**The Important Role of Extension Services in Strengthening the Capacity of Farmers’ Resilience to Climate Change in India**

**Abstract**

Agricultural extension services play a pivotal role in enhancing farmers’ resilience to climate change by facilitating knowledge dissemination, promoting climate-smart practices, and improving access to adaptive technologies. Climate variability, including rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and increased frequency of extreme weather events, has disrupted agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods. Despite the availability of extension services, challenges such as limited outreach in remote areas, inadequate training of extension personnel, low adoption rates of climate-resilient technologies, and institutional constraints hinder their effectiveness. Strengthening public-private partnerships, increasing financial support, integrating ICT-based advisory systems, and enhancing farmer-led participatory approaches are essential strategies for improving climate adaptation. Digital extension models, including mobile-based advisories, AI-driven precision farming, and e-learning platforms, have demonstrated significant potential in bridging knowledge gaps and improving decision-making. Strengthening the research-extension-farmer linkage is crucial in ensuring that scientific innovations are effectively transferred to farming communities. Policy interventions focusing on climate-resilient agriculture, financial inclusion through credit and insurance schemes, and decentralized extension service models can further enhance adaptation efforts. Investing in capacity-building programs for extension agents, promoting gender-inclusive advisory services, and fostering community-led innovation can improve the scalability and impact of climate adaptation strategies. Evidence suggests that well-functioning extension services can increase farm productivity by 20%–30%, enhance climate risk preparedness, and reduce yield losses through improved resource management. Future directions should emphasize participatory and farmer-driven extension models, ensuring that localized and context-specific solutions are implemented for sustainable agricultural development. Addressing existing policy and institutional gaps, expanding financial and infrastructural support, and fostering collaborative extension frameworks can significantly strengthen farmers’ adaptive capacity. By mainstreaming climate resilience into agricultural policies, ensuring equitable access to extension services, and leveraging emerging technologies, extension services can play a transformative role in securing food systems, stabilizing rural economies, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the face of climate change.

**Keywords:** *Climate resilience, Agricultural extension, Climate-smart practices, Digital extension, Farmer adaptation, Policy interventions, Sustainable agriculture*

**I. Introduction**

**A. Significance of Climate Change**

Climate change presents a significant challenge to agriculture, affecting weather patterns, temperature regimes, and water availability. The agricultural sector, which remains highly dependent on climatic conditions, has been experiencing more frequent droughts, heat waves, erratic monsoons, and floods. The Global Climate Risk Index 2021 highlights that South Asia is among the most vulnerable regions to climate-related disasters, with smallholder farmers being disproportionately affected (Aryal *et.al.,* 2020).

Over the past century, the region has recorded a temperature increase of approximately 1.2°C, and projections indicate that this could rise between 1.5°C and 3°C by the middle of the century if greenhouse gas emissions continue unchecked. Rainfall patterns have become increasingly erratic, with shorter but more intense monsoon seasons, resulting in water shortages in some periods and excessive flooding in others. Reports from the Indian Meteorological Department suggest that the occurrence of extreme weather events has increased nearly fivefold over the last five decades, posing a direct threat to agricultural productivity.

Agriculture contributes about 18% to the national GDP and provides employment for over 40% of the workforce. The heavy reliance on monsoonal rainfall, with nearly 60% of cultivated land being rainfed, makes the sector particularly vulnerable to climatic changes. Rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, and an increasing frequency of extreme weather events threaten food security and rural livelihoods, making it crucial to implement strategies that enhance farmers’ ability to adapt to these challenges.

**B. Impact of Climate Change on Agriculture**

The agricultural sector is acutely sensitive to climate variability, with even minor fluctuations in temperature and rainfall leading to significant consequences for crop yields, soil health, water availability, and pest outbreaks (Thornton *et.al.,* 2014). Climate change leads to shifts in temperature and precipitation patterns, which directly impact growing conditions. Rising temperatures can disrupt crop growth cycles, reduce yields, and alter the geographic ranges of many crops (Sarma et al. 2024). Rising temperatures have already begun to affect key staple crops. Research indicates that wheat production could decline by 6% to 10% for every one-degree Celsius increase in temperature, while rice yields may drop by up to 7% due to excessive heat stress during the reproductive phase. A study by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) projects that, by 2050, wheat yields could decrease by 18%–23%, and rice productivity may decline by 10%–12% under current climate change scenarios.

Soil degradation has also emerged as a major concern, with shifts in rainfall patterns accelerating erosion, reducing organic matter content, and depleting soil fertility. The National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning estimates that over 30% of the land area is already affected by degradation, making farmlands more susceptible to productivity losses. Water scarcity further compounds these challenges, as declining groundwater levels threaten irrigation sustainability. Groundwater supplies nearly 70% of irrigation needs, yet excessive withdrawal coupled with lower recharge rates has led to critical depletion in many regions.

Pest and disease outbreaks have increased due to changing climatic conditions, further threatening crop production. Warmer temperatures and altered precipitation patterns have created favorable conditions for the proliferation of pests such as the fall armyworm, which has devastated maize crops in several states. Similarly, fungal infections have spread more aggressively in wheat and rice fields, causing substantial yield losses (Cruz *et.al.,* 2017).

The socioeconomic impact of climate change on farmers is profound. Crop failures and declining productivity result in financial distress, increasing farmer indebtedness and forcing many to seek alternative livelihoods. According to the National Sample Survey Office, nearly 52% of agricultural households are burdened with debt, a situation exacerbated by climate-induced uncertainties. Agricultural distress has also been linked to rising cases of farmer suicides, emphasizing the urgency of resilience-building measures.

**C. The Concept of Farmers’ Resilience to Climate Change**

Farmers' resilience to climate change refers to their ability to anticipate, absorb, adapt, and transform in response to climatic shocks and stresses. Resilience-building involves strengthening adaptive capacity through improved knowledge, access to resources, and institutional support. The concept encompasses multiple dimensions, including absorptive capacity, which allows farmers to withstand climate shocks with minimal disruption; adaptive capacity, which enables them to adjust their farming practices in response to changing conditions; and transformative capacity, which empowers them to transition towards sustainable agricultural systems.

A key aspect of resilience lies in the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices (Berhanu *et.al.,* 2024). Techniques such as drought-resistant crop varieties, integrated pest management, conservation tillage, and agroforestry help mitigate climate risks while sustaining productivity. Institutional support through access to credit, crop insurance, and market linkages plays a crucial role in enhancing farmers’ capacity to recover from climatic disruptions. Strengthening resilience requires a holistic approach that integrates scientific advancements with traditional knowledge, ensuring that farmers have the necessary tools to navigate climate uncertainties effectively.

**D. Role of Agricultural Extension Services in Climate Adaptation**

Agricultural extension services play a critical role in bridging the gap between scientific research and on-ground farming practices (Joshi *et.al.,* 2019). These services function as a conduit for disseminating knowledge, promoting climate-resilient technologies, and empowering farmers with adaptive strategies. Traditional extension models primarily focused on production enhancement, but recent shifts have placed greater emphasis on climate adaptation, sustainable resource management, and risk mitigation.

Extension programs have been instrumental in promoting climate-smart agricultural practices that enhance resilience. Techniques such as precision farming, water-efficient irrigation methods, and weather-based advisories help farmers make informed decisions in response to climatic variations. Digital extension services have further revolutionized information dissemination, with mobile-based advisory platforms providing real-time weather forecasts, pest alerts, and best farming practices. Initiatives like mKisan and eNAM have expanded the reach of extension services, making climate-related information accessible to a larger farming population.

Capacity-building programs tailored for farmers, extension agents, and local institutions have gained prominence in strengthening climate resilience. Training sessions on soil health management, sustainable irrigation techniques, and integrated nutrient management equip farmers with the necessary skills to adapt to climate challenges. Participatory research and farmer-led innovation approaches further ensure that extension interventions are context-specific and relevant to local agricultural conditions (Staub *et.al.,* 2021).

Despite these advancements, challenges persist in ensuring the effectiveness and inclusivity of extension services. Limited access to extension programs in remote areas, inadequate training of extension personnel, and financial constraints hinder the widespread adoption of climate-resilient practices. Strengthening extension networks, fostering public-private partnerships, and integrating digital innovations into extension frameworks are essential to enhancing farmers' adaptive capacity in the face of climate uncertainties.

**E. Objectives and Scope of the Review**

This review aims to examine the evolving role of agricultural extension services in strengthening farmers’ resilience to climate change. The analysis focuses on the impact of climate variability on agricultural systems, the significance of resilience-building, and the contributions of extension services in promoting adaptive strategies. The review also highlights case studies of successful climate adaptation initiatives and discusses policy interventions required to enhance the effectiveness of extension services.

By exploring the integration of traditional extension approaches with modern digital solutions, the review seeks to provide insights into the future direction of extension services in fostering climate resilience. The discussion will also address the existing challenges and propose recommendations for strengthening the institutional, technical, and financial support systems needed to sustain farmers’ adaptive capacity. Through this comprehensive assessment, the review aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on climate-resilient agriculture and the critical role of extension services in ensuring food security and rural livelihood sustainability (Goswami *et.al.,* 2023).

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**II. Climate Change and Its Impact on Agriculture**

***A. Overview of Climate Variability***

Climate variability has become a defining challenge for the agricultural sector, altering weather patterns and disrupting traditional farming cycles. Changes in temperature, erratic rainfall, and an increasing frequency of extreme weather events have created unpredictable conditions for farmers, making agricultural planning and risk management more difficult. The South Asian region has witnessed significant climatic shifts over the past century, with long-term consequences for crop productivity, soil fertility, and water availability.

***Rising Temperatures***

Temperature increases have been recorded across different agro-climatic zones, leading to heat stress in crops and reduced growing periods. Reports from the Indian Meteorological Department indicate that the annual mean surface temperature has risen by approximately 1.2°C over the past century, with projections suggesting an additional increase of 1.5°C to 3°C by 2050. The warming trend has been particularly severe in major wheat-producing regions, where temperatures during critical growth stages have exceeded optimal thresholds, causing significant yield declines (Huang *et.al.,* 2022).

Temperature variations have also affected livestock productivity, as heat stress reduces milk production in dairy cattle by nearly 10%–15% in heatwave-prone regions. Poultry farming has been impacted as well, with studies showing that temperature extremes above 35°C increase mortality rates in broiler chickens by up to 40%.

***Erratic Rainfall Patterns***

Rainfall patterns have become increasingly unpredictable, resulting in prolonged dry spells, intense short-duration downpours, and shifting monsoon onset dates. Historical rainfall data from the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology reveals that monsoon rainfall has declined by nearly 8% over the past century, with significant reductions in major agricultural states. Simultaneously, an increase in the intensity of heavy rainfall events has been observed, leading to flash floods that damage standing crops and erode topsoil.

Drought frequency has also escalated, with nearly 68% of cultivated land classified as drought-prone. Rainfed agriculture, which supports more than half of all cultivated land, remains highly vulnerable to these changes, affecting millions of smallholder farmers.

***Increased Frequency of Extreme Weather Events***

The frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as cyclones, floods, and heat waves have increased over the past few decades (Coumou *et.al.,* 2012). Reports from the National Disaster Management Authority indicate that between 2000 and 2020, extreme weather events caused direct agricultural losses exceeding $10 billion. Cyclones in coastal regions have led to large-scale destruction of paddy crops, particularly in the states bordering the Bay of Bengal, where cyclone frequency has risen by nearly 30% in the past two decades.

Heatwaves have intensified across major agricultural zones, with the number of heatwave days doubling over the past 50 years. These conditions have adversely affected crops such as wheat and maize, reducing yields by 10%–20% due to excessive transpiration losses and reproductive failure.

***B.* Impacts *on Crop Production***

Climatic fluctuations have had direct and indirect consequences on crop production, leading to declining yields and increased vulnerability to pests and diseases.

***Yield Fluctuations***

Changes in temperature and rainfall patterns have resulted in unpredictable yield patterns, particularly for staple crops such as wheat, rice, and maize (Haile *et.al.,* 2017). Research from the International Food Policy Research Institute estimates that by 2050, wheat yields could decline by up to 23%, while rice productivity may drop by 12% due to increasing heat stress and changing precipitation trends.

Field studies have demonstrated that heat stress during the reproductive stage of wheat can reduce grain weight by up to 20%, while delayed monsoons have shortened the growing season for rice, decreasing productivity in rainfed areas. Cash crops such as cotton and sugarcane have also experienced yield losses due to extreme temperature fluctuations, with productivity declines of nearly 15% reported in major growing regions (Srivastava & Rai, 2012).

***Pest and Disease Outbreaks***

Rising temperatures and altered humidity levels have created favourable conditions for the proliferation of pests and diseases. The incidence of the fall armyworm, a highly destructive pest, has expanded across maize-growing regions, causing yield losses of up to 30% in affected areas. Similarly, changes in climate have led to the resurgence of pests such as the pink bollworm in cotton fields, significantly reducing fibre quality and productivity (Rajendran *et.al.,* 2018).

Fungal diseases such as wheat blast and bacterial leaf blight in rice have become more prevalent due to shifting rainfall patterns. Research from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research highlights that blast infections in wheat fields have increased by 18% over the past decade, particularly in humid regions experiencing rising temperatures. These outbreaks not only affect crop yields but also increase dependency on chemical pesticides, raising production costs for farmers.

***C. Impact on Soil Health and Water Resources***

Long-term shifts in climate have degraded soil quality and altered hydrological cycles, threatening the sustainability of agricultural land. Studies from the National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning estimate that nearly 30% of land under cultivation suffers from degradation, with erosion rates increasing due to erratic rainfall and loss of vegetative cover. Declining soil organic carbon levels have reduced fertility, leading to lower nutrient availability and diminished crop productivity.

Water scarcity has emerged as a critical challenge, with groundwater levels depleting rapidly due to excessive extraction for irrigation. Reports from the Central Ground Water Board reveal that nearly 70% of irrigation needs are met through groundwater, yet over 50% of monitored wells show declining water tables, with some regions experiencing drops of up to 10 meters in the past two decades. The overexploitation of water resources has led to increased salinity in coastal regions, further affecting soil productivity and limiting the scope for sustainable agriculture.

***D. Socioeconomic Consequences for Farmers***

The adverse effects of climate change have exacerbated socioeconomic vulnerabilities for farmers, increasing financial insecurity and migration pressures.

***Rural Livelihood Vulnerabilities***

Unpredictable weather patterns and declining crop yields have contributed to growing economic distress among smallholder farmers (Harvey *et.al.,* 2014). According to the National Sample Survey Office, nearly 52% of agricultural households are in debt, with climate-induced crop failures worsening financial burdens. Income instability has forced many farmers to take on non-agricultural work, reducing the overall labour force available for farming activities.

***Migration and Displacement***

Climate-induced livelihood pressures have driven an increasing number of farmers to migrate to urban centres in search of alternative employment. Studies from the International Labour Organization estimate that nearly 30 million people have migrated from rural to urban areas over the past decade due to declining agricultural incomes and recurrent climate shocks. The displacement of farming communities has led to labour shortages in rural regions, further weakening agricultural productivity.

***Food Security Concerns***

The combination of declining crop yields, soil degradation, and water scarcity has raised concerns about long-term food security (Ye *et.al.,* 2009). The Global Hunger Index ranks South Asia among the most vulnerable regions to food insecurity, with climate change posing a major threat to stable food production systems. Research from the Food and Agriculture Organization highlights that unless adaptive strategies are implemented, staple crop shortages could lead to rising food prices, disproportionately affecting marginalized populations.

**III. Concept of Farmers’ Resilience to Climate Change**

***A. Definition and Importance of Resilience in Agriculture***

Agricultural resilience refers to the ability of farming systems, rural communities, and individual farmers to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate-related shocks while maintaining productivity and livelihoods. Resilience is a dynamic process that enables farmers to cope with environmental stresses, adapt to changing conditions, and transform their agricultural systems to sustain long-term viability.

The significance of resilience in agriculture has increased due to the growing intensity and frequency of climate-related disturbances, which have disrupted traditional farming practices, reduced yields, and affected rural livelihoods (Osbahr *et.al.,* 2008). According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), climate resilience is essential for ensuring food security, protecting natural resources, and sustaining rural economies in the face of unpredictable weather patterns and long-term climatic shifts.

Studies indicate that farmers who adopt resilience-building strategies experience lower yield variability and improved economic stability. Research conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) suggests that climate-resilient agricultural practices, such as crop diversification, conservation agriculture, and agroforestry, can reduce yield losses by up to 30% under extreme climate conditions. Strengthening resilience is not only crucial for individual farmers but also for national economies that rely heavily on agricultural production for food security and economic growth.

***B. Key Dimensions of Resilience***

Resilience in agriculture is a multi-dimensional concept that includes the ability to absorb shocks, adapt to changing conditions, and transform farming systems when necessary (Roy *et.al.,* 2019). These dimensions help define how farmers respond to climate-related stresses and determine their long-term capacity to sustain agricultural productivity.

***Adaptive Capacity***

Adaptive capacity refers to the ability of farmers and agricultural systems to adjust to changing environmental conditions by modifying management practices, adopting new technologies, and utilizing climate information for decision-making. Farmers with high adaptive capacity can respond to climate variability by altering their cropping patterns, diversifying income sources, and improving resource efficiency.

The adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices is a key component of adaptive capacity. Research from the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) has shown that the use of drought-resistant crop varieties can increase yields by 20%–25% in water-scarce regions, reducing farmers' vulnerability to erratic rainfall. The integration of precision farming techniques, such as soil moisture sensors and weather-based advisories, has improved decision-making and resource management, enabling farmers to optimize water and nutrient use (Mohyuddin *et.al.,* 2024).

Access to financial resources plays a crucial role in enhancing adaptive capacity. Studies indicate that farmers with access to credit and insurance are more likely to invest in climate-resilient technologies and diversify their farming systems to mitigate risks. Government initiatives, such as climate risk insurance programs and microfinance schemes, have provided financial security to farmers, allowing them to adopt adaptive strategies without fear of economic losses.

***Transformative Capacity***

Transformative capacity refers to the ability of farmers and agricultural institutions to implement long-term structural changes that enhance sustainability and reduce vulnerability to climate change. This includes shifts toward agroecological farming, large-scale landscape restoration, and systemic policy reforms that promote sustainable resource use.

Long-term adaptation strategies often require changes in land-use patterns, irrigation infrastructure, and supply chain management. Studies from the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) highlight that transitioning to water-efficient irrigation systems, such as drip irrigation, has improved water productivity by 30%–40%, reducing dependence on erratic rainfall. Similarly, large-scale agroforestry initiatives have improved soil fertility and increased carbon sequestration, helping mitigate climate impacts while sustaining agricultural productivity (Lorenz *et.al.,* 2014).

Transformative resilience also depends on policy support and institutional reforms. Research indicates that strong governance, investment in agricultural research, and market linkages are essential for enabling large-scale transformations in farming systems. The role of extension services in promoting innovative farming models, providing climate advisory services, and facilitating farmer cooperatives has been critical in fostering long-term resilience.

***Absorptive Capacity***

Absorptive capacity refers to the ability of farmers to withstand climate-related shocks with minimal disruptions to their agricultural activities. This includes short-term coping mechanisms such as financial savings, crop insurance, emergency food reserves, and community-based support systems.

Studies indicate that social safety nets and risk management strategies play a crucial role in enhancing absorptive capacity. The implementation of weather-based index insurance has provided financial security to farmers affected by crop failures, reducing distress migration and economic instability. The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), one of the largest crop insurance programs, has provided compensation to over 60 million farmers, helping them recover from climate-induced losses (Steinbach *et.al.,* 2016).

Community-based adaptation approaches have strengthened resilience by fostering collective action and knowledge-sharing among farmers. Research from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) highlights that farmer cooperatives and self-help groups have improved access to credit, facilitated bulk procurement of inputs, and promoted climate-smart agricultural practices, enhancing farmers' ability to absorb climate shocks.

***C. Role of Knowledge, Skills, and Institutional Support in Resilience-Building***

Knowledge dissemination and skill development are essential components of resilience-building in agriculture. Farmers who have access to climate information, technical training, and extension services are better equipped to adopt adaptive strategies and respond effectively to climate risks (Jha *et.al.,* 2021).

The role of agricultural extension services in resilience-building has expanded with the introduction of digital technologies. Mobile-based advisories, online training platforms, and weather forecasting applications have improved farmers’ access to real-time information on climate risks and adaptive practices. Research from the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) indicates that digital extension services have increased the adoption of climate-smart practices by 35%, leading to improved resource efficiency and higher productivity.

Institutional support plays a critical role in ensuring that farmers have the necessary resources to implement resilience-building strategies. Government policies that promote sustainable agriculture, financial assistance programs, and climate adaptation initiatives have provided a foundation for long-term resilience. Research institutions and universities have contributed by developing stress-tolerant crop varieties, water-efficient technologies, and integrated pest management systems that help farmers adapt to changing climate conditions (Mohapatra *et.al.,* 2024).

The role of farmer organizations and cooperatives in resilience-building has also been significant. Studies indicate that collective action among farmers has improved bargaining power, facilitated access to markets, and enhanced knowledge-sharing, leading to better climate adaptation outcomes. Training programs focused on sustainable farming, resource management, and financial literacy have empowered farmers with the skills needed to navigate climate uncertainties and sustain agricultural productivity.

Strengthening resilience in agriculture requires a multi-pronged approach that integrates scientific research, technological innovations, institutional support, and community-based adaptation strategies. By enhancing adaptive, transformative, and absorptive capacities, farmers can mitigate climate risks, ensure stable livelihoods, and contribute to sustainable food production systems.

**IV. Agricultural Extension Services: An Overview**

***A. Definition and Objectives of Agricultural Extension Services***

Agricultural extension services refer to a structured system designed to transfer knowledge, technologies, and best farming practices from research institutions to farmers (Ison *et.al.,* 2000). The primary objective of these services is to enhance productivity, promote sustainable agricultural methods, and improve the livelihoods of farming communities through education, training, and advisory support. These services act as a crucial bridge between agricultural research and practical field applications, ensuring that farmers have access to scientifically validated information that enables them to cope with changing environmental and market conditions.

A key focus of extension services is to promote climate-resilient agriculture by disseminating information on sustainable resource management, water conservation techniques, integrated pest and nutrient management, and modern irrigation systems. Reports from the FAO indicate that well-functioning extension services can increase agricultural productivity by up to 30% by improving farmers’ decision-making capabilities and encouraging the adoption of climate-smart technologies.

The scope of extension services has expanded significantly with advancements in digital technology. Mobile-based advisories, real-time weather forecasting applications, and online training platforms have revolutionized the way farmers receive agricultural knowledge. Research from the World Bank highlights that the use of digital extension models has improved agricultural output by 20%–25% by enabling farmers to make timely, informed decisions regarding crop selection, irrigation scheduling, and pest management.

***B. Evolution of Extension Services***

The development of agricultural extension systems has undergone significant transformations over the decades, shifting from top-down knowledge transfer models to more participatory and technology-driven approaches (Rivera *et.al.,* 2005).

***Traditional Extension Models***

Early extension services primarily operated under a centralized, government-driven framework, where trained agricultural officers provided technical recommendations to farmers. These models, often based on the "Training and Visit" (T&V) approach introduced by the World Bank in the 1970s, emphasized expert-driven dissemination of knowledge. The T&V model played a critical role in increasing the adoption of high-yielding variety (HYV) seeds, fertilizers, and modern irrigation techniques during the Green Revolution, leading to significant improvements in crop productivity.

Despite these initial successes, traditional extension systems faced several limitations, including limited outreach, inadequate feedback mechanisms, and a lack of farmer participation in decision-making. Research from the IFPRI suggests that less than 30% of smallholder farmers had direct access to traditional extension services due to insufficient manpower, logistical constraints, and inefficiencies in service delivery.

***Participatory and Farmer-Led Approaches***

Recognizing the limitations of conventional models, extension services gradually transitioned toward participatory and farmer-led approaches that emphasize knowledge co-creation and local adaptation. These approaches involve greater farmer engagement, ensuring that extension activities are tailored to regional needs and specific climatic conditions.

Farmer Field Schools (FFS) have emerged as a successful participatory model, where groups of farmers receive hands-on training on climate-resilient practices such as integrated pest management, conservation agriculture, and water-efficient cropping techniques. Studies indicate that FFS participants achieve up to 40% higher yields compared to non-participating farmers due to better knowledge retention and skill development (Visser *et.al.,* 2019).

Decentralized and community-driven extension programs have also gained prominence. Research from the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry highlights that farmer-to-farmer extension networks have increased technology adoption rates by 35%, demonstrating the effectiveness of peer-led learning models in knowledge dissemination.

***C. Major Institutions Involved in Extension Services***

Agricultural extension in the country is facilitated by multiple institutions, including government agencies, research organizations, universities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private-sector entities. These institutions play a critical role in capacity building, technology dissemination, and climate adaptation efforts.

***Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs)***

Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) serve as the frontline agricultural extension centres that provide location-specific training, demonstrations, and advisory services to farmers (Singh *et.al.,* 2012). Established under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), KVKs focus on promoting regionally relevant agricultural technologies, improving farm productivity, and strengthening rural livelihoods.

There are over 730 KVKs across the country, each catering to the unique agro-climatic conditions of their respective districts. Studies indicate that KVK interventions have contributed to a 25%–30% increase in crop yields among participating farmers by enhancing their knowledge of improved agricultural techniques. KVKs also play a vital role in climate adaptation by conducting on-farm trials of drought-resistant crop varieties, promoting organic farming practices, and facilitating the adoption of precision agriculture tools.

***State Agricultural Universities (SAUs)***

State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) are integral to the agricultural extension system, providing research-driven solutions and training programs that support extension activities. These institutions conduct applied research on climate-resilient farming methods, water-efficient cropping systems, and agroforestry techniques, ensuring that farmers receive scientifically validated recommendations (Eliseu *et.al.,* 2024).

Extension programs run by SAUs have facilitated knowledge dissemination through rural advisory centres, farmer training institutes, and collaborative projects with local government agencies. Research from the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences suggests that SAU-led extension programs have improved farmers' income by 15%–20% through the introduction of sustainable farming models and market-oriented production strategies.

***Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)***

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is the apex body responsible for agricultural research, education, and extension. ICAR plays a pivotal role in developing climate-resilient technologies, coordinating national extension programs, and supporting policy formulation for sustainable agriculture.

ICAR’s National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) initiative has promoted climate-smart farming practices, leading to a reduction in yield losses of up to 18% under extreme climatic conditions. The organization also collaborates with global research institutions to integrate advanced technologies such as remote sensing, artificial intelligence (AI), and big data analytics into agricultural extension services.

***NGOs and Private Sector Participation***

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private enterprises have played an increasingly important role in agricultural extension by filling gaps left by public extension systems. NGOs have pioneered community-based extension models, empowering smallholder farmers with training on sustainable agriculture, financial literacy, and climate risk management (Baden *et.al.,* 2011).

The private sector has contributed significantly to the digital transformation of extension services. Companies have developed mobile-based advisory platforms, precision farming tools, and data-driven solutions that enable farmers to access real-time market information, weather forecasts, and agronomic advice. Studies suggest that mobile-based extension services have increased farm productivity by 15%–20% by improving farmers' access to timely and relevant information.

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**V. Emerging Role of Extension Services in Climate Change Adaptation**

***A. Enhancing Farmers’ Knowledge and Awareness of Climate Change***

Climate change has introduced new uncertainties in agricultural production, making knowledge dissemination essential for adaptation. Farmers who receive timely information on changing climatic conditions, extreme weather events, and long-term shifts in temperature and rainfall patterns are better equipped to adjust their farming practices. Agricultural extension services play a vital role in bridging the gap between climate science and field-level implementation, ensuring that farmers have access to relevant and actionable knowledge (Belay *et.al.,* 2024).

Studies indicate that awareness programs focusing on climate variability, mitigation strategies, and resource-efficient farming techniques have increased the adoption of climate-resilient practices by 25%–30% among smallholder farmers. Participatory training models, farmer field schools, and local knowledge-sharing networks have further strengthened the reach of climate-related extension programs. Research from the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) highlights that farmers with access to extension-led climate advisories are 40% more likely to implement adaptive measures such as crop diversification and improved water management practices.

***B. Promoting Climate-Smart Agricultural Practices***

Climate-smart agricultural practices have emerged as critical adaptation strategies that enhance resilience, improve productivity, and mitigate environmental impacts. Agricultural extension services facilitate the dissemination of these practices through on-field demonstrations, farmer training, and access to climate-resilient technologies.

***Drought-Resistant Crop Varieties***

The development and dissemination of drought-tolerant crop varieties have played a crucial role in sustaining yields under erratic rainfall and prolonged dry spells. Research institutions, in collaboration with extension services, have introduced several improved varieties that can withstand water stress. Studies indicate that drought-resistant wheat and rice varieties developed under the National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) initiative have improved yields by 15%–20% in water-deficient regions.

Field trials conducted by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) demonstrate that short-duration paddy varieties reduce water consumption by 30% while maintaining comparable yields to traditional varieties (Gupta *et.al.,* 2002). Adoption of climate-resilient millets such as sorghum and pearl millet has also gained traction, with yields improving by 20% under low-rainfall conditions due to targeted extension efforts.

***Integrated Pest and Nutrient Management***

Climate change has altered pest dynamics, increasing the incidence of infestations that threaten crop yields. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques promoted by extension services have reduced pest-related losses by up to 35% by combining biological control methods, resistant crop varieties, and targeted pesticide applications.

Nutrient management strategies, such as site-specific nutrient application and organic soil amendments, have improved soil fertility and reduced input costs for farmers. Research from the International Fertilizer Development Center indicates that precision nutrient application techniques increase fertilizer-use efficiency by 25% while maintaining or improving crop yields.

***Soil and Water Conservation Techniques***

Soil degradation and declining water availability are among the most pressing challenges for agriculture (Kopittke *et.al.,* 2019). Extension services have promoted conservation agriculture practices, such as minimum tillage, cover cropping, and crop rotation, which have improved soil health and increased organic matter content by 10%–15% over five years.

Water conservation measures, including rainwater harvesting, micro-irrigation, and drip irrigation, have enhanced water-use efficiency in drought-prone areas. Studies from the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) show that drip irrigation can reduce water consumption by 40% while increasing crop productivity by 20%. Extension-led farmer training programs have facilitated the widespread adoption of these techniques, leading to improved water security in semi-arid and arid regions.

***C. Digital Extension and ICT-Based Solutions***

The integration of digital technologies into agricultural extension services has revolutionized knowledge dissemination, making climate-related advisories more accessible and cost-effective. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-enabled extension services have improved farmers’ decision-making capabilities, reducing yield losses by 15%–20% due to better climate preparedness.

***Mobile Apps and SMS Advisory Services***

Mobile-based extension services have expanded rapidly, providing farmers with real-time weather forecasts, pest alerts, and market information. Platforms such as mKisan, Kisan Suvidha, and IFFCO Kisan have reached millions of farmers, enhancing access to agronomic guidance and risk management strategies. Research indicates that SMS-based climate advisories have increased farmers’ adoption of recommended agronomic practices by 30% (Sharma *et.al.,* 2021).

***Online Training Platforms and E-Learning Resources***

Online learning modules, webinars, and interactive digital platforms have enhanced the effectiveness of capacity-building programs. The Digital Green initiative has trained over 1.5 million farmers through video-based learning, resulting in a 20% increase in technology adoption rates. The National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGPA) has facilitated remote access to extension training, reducing dependency on physical extension centres.

***Use of AI and Remote Sensing for Precision Farming***

Artificial intelligence (AI) and remote sensing technologies have improved climate risk assessment and resource optimization. AI-driven predictive analytics have helped farmers make informed decisions regarding crop planning and input application, increasing productivity by 15%–18%. Remote sensing-based soil moisture monitoring has enabled precision irrigation, reducing water wastage and improving yield outcomes.

***D. Strengthening Farmer-Led Innovation and Participatory Research***

Participatory research models have empowered farmers to develop localized solutions for climate adaptation. Farmer-led innovation programs, facilitated by extension services, have improved knowledge-sharing and problem-solving within agricultural communities. Studies indicate that collaborative research projects involving farmers and scientists have increased technology adoption rates by 35%, ensuring that solutions are tailored to specific agro-climatic conditions.

***E. Capacity-Building Programs and Skill Development Initiatives***

Skill development initiatives have enhanced farmers' technical proficiency in climate-smart agriculture, irrigation management, and post-harvest processing. Training programs conducted by Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) have improved farm income by 15%–20% through better resource utilization and value-added practices (Sahoo *et.al.,* 2021). Extension-led training on financial literacy and market access has strengthened farmers' ability to navigate climate-induced economic risks.

***F. Role of Extension Services in Financial Inclusion and Risk Management***

Financial stability is a key component of climate resilience, enabling farmers to invest in adaptive technologies and recover from climate-induced losses.

***Crop Insurance Schemes***

Extension services have facilitated the enrollment of farmers in climate risk insurance programs, reducing the financial impact of crop failures. The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) has provided insurance coverage to over 60 million farmers, with compensation payouts exceeding $4 billion since its inception. Studies indicate that insured farmers are 25% more likely to adopt climate-resilient practices compared to uninsured counterparts.

***Access to Climate-Resilient Credit Facilities***

Microfinance and institutional credit access have played a crucial role in enabling farmers to invest in sustainable agricultural technologies. Agricultural credit schemes, facilitated through extension services, have increased farm mechanization rates by 20% and improved input access for smallholders. Targeted financial literacy programs have strengthened farmers’ ability to manage resources efficiently, reducing economic vulnerabilities (Yaron *et.al.,* 1997).

**VI. Challenges in Strengthening Extension Services for Climate Resilience**

***A. Limited Access to Extension Services in Remote Areas***

Rural and remote farming communities often struggle to access extension services due to geographical constraints, inadequate infrastructure, and an insufficient number of trained personnel. Studies indicate that more than 60% of smallholder farmers have limited or no access to formal agricultural extension services, significantly affecting their ability to adopt climate-resilient practices. The gap is particularly evident in rainfed and tribal farming regions, where traditional knowledge remains the primary source of agricultural decision-making.

A major limitation is the low extension worker-to-farmer ratio. The FAO reports that the ideal ratio for effective extension service delivery should be 1:400; however, many developing regions operate at ratios exceeding 1:2000, leading to ineffective outreach and limited farmer engagement. The absence of dedicated extension officers in marginalized farming communities has resulted in reduced awareness of climate-resilient practices and delayed adoption of new technologies.

The lack of digital infrastructure in remote areas further restricts access to modern extension tools such as mobile-based advisory services, online training platforms, and real-time weather forecasting applications (Hove *et.al.,* 2024). Studies indicate that although digital extension services have improved outreach in some regions, only 35% of smallholder farmers have access to mobile-based advisories due to poor network connectivity, lack of technical literacy, and high costs associated with smartphones and internet services.

***B. Inadequate Training and Capacity of Extension Personnel***

The effectiveness of agricultural extension services depends largely on the expertise and technical capacity of extension personnel. Studies highlight that many extension agents lack specialized training in climate-resilient agriculture, limiting their ability to provide comprehensive guidance on adaptation strategies. A survey conducted by the IFPRI found that only 40% of extension workers had received training in climate change-related advisories, leaving significant knowledge gaps in climate-smart practices.

Traditional extension training models have focused primarily on increasing agricultural productivity through conventional techniques, often overlooking sustainability and climate resilience (Altieri *et.al.,* 2015). Research indicates that extension curricula need to be revised to incorporate agroecology, water conservation techniques, integrated pest and nutrient management, and digital advisory systems to improve the relevance of extension services in climate adaptation efforts.

Limited incentives and career growth opportunities have also led to high attrition rates among extension personnel. A study by the World Bank found that low salaries, lack of professional development programs, and excessive workloads contribute to a 30% turnover rate among public extension officers, affecting service continuity and farmer engagement. Strengthening capacity-building programs, offering financial incentives, and integrating digital tools into extension training could enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of extension service delivery.

***C. Low Adoption Rates of Climate-Resilient Technologies***

Despite the availability of climate-smart technologies, adoption rates among smallholder farmers remain low due to multiple economic, social, and technical barriers. Studies suggest that fewer than 30% of farmers actively implement climate-resilient technologies such as drought-resistant crop varieties, precision irrigation, and conservation agriculture due to high input costs, limited knowledge, and concerns about uncertain returns on investment.

Financial constraints are a major deterrent, with climate-smart technologies often requiring significant upfront investments. Research from the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) found that smallholder farmers are 50% less likely to adopt water-saving irrigation methods such as drip and sprinkler systems due to high installation costs and limited access to credit. Similarly, the adoption of climate-resilient crop varieties remains restricted to less than 20% of cultivated land, despite their demonstrated benefits in improving yield stability under erratic climatic conditions (Banga *et.al.,* 2014).

Social factors such as risk aversion and resistance to change further contribute to slow adoption rates. Many farmers continue to rely on traditional agricultural practices due to concerns about the reliability and effectiveness of new technologies. Research suggests that participatory extension models, where farmers are actively involved in on-farm trials and demonstrations, can increase adoption rates by up to 40% by building trust and confidence in climate-smart innovations.

***D. Institutional and Policy Constraints***

Weak institutional coordination and fragmented policy implementation have hindered the effectiveness of agricultural extension services in addressing climate resilience. Studies indicate that extension policies often operate in isolation, lacking integration with broader climate adaptation strategies, rural development programs, and financial support mechanisms. The absence of clear guidelines on climate-smart extension services has resulted in inconsistencies in training programs, technology dissemination, and funding allocations.

Public extension services often suffer from bureaucratic inefficiencies and delays in policy execution. A study by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) highlights that less than 50% of allocated funds for agricultural extension programs are utilized effectively due to administrative bottlenecks, corruption, and a lack of accountability mechanisms. Strengthening institutional frameworks, improving interdepartmental coordination, and ensuring participatory policymaking could enhance the impact of extension services on climate resilience.

***E. Financial and Infrastructural Limitations***

Agricultural extension programs require substantial financial investment to expand their reach, improve service quality, and integrate modern technologies (Anderson *et.al.,* 2007). Studies indicate that public spending on extension services remains below 1% of the agricultural GDP, significantly lower than the recommended threshold for ensuring effective knowledge transfer and technology adoption.

Limited funding affects infrastructure development, particularly in rural extension centres, research facilities, and digital extension platforms. Reports from the MANAGE indicate that only 40% of extension centres are equipped with modern ICT tools, limiting their ability to deliver timely and accurate climate advisories. Expanding financial allocations, promoting public-private partnerships, and leveraging international funding for climate adaptation projects could address financial shortfalls and strengthen extension infrastructure.

***F. Need for Gender-Inclusive and Socially Equitable Extension Services***

Women play a significant role in agricultural production, yet they remain largely excluded from formal extension services. Studies suggest that only 20% of female farmers receive direct extension support due to socio-cultural barriers, lack of land ownership, and limited access to decision-making forums. Gender-responsive extension programs have been shown to improve women’s participation in climate adaptation efforts, with research indicating that training programs tailored for female farmers increase technology adoption rates by 30%–35%.

Marginalized farming communities, including Indigenous and landless farmers, also face significant barriers to accessing extension services (Rotz *et.al.,* 2019). Research from the International Labour Organization (ILO) highlights that extension outreach in marginalized communities remains 40% lower than in more developed farming regions due to language barriers, economic constraints, and limited institutional representation. Strengthening inclusive extension models, providing targeted training for women and disadvantaged groups, and promoting gender-sensitive policies can ensure equitable access to climate-resilience-building initiatives.

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**VII. Policy and Institutional Interventions for Strengthening Extension Services**

***A. Government Policies Supporting Agricultural Extension***

Agricultural extension services have played a crucial role in enhancing farmers' resilience to climate change through knowledge dissemination, technology transfer, and adaptive capacity-building initiatives. Policy interventions by governments have been instrumental in strengthening the extension system by ensuring access to advisory services, promoting climate-smart agriculture, and integrating digital innovations into extension frameworks.

National agricultural policies have emphasized the need for an inclusive and technology-driven extension system. A report by the World Bank highlights that countries investing at least 1% of their agricultural GDP in extension services witness a 20%–25% increase in farm productivity due to improved access to information and training. Governments have launched targeted schemes, such as climate adaptation programs, farmer training initiatives, and ICT-enabled extension models, to address challenges posed by climate variability.

Public extension services have been reinforced through legislative reforms and institutional frameworks aimed at improving service delivery (Cohen *et.al.,* 2011). Research suggests that countries implementing decentralized extension systems, which involve local governance structures, farmer organizations, and community-led advisory services, have achieved higher technology adoption rates and better climate adaptation outcomes. Policies supporting participatory extension approaches have enabled smallholder farmers to access region-specific solutions tailored to their agro-climatic conditions.

***B. Role of Public-Private Partnerships in Extension Delivery***

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) have emerged as an effective strategy for expanding the reach and efficiency of agricultural extension services (Mukherjee *et.al.,* 2015). Collaborative efforts between government agencies, private agribusiness firms, research institutions, and non-governmental organizations have facilitated the large-scale dissemination of climate-smart technologies, precision farming tools, and financial risk management solutions.

Private sector involvement has enhanced access to market-driven advisory services, allowing farmers to receive real-time weather updates, soil health diagnostics, and pest management recommendations through digital platforms. Studies indicate that ICT-based extension services operated by private firms have improved farmers’ decision-making capacity, resulting in a 15%–20% reduction in climate-induced crop losses. Agribusiness-led extension initiatives have also introduced innovative financing models, such as bundled insurance and credit-linked advisory services, which have improved farmers' ability to invest in climate-resilient practices.

Hybrid extension models, which integrate public research with private-sector-driven technology dissemination, have proven successful in accelerating climate adaptation. Research from the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) shows that farmer engagement in private-sector extension programs has increased the adoption of climate-resilient crops by 30% due to targeted advisory services and input support.

***C. Strengthening the Research-Extension-Farmer Linkage***

The effectiveness of extension services depends on the seamless integration of scientific research, field-level advisory systems, and farmer participation. Strengthening the research-extension-farmer linkage ensures that innovative agricultural technologies are tailored to the needs of farmers, increasing adoption rates and enhancing climate resilience.

Participatory research models involving farmers in on-farm trials and adaptive learning programs have been shown to improve technology adoption by 35% due to hands-on experience and localized knowledge adaptation. Research institutions have collaborated with extension agencies to develop climate-resilient seed varieties, precision irrigation techniques, and agroecological farming models, ensuring that farmers receive scientifically validated solutions.

Strengthening institutional collaboration between universities, extension agencies, and farmer cooperatives has enabled knowledge-sharing networks to expand (Kwanya *et.al.,* 2021). Studies indicate that multi-stakeholder extension models have improved information accessibility and training efficiency, reducing the lag between research innovations and field-level implementation.

***D. Enhancing Funding and Resource Allocation for Extension Programs***

Financial constraints remain a critical barrier to the expansion of agricultural extension services. Research highlights that most developing countries allocate less than 1% of their agricultural budget to extension services, significantly limiting outreach capacity and infrastructure development. Increasing financial support for extension programs has been identified as a key strategy for improving service delivery, technology transfer, and climate adaptation efforts.

Investment in digital extension tools, rural training centres, and extension personnel development has demonstrated a direct impact on agricultural productivity. Reports from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) show that doubling extension budgets can increase farmer incomes by 15%–20% by improving access to adaptive technologies and financial risk management solutions. Strengthening financial allocations to extension services through international climate funds, development grants, and public-private investment partnerships has emerged as a viable solution for expanding climate-resilient agricultural programs.

***E. Integrating Climate Resilience into National Agricultural Policies***

Mainstreaming climate resilience into national agricultural policies has become essential for ensuring long-term sustainability in food production systems (Wright *et.al.,* 2017). Governments have increasingly integrated climate adaptation frameworks into extension strategies, emphasizing water conservation, soil health management, and ecosystem-based approaches to mitigate climate risks.

Legislative frameworks supporting climate-smart agriculture have promoted the widespread adoption of low-emission farming techniques, organic agriculture, and integrated nutrient management systems. Studies indicate that policy-driven incentives for conservation agriculture have increased adoption rates by 25% among smallholder farmers, improving soil organic matter content and reducing dependency on synthetic fertilizers.

**VIII. Future Directions and Recommendations**

***A. Strengthening Digital Extension Services and ICT Innovations***

Digital transformation in agricultural extension has the potential to significantly enhance climate resilience. Expanding mobile-based advisory platforms, remote sensing applications, and AI-driven decision-support tools can improve access to timely climate information, reducing yield losses due to extreme weather events. Research suggests that scaling up digital extension services could increase farm productivity by 20% through better risk assessment and precision farming techniques.

***B. Capacity Building of Extension Agents for Climate Advisory Services***

Training programs for extension personnel should be updated to include climate risk management, agroecology, and digital extension methodologies (Singh *et.al.,* 2013). Studies highlight that improving extension agents' technical knowledge in climate adaptation strategies can enhance farmer engagement and technology adoption rates by 30%. Establishing continuous learning programs, knowledge-sharing networks, and performance-based incentives can improve extension service delivery.

***C. Promoting Participatory Extension Approaches***

Farmer-led extension models, such as participatory research programs and farmer field schools, have been shown to improve climate adaptation outcomes. Studies indicate that participatory extension approaches increase adoption rates of climate-smart technologies by 40% due to higher levels of farmer engagement and practical learning opportunities. Strengthening grassroots-level extension services through decentralized governance structures can further enhance climate resilience.

***D. Enhancing Financial and Infrastructural Support for Climate Resilience Programs***

Increasing investment in rural extension infrastructure, climate-smart farming incentives, and farmer training centres is essential for strengthening resilience. Research suggests that countries investing in rural extension services see a 15%–25% reduction in climate-induced crop losses due to better preparedness and adaptive capacity. Public-private investment in climate finance programs can provide sustainable funding mechanisms for long-term resilience-building initiatives.

***E. Encouraging Farmer-to-Farmer Knowledge Exchange and Local Innovations***

Community-driven extension models have proven highly effective in scaling up climate-smart practices (Barbon *et.al.,* 2021). Strengthening farmer cooperatives, self-help groups, and local innovation hubs can facilitate peer-to-peer learning and knowledge-sharing networks. Research suggests that farmer-to-farmer extension programs increase technology diffusion rates by 35% due to localized adaptations and trust-based learning.

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**IX. Conclusion**

Agricultural extension services play a crucial role in strengthening farmers’ resilience to climate change by promoting climate-smart practices, improving knowledge dissemination, and enhancing access to adaptive technologies. Challenges such as limited outreach, inadequate funding, low adoption rates, and gender disparities hinder the effectiveness of extension programs. Policy interventions, including increased financial support, integration of digital extension services, and participatory research models, are essential for improving climate adaptation efforts. Strengthening public-private partnerships, expanding ICT-based advisory services, and capacity-building initiatives for extension personnel can further enhance service delivery. Future strategies should focus on inclusive, decentralized, and community-driven approaches to ensure equitable access to climate resilience-building programs. Farmer-led innovation, cooperative networks, and institutional reforms will be critical in ensuring long-term sustainability. Strengthening the research-extension-farmer linkage and mainstreaming climate resilience into agricultural policies can significantly improve food security, rural livelihoods, and overall agricultural sustainability in the face of climate challenges.

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