

## An Examination of Back Ground and Strategies for Privatization of Agricultural Extension

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**Abstract: Problem statement:** Agricultural extension as an important tool to achieve food for people has always been faced with challenges. One of these challenges is relation to the privatization of agricultural extension which has been suggested in most countries due to inefficiency of governmental systems of agricultural extension and their financial problems. The main purpose of current study was to examination of background and strategies for privatization of agricultural extension from the View point of experts in Ilam province, Iran. On the based on research goal, current research was the type of applied research, in this study, due to the inability to fully control the independent variables; research method was the type of non-experimental research. **Approach:** This research has been done based on the descriptive research method. The statistical society of this study was included all of experts in the agricultural jihad organization of Ilam province. Sampling method for choosing statistical samples was census in expert's community. Sample size was calculated to help the Cochran formula for the number of 76 experts. The Main tools of current research for gathering information was a questionnaire was developed that made the research and theoretical literature from interviews with experts and it was used to determine the validity of the panel of experts. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used and data was analyzed by spss 19. **Results:** The results showed that the experts in the field of Extension and privatization have a positive attitude. And believe that the type of operating systems, familiarity of farmers with extension, type of association, type of operation, land area and academic experts in the field, are positively associated with the possibility to privatization. Best approaches from the view of experts for the privatization are those costs paid by the government and providing services from the private sector. In this regard, giving subsidies to farmers, the most appropriate approach from the view of experts. In terms of the payment methods, farmers were demanding loans from the government. And tended that cooperate with the private sector in the preparation of inputs, land preparation and planting. **Conclusion/Recommendations:** The most important factor in the privatization of agricultural extension was knowledge and experience of the extension agent of private sector. In general, privatization was appropriate for areas that have grown large and commercial farmers and agricultural conditions were in terms of satisfactory.

**Key words:** Privatization, experts, farmers

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### INTRODUCTION

The evolution of public agricultural extension arrived at a worldwide turning point in the 1980s, one that represented the end of a major phase in the growth of publicly funded extension in both the developed and developing world. Agricultural extension increasingly has become defined as one or other of (apparently) differentiated activities of technology transfer or rural development (Jiyawan *et al.*, 2009). In many situations, the transfer of technology, heretofore considered the purview of public sector systems, has been reconceived. Such changes suggest a re focusing of paradigms for

the delivery of public sector extension. In developed industrialized countries, which often provide models for extension service delivery elsewhere, the declining relative importance of agriculture for economic growth, the increasing education and affluence of smaller populations of rural producers and the increasing use of externally purchased inputs have changed the nature of publicly funded extension services and led to a questioning of the means of delivery of extension services by governments (Rivera and Gustafson, 1991). In developing countries, where publicly funded extension is often more important, there has been considerable questioning of the structure and forms of

extension delivery Agricultural extension in Iran has always been faced with problems such as financial problems, inappropriate use of manpower, inefficiency and structural weakness. Long-term nature of the extension program has put a heavy cost on the budget for the financial world countries, especially in developing countries. Budget problems that many countries are behind in the face, which caused them to seek other ways to fund the government programs (Arayesh, 2011). Although has already done much to increase the budget and financial needs governmental organizations extension, but, extension organization budget and foreign funds has increased to as negligible. In many countries, especially in Africa and the Middle East, the Extension budget has been stable or decreased. The farmers in order to convert it to production accomplishment. Research and Extension are the two founding pillars of agricultural systems. Research network has considerably stridden in the last four decade but the information and communication support is almost conventional and inadequate. Extension personnel are considered as friend and philosophers of the farmers to take the decision. In the WTO era, the problems and challenges become sharper and extension personnel will have to be equipped with a strategy to meet the challenges more promptly (Mahaliyanaarachchi, 2005). In this regard should be reviewed reasons for the ineffectiveness of various countries agricultural Extension (Arayesh and Hosseini, 2010). Some countries have never developed public sector agricultural extension services, leaving the function of agricultural extension to private sector commodity enterprises or industry agencies, albeit often with some government financial subsidy. In France, while chambers of agriculture and private sector companies provide extension services, the former are substantially supported financially by public funds (Jiyawan *et al.*, 2009). Privatization of Extension not necessarily reassigning the Duties and roles of the government to the Private Sector, on the Contrary is a more participation of Private Sector (Lashgarara and Hosseini, 2011). It seems that the main objectives of privatization of agricultural Extension in Iran is Include: Increasing Coverage level of extension service through the use of private extension organization, revolutionizing the governmental extension, Increasing its efficiency through competition with private section, providing participation background of different groups of farmers in the extension activities and increasing effectiveness of extension services through the choosing the best extension system (Beglarian, 2010). Almost “in all countries where agriculture has a special place in their national economy, has taken steps in the

privatization of agricultural extension (Lashgarara and Hosseini, 2011). The main purpose of current study was to examination of background and strategies for privatization of agricultural extension from the view point of experts in Ilam province, Iran. The special purposes of this study are:

- Identifying applicable approach in the field of Extension privatization from the view of experts
- Understanding the factors affecting in Extension privatization process
- Identifying appropriate administrative policies for Extension privatization process
- Identify the most important methods of cost payment by farmers

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

On the based on research goal, current research was the type of Applied Research, In This study, due to the inability to fully control the independent variables; Research Method was the type of non-experimental research. This research has been done based on the descriptive research method. The statistical society of this study was included all of experts in the Agricultural jihad organization of Ilam province. Sampling method for choosing statistical samples was census in expert's community. Sample size was calculated to help the Cochran formula for the number of 76 experts. The Main tools of Current Research for gathering information was a questionnaire was developed that made the research and theoretical literature from interviews with experts and it was used to determine the validity of the panel of experts. The questionnaire used in this study was consisted of 5 parts. The First part of questionnaire was consisting of questions about individual factors of employers (Age, Sex, educational level, work experience.). The second part of questionnaire was consisting of 10 close questions regarding measuring of effective factors in extension privatization. The Third part of questionnaire was consisting of 15 close questions regarding Measuring of methods of cost payment by farmers. The fourth part of questionnaire was consisting of 9 close questions regarding measuring of executive policy. Last part of questionnaire was consisting of 10 close questions regarding measuring of approaches of private sector. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used and data was analyzed by spss 19.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Finding:**

**View point of experts to ward conventional agricultural extension services:** In surveys taken, on average, experts had a positive view of the existential philosophy of agricultural extension and Most of them were believed to agricultural extension too much.

**View point of experts to ward efficiency of governmental extension services:** More than 52.7% of the experts stated that governmental extension Systems had been very high level.

**View point of experts to ward Extension privatization:** Mean opinion of the expert’s shows that they are convinced to extension privatization and its ability in the Average Level.

**View point of experts to ward conceivability of privatization:** The Result of Current study shows that, More than half (59%) of the experts consider the possibility of extension privatization in the medium level.

**Approaches of private extension:** Results of this study show that best approaches from the view of experts for the privatization are those costs paid by the government and providing services from the private sector. In this study, the most appropriate approach for privatization, respectively, includes: giving subsidies to farmers, contract extension and program guide documents Table 1.

**Executive policies:** In this study, a number of executive policies for the privatization of agricultural extension were to surveys experts. Policies that were studied include:

- Farm costs are divided between farmers and private sector
- Guarantee commitments made between farmers and private sector
- The government must be established communication with the agricultural extension
- The number and coverage level of private companies should be established in the every area based on Income Level and the Prosperity of Agriculture
- Insurance companies are accountable for their commitments

**Cost payment methods:** The views of experts about the best way to pay for extension by farmers Showed that the best method of additional share payment by private extension services is to Increase the annual production. The results obtained include:

- Receiving additional share from the increase the annual production by private extension services
- Receiving share of the profits
- Giving loan to farmers for providing private extension costs
- Granting subsidies to farmers

**Factors affecting the privatization of agricultural extension:** Results of expert viewpoints about the factors affecting the privatization of agricultural extension shows that the most important factors in this area are experience and knowledge of private sector extension workers. Other factors included:

- Experience and knowledge of private sector extension workers
- Providing the scientific knowledge of agriculture
- The cultural background
- Type of exploitation system (small scale farming, agro- industries and cooperatives)
- Type of employed groups in agriculture

Table: 1. Prioritizing private extension Approaches

Approaches/ Priority	Government costs - private services	Private services and costs	Government services – private costs	Governmental services and private costs
1	giving subsidies to farmers	-----	-----	-----
2	Contract extension	-----	-----	-----
3	Program guide documents	-----	-----	-----
4	-----	Supply system of inputs	-----	-----
5	-----	Share cropping system	-----	-----
6	-----	Extension based on goods	-----	-----
7	-----	Agricultural extension organizations	-----	-----
8	-----	-----	Costs recovery system	-----
9	-----	-----	-----	Contract extension
10	-----	Private consultants	-----	-----

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study showed that:

- Extension as the most important tools for transmitting information to farmers was required them
- Efficiency of governmental extension is not desirable, thus need to be part of the responsibilities granted to the private sector
- Mean opinion of the experts shows that they are convinced to extension privatization and its ability in the average level
- The result of current study shows that, More than half (59%) of the experts consider the possibility of extension privatization in the medium level. But, farmers in this area have a desirable view and even their willingness to cooperate and pay the cost of private services is a little more than experts in this case
- A variety of exploitation systems in cooperation with the extension private farmers are affected

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