

Changing trends in Extension System/ Emerging thoughts in Extension Works

Abstract

The term 'Extension' was first used in the United State in the first decade of the 20th century, meaning extension of knowledge from the Land Grant Colleges to farmers. Extension education is an educational process of imparting knowledge to rural people in a convincing way and helping them to take decision within their specific local situations. The fundamental objective of the extension is the development of the individual in the community and the ultimate aim to improve the well-being of the all rural people within the framework of national economic and social policies.

In the complexity, diversity and vastness of extension work, it may be useful to think of extension in terms of system. A system is essentially a set or assemblage of things interconnected or interdependent, so as to form a complex unity.

Introduction

Systems Approach in Extension

The principal system in agricultural extension are client system and the change agent system. The farmers who are in need of and desire change, comprise the client system. Extension agents who influence the farmer's innovation-decision process, constitute the change agent system. Change agent provides the linkage between the change agency and client system.

Approaches of Extension

Approach means the act of coming near, movement towards the establishment of personal relations with one, power of approaching an access, a means or way of approach. Thus, it conveys clearly that it is the organisation through which we come closer or approach an individual, group or a community to educate. Some well defined extension approaches have been and are being practised in several countries of the world since the beginning of the twentieth century. A single approach is neither wholly perfect nor universally applicable. Approaches of extension may broadly be classified as below.

1. Multi-Subject Matter Extension

In this approach the field agent although supported by a large number of subject-matter specialists, have to deal with all the subjects at field level i.e. Agriculture, Health, Home Science etc.

2. Specialized or Intensive Approach

This type of approach needs technically trained field staff in each of the subject-matter to be given education to the rural people. So, it requires greater number of technically trained personnel. It may suit where some regions are particularly to be dealt with specific problems.

3. Democratic Approach

In this approach, the extension worker takes people's real problem and takes them into confidence for its solution by contacting their leaders. He helps them realize their problem and suggests them alternative solutions.

4. Regional Development Approach

Specific programmes for a certain region having specific conditions and problems are allotted to a specially trained personnel according to the special need and interest of people of that region i.e. the hilly areas of Punjab having different agro-climatic conditions and different types of agricultural crops, fruits, forests, tea plants are to be developed there in planes of Punjab. So it would be appropriate to develop that region drawing out programme specifically suited to that area and setting up an organisation suitable for that area and setting up an organisation suitable for that area. Such an approach called regional approach.

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5. National Development Approach

When National Government combine many activities like education in schools, college, development of roads, railway, irrigation etc. or provide facilities for research for disease and pest control, marketing, price control etc. all aimed at rural development in a single or integrated programme.

6. Self-help Small Projects

Where a group of people having common interest to join their heads, may form a society and work together to fulfill their own aim without any assistance from the government, using their own men, material and finance, we may call this approach as self aided, e.g. constructing a temple building in a village.

7. Aided Self-help Projects

Where the betterment of a community achieved through their own participation and partly by the financial help by Government such a project may be called an aided self-help project, e.g. construction of school building or streets or roads.

8. Foreign Aided Programme

Where foreign aid is involved in carrying out an extension programme may it be for a few selected areas or activities, the approach will be foreign aided, e.g. higher education special courses offered by foreign governments.

9. Farmers Initiated Organisations

Farmers themselves form a local organisation for the purpose of improving their agricultural methods and they hire technical advisors to assist in bringing to them the latest the latest scientific knowledge and techniques. Such an approach may be called farmers, own initiated approach.

10. Development of Extension as a Result of Teaching in Agricultural Schools, Colleges and Universities

In this approach, the students after having their education either settled on their own lands improve their standard their experiences and knowledge with others and thus help extending the knowledge.

11. Research Worker's Conduct Extension Activities

New findings of the research workers are necessarily go to be tried under local conditions and when they conduct trials in rural areas then this provides an excellent learning situation. thus, the people coming in such a contact, get benefited from such trials and they form their own views after getting satisfaction when they evaluate such an activity. In this way, research workers serve as a approach.

Some other approaches used worldwide, given by Swanson and Clear (1984) are as follows.

1. Community Development-cum-Extension Approach

This approach is on of the most effective system for raising production and productivity of crops together with other socio-cultural development of the rural and farming community. In this approach specific agricultural extension responsibility at grass root level lies with the village extension agent. Together with agricultural activities, the extension agents are

expected to perform several other social, economic and educational development works.

2. Technical Innovation Centred Approach

This approach centres around technology transfer from outside to the farm, transmitting the readymade technology to the users with considering their acceptability and capability to use the same.

3. Commodity Focused Approach in Extension

The objective of this approach is to produce and market relatively high value commodities such as tea, coffee, oil, cashews, rubber, sugar etc. usually for export, efficiently and effectively. Selection of commodity mostly depends on the particular ecological features of the area or the country.

4. Clients Focused Approach in Extension

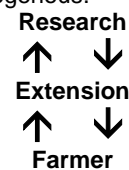
This is an organisational approach putting the farmers and their constraints, abilities and needs at the centre of the whole extension effort. this is generally known as the Training and Visit (T & V) System of extension. Its approach is holistic, as in mobilizes the entire extension machinery and research systems to serve the clients and ultimate producer.

Emerging Thoughts in Extension work

The emerging thoughts in extension work in India emphasize on development of the systems in which farmers live and work, rather than on the spread of a few standard package of technologies. The approach is multidisciplinary with emphasis on resource-poor farmers. There is more integration between reseach and extension and both of them are brought closer to the rural people.

Linear Model Transfer of Technology

This model has for many years been dominant-example in agricultural research and extension. It has been most successful in stimulating technical change and raising productivity in areas where agro-climatic, biophysical and socio-organizational conditions had fewer constrains and were relatively homogenous.

**Linear Model Transfer of Technology**

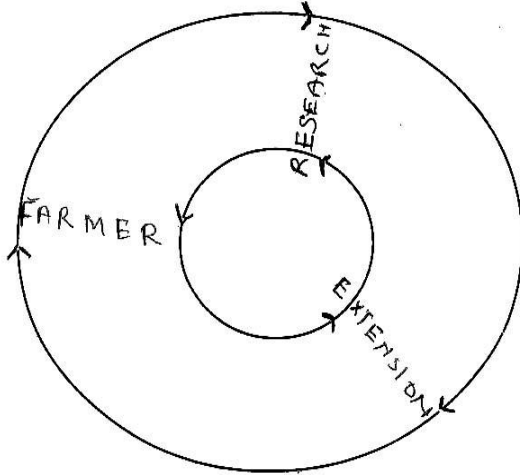
According to Jiggins and Rolling (1991) the model assumes a simple linear relationship between research, Extension and farmers. With research as source of innovation. It is sequential with technologies being transferred down a pepeline. Technology is viewed as a product, a commodity which is originated by researchers transferred by extensionists an adopted by farmers. Farmer's Reaction and problems about technology adoption are gathered and evaluated by extension and passed on to research for taking suitable action.

Circular Model Transfer of Technology

The linear Model Proved inadequate for effective transfer of technology to the poorer farmers in socially and economically backward farming communities nor of those farming situations of diverse, variable and unstable micro-environments.

Innovation The Research Concept

The main concern was to reduce the gap between research and farmer which gave rise to the concept of circular model transfer of technology.



The circular model attempts to bend the linear model by bringing research and farmers closer through greater emphasis on adaptive research in farmer's fields and by improving research's capacity to anticipate farmer's needs. By moving away from a diagnostic perspective approach, it provides opportunities for interactive two-way communication and development of multiple options for innovation rather than packaged technological products and practices.

Farming Systems Research and Extension (FSRE)

The concept of FSRE began to be used since early 1980's in India. Farming is viewed as system including interesting components of land, soil, water, Crops, livestock, labour and other resources, with the farm family at the centre, managing agriculture and allied activities. The farm family functions within the limitations of resources and capabilities economic and socio-cultural setting and interactions of the sub-systems.

FSRE's principal organizational goal is to influence the directions and priorities of larger agricultural research and extension systems for improving livelihoods of rural people by giving the greater power in decision making and pressurizing the centralized support agencies and policy makers to be more responsive to be more responsive to their interests and needs.

The programme in started with problem diagnosis and development of relevant research agenda in a selected target area followed by on-farm (carried out on farmer's farm) exploratory and adaptive farmer participatory trials when a number of technologies are tested with a few farmers at different locations to know the reactions and responses. On the basis of results, the next stage is initiated for technology generation when a number of potential technologies are tested with a selected number of farmers through on farm participatory research. To assess the results the FSRE team is involved in

evaluation of biological performance, economic and financial gains, actual resource requirements and socio-cultural acceptability. The evaluation indicated the readiness of the technology for diffusion and the needed policy and support services.

References

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2. Singh, Ranjit. 1969. An Introduction to Extension Education. Pujnab Agricultural University, Ludhiana. pp 45-48.