

## **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AS A KEY TO AGRIBUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

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**Keywords:**

Communication,  
Agribusiness,  
Management,  
Sustainable  
Development,  
Nigeria

**Abstract:** This study evaluated the effective communication as a key to agribusiness management and sustainable development in Nigeria. The diffusion of innovation theory was adopted as a theoretical framework. This study adopted a qualitative research design and the research focuses on in-depth insights into the experiences and perspectives of key agricultural stakeholders across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The population for this study consists of agribusiness managers, agricultural extension officers, government officials, and a total of six stakeholders, one from each of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. The sample size for the study is purposefully set at six respondents and the sampling technique employed is purposive sampling. Data is collected using email interviews, and the interview questions are semi-structured. The data collected through these email interviews were analysed using thematic analysis, where responses were coded and categorised to identify common themes. The findings revealed that effective communication significantly enhances agribusiness productivity in Nigeria by providing farmers and agribusiness managers with timely and relevant information, which aids in better decision-making, improves operational efficiency, and promotes the adoption of modern farming techniques. Communication technologies, such as mobile phones, have proven crucial in delivering real-time market updates, weather forecasts, and pest control advice, thereby contributing to improved crop yields and overall productivity. The study concluded that the that effective communication plays a crucial role in enhancing agribusiness productivity in Nigeria by providing timely and accurate information that supports better decision-making, improved operational efficiency, and the adoption of modern farming techniques. The study recommended that agribusiness stakeholders should invest in improving communication channels, particularly through mobile technology and digital platforms, to ensure that farmers and agribusiness managers have access to relevant information that can boost productivity.

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# Advance Journal of Agriculture and Ecology

Adv. J. Agric. & Eco.

Volume: 9; Issue: 11

November-2024

ISSN 2334-2414

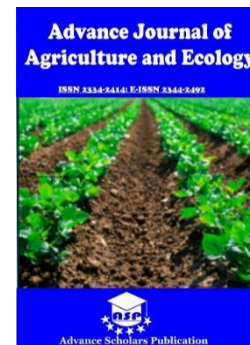
E-ISSN 2344-2492

Impact Factor: 5.39

Advance Scholars Publication

Published by International Institute of Advance Scholars Development

<https://aspjournals.org/Journals/index.php/ajae/index>



## Introduction

Agribusiness is a critical sector for Nigeria's economy, contributing significantly to national income, employment, and food security. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of effective communication in enhancing agribusiness operations and promoting sustainable development. According to Akinsorotan (2021), communication serves as a bridge between various stakeholders in the agribusiness sector, including farmers, processors, marketers, and policymakers. This collaborative approach not only improves productivity but also fosters innovations that are essential for addressing the complex challenges facing the agricultural sector in Nigeria.

The role of communication in agribusiness management extends beyond merely exchanging information; it encompasses the dissemination of knowledge, skills, and practices that enhance agricultural productivity and market efficiency. Effective communication enables agribusiness managers to respond proactively to market demands, changes in consumer preferences, and environmental challenges (Aker, 2011). In Nigeria, where many smallholder farmers rely on traditional farming practices, the dissemination of modern agricultural techniques and market information is particularly crucial for sustainable development (Oluwaseun & Ibrahim, 2020).

Agricultural sustainability in Nigeria requires a continuous flow of relevant information to guide decision-making at all levels. Communication channels such as radio, mobile phones, and social media play a pivotal role in this regard, especially in reaching rural communities where the majority of farmers reside (Nwankwo & Ejiofor, 2019). For example, mobile technology has revolutionised the way information is accessed and shared among farmers, facilitating timely access to weather forecasts, crop prices, and pest control techniques. This access to real-time information helps reduce the risks associated with agribusiness and supports informed decision-making (Aker & Mbiti, 2010).

In recent years, the concept of sustainable development has gained prominence, emphasising the need to balance economic growth with environmental preservation and social equity. The agribusiness sector, due to its reliance on natural resources, plays a crucial role in this regard. According to the United Nations (2015), sustainable development in agriculture involves adopting practices that increase productivity while minimising environmental impact. Effective communication is essential in promoting these practices and fostering a sustainability culture within the agribusiness sector.

One of the significant challenges facing agribusiness in Nigeria is the limited awareness

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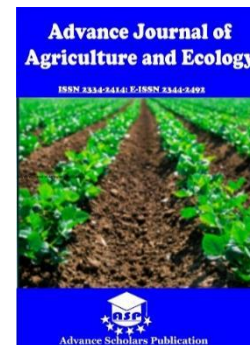
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of sustainable agricultural practices among farmers. Communication can play a transformative role by educating farmers on sustainable practices such as crop rotation, organic farming, and water conservation (Olajide, 2017). By integrating these practices into daily farming routines, agribusiness can contribute to the broader goals of sustainable development, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and conserving biodiversity (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2020).

The interrelationship between communication, agribusiness management, and sustainable development highlights the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement. Government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research institutions, and private companies must collaborate to ensure that relevant information reaches farmers and agribusiness managers (Chikezie, 2012). For instance, extension services, which are crucial for rural agricultural communities, rely heavily on effective communication to disseminate information and train farmers on new technologies (Akinola & Adeyemo, 2013).

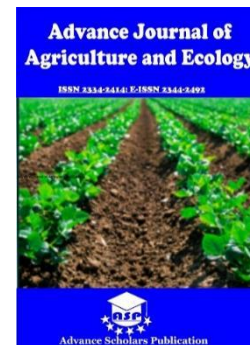
Furthermore, communication facilitates the transfer of knowledge and best practices from research institutions to the agribusiness sector. According to Ozor and Madukwe (2010), universities and research institutions play an essential role in developing innovative agricultural solutions. However, without

effective communication channels, these innovations may not reach the intended beneficiaries, limiting their impact on agribusiness productivity and sustainability. Therefore, bridging the communication gap between researchers and agribusiness managers is crucial for sustainable agricultural development in Nigeria.

In the context of agribusiness management, effective communication also fosters transparency and accountability, which are essential for building trust among stakeholders. As Smith (2016) notes, transparency in agribusiness operations strengthens relationships with consumers, investors, and regulators, enhancing the sector's overall credibility. This trust is particularly important in Nigeria, where challenges such as corruption and poor governance have historically undermined the agricultural sector's growth and development (World Bank, 2018).

Effective communication in agribusiness can also empower farmers by providing them with a voice in the decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods. According to Alawode and Fagbenro (2020), participatory communication approaches enable farmers to share their experiences, concerns, and needs with policymakers and agribusiness leaders. This feedback loop is vital for developing policies and practices that are responsive to the realities of Nigerian farmers, ultimately

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contributing to a more inclusive and sustainable agribusiness sector. Effective communication is a critical enabler of agribusiness management and sustainable development in Nigeria. By promoting information exchange, fostering innovation, and facilitating collaboration, communication enhances the capacity of agribusinesses to respond to market demands and environmental challenges. As Nigeria continues to pursue sustainable development goals, prioritising communication in agribusiness management will be essential for achieving long-term growth and resilience in the sector.

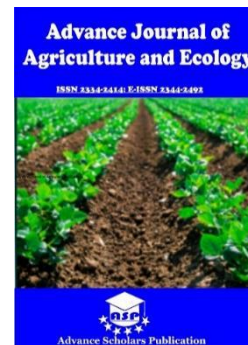
The significance of this study lies in its potential to highlight the critical role of effective communication in enhancing agribusiness management and promoting sustainable development in Nigeria. By identifying the communication gaps that hinder productivity and sustainable practices within the sector, the study aims to provide actionable insights for policymakers, agribusiness leaders, and extension services. These insights will help in developing more robust communication strategies, ensuring that relevant information reaches farmers and agribusiness managers. Ultimately, the study's findings can contribute to the broader goals of economic growth, environmental conservation, and improved livelihoods for Nigerians dependent on agriculture.

## Statement of the problem

In Nigeria, agribusiness holds significant potential to drive economic growth, reduce poverty, and contribute to sustainable development. However, the sector faces substantial challenges, including limited access to information, inadequate training, and insufficient communication infrastructure, especially in rural areas where the majority of agricultural activities occur. Many farmers lack access to timely and relevant information on modern farming techniques, weather patterns, and market demands, which restricts their ability to make informed decisions. This communication gap has resulted in inefficient farming practices, lower productivity, and limited market access, ultimately hindering the growth of the agribusiness sector and its contribution to Nigeria's economy.

The lack of effective communication channels between key stakeholders in agribusiness - farmers, extension agents, researchers, and policymakers exacerbate these challenges. For instance, many extension services that provide training and resources for farmers are either underfunded or understaffed, limiting their capacity to reach a broad audience. As a result, critical information on sustainable practices, pest control, and resource management often fails to reach farmers, leading to continued reliance on out-dated and unsustainable methods. Without effective communication to





disseminate knowledge and innovations, the agribusiness sector struggles to adapt to global standards and contributes minimally to Nigeria's sustainable development goals.

Additionally, the absence of robust communication strategies has led to low levels of awareness about sustainable agricultural practices, further undermining efforts to promote environmental conservation and resilience against climate change. As agribusiness relies heavily on natural resources, sustainable practices are crucial for long-term productivity. However, without effective communication to educate and encourage farmers to adopt these practices, environmental degradation continues to pose a serious risk. Addressing these communication gaps is therefore essential to enhance the agribusiness sector's capacity to contribute to sustainable development and improve the livelihoods of millions of Nigerians who depend on agriculture for their income and food security.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

This study explores the impact of effective communication on agribusiness management and sustainable development in Nigeria, examining how improved information exchange among stakeholders can enhance productivity, promote sustainable practices, and support economic growth within the agricultural sector. The objectives are:

1. To assess the role of effective communication in enhancing agribusiness productivity in Nigeria;
2. To identify communication barriers faced by stakeholders in the Nigerian agribusiness sector;
3. To examine the impact of communication on the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices; and
4. To evaluate the role of technology in improving communication within the agribusiness sector.

### **Research Questions**

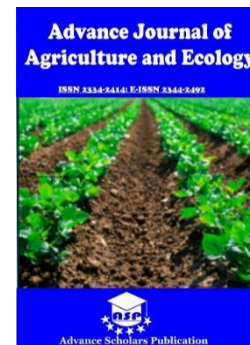
1. How does effective communication influence agribusiness productivity in Nigeria?
2. What communication barriers exist among stakeholders in the Nigerian agribusiness sector?
3. What is the impact of communication on the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices?
4. How can technology improve communication in the Nigerian agribusiness sector?

### **Literature Review**

#### **Conceptual Review**

#### **The Role of Communication in Agribusiness Management**

Effective communication is essential in agribusiness management as it facilitates information sharing among stakeholders, enhances productivity, and enables informed



decision-making. According to Aker (2011), communication in agribusiness goes beyond simple exchanges; it involves the dissemination of knowledge, training, and the use of innovative agricultural techniques. This is particularly important in Nigeria, where a large number of smallholder farmers rely on traditional farming practices and lack access to modern agricultural information (Adebayo, 2020). As noted by Akinola and Adeyemo (2013), extension services play a crucial role in bridging the communication gap by training farmers on best practices, though many of these services remain underfunded and understaffed, limiting their reach.

Moreover, effective communication in agribusiness helps address market demands, respond to environmental changes, and align practices with global standards (Ozor & Madukwe, 2010). Through enhanced communication, farmers and agribusiness managers can stay updated on crop prices, weather forecasts, and pest control measures, which are critical for optimizing productivity (Nwankwo & Ejiofor, 2019). Smith (2016) emphasises that communication also promotes transparency and accountability in agribusiness operations, building trust among consumers, investors, and regulators.

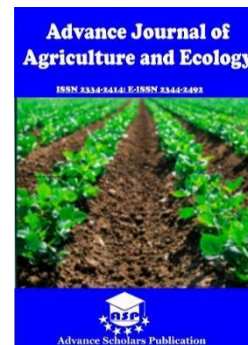
In the Nigerian context, the role of communication in agribusiness management is closely linked to overcoming infrastructural and

educational barriers. Many rural farmers still lack access to information due to poor communication networks and low literacy levels (Oluwaseun & Ibrahim, 2020). Addressing these challenges is critical for enhancing agribusiness management and enabling the sector to contribute more significantly to Nigeria's economy. To achieve this, stakeholders must prioritize investments in communication infrastructure and training programs that empower farmers with essential agribusiness knowledge.

## **Barriers to Effective Communication in Agribusiness**

Despite its importance, various barriers hinder effective communication in Nigeria's agribusiness sector. One of the primary obstacles is inadequate infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, where the majority of farmers reside. Poor road networks, limited access to electricity, and insufficient mobile connectivity restrict the ability of farmers to access information through modern communication channels like the internet and mobile phones (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). As highlighted by Chikezie (2012), this infrastructural deficit limits the reach of extension services and impedes the flow of critical information on sustainable farming practices, pest control, and market prices.

Additionally, low literacy levels among many farmers create communication challenges. As



noted by Alawode and Fagbenro (2020), low literacy affects farmers' ability to interpret and apply agricultural information, particularly if presented in written or technical formats. This challenge underscores the need for communication strategies that are accessible to farmers, such as the use of local languages or visual aids. In a study on agricultural extension services, Olajide (2017) finds that many Nigerian farmers benefit more from audio-visual materials than from text-based information, suggesting a need for more inclusive communication methods.

Finally, limited funding for agricultural extension services constrains the dissemination of agricultural information. Many extension agents in Nigeria operate under financial constraints that limit their ability to reach farmers effectively (Akinola & Adeyemo, 2013). This funding gap not only restricts the spread of information but also affects the quality of training provided to farmers. Addressing these barriers requires a collaborative approach involving government agencies, NGOs, and private-sector investments to enhance communication infrastructure and provide accessible, farmer-friendly information.

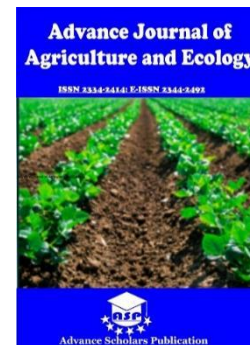
## **Communication and the Adoption of Sustainable Agricultural Practices**

Communication plays a critical role in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, as it facilitates the transfer of knowledge on

environmentally friendly and resource-efficient techniques. Sustainable agriculture requires farmers to adopt practices that conserve soil, water, and biodiversity, which necessitates a continuous flow of relevant information (FAO, 2020). According to Smith (2016), effective communication not only informs farmers about these practices but also encourages behavioural changes that align with sustainable development goals. For instance, educating farmers on the benefits of crop rotation, organic fertilizers, and integrated pest management can help reduce the environmental impact of agriculture.

In Nigeria, limited awareness and adoption of sustainable practices are largely due to inadequate communication on their benefits and methods. As observed by Ozor and Madukwe (2010), many Nigerian farmers are not fully aware of the long-term benefits of sustainable practices, such as improved soil health and reduced dependency on chemical inputs. Chikezie (2012) highlight the need for targeted communication campaigns that address local environmental issues and promote sustainable farming techniques suited to Nigeria's diverse agro-ecological zones.

Moreover, extension services are essential in promoting sustainable agriculture through direct interaction with farmers. Akinola and Adeyemo (2013) emphasise that extension agents can effectively disseminate information



on sustainable practices by demonstrating these techniques on demonstration farms or through hands-on training. However, this potential is often underutilised due to limited funding and resources. Addressing these challenges is critical for achieving sustainable agricultural development in Nigeria, as well-informed farmers are more likely to adopt practices that improve their productivity while protecting the environment.

### **The Role of Technology in Improving Agribusiness Communication**

Technology has emerged as a transformative force in enhancing communication within the agribusiness sector, offering innovative ways to reach farmers with vital information. Mobile technology, in particular, has significantly improved access to agricultural information by allowing farmers to receive real-time updates on weather forecasts, crop prices, and disease outbreaks (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). In Nigeria, where mobile phone usage has grown rapidly, this technology serves as a powerful tool for bridging the communication gap, especially in rural areas where traditional communication methods may not be effective (Nwankwo & Ejiofor, 2019).

Digital platforms such as social media, mobile apps, and online marketplaces have also revolutionised how agribusiness stakeholders interact. According to Alawode and Fagbenro (2020), social media platforms enable farmers

to connect with other farmers, agronomists, and buyers, facilitating the exchange of ideas, experiences, and market information. Additionally, mobile applications tailored for agricultural needs offer farmers tools for monitoring soil health, tracking crop growth, and accessing advisory services. These technological innovations contribute to improved decision-making and market access, ultimately enhancing productivity.

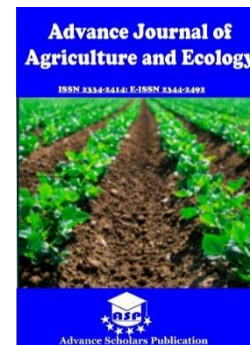
Despite these benefits, challenges such as limited digital literacy and high costs of mobile data remain barriers to technology adoption among smallholder farmers in Nigeria. As Olajide (2017) notes, many farmers, especially older ones, lack the skills needed to navigate digital platforms effectively. Addressing these challenges requires targeted training programs to build farmers' digital literacy and government policies that make internet access more affordable in rural areas. By leveraging technology, the agribusiness sector in Nigeria can overcome communication barriers and support sustainable agricultural practices through more efficient and inclusive information dissemination.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Diffusion of Innovations Theory**

This theory was propounded by Everett M. Rogers in 1962, is widely applicable to communication studies, especially in understanding how new ideas and technologies





spread within a society. Rogers (1962) theorises that innovations are communicated through specific channels over time among members of a social system, ultimately influencing adoption rates. According to Rogers, the diffusion process consists of five stages: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation. The theory also categorises adopters into groups based on their adoption timing—innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. DOI theory has been extensively applied in various fields, including agriculture, where the adoption of new farming techniques often depends on effective communication and social influence.

The assumptions of DOI theory emphasise that the rate and success of an innovation's adoption are influenced by its perceived advantages, compatibility with existing practices, complexity, trialability, and observability (Rogers, 2003). For example, a farming innovation that is perceived as complex may face slower adoption among farmers, particularly those with lower literacy levels. Additionally, the theory assumes that social systems and communication channels play crucial roles in influencing adoption behaviours. In the context of Nigerian agribusiness, this implies that the effective dissemination of information about sustainable practices is essential for adoption. However, DOI has been criticised for assuming that all innovations are

beneficial and for underestimating the social, economic, and cultural factors that may hinder adoption. Critics argue that innovation adoption often depends on factors like cost, government support, and socio-cultural beliefs (Dearing & Cox, 2018).

The relevance of DOI theory to this study lies in its framework for analysing the role of communication in promoting sustainable agricultural practices in Nigeria. Since agribusiness management and sustainable development heavily depend on the adoption of innovations such as improved crop varieties, organic farming, and resource management practices - understanding the diffusion process is crucial. By applying DOI, this study can assess how communication strategies influence farmers' perceptions and adoption of sustainable practices. This understanding will provide insights for policymakers, extension agents, and agribusiness leaders on enhancing the spread of beneficial agricultural innovations within Nigeria's agribusiness sector, thus promoting sustainable development.

## **Empirical Review**

Ozor and Madukwe (2010) conducted a study on "Role of Agricultural Innovation and Information Dissemination in Sustainable Agricultural Development in Africa. The study analysed the role of information dissemination in promoting agricultural productivity across Africa, focusing on Nigeria. Using surveys and

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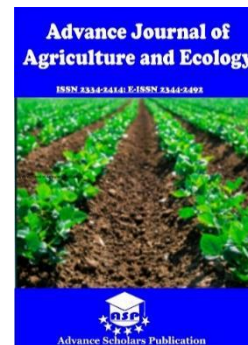
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Impact Factor: 5.39

Advance Scholars Publication

Published by International Institute of Advance Scholars Development

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interviews with farmers and extension agents, this study found that access to timely information significantly increased farmers' productivity by enabling better decision-making regarding crop selection and resource management. Similar to the current study, this study underscored the importance of effective communication in enhancing productivity within the agricultural sector. However, while this study covered general agricultural information dissemination across Africa, the current study focuses specifically on agribusiness productivity in Nigeria, with an emphasis on sustainable practices within the sector.

Chikezie (2012) did a study on "The Role of NGOs in Agricultural Extension Services in Nigeria." The objective was to identify key barriers to effective communication in agricultural extension services and explore the role of NGOs in mitigating these challenges. Using qualitative methods, including interviews with extension workers and farmers, the study found that poor infrastructure, low literacy levels, and limited funding were major communication barriers that hindered effective agricultural extension. The current study and the reviewed study both address communication barriers within Nigerian agriculture. However, the reviewed study emphasised the role of NGOs in overcoming these barriers, whereas the current study explores a broader range of

factors affecting communication and productivity in the agribusiness sector, not limited to the role of NGOs.

Alawode and Fagbenro (2020) carried out a study on "Participatory Communication Strategies in Rural Development Programs in Nigeria." This study evaluated how participatory communication strategies influenced the adoption of sustainable farming practices. Utilising a mixed-methods approach, they engaged rural farmers in communication-focused programs and found that participatory approaches significantly improved adoption rates of sustainable practices, as farmers were more likely to embrace practices they understood and helped to develop. Both the reviewed study and current study emphasise the role of communication in promoting sustainable agricultural practices. However, the reviewed study centred on participatory strategies, while the current study assesses a wider range of communication methods and their general effectiveness in promoting sustainable practices within agribusiness.

Aker and Mbiti (2010) did a study on "Mobile Phones and Economic Development in Africa." The study analysed how mobile phone technology enhances communication and access to market information in African agriculture. Through a combination of surveys and econometric analysis, this study found that mobile phones increased access to timely

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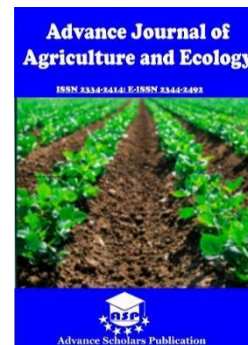
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information on prices and weather, which helped farmers make better decisions and improved their market participation. The reviewed study aligns with the current study in examining the role of technology in improving agricultural communication. However, the reviewed study focused on mobile phones as the primary technology, while the current study investigates a wider range of technological tools and their impact on agribusiness communication specifically in Nigeria.

The literature review highlights the crucial role of effective communication in agribusiness management and sustainable development, particularly in Nigeria. Various studies emphasise that communication facilitates the dissemination of vital agricultural information, improving productivity and decision-making among farmers (Ozor & Madukwe, 2010). However, several barriers hinder effective communication, including poor infrastructure, low literacy rates, and inadequate funding for extension services (Chikezie, 2012). Furthermore, the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices is significantly influenced by communication strategies, with participatory approaches proving to be effective in promoting such practices (Alawode & Fagbenro, 2020). The review also highlights the growing importance of technology, particularly mobile phones, in enhancing communication within the agribusiness sector by providing farmers with

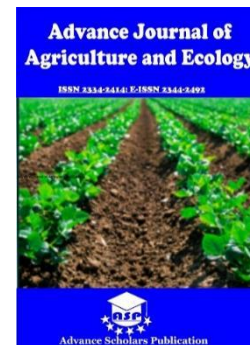
timely market information and weather updates (Aker & Mbiti, 2010).

Despite the vast body of work on communication in agriculture, significant gaps remain in the existing literature, especially regarding the specific impact of communication on agribusiness management and its relationship to sustainable development in Nigeria. While many studies discuss general communication barriers and the adoption of agricultural innovations, few address how communication influences the broader agribusiness sector's performance, particularly in terms of productivity and sustainability. Additionally, while technology's role in communication has been explored, there is limited research on how a combination of traditional and modern communication methods can enhance agribusiness practices in the Nigerian context. This gap underscores the need for further research that integrates communication strategies across different levels of the agribusiness value chain and assesses their direct impact on sustainable agricultural development.

## Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design to explore the role of communication in agribusiness management and sustainable development in Nigeria. The research focuses on in-depth insights into the experiences and perspectives of key agricultural stakeholders

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across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The population for this study consists of agribusiness managers, agricultural extension officers, government officials, and representatives from agricultural NGOs, all of whom play a pivotal role in communication within the agricultural sector. A total of six stakeholders, one from each of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria, are selected to ensure a diverse representation of perspectives from different regions of the country.

The sample size for the study is purposefully set at six respondents, with one participant selected from each geopolitical zone in Nigeria to provide a comprehensive view of the communication dynamics in different contexts. The sampling technique employed is purposive sampling, allowing the researcher to select participants based on their expertise and involvement in agricultural communication. Data is collected using email interviews, which provide flexibility for stakeholders to respond at their convenience while ensuring a detailed exploration of their perspectives. The interview questions are semi-structured, allowing for both standardised responses and the exploration of emerging themes. The data collected through these email interviews were analysed using thematic analysis, where responses were coded and categorised to identify common themes, patterns, and insights related to communication strategies, barriers, and their impact on

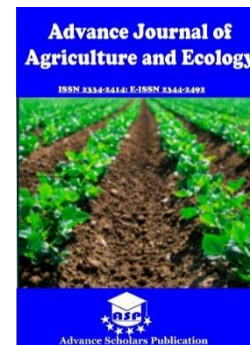
agribusiness management and sustainable development.

## **Data Presentation and Analysis**

Themes were deduced deductively following the research objectives. The following themes were deduced: How effective communication influence agribusiness productivity in Nigeria; communication barriers existing among stakeholders in the Nigerian agribusiness sector; the impact of communication on the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices; and how technology improve communication in the Nigerian agribusiness sector. These were presented and discussed below:

**How effective communication influence agribusiness productivity in Nigeria;** the interview report has shown that effective communication plays a significant role in enhancing agribusiness productivity in Nigeria by ensuring that relevant and timely information reaches farmers, agribusiness managers, and other stakeholders. Communication helps farmers make informed decisions on crop selection, pest control, irrigation methods, and resource allocation. According to the interviewees, access to mobile phone technology has enabled farmers to receive timely updates on weather patterns, market prices, and pest outbreaks, which are crucial for optimising production. By facilitating the flow of this information, effective communication improves the efficiency of





agricultural operations and helps stakeholders make decisions that increase productivity.

The interviewees stated that agribusiness managers rely on communication to coordinate activities across the value chain, from production to processing and marketing. The ability to relay information quickly and effectively across different sectors enhances collaboration and streamlines operations. For example, efficient communication within agribusiness companies ensures that products meet market demands and quality standards. The interviewees argued that transparent communication within agribusiness operations promotes accountability and trust, which are essential for increasing productivity. In the Nigerian context, where smallholder farmers often face challenges in accessing information, improving communication can significantly boost productivity by enabling them to adopt best practices and modern agricultural techniques.

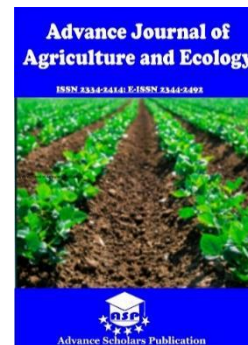
Moreover, the interviewees added that Communication also influences productivity through agricultural extension services. Extension workers are responsible for disseminating agricultural knowledge and innovations, including information on sustainable farming practices. When extension officers communicate effectively with farmers, it fosters the adoption of new technologies that can increase crop yields and improve overall

farm productivity. Farmers who receive regular and clear information from extension services are more likely to implement practices that improve productivity. Thus, the efficiency of communication in agribusiness settings directly impacts the productivity levels of farms and agribusinesses in Nigeria.

However, the interviewees agreed that the challenges of poor infrastructure, low literacy rates, and lack of funding for extension services limit the effectiveness of communication in promoting productivity. The interviewees noted that many farmers in Nigeria still rely on informal communication channels, which are often unreliable. Addressing these barriers through improved infrastructure and targeted communication programs can substantially enhance the productivity of Nigeria's agribusiness sector.

### **Communication barriers existing among stakeholders in the Nigerian agribusiness sector;**

Majority of the interviewees believed that several communication barriers hinder effective communication among stakeholders in Nigeria's agribusiness sector, and these barriers negatively impact the sector's overall performance. One of the primary barriers is inadequate infrastructure, especially in rural areas, where many smallholder farmers reside. Poor road networks, lack of reliable electricity, and limited access to mobile and internet services make it difficult for farmers and



agribusiness managers to access important information. As noted by the interviewees, communication technology such as mobile phones has the potential to bridge this gap, but poor infrastructure remains a significant challenge in rural areas, preventing farmers from fully benefiting from technological advancements.

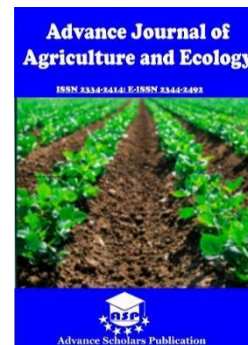
The interviewees stated that another barrier is low literacy rates among many Nigerian farmers, particularly in rural areas. Low literacy limits farmers' ability to interpret and apply technical agricultural information, which is often disseminated through written materials or complex agricultural programs. The interviewees emphasised that effective communication strategies must consider the literacy levels of the target audience to ensure that the information is understood and applied. Inadequate education and training in communication skills among extension workers also contribute to the communication challenges in Nigeria's agribusiness sector.

However, the interviewees said that cultural and social factors also present barriers to effective communication in Nigeria's agribusiness sector. Many farmers in Nigeria have deep-rooted cultural beliefs and traditional practices that may conflict with modern agricultural innovations. These cultural barriers can make farmers hesitant to adopt new technologies or practices, even when they are communicated

effectively. As noted by the interviewees, participatory communication strategies that respect local beliefs and engage farmers in the decision-making process have proven effective in overcoming these cultural barriers.

Additionally, the interviewees said that limited funding and inadequate governmental support for agricultural extension services pose significant challenges. Without sufficient resources, extension services struggle to reach a broad audience, particularly in remote areas. This limits the scope and effectiveness of communication efforts in the agribusiness sector. According to the interviewees, the lack of funding for extension services has led to understaffing and a limited capacity to deliver crucial agricultural information to farmers. Addressing these barriers requires increased investment in communication infrastructure, extension services, and farmer education programs.

**The impact of communication on the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices;** all the interviewees agreed that communication plays a crucial role in encouraging the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices in Nigeria. Effective communication strategies can help raise awareness among farmers about the benefits of sustainable practices, such as organic farming, crop rotation, and integrated pest management. The interviewees indicated that when farmers



receive timely and relevant information about sustainable practices through accessible communication channels, they are more likely to adopt these practices. By highlighting the environmental and economic benefits of sustainable agriculture, communication can change farmers' attitudes and behaviours, leading to improved adoption rates.

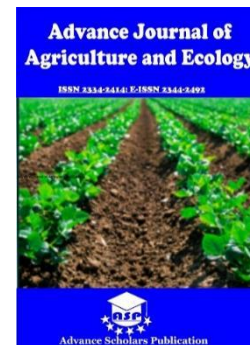
Also, other interviewees acknowledged that communication helps overcome the knowledge gap related to sustainable farming techniques. Extension services, when effectively communicated, can provide farmers with the necessary skills and knowledge to adopt sustainable agricultural practices. The interviewees suggested that participatory communication methods, such as community-based discussions and farmer training programs, can enhance the adoption of sustainable practices. These approaches allow farmers to understand the long-term benefits of sustainability and see the practical application of new practices in their own contexts, thereby increasing their willingness to implement such techniques.

However, the interviewees stated that the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices often requires overcoming resistance to change, which is influenced by insufficient or ineffective communication. Interviewees argued that many farmers in Nigeria continue to rely on traditional methods because they are more

familiar with them and may not perceive the value of sustainable alternatives. Effective communication strategies, therefore, must not only provide knowledge but also address the specific concerns and barriers that prevent farmers from adopting sustainable practices. This involves tailoring communication methods to different farmer groups and emphasizing how sustainable practices can be integrated into their existing farming systems.

The interviewees agreed that the impact of communication on adoption is also influenced by the availability of resources to support sustainable practices. Effective communication alone may not be enough if farmers lack access to the necessary inputs, such as organic fertilizers or water-saving technologies, which are crucial for implementing sustainable practices. Thus, communication needs to be coupled with supportive policies and programs that provide farmers with the tools they need to transition to sustainable farming systems.

**How technology improve communication in the Nigerian agribusiness sector;** all the interviewees said that technology plays a transformative role in improving communication within the Nigerian agribusiness sector by providing real-time information, facilitating collaboration, and enabling access to global markets. One of the most effective technological tools is mobile phones, which have become a critical means of



communication for farmers, especially in rural areas. Mobile phones significantly improved farmers' access to market prices, weather forecasts, and agricultural advice, all of which contribute to better decision-making and increased productivity. With the widespread adoption of mobile phones across Nigeria, this technology can be harnessed to bridge communication gaps and improve efficiency within the agribusiness sector.

Furthermore, the interviewees posited that the internet and social media platforms are becoming increasingly important in agribusiness communication. Platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter offer farmers the opportunity to share experiences, seek advice, and access information on best agricultural practices. The interviewees highlighted that these platforms enable farmers to connect with other agricultural stakeholders, such as agronomists, researchers, and buyers, which can enhance market access and the adoption of innovative practices. By providing a space for knowledge exchange and community building, technology fosters a more collaborative and informed agribusiness environment.

In addition to technology, the interviewees elicited that technology offers substantial benefits, its effectiveness in improving communication depends on overcoming barriers such as low digital literacy and high

costs of internet access. Many farmers, particularly in remote areas, may struggle to use digital tools effectively due to a lack of training or limited access to affordable internet services. The interviewees argued that addressing these challenges requires targeted training programs to improve digital literacy and government policies that reduce the costs of internet access in rural areas. Additionally, combining traditional communication methods with technological tools can ensure that all farmers, regardless of their technological skills, can benefit from the information shared.

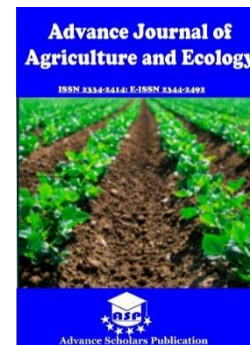
Finally, the interviewees agreed that technology can significantly improve communication in the Nigerian agribusiness sector by enhancing the flow of information and promoting collaboration. However, its success depends on overcoming barriers to access and ensuring that farmers are equipped with the necessary skills to use these tools effectively. By addressing these challenges, technology can play a pivotal role in improving agribusiness management and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in Nigeria.

## Discussion of Findings

**Research Question One:** How does effective communication influence agribusiness productivity in Nigeria?

The findings indicate that effective communication significantly enhances agribusiness productivity in Nigeria by





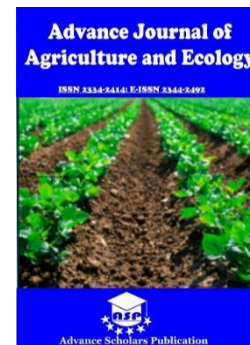
providing farmers and agribusiness managers with timely and relevant information, which aids in better decision-making, improves operational efficiency, and promotes the adoption of modern farming techniques. Communication technologies, such as mobile phones, have proven crucial in delivering real-time market updates, weather forecasts, and pest control advice, thereby contributing to improved crop yields and overall productivity. This corroborates the findings of Aker & Mbiti (2010), which explores the role of mobile phones in improving agricultural productivity, is significant to this finding as it reinforces the idea that communication enhances agribusiness productivity by providing farmers with timely and accurate information. The finding showed how mobile technology helps disseminate weather forecasts, market prices, and agricultural advice, directly supporting the finding that effective communication can lead to increased productivity in the Nigerian agribusiness sector.

The Diffusion of Innovation theory is highly relevant to the finding that effective communication enhances agribusiness productivity, as it emphasises how new ideas, technologies, and practices spread among a population. The theory suggests that communication channels play a crucial role in the adoption process, and as such, effective communication strategies help disseminate

innovations such as new farming techniques, technology, and market information. This aligns with the study's finding that timely, clear communication promotes the adoption of innovations that improve agribusiness productivity in Nigeria. The implication of the finding that effective communication enhances agribusiness productivity in Nigeria is that policymakers and agribusiness managers must prioritise communication strategies, particularly through modern technologies like mobile phones, to ensure that farmers and agribusiness stakeholders have timely access to critical information. This will improve decision-making processes, increase productivity, and help boost the overall efficiency of the agribusiness sector, ultimately contributing to national food security and economic growth.

**Research Question Two:** What communication barriers exist among stakeholders in the Nigerian agribusiness sector?

The study found that key communication barriers in the Nigerian agribusiness sector include inadequate infrastructure, low literacy rates, cultural beliefs, and insufficient funding for agricultural extension services. These barriers limit the effectiveness of communication efforts, preventing farmers from accessing vital agricultural information, and hindering the adoption of best practices that could improve productivity and



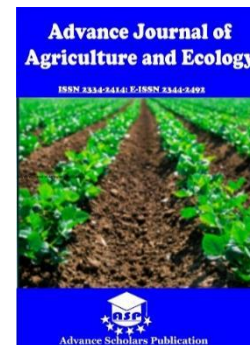
sustainability. The findings of the study also support that of Chikezie (2012), which identifies communication barriers in Nigeria's agricultural sector, is significant to the finding regarding communication obstacles, as it highlights how issues like poor infrastructure, low literacy, and cultural barriers hinder effective communication. The finding emphasised that overcoming these barriers is essential to improving communication within the agribusiness sector, aligning with the study's finding that such barriers restrict access to important agricultural information and hinder innovation adoption.

The Diffusion of Innovation theory is also relevant to the finding on communication barriers, as it highlights how factors such as social systems, infrastructure, and perceived complexity can hinder the adoption of innovations. Barriers like low literacy, poor infrastructure, and cultural beliefs create resistance to the adoption of new agricultural practices, as they impede the flow of information and delay the diffusion process. The theory suggests that overcoming these barriers requires tailored communication strategies that address the specific needs and concerns of different stakeholders, which is central to improving the effectiveness of communication in the agribusiness sector. The implication of the finding regarding communication barriers is that addressing these

obstacles, such as poor infrastructure, low literacy, and cultural beliefs, is critical to improving communication effectiveness within Nigeria's agribusiness sector. Efforts to overcome these barriers through targeted interventions, such as improving rural infrastructure, offering literacy and digital skills programs, and adapting communication strategies to cultural contexts, are necessary for improving information flow and fostering the adoption of modern agricultural practices.

**Research Question Three:** What is the impact of communication on the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices?

The findings suggested that effective communication plays a pivotal role in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices in Nigeria by raising awareness, addressing knowledge gaps, and fostering a better understanding of the benefits of sustainability. Participatory communication strategies, which involve farmers in the decision-making process, have proven particularly effective in overcoming resistance to change and encouraging the adoption of sustainable farming techniques. This finding is consistent with that of Alawode & Fagbenro (2020), which examines the role of communication in promoting sustainable agricultural practices, is relevant to the finding about the positive impact of communication on sustainability. The finding demonstrated how participatory communication strategies and



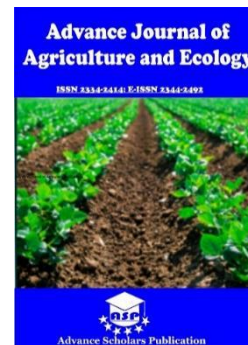
clear information dissemination about the benefits of sustainable practices can overcome resistance and encourage farmers to adopt more environmentally friendly farming techniques, which supports the current finding that communication is a key driver of sustainability adoption.

In relation to the finding on the impact of communication on the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, the Diffusion of Innovation theory is directly applicable as it explains how the communication of new, sustainable farming practices influences their adoption. The theory posits that the perceived advantages, simplicity, and trialability of innovations, along with effective communication, can speed up their adoption. In this case, participatory communication strategies help overcome resistance by involving farmers in the innovation process, thereby increasing their willingness to adopt sustainable practices as they see the benefits and applicability of these innovations in their own farming contexts. The implication of the finding that communication influences the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices is that effective communication strategies are essential for promoting environmentally friendly farming methods. By emphasising the benefits of sustainable practices through participatory communication, farmers are more likely to adopt these methods, which will enhance long-

term agricultural productivity, reduce environmental degradation, and contribute to sustainable development goals in Nigeria.

**Research Question Four:** How can technology improve communication in the Nigerian agribusiness sector?

The study found that technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, significantly improves communication within the Nigerian agribusiness sector by providing farmers with immediate access to market information, weather updates, and agricultural advice. However, the effective use of technology requires overcoming challenges such as digital literacy barriers and high costs of internet access, emphasising the need for targeted training and supportive policies to maximise the potential of technology in enhancing agribusiness communication. This finding upholds the finding of Smith (2016), which investigates the role of technology in agricultural communication, is significant to the finding about the positive impact of technology on communication in the agribusiness sector. Their research highlights how digital platforms, mobile phones, and internet technologies have revolutionised communication, providing real-time information that enhances decision-making and productivity, supporting the current finding that technology is a vital tool in improving communication within Nigeria's agribusiness sector.



The Diffusion of Innovation theory is pertinent to the finding that technology improves communication in the agribusiness sector, as it underscores how technological innovations spread through communication channels. The theory emphasizes that the adoption of new technologies, such as mobile phones and internet-based platforms, can transform communication within the agribusiness sector. It also suggests that for technology to be successfully diffused, it must be perceived as advantageous, easy to use, and compatible with existing practices. In the context of Nigerian agribusiness, technology facilitates faster information flow, making it a vital tool for innovation diffusion and improving communication efficiency. The implication of the finding that technology improves communication in Nigeria's agribusiness sector is that integrating technology, particularly mobile phones and internet-based platforms, is crucial for enhancing communication efficiency. Stakeholders in the agribusiness sector must invest in digital tools and provide training for farmers and agribusiness managers to effectively use these technologies, ensuring that the sector can better respond to market dynamics, weather changes, and other critical information, ultimately improving productivity and sustainability.

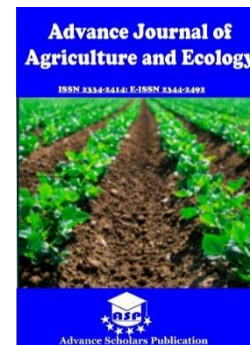
## Conclusion

The study concludes that effective communication plays a crucial role in enhancing agribusiness productivity in Nigeria by providing timely and accurate information that supports better decision-making, improved operational efficiency, and the adoption of modern farming techniques. The study establishes that communication barriers such as poor infrastructure, low literacy rates, and cultural beliefs hinder the effective dissemination of agricultural information, limiting the ability of stakeholders to adopt innovative farming practices.

The explores that effective communication significantly influences the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices by raising awareness, bridging knowledge gaps, and encouraging farmers to embrace environmentally friendly techniques. Finally, the study justifies that technology, particularly mobile phones and internet-based platforms, improves communication in the agribusiness sector by providing real-time information and enhancing decision-making processes.

This study contributes to the body of knowledge by highlighting the critical role that effective communication plays in improving agribusiness productivity in Nigeria. Through the examination of how timely and accurate information affects decision-making, it establishes that effective communication tools,





such as mobile phones and digital platforms, are essential in bridging the information gap and enabling farmers and agribusiness managers to optimise their operations. This research further adds value by illustrating how information dissemination, when managed properly, can lead to better productivity outcomes, thereby contributing to the larger discourse on the role of communication in agricultural development and food security.

Additionally, the study provides insights into the barriers that hinder effective communication among stakeholders in Nigeria's agribusiness sector, emphasising the need for tailored communication strategies that consider cultural, infrastructural, and literacy challenges. By integrating the role of technology in enhancing communication, the research offers practical recommendations for utilising digital tools to improve the flow of information, foster collaboration, and facilitate the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices. In doing so, the study expands current understanding on the relationship between communication and sustainable agribusiness management, providing a roadmap for policy interventions that can improve agricultural outcomes in Nigeria.

## Recommendations

In view of the findings from the work, the following recommendations have been made.

- 1) Agribusiness stakeholders should invest in improving communication channels, particularly through mobile technology and digital platforms, to ensure that farmers and agribusiness managers have access to relevant information that can boost productivity.
- 2) Efforts should be made to address these barriers by improving infrastructure, providing literacy and digital skills training, and adapting communication strategies to suit the cultural context of different agricultural communities.
- 3) Government and agricultural organisations should use participatory communication methods to promote the benefits of sustainable practices and involve farmers in the process to increase adoption rates.
- 4) Stakeholders in the agribusiness sector should invest in digital tools, offer training programs for farmers, and develop policies that reduce the cost of internet access to fully leverage the benefits of technology in improving communication.

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# Advance Journal of Agriculture and Ecology

Adv. J. Agric. & Eco.

Volume: 9; Issue: 11

November-2024

ISSN 2334-2414

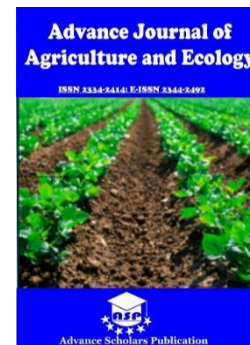
E-ISSN 2344-2492

Impact Factor: 5.39

Advance Scholars Publication

Published by International Institute of Advance Scholars Development

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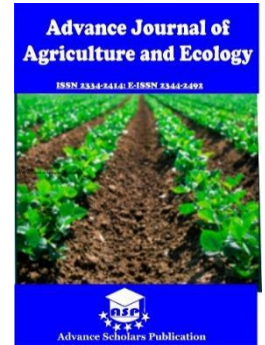
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