

## **Soil and Environmental Management Awareness as Professional Competency of the Agricultural Extension Officers for Their Plans Implementation**

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**Abstract :** Agricultural Extension Officers' (AEOs) competency level in soil and environmental management awareness is important for interacting with farming communities of different types of soil. Questionnaire was developed for all AEOs for data collection to know the present position and needed position of competency on Likert scale from 01-05 by assigning very low (01) and very high (05). Wide gap was found in competency of suitability of various soil types for horticultural and agronomic crops and reclamation of saline soil. We observed that suitability ranking of various soil types for horticultural crops (Diff. = 1.21), agronomic crops (Diff. = 1.20) and soil borne diseases (Diff. = 1.19) were the top three important competencies where training or improvement is needed. To better fill this gap we recommend that professional qualification of AEOs should be enhanced and training opportunities should be provided to them particularly to deal with soil and environmental management awareness. Thus training opportunities may increase their competency and will add highly skilled manpower to the system for sustainable development to protect environment. It is therefore, recommended that AEOs may be provided pre and in service trainings of soil environmental management in order to equip them with a capacity to work with farming community effectively to boost the living standard of farming community and alleviate poverty for environmental protection.

**Keywords :** professional competency, agricultural extension officers, soil and environmental management awareness, plans implementation

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