggests that the positive opinion expressed by the extension workers for work in the public sector despite their dissatisfaction with work benefits and salaries is not unlikely to be linked to assurance of job security in the public sector. This position has been affirmed in the literature that staff turnover rate is higher in the private than in the public organizations (Munnell and Fraenke, 2013).

**Table 1(a).** Extension supervisors job satisfaction (n=54)

Statements	Response options	F	%
Opinion on working in public sector compared with private sector	Worse	12	22.2
	The same	13	24.1
	Better	29	53.7
Satisfaction with salary	Unsatisfactory	10	18.5
	Fairly satisfactory	35	64.8
	Very satisfactory	9	16.7
Satisfaction with benefits	Unsatisfactory	16	29.6
	Fairly satisfactory	27	50.0
	Very satisfactory	11	20.4
Job security	Insecurity	6	11.1
	Fairly secure	25	46.3
	Very secure	23	42.6
Engaging in extra official activities	Never	10	18.5
	Occasionally	29	53.7
	Frequently	15	27.8
Activity that fetch more	Official	27	50.0
	Extra official	23	42.6
	Not applicable	4	7.4
Major drive for engaging in extra official activities	Income Boost	36	66.7
	community service	16	29.6
	Not applicable	2	3.7

**Table 1 (b).** Categorization of extension supervisors' level of job satisfaction (n=54)

Job satisfaction	Scores	ADP F (%)	FADAMA F (%)	All respondents		
				F	(%)	Mean
Low	8-12	14(35.0)	7(50.0)	21	38.9	13.3±2.6
High	13-26	26(65.0)	7(50.0)	33	61.1	

\*Figures in parentheses are percentages

The finding that 81.5% of extension supervisors engage somehow in extra official activities and most (66.7%) do so for the purpose of boosting their income received from the government further give credence to the position that extension supervisors in the study area have poor satisfaction with their salary. This



could have negative implications for their job efficiency and professionalism. On the whole, table 1(b) shows that more respondents (65%) from the ADP had better job satisfaction than their counterparts from Fadama establishment (50%). The reason for this finding may not be far-fetched as a considerable proportion of Fadama workers in Nigeria work as contract staff or were seconded from the Ministry of Agriculture and whose job continuity depends on renewal of contract subject to performance and availability of external funds for further agricultural intervention (AfDB, 2013).

#### 4.2. Extension agents' perception of their supervision

The distribution of responses by extension agents to perception statements on their supervision suggests a fairly positive perception among the extension workers (supervisees) in the two establishments. For instance, an overwhelming proportion (82.5%) of the respondents agreed that their supervision provides the opportunity to revise practices to better satisfy clients. More than 60% indicated positive disposition to discussing measurable outcomes for clients and alternative courses of action for effective services respectively. In addition, 86.3% were willing either regularly or occasionally to discuss and review team performance data with supervisor in order to improve practices. These findings implies that the extension agents in the study areas had sufficient motivation that can serve as springboard for effective supervision by the supervisors (Maslow, 2013).

**Table 2.** Extension agents' perception of their supervision (n=80)

Statements	Response options	F	%
Supervision is an opportunity to reflect on your practice and how it is impacting clients?	Yes	66	82.5
	No	14	17.5
Conversations with supervisor contribute to better outcomes for farmers/ clients in general?	Large extent	43	53.8
	Moderate extent	29	36.3
	No extent	8	10.0
How disposed are you to your supervisor discussing what success might look like (i.e. measurable outcome for clients)?	Regularly	50	62.5
	Occasionally	24	30.0
	Never	6	7.5
How disposed are you to your supervisor discussing which of the alternative courses of action is likely to be more effective, and how you will know if it is?	Regularly	49	61.3
	Occasionally	25	31.3
	Never	6	7.5
How often are you willing to discussing what team performance data tell you that may help you improve your practice with clients?	Regularly	30	37.5
	Occasionally	39	48.8
	Never	11	13.8

#### 4.3. Extension supervisors use of standard supervision practices

Table 3 shows a list of expected standard supervision (evidence-based) practices for effective supervision of workers in an organization as adapted from Collins-Camargo and Royse (2010) and how the extension supervisors fared in the adoption of these practices in their routine supervisory roles. Findings shows that

adoption or use was highest for the following practices: making objectives and tasks known to workers (mean =4.6), training of team task leaders (mean =3.8), proper documentation of supervision sessions (mean =3.8), and use of data evidence to guide practice (mean =3.7). On the other hand, use of standard practices such as subjecting supervisory relationship to written agreement (mean =2.9), arranging and conducting supervision to allow for proper discussion (mean = 3.0) and use of role play or modelling client scenarios (mean =3.1) ranked least in the bottom of the scale respectively.

**Table 3 (a).** Extension Supervisors use of standard supervision practices (n=54)

S/N	Statements	Never	Up to 25%	Up to 50%	Up to 75%	All of the time	Mean
1	Supervision session include a clear set of expectations and objectives to guide	9.3	20.4	13.0	50.6	7.4	3.3
2	Use of research findings to guide your worker's practice	3.7	20.4	40.7	22.2	13.0	3.2
3	Role play or model client scenarios to guide your workers' practice	27.8	38.9	29.6	29.6	3.7	3.1
4	Use of data evidence/reports to guide worker's practice	9.3	11.1	18.5	24.1	37.0	3.7
5	Feel comfortable in challenging current practice with research based ideas	1.9	27.8	35.2	27.8	7.4	3.1
6	Provide good working conditions for your workers	0	18.5	27.8	35.2	18.5	3.5
7	Make the objectives and the importance of task known to the workers from the onset?	3.7	16.7	20.4	38.9	20.4	4.6
8	Practice good delegation of duties to workers	3.7	31.5	22.2	25.9	16.7	3.2
9	Supervision is arranged and conducted in such a way as to permit proper reflection and discussion	11.1	16.7	40.7	22.2	9.3	3.0
10	All supervisory relationships are subject to a written agreement drawn up within the first six weeks of the start of the relationship.	9.3	31.5	31.5	20.4	7.4	2.9
11	All supervision sessions are recorded promptly, competently and stored properly.	1.9	18.5	14.8	37.0	29.6	3.8
12	Team task leaders and supervisees are trained to carry out their roles	0	13.0	16.7	37.0	33.3	3.9

On the whole (table 3b), index of use of standard supervision practices was above average among more than half (53.7%) of the extension supervisors. However, more supervisors (92.9%) from Fadama Establishment complied with the standard practices when compared with only 40% of respondents from the

ADP who did. This results justifies the suggestion of Khalique (2012) that Fadama project in Nigeria has been observed to be more effective in meeting farm households' needs at the grassroots because of its system of management.

Better compliance to supervision standards observed among the Fadama supervisors is probably due to the contractual nature of their job which predicates renewal of funding support to keep project cycle going on performance, hence a more commitment and conscious efforts towards best practices among the supervisors, unlike the ADP supervisors whose jobs sustainability and promotion have little or nothing to do with their performance. The foregoing is consistent with the assumption of Theory X propounded by McGregor in 1960 (The economist, 2008) that workers require strict supervision and external rewards and penalties if organizational goals are to be met.

**Table 3 (b).** Categorization of extension supervisors based on use of standard supervision practices (n=54)

Use of standard supervision practices	Scores	ADP F (%)	FADAMA F (%)	All respondents F (%)	Mean
Poor	27-40	24(60.0)	1(7.1)	25 (46.4)	40.6±10.4
Good	41-96	16(40.0)	13(92.9)	29 (53.7)	

\* Figures in parentheses are percentages

#### 4.4. Constraints faced in use of standard practices by extension supervisors

Table 4 on the constraints to use of standard supervision practices among the supervisors reveals that policy summersault (mean=3.17), heavy workload (mean=3.15), corruption (mean=3.11) resistance to change by the extension workers (mean=3.09), poor welfare of workers (mean=3.02) and inadequate staffing (2.89) ranked foremost among the constraints faced by the supervisors. On the other hand, factors such as inadequate support from managers (mean=2.22) and poor commitment to work by the extension workers (mean=2.43) ranked least among the constraints. The connection between poor staffing and heavy work load makes these constraints a very critical issue to be addressed in order to improve extension effectiveness in Nigeria. This is more so as several literature (Haruna and Abdulahi, 2013; Mommoh, 2009) have established that a wide gap exists between the number of extension workers in Nigeria and the number of clientele they are expected to cover. In addition, apart from resistance to change by the extension workers, it is worthy of note that most of the critical constraints identified are government centered; an implication that much is still required from the government in order to ensure a more effective and efficient extension system in Nigeria. This results corroborates the argument that current ADPs dismal performance when compared with the era of World Bank-funded ADP is a testimonial of the gross neglect of the programme by the government since the withdrawal of the World Bank funding support (Oladele, 2004).

The findings reveal that apart from resistance to change by the extension workers, most of the critical constraints confronting use of standard supervision practices were within the purview of the government. This implies that much is still required from the government in order to ensure a more effective and efficient extension system in Nigeria. This result confirms Daneji (2011) who reported that ADP in Nigeria has not been giving the expected results compared to when it started simply because of some factors that included poor level of supervision at various levels.

**Table 4.** Supervisors constraints to the use of standard supervision practices (n=54)

S/N	Factors	Very large extent	Large extent	Limited extent	Not a factor	Mean
1	Ineffective sponsorship by stakeholders	42.6	14.8	16.7	25.9	2.74
2	Inadequate management resources and planning	14.8	48.1	27.8	9.3	2.69
3	Poor commitment and alignment with middle management	24.1	27.8	40.7	7.4	2.69
4	Resistance to change by the workers and/or farmers	35.2	42.6	18.5	3.7	3.09
5	Inadequate materials for training the workers	27.8	27.8	38.9	5.6	2.78
6	Lack of adequate support from top management	13.0	22.2	38.9	25.9	2.22
7	Inadequate staffing	40.7	24.1	18.5	16.7	2.89
8	Short time for execution of project	37.0	20.4	18.5	24.1	2.70
9	Heavy workload	44.4	29.6	22.2	3.7	3.15
10	Poor commitment to work by workers	9.3	33.3	48.1	9.3	2.43
11	Corruption	46.3	27.8	16.7	9.3	3.11
12	Inconsistent government/management policy	40.7	33.3	24.1	1.9	3.13
13	Policy summersault	44.4	35.2	13.0	7.4	3.17
14	Poor welfare	22.2	57.4	20.4	0	3.02

## 5. Test of hypotheses

Table 5 shows a negative but significant correlation between the constraints faced by extension supervisors and their use of standard supervision practices ( $r = -0.334$   $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that as the constraints faced became more severe, compliance to standard supervision practices reduced among the supervisors. This result suggests that a significant improvement in compliance to standard practices for supervision is achievable if efforts are made to address the critical constraints observed in this study. On the other hand, respondent's level of job satisfaction did not significantly affect their use of standard practices for supervision ( $r = 0.111$   $p > 0.05$ ). While this result does not totally nullify the assumptions of Maslow theory, it

only suggests that Maslow assumptions will hold only when other organizational specific variables are held constant.

**Table 5.** Relationship between extension supervisor's job satisfaction, constraints faced and their use of standard supervision practices

Variables	N	r- value	p-value
Job satisfaction	54	0.111	0.426
Constraints	54	-0.334	0.014*

Significant  $p < 0.05$

## 6. Conclusion and recommendations

Use of standard supervision practices was above average among more than half of the extension supervisors in south-western Nigeria. A significant improvement in compliance to standard practices for supervision is achievable if efforts are made to address the critical constraints of poor staffing and heavy work load on the extension supervisors. In addition, the following recommendations would help improve extension supervision and goal attainment in southwestern Nigeria:

- Extension supervisors' promotion and access to other work benefits should be tied to performance and not just the number of years in service alone. In this way the rewards and penalties for performance or failure would help to bring out the best in supervisors and compel compliance to standard practice with minimal checks.
- Better attention especially in terms of funding and recognition of the roles played by effective extension services for agricultural transformation is required from the government.
- While workers job satisfaction is important for efficient job performance, extension managers and entrepreneurs should pay careful to organizational specific differences that may also enhance the performance of their supervisors and workers at large.

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