

---

## ***Attitude of Farmers, Extension Personnel and Scientists Towards Privatization of Agricultural Extension Service***

**NITISH KUMAR, NAVEEN KUMAR, AMRIT WARSHINI**

Department of Agricultural Extension Education SHUATS, Prayagraj U.P., School of Agriculture Science ,K.K.University, Nalanda ,Bihar , Acharya Narendra DevaUniversity of Agriculture & Technology, Kumarganj, Ayodhya U.P

**Corresponding Email-** nraj55487@gmail.com

---

### **Introduction**

The privatization of agricultural extension services has sparked considerable debate among farmers, extension personnel, and scientists. Historically, agricultural extension services have been predominantly government-funded and delivered, aiming to provide farmers with essential knowledge and technologies to enhance productivity and sustainability. However, fiscal constraints, inefficiencies, and the need for more tailored, demand-driven services have driven many to consider privatization as a viable alternative. Farmers, the primary beneficiaries of these services, often have mixed feelings about privatization. On one hand, they recognize the potential for improved service quality, greater responsiveness to their specific needs, and the introduction of innovative technologies. Privatized services can offer more customized advice and timely support, which is particularly beneficial in rapidly changing agricultural environments. On the other hand, there is a concern about the affordability and accessibility of these services, especially for small-scale and resource-poor farmers. The fear that privatization might prioritize profit over the needs of the farming community adds to their apprehensions. Extension personnel, who are traditionally employed by the public sector, face a different set of challenges and opportunities

with privatization. They may benefit from increased resources, better training, and improved career prospects within a competitive market. However, they also face the uncertainty of job security and the pressure to meet profit-driven targets, which might compromise their ability to provide unbiased and equitable services to all farmers. Scientists, particularly those involved in agricultural research and development, view privatization through a pragmatic lens. They acknowledge the potential for enhanced collaboration with private entities, leading to more rapid dissemination of research findings and technologies. Nonetheless, there is concern about the potential narrowing of research focus to commercially viable projects at the expense of public good-oriented research.

### **Concept of Privatization**

Bloome (1993) indicated that, Private Extension involves any personnel in the private sector which delivers advisory services in the areas of agriculture, and is seen as an alternative to public extension. Whereas, Van Den Ban and Hawkins (1996) say that farmers are expected to share the responsibility for this service and pay either full or part of the cost this privatization was operationalised in the following way: "Privatization of agricultural extension. service refers to the services rendered in the area. of agriculture and allied aspects by

extension personnel working in the private agencies or organizations, for which farmers are expected to pay fee and it can be viewed as supplementary or alternative to public extension service".

### Strategies

The attitudes of farmers, extension personnel, and scientists towards the privatization of agricultural extension services vary and are influenced by multiple factors, including perceived benefits, challenges, and the specific context of the region. Here is an explanation of these attitudes in different stages:

#### Stage 1: Initial Introduction

##### Farmers

- **Curiosity and Skepticism:** Farmers may initially be curious about privatized services but skeptical about their efficacy and cost.
- **Concerns about Access and Affordability:** Small-scale and resource-poor farmers might worry that privatization could lead to increased costs and reduced access to services.

##### Extension Personnel

- **Uncertainty and Resistance:** Public sector extension personnel might feel uncertain about their job security and resist the shift towards privatization.
- **Adaptation Challenges:** They might face challenges in adapting to new roles and responsibilities that come with a privatized system.

##### Scientists

- **Research Opportunities:** Scientists might see opportunities for increased

funding and collaboration with private entities.

- **Concerns about Focus:** There could be concerns that privatization might prioritize profit over research that benefits smallholder farmers or addresses broader public goods.

#### Stage 2: Implementation and Adjustment

##### Farmers

- **Evaluation of Services:** Farmers begin to evaluate the quality, relevance, and accessibility of privatized services compared to the public ones.
- **Varied Experiences:** Some may experience improved service delivery and tailored advice, while others might face challenges in affordability and access.

##### Extension Personnel

- **Adaptation and Skill Development:** Personnel start adapting to new systems, often requiring skill development in areas such as business management and customer relations.
- **Mixed Reactions:** Some personnel might appreciate the increased efficiency and incentives, while others may struggle with the transition.

##### Scientists

- **Collaboration and Innovation:** Increased collaboration with private companies can lead to innovation and practical research applications.
- **Ethical Considerations:** There might be ongoing concerns about the direction of research and ensuring it remains

ethical and beneficial to a broad spectrum of farmers.

### Stage 3: Stabilization and Long-Term Impact

#### Farmers

- **Informed Choices:** Over time, farmers become more informed and discerning consumers of extension services.
- **Impact on Productivity:** If privatized services are effective, farmers might see improvements in productivity and income. Conversely, inadequate services could exacerbate disparities.

#### Extension Personnel

- **Professional Growth:** Successful adaptation can lead to professional growth, with personnel developing new skills and competencies.
- **Job Satisfaction:** Job satisfaction might increase if the new system provides better incentives and working conditions.

#### Scientists

- **Sustained Collaboration:** Long-term collaborations between scientists and private entities can result in sustained innovation and practical solutions for agriculture.
- **Balanced Research Agenda:** Efforts to balance commercial interests with public good research remain crucial.

### Privatization of Agricultural Extension Prospects and Future



S.NO	STATEMENT
1.	PAES Render Services based on seasonal Needs
2.	PAES provide appropriate advisory services in timely manner
3.	PAES provide solution to all technical problem of farmers
4.	PAES ensures maximum profit to farmers
5.	PAES enhances over all efficiency of agricultural production system
6.	PAES is cost effective
7.	PAES motivate the farmers utilize the loan

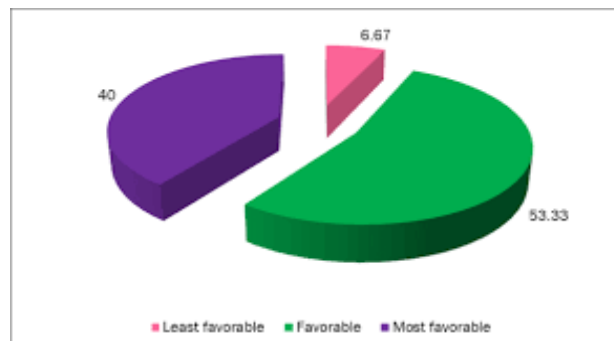
**Table 1. Selected attitude statement for the PAES.**

## Discussion

The privatization of agricultural extension services has sparked a significant debate among various stakeholders in the agricultural sector, including farmers, extension personnel, and scientists. Each group has its unique perspectives shaped by their roles, experiences, and expectations.

### Farmers' Perspective

Farmers are the primary beneficiaries of agricultural extension services, which provide them with vital information and support to enhance their productivity and sustainability. Their attitudes toward privatization are often mixed. On one hand, some farmers appreciate the efficiency and innovation that privatization can bring. Private companies might offer more specialized services, advanced technologies, and timely solutions compared to often under-resourced public extension services. This can lead to improved crop yields, better pest management, and higher profitability. However, many farmers express concerns about the affordability and accessibility of privatized services. Small-scale and resource-poor farmers fear that privatization could lead to a system where only those who can pay will benefit from quality extension services, thereby exacerbating existing inequalities. Additionally, there is apprehension that private providers might prioritize profit over farmers' welfare, leading to biased advice that favors sales of specific products rather than genuinely beneficial practices.



### Overall attitude level of farmers towards PAES

### Extension Personnel's Perspective

Extension personnel, who are the frontline workers in delivering agricultural advice, have varied views on privatization. Some see it as an opportunity for professional growth and increased motivation. Privatization can potentially offer better salaries, resources, and training opportunities compared to public sector jobs, which are often plagued by bureaucratic inefficiencies and budget constraints. Conversely, many extension workers worry about job security and changes in their roles. Privatization could lead to a reduction in public sector jobs, or require them to adapt to a more business-oriented approach, which might conflict with their training and values centered on public service. There is also a concern that the shift to privatized services could undermine the trust and rapport they have built with farmers over the years, as relationships might become more transactional.

### Scientists' Perspective

Agricultural scientists, who play a crucial role in developing the knowledge and technologies that extension services disseminate, generally have a pragmatic view of privatization. Many scientists recognize the potential benefits, such as increased funding for research and a faster translation of scientific advancements into practical applications. Private sector involvement can drive innovation and facilitate the adoption of cutting-edge technologies. Nevertheless, scientists also express caution about the potential downsides. There is a risk that research priorities might shift towards commercially lucrative areas, neglecting important but less profitable issues such as sustainable practices, conservation, and the needs of marginalized communities. The independence and objectivity of scientific research might be compromised if driven primarily by commercial interests.

### Conclusion

The attitudes towards the privatization of agricultural extension services are complex and

multifaceted. While there are clear potential benefits such as improved efficiency, innovation, and resource availability, there are also significant concerns about accessibility, equity, job security, and the integrity of both extension and research. Policymakers must carefully consider these diverse perspectives and strive to create a balanced approach that leverages the strengths of privatization while mitigating its risks. A hybrid model that combines public and private efforts, ensuring broad access and equitable support for all farmers, particularly the most vulnerable, could be a viable way forward. Ensuring transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in the process will be crucial to achieving a successful and sustainable agricultural extension system. They also suggested monitoring and regulating PAES activities to ensure proper functioning. Thus, it can be concluded that, though public extension advisory system has certain limitations; it has advantages also. Hence, amalgamation of public and private extension advisory system through PPP (Public Private Partnership) can satisfy the farmers' needs and act as a strategy for their social and economic empowerment.

### References

1. Saravanan, R. and Gowda, N. S. S. 1999. Development of a Scale to Measure Attitude Towards Privatization of Agricultural Extension Service. *Tropical Agricultural Research*. 11:190-198.
2. Pandya, R. D. 2004. A Scale to Measure the Attitude Towards Privatization of Extension Services. *Gujarat Journal of Extension Education*. XV:66-70
3. Bhatt, P. M. (2006). Effect of mass media. exposure on dairy farmers regarding. animal husbandry practices, Ph. D.Thesis, AAU, Anand.
4. Mahaliyanaarachachi, R. P., Wijeratne, A. W. and Bandara, R. M. A. S. 2006. Developing an Attitudinal Scale to Measure the Attitudes of the Farmers Towards Commercialization of Agricultural Extension. *Journal of Agricultural Sciences*. 2(3):26-35



5. asvinder, K., Shehrawat, P. S. and Quadri Haveed Ahmed Peer. 2014. Attitude of Farmers Towards Privatization of Agricultural Extension Services. *Agricultural Science Digest*. 34(2):81-86.
6. Kushwaha, N. (2018). A Study on Attitude of Farmers towards Privatization of Agricultural Extension Services. M.Sc. (Ag) Thesis Submitted to RVSKVV, Gwalior (M.P.). Naidu, J. Y. N. and Bose, D. K. (2016).
7. Gardhariya, K. V., Dhodia, A. J. and Pandya, R. D. 2019. Scale to Measure the Attitude of Agricultural Enterprise Owners Towards Private Extension Service. *International Journal of Agriculture Sciences*. 11(16):8936-8937.