



PROBLEMS FACING AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORKERS AS FACILITATORS IN PROVIDING EXTENSION SERVICES TO RURAL YOUTH IN BAGHDAD GOVERNORATE

Fatma Younis Dawid¹, Najwa Salim Ali²

¹Department of Agricultural Extension and Technology Transfer, College of Agricultural Engineering Sciences, University of Baghdad, Iraq. Fatima.younis2209m@coagri.uobaghdad.edu.iq

²Assistant Professor, PhD., Department of Scientific Affairs, University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq. najwa.s@uobaghdad.edu.iq

Received 19/ 5/ 2024, Accepted 10/ 9/ 2024, Published 30/ 6/ 2026

This work is licensed under a CCBY 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>



ABSTRACT

The current research aims to identify the problems facing agricultural extension workers as facilitators in providing extension services to rural youth in the Baghdad Governorate. The research community included all agricultural extension workers (138) respondents (regardless of their specializations), and included workers in the Directorate of Agricultural Extension and Training, and its affiliated formations {extension centers (2), extension farms (2)}, workers in the Agricultural Extension and Training Department in the Baghdad Agriculture Directorate, the Baghdad / Al-Karkh Agriculture Department in Abu Ghraib, and the Baghdad / Rusafa Agriculture Department, workers in the agricultural divisions in Baghdad/Al-Rusafa, (5 divisions), workers in the agricultural divisions in Baghdad/Al-Karkh (13 divisions). Twenty (20) respondents were excluded from the research sample to conduct the initial test to measure the stability of the questionnaire. The initial questionnaire test was performed on a random sample of the agricultural divisions affiliated with the Baghdad Agriculture Directorate (Karkh/Rusafa), the Department of Agricultural Extension and Transfer Technologies, and the Extension Department in the Directorate, consisting of (20) respondents. The research data was collected using a questionnaire which included (42) items distributed over four areas: (financial and material problems, administrative and organizational problems, problems related to the work environment and relations, and problems related to the application of electronic agricultural extension services). Collected data was analyzed using the statistical analysis program SPSS, as well as using manual analysis using the Cronbach coefficient, the weighted mean, the percentage weight, and the hypothetical mean. The results of the research showed that the problems related to the work environment and relations came in first place, with a weighted mean of (3.60) degree and a percentage weight of (90.00) degree, then the problems related to the application of electronic agricultural extension services came in last order with a weighted mean of (3.39) degree and a percentage weight of (84.75) degree. Therefore, the researcher recommends the necessity of making efforts by agricultural extension institutions and relevant responsible authorities to prepare training programs to develop the capabilities of workers in the field of collective and participatory work to facilitate the provision of extension services to rural youth and provide support from through financial and moral incentives to achieve the facilitation role.

Keywords: facilitation role, extension service, rural youth, Agricultural mentors, Guidance centers.

المشكلات التي تواجه العاملين بالإرشاد الزراعي كميسرين في تقديم الخدمة الإرشادية للشباب الريفي في محافظة بغداد

فاطمة يونس داود¹، نجوى سالم علي²

¹ باحث قسم الإرشاد الزراعي ونقل التقنيات، كلية علوم الهندسة الزراعية، جامعة بغداد، العراق، Fatima.younis2209m@coagri.uobaghdad.edu.iq
² أستاذ مساعد دكتور، قسم الشؤون العلمية، رئاسة جامعة بغداد، العراق، najwa.s@uobaghdad.edu.iq

الخلاصة

يهدف البحث الى التعرف على المشكلات التي تواجه العاملين بالإرشاد الزراعي كميسرين في تقديم الخدمة الإرشادية للشباب الريفي في محافظة بغداد، حيث شمل مجتمع البحث جميع العاملين بالإرشاد الزراعي والبالغ عددهم (138) مبحوثاً (بغض النظر عن تخصصاتهم)، شمل العاملين في دائرة الإرشاد والتدريب الزراعي وتشكيلاتها (المراكز الإرشادية) وعددها (2)، المزارع الإرشادية عددها (2)، العاملين في قسم الإرشاد والتدريب الزراعي في مديرية زراعة بغداد، وقسم زراعة بغداد / الكرخ في ابي غريب، وقسم زراعة بغداد/ الرصافة، العاملين في الشعب الزراعية في بغداد/ الرصافة وعددها (5) شعب، العاملين في الشعب الزراعية في بغداد/ الكرخ وعددها (13) شعبة، استبعد منهم عينة مقدارها (20) مبحوثاً لأجراء الاختبار الاولي لقياس ثبات الاستبانة، وتم جمع بيانات البحث باستخدام الاستبانة وشملت (42) فقرة موزعة على اربع مجالات وهم (المشكلات المادية والمالية، المشكلات الادارية والتنظيمية، المشكلات الخاصة ببيئة وعلاقات العمل، المشكلات الخاصة بتطبيق خدمات الإرشاد الزراعي الالكتروني). تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامج التحليل الاحصائي SPSS والتحليل اليدوي باستخدام معادلة الفاكرونباخ، والوسط المرجح والوزن المنوي والوسط الفرضي. وأظهرت نتائج البحث ان المشكلات المرتبطة ببيئة وعلاقات العمل جاءت بالترتيب الاول بوسط مرجح (3.60) درجة ووزن منوي (90.00) درجة، ثم جاءت المشكلات الخاصة بتطبيق خدمات الإرشاد الزراعي الالكتروني بالترتيب الاخير بوسط مرجح (3.39) درجة ووزن منوي (84.75) درجة، لذا يوصي الباحث بضرورة بذل الجهود من قبل المؤسسات الإرشادية الزراعية والجهات المسؤولة ذات العلاقة لأعداد البرامج التدريبية لتطوير قدرات العاملين في مجال العمل الجماعي والتشاركي لتسهيل وتيسير تقديم الخدمات الإرشادية الى الشباب الريفي وتوفير الدعم من خلال الحوافز المادية والمعنوية لتحقيق الدور التيسيري.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الدور التيسيري، الخدمة الإرشادية، الشباب الريفي، مرشدين زراعيين، مراكز إرشادية.

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture in the world today stands at a crossroads, as it faces many pressures to provide sufficient food for a growing population (Armash & Ali, 2023) and do so sustainably, it is necessary for a radical and urgent transformation in food systems (Al-Masoudi, 2023), for transformational measures to be appropriate and effective at the same time, they must address a complex set of strategies and planned objectives that are interconnected with social, economic and environmental goals, that are compatible with the agricultural sector (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations & International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2019). The agricultural sector is at the forefront of the vital sectors that widely influence the inputs and outputs of the economy (Qusay, 2018), and represents a prominent activity in the economies of most Arab countries (Al-Zuhairi, 2015) because it absorbs more than a quarter of the total size of the workforce and contributes to the formation of the gross domestic product, as it meets food consumption needs (Unified Arab Monetary Fund, 2019),



it is necessary to work to open the door to the development and development of the agricultural sector in particular and the development of the economy in general (**Moussa, & Naji, 2020**), as the agricultural sector contributes to achieving comprehensive agricultural development by providing food security requirements and materials. Primary and food products to meet the necessary needs of rural people (**Ali et al., 2020**), as some countries are on the right track towards achieving some food security goals, but we need to make intensive and immediate efforts to save the sustainable development goals towards achieving them, which are considered the primary source for achieving hopes and prosperity. In rural society, building resilience and standing up to crises and shocks that cause food insecurity obstruct advancing agriculture and community development (**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2023**). To achieve development goals, rural society must reach ambitious goals through creativity, technology, knowledge, and financial resources. Sustainable in every context. (**UNDP, 2024**).

Within the framework of sustainable agricultural development, agricultural extension work has an important role and force in changing through providing extension services, tasks, and responsibilities on a broader basis, transferring and disseminating appropriate agricultural technology, building the capabilities of rural youth farmers, developing their skills to carry out their work (**Khamis, et al., 2023**), and developing and improving the most modern and innovative agricultural tools and practices for farmers to meet their needs and to ensure the long-term well-being of farmers and their families (**Swanson et al., 1997; Armash & Ali, 2023**). One of the necessities of successful extension work is the provision of qualified and trained agricultural extension specialists to carry out various extension activities efficiently. From here the importance of agricultural extension appears (**Al-Amiri, 2022**), as it is the body responsible for disseminating agricultural scientific information and knowledge and its developments among the ranks of farmers and persuading them to adopt these innovations and providing them with the information, knowledge and skills necessary to apply them properly, through the implementation of appropriate extension programs for them (**Al-Taie & Al-Rawi, 2010; Ridha & Ali, 2020**). It aims mainly to advance and develop farmers, including rural youth, by helping them to improve their standard of living, as they are the goals and means of development to advance and prosper agriculture through adopting innovations, technology, and modern agricultural techniques (**Al-Taie, 2009**). Pushing rural youth to enter the field of agriculture will ensure the way forward and the continuation of innovation by linking traditional knowledge with new solutions in the sector, revitalizing rural areas, and leading to reformulating the perception of rural society related to agriculture into a society capable of continuity and renewal (**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2019**). At present, extension work is almost unclear and traditional, and to develop the general framework of agricultural extension policies and strategies on a large scale, it must begin by



expanding the extension system and linking it to comprehensive national goals (**Abu Brith, 2015**). A strong extension system is the key to the desired change to meet the challenges of agriculture by integrating innovative extension approaches with today's challenges in agriculture. This essentially requires a strong network of extension systems supported by government initiatives and links between agricultural extension workers and other responsible bodies. This would ensure the security of livelihoods for the rural community through improved production (**Mohanty et al., 2011**), and creating better job opportunities for rural youth who are the pillar of the future and the conscious and important group in the development of the agricultural sector (**Ashima, 2021**), which aims to develop youth attitudes and confront obstacles (**Al-Sayed, 2023**), and bring planned changes to meet the needs of the current generation of rural youth (**Food and Agriculture Organization in the Near East and North Africa: 2023**), and active participation, which is one of the tools through which rural society can be promoted and advanced in providing facilitation work and facilitating access to resources, supplies and agricultural methods without compromising the requirements of the future generation of rural youth, and to improve their social and economic standard of living (**Al-Shafi'i & Khalifa, 2024**).

Accordingly, agricultural extension workers need many facilitation skills, building their capabilities as facilitators within the framework of groups with rural youth, and their active participation in program planning and resource allocation (**Al-Darini, 2020**), and moving to the facilitation role to develop new agricultural practices and activities at work (**Christian et al., 2015**). The participatory approach plays a valuable and fundamental role in calling for the activation of agricultural extension reforms through the application of decentralization and making it a modern system oriented towards innovation, learning by discovery, and developing the skills of workers (**Al-Dhubyani, 2022**), and involving all relevant parties (farmers or targets, agricultural extension workers) and achieving policies in developing the agricultural sector (**Al-Taie, 2014**). The participation of agricultural development institutions in the country with international and national research centers, global experiences, and expertise and their careful study to prepare and implement programs and projects appropriate for modernization (**Al-Taie, 2013**). Therefore, the changing situation after the reforms become agricultural extension workers' facilitators through the collective approach, the participation of rural youth, the promotion of participatory work, and the exchange of ideas, experiences, and problems, as their work begins with people's capabilities and moves to empowering them (**Abdel Nabi, 2021**), and thus the role of workers changes from expert to facilitator (**Barman, 2013**). Swanson mentioned that multiple reasons lead to weakness in providing effective guidance services and in performing facilitative roles. (**Swanson & Rajalahti, 2010**), including the lack of policy in reality and the lack of a systematic strategic framework that defines the mission of the agricultural extension system (**Noueiser, et al., 2019**), as well as the lack of agreement on



extension functions, the weakness of job specializations for agricultural extension workers, with the lack of focus on the emerging rural youth group, the lack of government support in providing services, and weak management are among the main reasons for obstructing the provision of extension services (Al-Dulaimi, 2020). The study presented by (Mohammed & Shair, 2024) confirmed the presence of many obstacles, including frequent changes in the structure of its organization, weakness in training on its programs, the target audience that must be served and financed, the lack of rewards and incentives, the severe decrease in the number of extension workers, the frequent reorganization of extension workers, the multiplicity of different organizations that carry out agricultural extension work, the lack of coordination between them, and the weakness of collective participation (Reda & Hassouni, 2015). These prominent problems hinder learning for participatory diagnosis of problems and the search for solutions that lead to a conscious agricultural generation, (Musa & Odo, 2013). So this research targeted the problems facing agricultural extension workers as facilitators and identified the most important problems they face while providing guidance services to rural youth in Baghdad Governorate.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research studied the problems faced by agricultural extension workers as facilitators in providing extension services to rural youth in the Baghdad Governorate in the following fields:

- 1- Material and financial problems.
- 2- Administrative and organizational problems.
- 3- Problems related to the work environment and relations.
- 4- Problems related to applying electronic guidance services.

Research Methodology

To achieve the goal of the research, the descriptive analytical method was used, which is one of the research methods that aims to study facts, events, phenomena, or a specific problem and analyze them in a detailed and systematic manner. The approach aims to clarify and interpret facts, concepts, and relationships. It is appropriate to the current research topic to reach accurate and detailed information and facts about the research to complete it. From Ahmed's point of view, the descriptive analytical method is the system followed by the researcher, in which the ideas that take place it become clear to reach the truth he seeks (Ahmed, 1996).

Research Community

The research Community included all agricultural extension workers (regardless of their specializations), numbering (138) respondents distributed as follows:



- 1- Workers in the Directorate of Agricultural Extension and Training and its affiliated formations: (the Training and Rehabilitation Center in Abu Ghraib, and the Extension Center in Baghdad) and (the extension farms are Al-Rashidiyah and Al-Tarmiyah).
- 2- Workers in the Agricultural Extension and Training Department in the Baghdad Agriculture Directorate, the Baghdad Agriculture Department, Al-Karkh in Abu Ghraib, and the Baghdad Agriculture Department, Rusafa.
- 3- Workers in the agricultural divisions in Baghdad/Al-Rusafa, (5) divisions, namely (Baghdad Agriculture Division -Al-Rusafa, Al-Rashidiya, Al-Mada'in, Al-Nahrwan, and Al-Jisr Divisions). The agricultural divisions in Baghdad/Al-Karkh, (13) divisions, which are (Al-Mahmudiyah, Al-Latifayah, Al-Yusufiyah, Al-Rashid, Al-Ridwaniyah Al-Sharqiya, Al-Abayji, Al-Mushahada, Al-Taji, Al-Kadhimiya, Al-Tarmiyah, Abu Ghraib, Al-Nasr and Al-Salam). Twenty (20) respondents were excluded from the research sample to measure the reliability of the questionnaire, and thus the total number of respondents became 118, as shown in Table 1.

Table (1): Distribution of agricultural extension workers in the research community.

No.	Workplace	Number of workers in agricultural extension
1	Headquarters of the Agricultural Extension and Training Department	80
2	Training and rehabilitation center in Abu Ghraib	5
3	Guidance Center in Baghdad	6
4	Al Rashidiya Farm	6
5	Al-Tarmiya Farm	7
6	Agricultural Extension Department in Baghdad Agriculture Directorate	12
7	Karkh Agriculture Department in Abu Ghraib	3
8	Rusafa Agriculture Department	1
9	Baghdad Agriculture Division, Al-Rusafa -Center	1
10	Rashidiya Agriculture Division	1
11	Almadain Agriculture Division	1
12	Nahrwan Agriculture Division	1
13	Al-Jisr Agriculture Division	1
14	Karkh Agriculture Division-Center	1
15	Al-Mahmudiyah Agriculture Division	1
16	Latifiya Agriculture Division	1
17	Youssooufia Agriculture Division	1
18	Rasheed Agriculture Division	1
19	Al-Ridwaniyah Al-Sharqiya Agriculture Division	1
20	Abayaji Agriculture Division	1
21	Al-Mushahada Agriculture Division	1
22	Taji Agriculture Division	1
23	Kadhimiya Agriculture Division	1



24	Tarmiya Agriculture Division	1
25	Abu Ghraib Agriculture Division	1
26	Al-Nasr and Al-Salam Agriculture Division	1
	Total	138

Research Design and Tool

The questionnaire was prepared to achieve the research objectives as a tool for collecting data, it is the most widely used method for collecting data through preparing written questions and the respondent's answers to them. The preparation of the questionnaire went through a series of stages, where the research plan was prepared in its preliminary form, by reviewing the literature, scientific research, and previous studies related to the research topic, as well as the opinions and observations of experts, specialists, and employees working in the field of agricultural extension.

The questionnaire was presented in its initial form to some experts specialized in the field of agricultural extension (12) experts, to indicate the degree of their agreement with the areas and paragraphs. In light of the approval, the scale consists of three levels: agree, agree with the amendment, disagree, and write the proposed amendment or add a field or a paragraph. Accordingly, the following weights were assigned to it (0, 1, 2) respectively. The purpose of presenting the questionnaire to some experts is to verify the apparent honesty and the honesty of the content.

The opinions of the experts were collected, their answers were recorded, and the average degrees of expert agreement were compared with the cut-off threshold of (75%), to prepare the questionnaire in its final form. All fields and paragraphs achieved (75%) and more, as the percentage of expert agreement reached (80%) and more. Thus the criterion of survival in the questionnaire was achieved in its final form, which is an acceptable percentage. In light of this, the opinions of experts must be taken into account under the stated research purposes. The questionnaire was kept with some modifications to it, as the questionnaire in its final form included (42) items distributed over (4) areas.

Stability Of the Research Tool

In light of the above, the pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted on 17/12/2023 on a sample of (20) respondents who were randomly selected from the agricultural departments, centers, and divisions to verify the stability of the scale by using the Cronbach equation. The results of the reliability coefficient values were (0.88) degree for the field of material and financial problems, (0.85) degree for the field of administrative and organizational problems, (0.91) degree for the problems related to the work environment and relations, and (0.93) degree for the problems associated with the application of electronic guidance services. The reliability coefficients were good and scientifically acceptable, met the purposes of the research, and confirmed that the scale is characterized by a high degree of stability.



Data Collection and Analysis

The data and information necessary for the research were collected using a questionnaire from respondents working in agricultural extension in agricultural departments, centers, and divisions (118) respondents during the period between (16/1/2024 to 6/2/2024) using a personal interview method.

- A four-graded scale was used for the problems facing agricultural extension workers as facilitators in providing extension services to rural youth. The levels included (very important, moderately important, little important, and not important), and weights were given to them (1, 2, 3, 4) respectively for all four domains and their (42) paragraphs. The scores of this scale ranged between (42-168) degrees. The domains and paragraphs were arranged in descending order according to the weighted mean, percentage weight, and according to their degree of importance to the respondents.

- After completing all the data, it was analyzed using the Statistical Analysis Program (SPSS) and other statistical methods such as the Facronbach Equation, the hypothetical mean, the percentage weight, and the weighted mean (Gaith & Maen, 2014).

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

First: Material and financial problems

The results of the research showed that the paragraphs related to the field of material and financial problems, which are (12) problems, have weighted means that fall between (3.32 - 3.68) degrees, and percentage weights that fall between (83.00 - 92.00) degrees, as shown in Table 2:

Table (2): Distribution of respondents according to paragraphs of material and financial problems.

Order	Percentage weight	weighted mean	Paragraph	No. in Questionnaire
1	92.00	3.68	Lack of financial incentives that encourage agricultural extension workers as facilitators in providing extension services to rural youth	2
2	91.75	3.67	Lack of libraries or agricultural references necessary to provide agricultural extension workers with the information and books required to achieve the facilitating role in providing extension services to rural youth.	7
3	89.25	3.57	Poor provision of modern program requirements and extension campaigns that facilitate extension service access to rural youth	1
4	88.75	3.55	Lack of a suitable place to meet and work to provide extension services to rural youth	10
5	88.00	3.52	Lack of additional wages paid to agricultural extension workers to facilitate access to the extension service for	3



			rural youth	
6	87.50	3.50	Lack of availability of courses to develop the skills of agricultural extension workers to facilitate access to the extension service or rural youth	12
7	87.00	3.48	Lack of the necessary capabilities to carry out practical applications and experiments for rural youth to participate in them	6
8	85.75	3.43	Lack of modern means of communication necessary to facilitate extension service to rural youth	9
9.5	85.50	3.42	Lack of modern means of communication designated for agricultural extension workers to work as facilitators in delivering extension services to rural youth	5
9.5	85.50	3.42	Lack of modern means of communication to communicate with higher levels to facilitate the extension service to rural youth	11
11	85.00	3.40	Failure to provide financial capabilities in government departments and extension centers to facilitate access to the extension service for rural youth	4
12	83.00	3.32	The distance between the agricultural extension workers' residence and the workplace	8

It is clear from the results of Table (2), that the problem of “lack of financial incentives that encourage agricultural extension workers as facilitators in providing extension service to rural youth” received the highest degree of importance and ranked first with a weighted mean of (3.68) degree, and a percentage weight of (92.00) degree. The reason for this is the lack of financial incentives granted to agricultural extension workers, which are necessary to encourage and motivate them to work as facilitators and develop their performance to provide the best extension services to rural youth. As for the importance of the rest of the problems for the respondents, they came sequentially and according to their order in Table 2, while the problem of “the distance of agricultural extension workers’ residence from the workplace” is ranked last, with a weighted mean of (3.32) degrees, and a percentage weight of (83.00) degrees. The reason is that this paragraph is not considered a problem from the point of view of the respondents compared to other problems, since the availability of multiple means of transportation for transporting agricultural extension workers can easily get to and from their workplaces, or the workplace is close to their residence.

Second: Administrative and organizational problems

The results of the research showed that the paragraphs related to the field of administrative and organizational problems, which are (10) problems, have weighted means between (3.35 - 3.79) degrees, and percentage weights between (83.75 - 94.75) degree, and as shown in Table (3):

**Table (3):** Distribution of respondents according to paragraphs on administrative and organizational problems

Order	Percentage weight	weighted mean	Paragraph	No. in Questionnaire
1	94.75	3.79	Lack of a database on rural youth	6
2	93.75	3.75	Failure to provide the appropriate staff at various levels of the extension organization and its units to facilitate extension service to rural youth	2
3	91.50	3.66	Weak evaluation of agricultural extension workers for programs to develop extension service facilitation for rural youth	1
4	91.25	3.65	Weak preparation and evaluation of extension plans and programs to facilitate extension service to rural youth	5
5	90.75	3.63	Lack of job description for the role of agricultural extension workers as facilitators in providing extension service to rural youth	3
6	85.75	3.43	Agricultural extension workers perform non-extension work that is not appropriate for their facilitation work in providing extension service to rural youth	9
7	85.25	3.41	Weak organization of farmers and rural youth into producer groups and linking them to markets dealing with high-value crops in rural areas	4
8	85.00	3.40	Lack of coordination and organization between the extension agency and other agencies in the countryside to facilitate the provision of extension services to rural youth	7
9	84.50	3.38	Weak development of the capabilities of agricultural extension workers at all administrative and organizational levels in facilitating extension service access to youth	10
10	83.75	3.35	Weak preparation of technical reports on agricultural extension using modern technologies to facilitate extension service to rural youth	8

It is clear from Table 3 that the problem of “lack of a database on rural youth” came in first place with a weighted mean of (3.79) degree and a percentage weight of (94.75) degree. This is due to the tremendous development in the technologies used on networks that require a database through which information and everything related to rural youth can be stored and used. The importance of the rest of the problems came to the respondents in turn and according to their order in the table. while the problem of “weak preparation of technical reports on agricultural extension using modern technologies to facilitate extension service to rural youth” came in the last rank, with a weighted mean of (3.35) degree, and a percentage weight of (83.75) degree. The reason is that the preparation of technical reports on agricultural extension using modern technologies does not represent a problem of importance to the workers because it falls within the tasks and duties that they carry out.



Third: Problems related to the work environment and relations

The results of the research showed that the paragraphs related to the field of the work environment and relations problems, which are (10) problems, have weighted means between (3.47 - 3.73) degree, and percentage weights between (86.75 - 93.25) degree, as shown in Table (4):

Table (4): Distribution of respondents according to paragraphs on problems related to the work environment and relations.

Order	Percentage weight	weighted mean	Paragraph	No. in Questionnaire
1	93.25	3.73	Lack of field visits to young rural farmers to identify their problems, determine priorities, and convey them to researchers	8
2	92.25	3.69	Poor information exchange between rural youth who face similar problems in rural areas	5
3.5	92.00	3.68	Weak application of participatory guidance and group work that meets the needs of rural youth in improving their standard of living	4
3.5	92.00	3.68	Lack of opportunities to communicate and speak with the superior director	10
5	89.50	3.58	Lack of coordination and organization between agricultural extension and local organizations related to facilitating extension service access to rural youth	3
6	88.75	3.55	The difficulty of conducting experiments in the fields of rural youth farmers that show the correct practical steps to implement practical technical recommendations	9
7.5	88.25	3.53	Lack of understanding by heads of local organizations of the role of agricultural extension in facilitating extension service access to rural youth	2
7.5	88.25	3.53	Lack of cooperation between rural youth and agricultural extension workers in facilitating the extension service	1
9	88.00	3.52	Lack of cooperation between local leaders and agricultural extension workers to facilitate extension services to rural youth	6
10	86.75	3.47	Weak management of dialogue between agricultural extension workers and rural youth in providing extension services to them	7

It is clear from Table (4) that the problem of “lack of field visits to young rural farmers to identify their problems, determine priorities, and convey them to researchers” came in first place with a weighted mean of (3.73) degree and a percentage weight of (93.25) degree. The



reason is due to the lack of field visits which is necessary to provide agricultural extension workers with realistic information regarding field or home conditions, identify the problems of rural youth, identify their needs and priorities, develop solutions, provide information, adopt agricultural innovations, and encouraging the building of a close relationship between agricultural extension workers and rural youth farmers, which contributes to increasing their confidence in agricultural extension work. The importance of the rest of the problems to the respondents came successively and according to their order in the table. The problem of “weak management of dialogue between agricultural extension workers and rural youth in the field of providing extension services to them” came in last place with a weighted mean of (3.47) degree and a percentage weight of (86.75) degree. The reason for that is due to the belief of agricultural extension workers that extension work is based on dialogue, teamwork, participation, and the exchange of ideas and information relevant to the needs of rural youth farmers.

Fourth: Problems related to applying electronic guidance services

The results of the research showed that the paragraphs of the field of problems associated with the application of electronic agricultural extension services, which are (10) problems have a weighted mean between (3.22 - 3.65) degree and a percentage weight of (80.50 - 91.25) degree, as shown in Table (5):

Table (5): Distribution of respondents according to paragraphs on problems related to applying electronic guidance services.

Order	Percentage weight	weighted mean	Paragraph	No. in Questionnaire
1	91.25	3.65	Poor use of modern information communication systems that facilitate the access of information to rural youth	8
2	86.75	3.47	Poor regular maintenance of electronic devices and failure to provide a technical worker to maintain the devices in agricultural centers and departments	7
3	85.75	3.43	Agricultural extension workers do not keep pace with information and communications technology in facilitating extension service access to rural youth	6
4.5	85.50	3.42	Lack of provision of electronic agricultural extension services in government departments, extension centers, and agricultural associations to facilitate extension service to rural youth.	2
4.5	85.50	3.42	Not publishing agricultural websites in Arabic that focus on rural youth	10
6	84.50	3.38	Failure to provide agricultural departments and extension centers with a sufficient number of advanced computers connected to the Internet to facilitate access to the extension service to rural youth	9



7	84.25	3.37	There is no incentive to encourage agricultural extension workers to use electronic agricultural extension to facilitate the extension service and its access to rural youth	3
8	82.50	3.30	Extension centers and agricultural directorates are not connected to the Internet	4
9	82.00	3.28	Lack of awareness among the majority of agricultural extension workers about the importance of electronic extension in facilitating extension service access to rural youth	5
10	80.50	3.22	Lack of training for agricultural extension workers on using computers and the internet in agricultural extension work in facilitating extension service access to rural youth	1

It is clear from Table (5) that the problem of “poor use of modern information communication systems that facilitate the access of information to rural youth” is ranked first with a weighted mean of (3.65) degree and a percentage weight of (91.25) degree. The reason is due to the importance of using modern communications technologies and the actual need for them to facilitate the access of information or provide extension services to rural youth in an easier and faster manner. The importance of the rest of the problems came to the respondents successively and according to their order in Table 4. The problem of “lack of training of agricultural extension workers on using the computer and the internet in agricultural extension work in facilitating extension service access to rural youth” came in last place with a weighted mean of (3.22) degree, and a percentage weight of (80.50) degree. The reason for this may be attributed to the fact that agricultural extension workers have now had experience and knowledge in using computers and the internet to deliver information and extension services to rural youth, so training does not constitute using this technique as a problem for them.

As for the ranking of the field of problems facing agricultural extension workers as facilitators in providing services to rural youth (4) fields, as shown in Table (6). The problems related to the environment and work relations came in first place with a weighted mean of (3.60) and a percentage weight of (90.00) degree. The reason for this is that the work environment and relationships are important and affect the efficiency of the performance of agricultural extension workers. The more positive work environment, cooperation, and harmony between the workers and the direct manager, as well as the presence of coordination and organization with institutions, organizations, and local leaders, will help facilitate the provision of the service to rural youth and encourage teamwork.

The field of problems related to the application of electronic agricultural extension services came in last place with a weighted mean of (3.39) degree and a percentage weight of (84.75) degree. This may be because agricultural extension workers focus on fieldwork and field visits, through which they directly identify the problems and needs of rural youth to find appropriate solutions and exchange opinions with them to facilitate the provision of extension



services them. A lack of interest of workers in using information and communications technology because there is no incentive to encourage them to use and rely on fieldwork in providing extension services with collective participation and direct contact with rural youth. The use of technology Information and electronic communications enhances the provision of agricultural extension services and facilitates the educational process, but they are not the basis for implementing the agricultural mission.

In light of the above-mentioned results of the weighted mean values of the problems, the hypothesis is accepted which states that there are some problems facing agricultural extension workers as facilitators in providing extension services to rural youth.

Table (6): Order on field problems facing agricultural extension workers as facilitators in providing extension services according to respondents.

Order	Percentage weight	weighted mean	Field	No. in Questionnaire
1	90.00	3.60	Problems related to the work environment and relations	3
2	88.75	3.55	Administrative and organizational problems	2
3	87.50	3.50	Material and financial problems	1
4	84.75	3.39	Problems related to applying electronic guidance services	4

CONCLUSION

In light of the results of the research, it is concluded that there are many and diverse problems facing agricultural extension workers, most notably the problems related to the work environment and relations, which are considered the most important obstacle to achieving the facilitating role in providing extension services to rural youth. Therefore, the researcher recommends the necessity of making more efforts by agricultural extension institutions and agencies to prepare training programs to develop workers' capabilities and skills in the field of collective and participatory work to facilitate the provision of extension services to rural youth and provide support through material and moral incentives to achieve the facilitation role.

REFERENCES

1. Abu Brith, (2015). *Extension and Advisory Services Rural Development Services for Agricultural Transformation*. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Report, 1-30.
2. Al-Amiri, Z. A. N. (2022). The Reality of The Agricultural Extension Service Provided To Family Farms In The Field Of Natural Resource Sustainability From The Point Of View Of Agricultural Extension Workers In The Central Governorates Of Iraq. MSC thesis, College of Agricultural Engineering Sciences, University of Baghdad, Iraq.



3. Armash, A. H., & Ali, N.S. (2023). Problems Facing Fodder Crop Farmers in the side of Rusafa/ Baghdad Governorate. *Iraqi Journal of Market Research and Consumer Protection*.15(2), 48-59.
4. Al-Masoudi, S. R. (2023), The reality of sustainable rural development in Al-Husseiniyah District in Karbala Governorate in Iraq during the year 2023 AD, *Ibn Khaldun Journal of Studies and Research*, 3 (9), 214- 232.
5. Ali, N. S. & Ali, R. H. (2020), Analysis of the impact of public spending on the agricultural sector's contribution to the gross domestic product in Iraq for the period (2003-2018). *Al-Kut Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences*, 12 (38), 175- 196.
6. Armsh, A. H., & Ali, N.S., (2023). Requirements for Developing Farmers' Capabilities in the Field of Fodder Crops Cultivation in the Side of Rusafa/ Baghdad Governorate. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 11(1);1229-1259.
7. Al-Zuhairi, L. C. L. (2015). The cognitive needs of agricultural employees working in the field of vegetable seed production in Abu Ghraib District/Baghdad Governorate. The Iraqi digital repository of dissertations and dissertations, Higher Diploma Thesis in Specialized Agricultural Extension, College of Agricultural Engineering Sciences, University of Baghdad, Iraq.
8. Al- Taie, H. K. & Al-Rawi, S. T. (2010). The reality of some aspects of agricultural extension service in the field of protected agriculture in the holy governorates of Karbala and Najaf. *Tikrit University Journal of Agricultural Sciences*, 10(2), 220-228.
9. Al- Taie, H. Kh. (2009). Improving the management of agricultural technology dissemination programs in Iraq. *Al-Furat Journal of Agricultural Sciences*, 1(2), 241-257.
10. Al-Taie, H. K. (2013). *An introduction to improving the quality of dissemination of agricultural technologies in Iraq. Dialogue Al-Fikr Magazine*, Issue (25-26), 89-101.
11. Al-Taie, H. K. (2014). A proposed introduction to reforming the agricultural extension system in Iraq. *Iraqi Agriculture Research Journal*, 19 (7), 204-216.
12. Ashhima, A. M. (2021). A critical analytical study of the reality of developing countries with a focus on the case of Libya. *Journal of Physical Education and Other Sciences* (7),
13. Al-Sayed, H. M. H. (2023), The role of units of a strategic nature at the university in qualifying university youth for the labor market. *Journal of Studies in Social Service*, 2 (63), 403-440.
14. Al-Shafie, E.M. & Khalifa, E.A. (2024), Participation of Local Rural Leaders in Some Agricultural Extension and Rural Development Activities in Some Villages of Beheira Governorate. *Journal of Advances in Agricultural Researches*. 29(1). 23-37.
15. Al-Dhubyani, H. B. M. M. (2022), Determinants of applying the participatory development approach in local communities: a study using the grounded theory approach in rural communities. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2 (64), 1- 70.
16. Al-Darini, H. a. a. (2020), Procedural Guidelines for Implementing Interventional Psychological Programs, *Journal of Education, Faculty of Education in Cairo, Al-Azhar University*, 5 (187). 1- 34.



17. Abdel Nabi, p. R. (2021). Determinants of rural youth empowerment in a village in Fayoum Governorate. *Alexandria Journal for Scientific Exchange*, 42(1), 162- 185.
18. Al-Dulaimi, H. R. M. (2020). *Requirements For Improving Rural Youth's Access To Extension Services To Develop Their Capabilities In The Field Of Increasing Agricultural Production In Baghdad Governorate*. MSC, College of Agricultural Engineering Sciences, University of Baghdad, 1- 115
19. Ahmed, N. H. (1996). *The descriptive approach in the book of Sibawayh*. 1 st. edition, National Book House - Benghazi, 13- 327.
20. Barman, U. (2013), Building the Capacity of Extension Workers as Group Facilitators, "The Extension Approach: Issues in the Indian Context. *Indian Journal of Science*, 2(3), 5- 7.
21. Christian S., Rob W. B., Alison J. K., Adrian C. N.& Robin. j. (2015). Facilitation and sustainable agriculture: a mechanistic approach to reconciling crop production and conservation. *British Ecological Society*, (30) 98-107.
23. FAO, (2023). Rural Transformation for Youth Employment and Income Enhancement.
24. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, (2019), United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028). Global Action Plan, Report, 6-73.
25. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2023). A report prepared by the United Nations revealed that crises have pushed an additional 122 million people into the abyss of hunger since 2019, 2023. Report, 1-5.
26. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2019). Placing family farmers at the focus of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (2019-2028). Global Action Plan. Report, 2- 27.
27. Ghaith Al-Bahr & Maen A., (2014). Statistical analysis of questionnaires using the IBM SPSS statistics program. Sabar Center for Statistical Studies and Public Policy, 5- 100.
28. Khamis, A. I., Saleh, J. M., Ali, N. S., & Ghaffoori, A.T. (2023). Strengthening Rural Youth in Anbar Province: Assessing the Influence of Small-Scale Agricultural Initiatives, *Pakistan Journal of Agricultural Research*, 36(4): 389-403.
29. Mohanty, A. K., Sagiv, M. Q. & Sajesh, F. K. (2011). Innovative Extension Approaches for Dissemination of Sustainable Technology in Fisheries. Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Cochin - ICAR, 93 - 107
30. Mohammad, F. A. A. & Shair, S. C. (2024), Determinants of job performance and organizational commitment of workers in the agricultural extension system in Menoufia Governorate. *Alexandria Journal for Scientific Exchange*, 45 (1), 58- 87.
31. Musa, Y. a. & Odo, I. Y. (2013). Limitations and implications of the extended training and visit (T&V) system in Nigeria. *Journal of Agriculture and Sustainability*, 4(1). 67 – 76.
32. Mousa, R. F. & Naji, A. A. R. (2020). The role of high-rank wheat seed maximization program in developing workers' abilities in the middle and south of Iraq. *Plant Archives*, 20(1), 2500-2507.



33. Noueiser, S. a. M. Sh. Abu Al-Rous, A. M. Y. & Fouda, H. (2019). The role of agricultural extension in promoting the most important export vegetable crops from the point of view of extension workers in the Sharkia and Ismailia governorates. *Zagazig Journal of Agricultural Research*, 46 (5), 1621- 1643.
34. Qusay, H., (2018), The agricultural sector within the general budget for the year 2010, *Journal of Management and Economics*, 1 (3):1-10.
35. Ridha, B. A. J. & Ali, N. S., (2020). Impact of Activities Offered by Agricultural Extension and Training Office for Rular Women in Iraq. *Indian Journal of Ecology*, 47, Special Issue (12): 381-384.
36. Reda, B. A. A. & Hassouni, A. R. (2015). The problems facing extension training centers and ways to develop them in Iraq from the point of view of their workers. *Iraqi Agricultural Sciences Journal*. 46(4),621-628.
37. Swanson, B. Y. Bentz, R. B. & Sofranco. A. (1997). *Improving Agricultural Extension*. A Reference Guide, *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*, Rome.
38. Swanson, B. J., & Rajalahti, R. (2010). *Strengthening Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services*. Procedures for Identifying, Transforming, and Evaluating Extension Systems, World Bank.
39. Unified Arab Monetary Fund (2019), *Unified Arab Economic Report. Agriculture and Water Sector*, Volume 3 (39), Frequency: Annual, Report, 49-66.
40. United Nations Development Program in the Arab Region (2024). *Sustainable Development Goals in Action*. Report.
41. Khamis, A.I., Saleh, J.M., Ali, N.S. & Ghaffoori, A. T. (2023). Strengthening Rural Women in Anbar Province: Assessing the Influence of Small-Scale Agricultural Initiatives. *Pakistan Journal of Agricultural Research*, 37(1), 1-12.