

## **Farmers' Perception on Extension Service Provided by Tea Small Holding Development Authority: A Case of Tea Smallholders in Nagoda DS Division**

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### *Abstract*

Tea small holder sector holds around 70% share of national tea production. Tea Small Holding Development Authority (TSHDA) plays a pivotal role in developing the tea small holder sector through advisory and subsidy programmes. But most significant problem was the farmers' disinclination to acquire TSHDA extension services and participate in the programmes conducted. Therefore, this study was conducted with the objectives to assess the extension services provided by the Tea Small Holding Development Authority for the growers. 150 small holders were selected randomly from 15 Grama Niladhari divisions with the highest and the lowest smallholders' GN divisions in Nagoda. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and collected data were analyzed using descriptive analysis and using MINITAB 14 statistical package. The results of the study revealed that TSHDA provided 10 well defined extension services to the small holders. Those were the advisory services, pH test facilities, supply of planting material, infilling subsidy, replanting with rehabilitation subsidy, training programmes for cultivation and management aspects, methods demonstration (for plucking and pruning), lessons about natural disasters such as climate change, extension worker's availability in the field and assistance in directing green leaf to the bought leaf factories. Results showed that 64.7%, 58%, 51.3% for the pH test facility, extension worker's availability in the field and advisory services respectively. But other identified services scored lower than 50% according to the farmers' perception. Results of the farmers' perception about effectiveness of the extension services revealed that the farmers believe that they have some development in skill and knowledge through the programmes conducted by TSHDA and that as a credible extension service. But their perception about the effectiveness of the extension programmes to reduce their cost of production and to increase the income was negative. The results of the study also showed that extension services should give priority to provide credit subsidy, technical information and methods, monitoring the TSHs and helping the farmers to guide their products.

**Keywords:** Extension services, tea small holders, effectiveness, perception