

EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT FOR THE EXTENSION ORGANIZATION IN LIGHT OF THE TOTAL QUALITY STANDARDS FROM THE STANDPOINT OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORKERS IN GOVERNORATES OF BAGHDAD AND DIYALA FROM IRAQ

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ABSTRACT:

This was aimed to identify the performance of the senior management of the extension organization in light of the comprehensive quality standards from the point of view of agricultural extension workers in the governorates of Baghdad and Diyala in Iraq through the following: Identify the field of planning, identify the field of decision-making, identify the field of human relations. Data from agricultural extension workers in the governorates of Baghdad and Diyala, which included a graded pentagonal scale consisting of degrees of approval with grades ranging between 5-1 To measure the degree of application of comprehensive quality standards for higher management in the fields from the viewpoint of the agricultural extension workers in the above-mentioned governorates. The governorates of Baghdad and Diyala were selected as an area for conducting the research, as the research community included 38 agricultural divisions, at a rate of 20% and by 8 divisions, and a random sample of 510 agricultural extension workers was withdrawn, amounting to 20% and by 102 agricultural guides. The results showed that the weighted mean for the field of planning from the viewpoint of agricultural extension agents was 3.189, which is close to a certain extent from the hypothetical mean of 3 and a percentage weight 63.78%. With regard to the field of human relations, it came with a weighted mean 3.136.

Key word: planning, decision-making, human relationships, weighted, hypothetical.

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تقويم أداء الإدارة العليا للمنظمة الإرشادية في ظل معايير الجودة الشاملة من وجهة نظر المرشدين الزراعيين في محافظتي

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المستخلص

هدف البحث إلى التعرف على أداء الإدارة العليا للمنظمة الإرشادية في ظل معايير الجودة الشاملة من وجهة نظر المرشدين الزراعيين في محافظتي بغداد وديالى في العراق وتحقيقاً لأهداف البحث تم التعرف على المجالات المذكورة آنفاً من خلال أعداد أستاذة لجمع البيانات من المرشدين الزراعيين في محافظتي بغداد وديالى والتي تضمنت مقياساً خماسياً متدرجاً من درجات موافقة (كبيرة جداً ، كبيرة ، متوسطة، قليلة ، قليلة جداً) تتراوح درجاته بين (5-1) لقياس درجة تطبيق معايير الجودة الشاملة للإدارة العليا في المجالات (التخطيط، اتخاذ القرار، العلاقات الإنسانية) من وجهة نظر المرشدين الزراعيين في المحافظات المذكورة أعلاه وقد شمل المقياس (76) فقرة (5) محور ، ثلاث مجالات. خلصت نتائج البحث إلى أن الوسط المرجح لمجال التخطيط من وجهة نظر المرشدين الزراعيين كان (3.189) وهو قريب إلى حد ما من الوسط الفرضي البالغ (3) ووزن منوي (63.78%) . وفيما يخص مجال العلاقات الإنسانية فقد جاءت بوسط مرجح (3.136) وهو قريب إلى حد ما من الوسط الفرضي والبالغ (3) ووزن منوي (62.72%) . وفيما يخص مجال اتخاذ القرار فقد جاءت بوسط مرجح (3.04) وهو قريب إلى حد ما إلى الوسط الفرضي والبالغ (3) ووزن منوي (60.8%).

الكلمات المفتاحية: التخطيط، اتخاذ القرار، العلاقات الإنسانية، الوسط المرجح، الوسط الفرضي.

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural extension guides the targeted to change their attitudes towards the best by providing them with more information and knowledge and convincing them to adopt the new technologies (16). In addition to the fact that the knowledge and skills it provides are based on the needs of men and women (9). This program is done by increasing the awareness of agricultural extension workers of the need to efficiently transfer that knowledge to the targeted and their families, and then increase their awareness of it. Thus, Agricultural extension is an education that leads to improvement through carefully and systematically planned programs (17). In many third world countries, agricultural development is one of the most important goals of their national governments, and this concern is reflected in governmental and private institutions (14). Also, it must be understood that in order for the development occurrence, there must be many components, some of which are related to policies and legislation, some of which are related to the level of technologies. Besides, some of them are related to the nature of the resources available in society, whether natural or human resources. However, the evidence confirms that the existence of agricultural systems capable of discovering and adapting modern technologies to serve the targeted is one of the basic foundations in agricultural development in any country (11). Accordingly, it can be observed that rural families in societies are the field of extension work in rural development and building the national economy. Since agricultural extension invests its efforts, means, and methods towards this development to raise the level of the rural individual agriculturally, mentally, and socially, expressing their needs, aspirations, and hopes, As well as, actual participation in developing agricultural production by improving their access methods on knowledge and modern agricultural technology in the various fields of production and marketing of commodities and agricultural plant and animal products (3). Poor management is one of the most prominent problems facing developing countries in general and Iraq in particular, and to overcome these problems, organizations should be

developed. Likewise, the performance of the administration and its workers improved, as whenever the administration has promoted its apparent and hidden powers, these organizations succeed in performing their tasks and this is what has been proven by experience. The United States of America, France, Japan, Germany, Singapore, and South Korea have made long strides in the science of management because effective management tries to integrate its functions. Further, coordinates together with human, material, financial, informational, and technical resources to achieve the goals that the organization seeks (8). The extension service could be better if it was well managed and accountable to farmers to meet the needs of all farmers (18), and this is what made the intellectual conflict open to the concept of total quality. Therefore, agricultural institutions seek to raise the level of performance through the approach of total quality management because it is a philosophy that requires a profound change in the vision, foundations, concepts, and practices. Since it is a system of integrated management that aims to activate the elements of total quality represented by the strategic vision and its focus on the customer and the commitment of senior management to quality since it is everyone's responsibility to solve problems and continuous improvement (12). As well as, decision-making that is based on facts and reduces uncertainties and risks by relying on quantitative methods prepared for this purpose such as a decision tree and others (7). Meanwhile, the decisions related to the application of total quality management (TQM) are among the long-term strategic decisions that are taken at the level of senior management in organizations. The strategic decision determines how to reach TQM and determine the time required to achieve it. Therefore, the needs are increasing to support the senior management to achieve success, as they are the most capable of convincing other levels to implement it. So, it can say that it is necessary to train leaders on the concepts and principles of TQM to increase their capabilities and skills to effectively affect the organization and communicate with workers, and meet the needs of the targeted Besides,

create an encouraging environment for planning and implementation for total quality programs with continuous improvement in their performance (2). Due to the importance of quality, the Islamic religion has adopted the foundations and philosophy of total quality management (15). These methods present good agreement with the definition. The American Federal Quality Institute defines quality as correctly perform the correct work from the first time with reliance on the beneficiary's evaluation to know the extent of improving performance (1). Quality is the correct performance of the work from the first time with the evaluation of those targeted for it to see the extent of performance improvement. Many organizations have accelerated their use in the field of their administrative work, and thus the importance of extension management is reflected in the practice of some functions, activities, and services, whether in planning, organizing, implementing, monitoring. Along with, decision-making and solving problems, evaluation, communication, and coordination as well as cooperative work to achieve the goals sought by the extension agency (10). The great interest in this field led to the development of the concept of quality, its methods, and tools in a way that could not provide a full definition of this concept. Until its definitions multiplied and companies and organizations have increasingly adopted competitive strategies based on the concept of quality because it means continuous improvement. As well as, improving the product and owning time and innovation that comes with everything new and keeps pace with everything developed (12). Management in the general sense has been practiced in various forms by ancient civilizations, which is a science that has rules, origins, theories, and modern concepts stemming from its primary mission to make the organization with its various components high-performance for its use of available resources the best use. Also, it is naturally an intellectual process that is reflected in the practical reality of the organizations in the form of practices for all its functions in order to effectively achieve the goals of the organization (6). The human practices of the leadership or administrative roles, with the many responsibilities and

burdens on it, affect one way or another productivity. Consequently, the human element, in all its levels and components in agricultural extension management, is the basic and decisive factor for increasing the effectiveness of the extension system, developing rural communities, and improving their standard of living (5). pointed out that there is a weakness in the performance of the extension manager and the absence of its activities at all levels. For that reason, new approaches have been used in measurement and evaluation, including total quality standards as an entry point in evaluating, improving, and developing performance. Since developed countries adopt these standards, and it has become evident for every organization to strive for quality and upgrading. Besides, the focus has become on using the approach of total quality management in service organizations Accordingly(4), the importance of using TQM in evaluating performance to continuously improve products and processes in line with continuous developments, and the fact that the extension process is an informal educational process. Thus, its fields are similar to the educational practical fields whose fields are within the total quality standards. Given that, the extension management must be based on international standards and that suits its work in order to improve the quality of its performance. Hence, the research problem is a result of the lack of studies in this field, where the researcher mentioned the study of total quality standards in the performance of the senior management of the extension organization, and accordingly, to find out the reality of the performance of higher management within the total quality standards, this research aimed to answer the following question. The research aims to identify the performance of senior management of the extension organization in light of the total quality standards from the standpoint of agricultural extension workers in the following fields: planning, decision-making, human relations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The researcher used the descriptive approach by selecting a random sample of agricultural extension workers in the governorates of Baghdad and Diyala, whose number is 510

agricultural extension workers with a percentage of 20%, by 102 agricultural extension workers. The questionnaire was used in addition to the use of a five-point graded scale consisting of approval degrees (very large, large, medium, few, very few) and weights 1 -5 were given respectively for all the scale paragraphs. Thus, the total scale degrees ranged between 1-76, and the research data was collected through observation, personal interview of the respondents, phone contact,

and a questionnaire form, which is the best way for this purpose. The data collection process began on 3/9/2020 and the results of the collection were completed on 13/11/2020, and the statistical processes to extract the reliability percentage ended on 20/11/2020. Furthermore, data were collected from 102 respondents, noting that three questionnaires were excluded due to the inaccuracy of the information, and the final questionnaire was presented as shown in Tables 1.

Table 1 . Agricultural extension workers questionnaire

Axis	Paragraphs number	Paragraphs	Degree of approval				
			Very large	Large	Medium	Few	Very few
The first field: planning							
Senior management plan	1	The senior management prepares an integrated annual extension plan with relevant authorities					
	2	The formulation of goals and policies by senior management corresponds to the requirements of the targeted					
	3	The annual plans for senior management cover all regions					
	4	The senior management relies on accurate and objective data and achieves clear results for the targets and their agricultural activities					
	5	The senior management is interested in the extension staff and increasing it in terms of quantity and quality					
	6	The plans formulated by the senior management achieve the adaptation of the objectives and extension programs to meet the needs of the environment					
	7	There is a future view from the senior management of the working environment of extension organization to enable it to work in strategic planning					
Plan financing	1	Financing is sufficient for the senior management's plans, in terms of quantity					

		and quality
	2	Senior management shall develop appropriate financial plans to cover their objectives
Activities	1	The planning of senior management activities is in line with the requirements of the Ministry of Agriculture
The second field: decision-making		
Organizing decision-making	1	Senior management encourages local extension organizations to decision-making that serve their field work and development
	2	The senior management has sound decisions in overcoming the crisis or containing a specific situation
	3	When decision-making, senior management resort to a participatory management method that uses the experience of employees
	4	The senior management takes its decisions based on studying the environment and relying on a constantly updated database
	5	Senior management possesses information and decision skills that enable them to decision-making
	6	When decision-making, senior management focuses more on the nature of the administrative problem than on the issue of solution
	7	The alternatives to solutions proposed by senior management shall be in a format commensurate with the capabilities available and the extension organization objectives
	8	Decision-making in senior management leads to the formulation of achievable objectives
	9	The evaluation results are used by senior management

		in decision-making related to the extension service	
10	Senior management	decision-making with the optimal use of material and human resources	
The third field: human relations			
Work climate within senior management	There are good relationships for senior management with the relevant authorities in the extension work		1
	The senior management works to find coordination and cooperation between the departments and the divisions within the department		2
	Senior management encourages to activate social relations among its employees		3
	Senior management works to achieve humane dealing and equality among all employees in a way that encourages creativity and innovation		4
	The senior management encourages employees to play their service role in providing extension service		5

The questionnaire was collected from extension workers, and the collection process lasted from 20/9/2020 until 30/1/2021.

RESULTS AND DISWSION

Planning field:

The degrees of the weighted mean of (11) paragraphs in the planning field were between (2,515 - 3,838) degrees and percentage weight

between (50.3 - 76.76)%. Similarly, most of the paragraphs recorded a weighted mean greater than the hypothetical mean, except for two paragraphs that recorded the weighted mean lower than the hypothetical mean of (3), as shows in Table 2.

Table 2 . The opinions of agricultural extension workers to identify the performance of the senior management in the extension organization in light of the total quality standards in the field of planning

Paragraph number according to the questionnaire	Paragraphs	Weighted mean	Percentage weight	Order according to the importance
1	The senior management prepares an integrated annual extension plan with the relevant authorities	3.838	76.76	1
10	The planning of the activities of senior management is in line with the requirements of the Ministry of Agriculture	3.424	68.48	2
2	The formulation of goals and policies by senior management corresponds to the requirements of the targeted	3.353	67.06	3
4	The senior management relies on accurate and objective data and achieves clear results for the targeted and their agricultural activities	3.272	65.44	4
6	The plans formulated by the senior management achieve the adaptation of the objectives and extension programs to meet the needs of the environment	3.242	64.84	5
5	The senior management is interested in the extension staff and increasing it in terms of quantity and quality	3.202	64.04	6
3	The annual plans for senior management cover all regions	3.151	63.02	7
7	There is a future view from the senior management of the working environment of the organization indicative to enable it to work in strategic planning	3.090	61.8	8
11	There is a future outlook from the senior management of working environment of the extension organization to enable it to work in strategic planning	3.040	60.8	9
9	Senior management shall develop appropriate financial plans to cover their objectives	2.959	59.18	10
8	Funding is sufficient for the senior management's plans, in terms of quantity and quality	2.515	50.3	11

Results in Table 2 shows a convergence between the weighted mean of the paragraphs. However, the paragraph (preparation of an annual extension plan) ranked the first with a weighted mean of (3.838) degrees and a percentage weight of (76.76)%. This may be attributed in general to the that the extension plans in the senior management of the

extension organization are one of its basic duties and the fact that planning in it is central and is contrary to the total quality standards in the development of annual plans. Likewise, is consistent with the total quality standards in the fact that the plans are integrated with all relevant authorities, as well as the extent to which their objectives are achieved through

programs and activities, so it obtained a good rate. In the role of the paragraph (funding is sufficient for the senior management's plans in terms of quantity and quality), it ranked the last, with a weighted mean of (2.515) degrees and a percentage weight (50.3%). This may be attributed to the weak financial potential and the lack of financial allocation in the agricultural field by the central government and this result agrees with the results of the interviews with the Planning Director in the Agricultural Extension and Training Department and the Diyala and Baghdad governorates. Moreover, this in turn directly

affects the ninth paragraph, which states (Senior management shall develop appropriate financial plans to cover their objectives) as its weighted average was (2.959) degrees and a percentage weight was (59.18).

Decision-making field

The degrees of the weighted mean for the (10) paragraphs in the planning field was between (2.646 - 3,545) degrees, and the percentage weight between (52.92 - 70.9%), and that the majority of these paragraphs recorded a weighted mean greater than the hypothetical mean of (3) degree, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 . The opinions of agricultural extension workers to identify the performance of the senior management in the extension organization in light of the total quality standards in the field of decision-making

Paragraph number according to the questionnaire	Paragraphs	Weighted mean	Percentage weight	Order according to the importance
2	Senior management has sound decisions in overcoming the crisis or containing a specific situation	3.545	70.9	1
1	Senior management encourages local indicative organizations to decision-making that serve their field work and development	3.535	70.7	2
6	When decision-making, senior management focuses more on the nature of the management problem than on the issue of solution	3.363	67.26	3
7	The alternatives to solutions proposed by senior management shall be in a format commensurate with the capabilities available and the extension organization objectives	3.252	65.04	4
5	Senior management possesses information and decision skills that enable them to decision-making	3.010	60.2	5
10	The senior management makes decisions with the optimal use of material and human resources	2.838	56.76	6
8	Decision-making in senior management leads to the formulation of achievable goals	2.747	54.94	7
9	Senior management employs the evaluation results in decision-making related to the extension service	2.747	54.94	8
4	The senior management takes its decisions based on studying the environment and relying on a constantly updated database	2.717	54.34	9
3	When making decisions, senior management resort to the participatory management method that uses the employees' experience	2.646	52.92	10

Data in Table shows a convergence between the weighted mean for the paragraphs.

However, the paragraph (senior management has sound decisions in overcoming the crisis

or containing a specific situation) ranked the first, with a weighted average of (3.545) degrees and percentage weight of (70.9)%. This may be attributed in general to the senior management's seeks to work with total quality standards with a medium degree to make sound decisions. As well as, the presence of an administration trying to understand its external environment, and this result is consistent with the results of the interviews with the Director of Planning in the Department of Agricultural Extension and Training. Furthermore, the paragraph (When decision-making, senior management resort to a participatory management method that uses the experience of employees), ranked the last with a weighted average of (2.646), a percentage weight of (52.92%). This may be attributed to the fact that the extension management adheres to the centrality in planning its extension programs without relying on the participatory principle. In addition, this makes it lose accuracy and

objectivity in formulating objectives, which is the paragraph that ranked the seventh (decision-making by senior management leads to the formulation of achievable goals) as it got a weighted mean of (2.747) and a percentage weight of (54.94)%. This may be attributed to the senior management's lack of reliance on the feedback, which is ranked the eighth paragraph (the senior management employs the evaluation results in making decisions related to the extension service) and that obtained a weighted mean of (2.747) degree and a percentage weight (54.94)%.

The field of human relations

The degrees of the weighted mean for the (6) paragraphs in the field of human relations were between (2,171 - 3,989) degrees, and percentage weight between (43.42 - 79.78)%, and that the majority of these paragraphs recorded a weighted mean greater than the hypothetical mean of (3) as shown in Table 4.

Paragraph number according to the questionnaire	Paragraphs	Weighted mean	Percentage weight	Order according to the importance
2	The senior management works to find coordination and cooperation between the departments and the divisions within the department	3.989	79.78	1
1	There are good relationships for senior management with the relevant authorities in the extension work	3.828	76.56	2
3	Senior management encourages to activate social relations among its employees	3.636	72.72	3
5	The senior management encourages employees to play their service role in providing extension service	2.333	46.66	4
4	Senior management works to achieve humane dealing and equality among all employees in a way that encourages creativity and innovation	2.171	43.42	5

Table (6) The opinions of agricultural extension workers to identify the performance of the senior management in the extension organization in light of the total quality standards in the field of human relations Results in Table shows a convergence between the weighted mean of the paragraphs. However, the paragraph (the senior management is working to find coordination and cooperation between the departments and the divisions within the department) ranked the first, with a weighted average of (3.989)

degrees and a percentage weight (79.78)%. This may be attributed to the fact that the senior management is keen to promote the culture of total quality among its departments in the field of human relations through coordination between departments. Coupled with, activating social relations between workers, which is the paragraph (senior management encourages to activate social relations between its employees) that ranked the third with a weighted mean of (3,636) and a percentage weight of (72.72). These results

are consistent with the results of the interviews for the Planning Manager in the Agricultural Extension and Training Department. Then, the paragraph (senior management works to achieve humane dealing and equality among all employees in a way that encourages creativity and innovation), ranked the last with a weighted mean of (2,171) degrees and a percentage weight (43.42)%. This may be attributed to the lack of an appropriate work environment for not involving the lower administrations, represented by extension workers, including technicians and division managers, to work with senior department

Recommendations

1. The necessity to work on the principle of decentralization in the extension work by senior management and the extension organization
2. Applying and implementing total quality standards
3. The involvement of employees at all levels by the senior management
4. Establishing an appropriate mechanism for coordination between departments
5. Increasing the number of courses in the field of decentralization to develop management skills and experiences in this field and promote the culture of decentralization among employees

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