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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC AND NGO SECTOR'S ROLE IN IMPROVING RURAL LIVELIHOODS IN THE PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

In Pakistan, both public and private sectors are working hard to deliver agriculture related information to the farmers. The basic objective of both of the sectors is to bring improvement in the living standards of rural poor. In this perspective, the current research was designed to evaluate the working of public and private sectors (NGO) which are working to uplift the livelihoods of rural community. Present study was conducted in district Muzaffargarh of the Punjab province to assess the role of public and private sector (NGO) in improving the livelihoods of rural masses through extension services. Through multistage sampling technique total 200 respondents were selected from entire district and were interviewed with the help of interview schedule. Findings revealed that electronic media and print media were being used by the both sectors for information dissemination. Both sectors were providing services related to the education, capacity building, trainings, and vaccination of livestock, inputs supply and awareness about the modern agriculture. Overall role of private sector was better than the public sector but needs improvement as effectiveness falls to the medium level. Study recommends the collaborative work of public and private sector for the sustainable development of rural masses.

Keywords: Public sector, NGO, livelihood, extension services.

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural Production in the 3rd world countries continues to be low and it is generally accepted that dearth of information tailored to local needs. Muhammad (1994) revealed that lack of technical knowledge at the farm level is one of the prime factors for low and stagnant agricultural production. Pakistan is also included in the list of those developing countries whose economy is agro-based where majority of the people used to live in rural areas and directly or indirectly depend upon farm income for their livelihoods (Government of Pakistan, 2013). It is widely accepted that country's overall development is highly depend upon the development of agriculture sector (Luqman *et al.*, 2013).

Government of Pakistan had been started a series of extension cum rural development programmes from

time to time. But unfortunately all of the programmes were terminated one after the other due to one or other reason (Luqman *et al.*, 2005). In 2001, the government implemented devolution of power plan to uplift the economic status of rural people through pooling their resources and sources at grass root level (Zaidi, 2005). All the rural development related initiatives of the government started during the different regimes were terminated after intervals due to their limitations. Political instability in the country and rivalry and contention among different government departments are some of the major factors for the failure of different rural development strategies and programmes (Saima *et al.*, 2005). In this situation, many NGOs and Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) are striving hard to improve the rural livelihoods (Majeed *et al.*, 2006). The efforts of these NGOs and RSPs in reducing poverty convinced state departments that local level community based organizations must be streamlined in order to attain sustainable development in the country

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(Khan, 2009). Keeping in view these facts, the present research was designed to evaluate the efforts of Public and private (NGOs) in the Punjab, Pakistan.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the Punjab province. The province is divided into 36 districts. Out of these districts district Muzaffargarh was selected randomly as the study area. The district is further divided into four sub-districts or tehsils namely Muzaffargarh, Jatoi, Ali Pur and KotAdu. From each of the four tehsils, fifty (50) farmers were randomly selected as the respondents thus making a total sample size of 200 respondents from the entire district. Only those people were selected who were obtaining services from the both public sector and NGOs. In this regard, purposive sampling was assumed best.

Interview schedule was used as research instrument. Three point scale (1=Low, 2=Medium, 3=High) was used to identify the extent of response. Majority of the respondents were interviewed by the researcher face to face while some were interviewed telephonically. Collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics was applied for the interpretation of the data. T-test was also applied to compare the means of the responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data mentioned in Table 1 indicate that various

communication sources were being used by the both public and NGO sectors as well. In case of public sector, highest mean value was obtained by the group meeting. It is obvious that group meeting is the group contact method and extension field staff belonging to public sector prefers group methods to disseminate technology effectively within the short time. Print media was also found as 2nd prominent technique but it was for the literate people therefore effectiveness appeared as limited. Helpline were also found being used along with TV as the most effective and appropriate electronic media.

General outlook indicate that NGO sector utilization regarding communication sources was bit greater than the public sector. Similar findings were found by the Onyenkazi and Gana (2009) where they revealed the private sector more effective regarding information provision among farmers. Similarly, Cox and Ortega (2004) also reported the dominancy of the private sector over public sector-test was applied and significant results were found revealing that NGO sector utilization is greater in all aspects except the internet and helpline.

The major reason found for the less usage of internet and helpline was the moveable functioning of NGO as they have to work in many areas and these NGO never remain stagnant in single area.

Table 1. Communication Sources Being Used by Public sector and NGO for the dissemination purpose.

Communication sources	Public sector		NGO sector		t-test
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
TV	2.49	0.521	2.665	0.504	-2.901**
Radio	1.63	0.759	2.61	0.600	-13.897**
Internet	1.90	0.841	2.12	2.361	-1.291 ^{NS}
Helpline	2.35	0.615	2.52	1.594	-1.469 ^{NS}
group meetings	2.69	0.497	2.76	0.431	-2.687**
print media	2.67	0.504	2.34	0.711	5.267**

Table 2. Extension service provided by public sector and NGO in improving rural livelihoods.

Extension Services related to	Public sector		NGO sector		t-test
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Education	1.70	0.511	1.89	0.314	-4.571**
Capacity building	1.18	0.406	1.29	0.453	-2.594**
Trainings	1.88	0.341	1.31	0.462	14.95**
Supply of inputs	1.07	0.256	1.52	0.642	-9.496**
Vaccination for livestock	1.11	0.329	1.13	0.413	-0.446 ^{NS}
Awareness regarding modern agriculture	1.68	0.478	1.22	0.529	9.903**

Average Mean (Public Sector): 1.43

Average Mean (NGO Sector): 1.39

Table 2 is the illustration of extension services provided by the public and NGO sectors for the uplifting of rural communities. Various services related to education, capacity building of farmers, trainings, inputs supply, vaccination for livestock and awareness regarding modern agriculture were being provided by the both sectors.

Comparative look on average mean shows slight difference between the both sectors regarding extension services delivery. The role in this regard was bit greater acknowledged than the NGO sector. Reason revealed during informal discussion was the greater staff of the public sector while NGOs staff was limited.

T-test analysis indicated significant relationship indicating the greater role of Ngo individually better than public sector. Major difference was seen regarding awareness regarding modern agriculture as public sector was working greater in thus perspective through various extension techniques. On other hand NGO was more passionate toward education promotion. It's up to the respondents then how they take the services being provided and to what extent they prefer and to whom. Similar statement was quoted by Davidson and Ahmad (2002) that farmers' preferences vary on behalf of their education and land holding size.

Table 3. Comparative effectiveness of extension services of Public and NGO sector.

Extension Services related to	Public sector		NGO sector		t-test
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Education	1.94	0.258	1.52	0.576	10.216**
Capacity building	1.26	0.448	1.63	0.506	-7.67**
Trainings	1.69	0.476	1.91	0.326	-5.747**
Supply of inputs	1.17	0.372	1.23	0.488	-1.486 ^{NS}
Vaccination for livestock	1.82	0.531	1.52	3.228	1.339 ^{NS}
Awareness regarding modern agriculture	1.19	0.453	1.26	0.437	-1.336 ^{NS}

Average Mean (Public Sector): 1.51 Average Mean (NGO Sector): 1.63.

Respondents were further asked to express their effectiveness level regarding the services provided by both public and NGO sector. In case of services provision regarding education role of NGO was greater but effectiveness was found more of the public sector work. Because the facilities provided by the public sector were almost free and education was easy to access. Numbers of schools were greater than the NGO temporary schools. T-test analysis also showed the role of public sector more effective in view of respondents. Regarding inputs supply non-significant results were found because public sector was more intended toward inputs provisions on subsidized rates for the farmers while NGO was not doing this task in this way as public sector performed. Livestock was seen as profitable business for the rural masses as there exists immense pastoral land where free grazing was common and animals were getting feed freely. Public sector was found in better role regarding vaccination of livestock animals. Farmers perceived trainings and capacity building more effective through involvement of NGO. Farmer showed that NGO did well job as they provide us practical experience because of that we learned well. Greater effectiveness of private sector could be result of

adequate financing and proper planning as revealed by Onyenkazi and Gana (2009). T-test applied showed significant results in case of education, capacity building and trainings while in case of other services results were found non-significant. Significant difference on basis of perceived effectiveness was also shown by the Rana et al. (2013). Average Mean value indicate that NGO services got maximum effectiveness but in-depth look clarify that effectiveness of both the sector is below mark as average falls slightly closer to the medium level which is not enough from the development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Present study concludes that despite the limited resources and deprived condition of inhabitants in Pakistan, both the sectors i.e. public and NGO played good role for the uplifting of the rural communities. According to the feasibility and access, both sectors did their best yet a lot of work is needed to be done. Perceived effectiveness is just one step toward the development while several more successful steps are needed for the development of the entire population. On the basis of findings it is suggested that both sector should work together through collaboration for the

maximum benefits. Inputs should be provided on subsidized rates for the extended productivity. Practical approach should be adopted for the maximum learning. Moreover, international organization should do more work for the rehabilitation for country as well.

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