



Corporate extension: Role in Agriculture and allied Sector

Simadri Rajasri

PhD Research Scholar, Department of Agricultural Extension,

Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya, CoochBehar, West Bengal

Abstract

The increasing involvement of corporations is causing a disruption in traditional agricultural extension, which is currently managed by governments and NGOs. Despite the resources, technology, and intelligent market strategies that these companies offer, there are concerns regarding bias and influence. Corporations directly provide services such as training and demonstrations, which can be beneficial but must be unbiased and farmer-focused. Additionally, corporations fund, provide equipment, and connect farmers to markets, which can increase efficiency and reach but potentially influence information. This underscores the growing influence of corporations in the dissemination of agricultural knowledge. Farmer capacity development and training in sustainable practices, technology adoption, risk management, and skill enhancement are essential, irrespective of the model. Corporations, governments, and producers are expected to collaborate in the future to guarantee food security and a flourishing agricultural landscape by utilizing resources and technology. For sustainable development and the preservation of farmer trust, it is imperative to address concerns regarding data privacy, equitable trade, and environmental impact.

Introduction:

Millions of Indians depend on agriculture for their livelihoods and subsistence, making it the foundation of the country's economy. The crucial role that farm extension services play in agrarian development, poverty alleviation, and rural prosperity has been underlined (Birner and Anderson, 2007). Historically based on the collaboration of NGOs and governments, agricultural extension is going through a major transformation. Extension should be viewed as a driving force for rural development, addressing issues such as food security, health, and youth development in addition to market accessibility and technology adoption (Ampt, P. *et al.*, 2015). In response to the constantly evolving global problems of population increase and climate change, corporate resources, technology, and market-driven strategies are redefining the traditional paradigms of agricultural extension.

Corporate involvement in agriculture:

The agriculture landscape is undergoing a dramatic transformation, fueled by the increasing involvement of large corporations. This involvement touches every aspect of the food chain,



from how food is grown and food is distributed to the to the research that gives shape to the agriculture sector (Bowe, C., & van der Horst, D., 2015)

Key features of corporate involvement include:

- **Significant capital infusion:** Corporations make substantial investments in agriculture, which facilitates the development of sophisticated technologies, large-scale farming, and enhanced infrastructure. This has the potential to enhance productivity, efficiency, and overall output.
- **Technology integration:** The adoption of cutting-edge technology in agriculture is being driven by corporations, which include precision farming, drones, and data analytics. The objectives of this initiative are to enhance yields, optimal resource utilization, and address obstacles such as pests and diseases.
- **Global market access:** Corporations facilitate the connection between producers and markets worldwide, thereby offering export opportunities and a diverse customer base. This can result in increased income for producers and the diversification of crops.
- **Research and development:** Corporate investment in research spurs innovation in agricultural practices, fertilizers, and seeds. This can result in the development of more resilient crops, sustainable practices, and solutions to environmental sustainability issues.
- **Integrated supply chain:** In the agricultural supply chain, numerous corporations are responsible for production, refining, and distribution. This has the potential to enhance efficiency, curb post-harvest losses, and guarantee quality control.