

The Nature and Importance of Extension Program Planning

Module Details

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4.	Module Name	The Nature and Importance of Extension Program Planning
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Introduction:

Program planning is essential for any systematic attempt to achieve desired goals. The use of planning is to discover and prepare the way for action that should be taken. The use of planning is to discover and prepare the way for action that should be taken. Planning must, therefore, result in programs that help people to find satisfactory modes of living and of making a living. Knowledge of the program planning process helps in gaining a sense of clear direction adds to work efficiency and increases personal satisfaction. Proper planning of the program is very important for achieving the success in extension work. It helps to identify the educational objectives, facilitates the selection

of learning experiences to attain these objectives and evaluation of the in relation to objectives becomes possible.

Program planning is the process of bringing about planned change. It is a deliberate and collaborative process involving change agent and client-systems, which are brought together to solve a problem, or more generally, to plan and attain an improved state of functioning in the client-system by utilizing and applying valid knowledge.

The function of extension program planning is to provide a clear blue print or a plan useful to extension workers in conducting an educational program. A well-developed extension program is to the extension worker what a compass is to the seaman. Rural development work is basically a joint effort of many agencies. It is essential to coordinate the activities of various agencies involved in this work. Program planning helps in understanding the statement of purpose both by the extension workers and the people. The general objective of having an extension program is to influence people to make changes in their way of life and in making a better living. The assumption is that there is need for change and if people are not aware, it is necessary to make them aware of this. And to develop their needs. Proper planning is important for achieving success in any work. It helps to identify the educational objectives, facilitates the selection of learning experiences to attain these objectives and evaluation of the results in relation to objectives decided. Planning is essential for any extension program to be effectively undertaken by an extension worker in the community or village.

Objectives:

1. The students will be able to define the extension program planning.
2. The students will be able to explain the importance of extension program planning.
3. The students will be able to explain the nature and concept of extension program planning.
4. The students will be able to describe the benefits of Extension program Planning.

Meaning of Program Planning and Extension program Planning:

It is essential to understand certain basic concepts to get acquainted with the extension program planning.

Planning:

Planning is an integral part and an important dimension of our culture. It is regarded as a process of making decisions on what is to be done, when and how is to be done. Myerson and Benfield (1935) defined, 'planning is designing a course of action to achieve ends'. Haiman, said, " Planning is deciding in advance what is to be done". According to Koontz, o Donnel, " Planning is an intellectual process, the conscious determination of course of action, basing of decisions on purpose, facts and considered estimates".

OR

Planning is a systematic effort to achieve desired goals. It is a progressive step-by-step process which involves studying the past and present in order to forecast the future and preparing a blue print for action.

As stated by Abraham Lincoln, " If we could but know where we are now and where we ought to go, we could better judge what to do and how to do it". It will be seen from the statement that the effective program for rural development do not just happen, they have to be built.

Effective planning requires:

- 1- Clearly defined objectives and strategies
- 2- Identification of the limiting or critical factors
- 3- Anticipation of future requirements and problems
- 4- Rigidity with flexibility
- 5- Built method of monitoring and evaluation so that needed changes could be made to reach the desired goal

Elements of Planning:

Planning in an extension organization is not done for its own sake, but for the purpose of improving rural life. There are some basic elements through the interaction and contribution of which a good plan may be developed. Planning results from the interaction of the two systems- the change agent system and the client system; in the context of their objectives, resources, facilities, constraints and time. This is shown in Fig.-1.

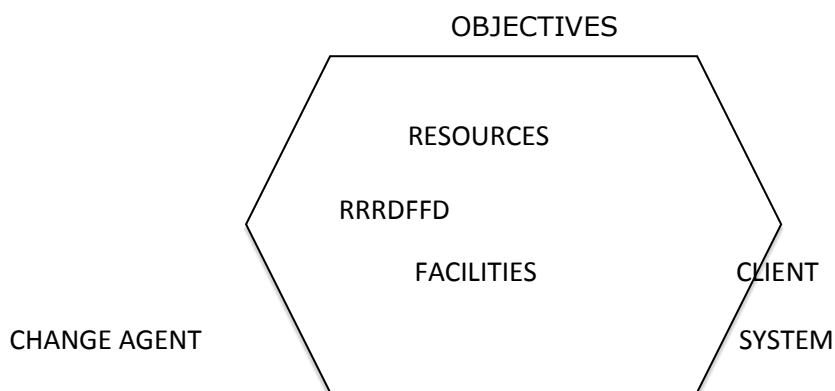


Figure – 1: Elements in ExtensiOrganizational Planning

Change agent system:

This comprises the extension agents who influence the innovation- decisions of the rural people in a direction deemed desirable by the extension organization.

Client system:

This constitutes the rural people who are in need of and desire the change.

The objectives:

In planning, the objectives of the change agent system and the client system should be harmonious i.e. in tune with each other. A common understanding on the objectives must be arrived at by the two systems. This may be done by thoroughly studying the enterprises and their 'environment' and exchanging ideas and opinions with the local people and their leader.

Availability of Resources:

Have the extension organization adequate funds, trained manpower and appropriate technology for transfer? Replies to such questions shall provide insight as to how the plan should be developed.

Facilities:

The next element is facilities, which are available with the two systems. Does the extension organization have adequate staff, facility for training, physical facilities like vehicles etc.?

Constraints:

The constraints, which the two systems perceive, may limit the scope of

planning. For the change agent system, these may be weak organizational system, lack of adequate authority and responsibility, lack of suitable organizational climate etc. (ray and Chatterjee, 1990). In making plan, perception about the problems of the two systems is to be considered.

Time:

Last, but not the least, comes the time factor. Does the change system have adequate time for planning and implementation of program? Does the client system have enough time to work for the program, or shall enough time be available to incorporate the program in the existing production system?

These are the some essential elements, which influence the planning of programs by the extension organization.

Program Planning:

It is a process of working with people in an effort to recognize the unsatisfactory situation and determine possible solutions or objectives or goals. Program planning is basically a process of making decisions that will carry into future. The decisions have to be made about what the present situation is, how it could and ought to be changed and what means can be used to accomplish the new and more desirable situation.

OR

Program planning is a procedure of working with the people in an effort to recognize unsatisfactory situations or problems and to determine possible solutions, objectives and goals. This is a conscious effort to meet the needs, interests and wants of the people for whom the program is intended. Therefore, the elements of people's needs become a central concern of planners for rural development.

Extension Program:

According to Kelsey and Hearne (1967), " An extension program is a statement of situation, objectives, problems and solutions". It is relatively permanent but requires constant revision".

Leagans (1961) says, "An extension program is a set of clearly defined, consciously conceived educationally objectives derived from an adequate analysis of the situation, which are to be achieved through extension teaching".

Thus, extension program is a written statement of situations, objectives, and a problem, which is prepared by adequate regulated planning. The function of extension program is to provide a clear guide, a blue print, or a plan useful to extension worker in conducting ongoing extension programs.

Extension Planning:

According to Beal et. al.(1966), extension is faced with two major problems which require that some type of program planning be undertaken.

- (i) The great amount of science and technology available in the many disciplines and fields of research.
- (ii) Limited professional and lay leader resources available this body of science and technology.
- (iii) Extension philosophy envisages extending scientific and technical know how to help clientele solve problems important to them. This requires setting priorities on the allocation of resources to make the aid reach different clientele.
- (iv) Certain method of program planning is preferred to an alternative method based on a ranking of values.

Extension Program Planning:

Extension program planning is the process of determining, developing and executing programs. It is a conscious process where by farm people, with the guidance and leadership of extension personnel attempt to determine, analyze and solve local problems. In this process, there are three characteristics:

1. What needs to be done?
 2. When it should be done?
 3. How it should be done?
- (Musgraw, 1962)

OR

Extension program planning may be defined as, " A decision making and social action process in which extension educationists involve people's representatives to determine

their needs, problems, resources and priorities in order to decide on an extension program consisting of situation analysis, problems, objectives and solutions which will form the basis of extension teaching plans for a given period.

Nature and Importance of Program Planning:

It is important to discuss the nature of program planning with special reference to extension programs. Like any other program, extension program planning is also a process. It means that program planning involves a series of actions, which culminate in the accomplishment of a goal. Therefore, it has to be viewed as a sequential set of steps or several systematically ordered steps of planning. This also suggests that extension program planning is a decision making process which requires advance thinking. It is important to know 'where we are' and 'where we want to go'. To reach our destination we have to decide 'what to do' and 'how to do' the same. This all needs intellectual efforts and skills to deal with people. A planner should have the technical information and planning skill. The extension program planning is built around the available improved technology, the people, their resources, problems, needs and interests. It also involves interaction between various segments of population. It is the duty of the program planners to inform, educate and persuade the people so as to involve them in the planning and execution of the program. The whole exercise must result in a practicable program acceptable to all the concerned parties.

The main objective of India's National Extension Service is to develop the ability to make a better living and to live a more satisfying life as individuals, as family members and as citizens in the village people. The first step in any systematic attempt to promote rural development is to prepare a useful program. The term program indicates focus, priority and design. It assumes the ability among the planners to distinguish important needs from unimportant ones. Such a program must be based on people's needs to make it significant and on their interests to make it effective.

Benefits of Program Planning-

Following are the important benefits of the program planning:

1. Avoid wastage of resources:

Planning helps in minimizing the waste of time and money and provides general efficiency. Optimum can be accomplished under the prevailing circumstances and conditions.

2. Provide guidance:

Planning ensures careful consideration of what is to be done and why,

establishes objectives, gives direction for execution of work and helps in evaluating the results.

3. Continuity:

Planning gives continuity to the program because a plan is available in black and white, the change of personnel will not affect the tempo or direction of the work.

4. Provide reliable information:

When and whatever information is required about the program, situation and resources, etc., it is easily available from the records. Information is the intelligence upon which plans are made.

5. Institutional support:

For proper implementation of the plan, the involved or affected persons must be in substantial agreement with the plan. Planning will help to justify the appropriations by public bodies and to obtain the support of the key personnel.

6. Leadership development:

Development of leadership is one of the keys to success and planning. It is one of the best methods of developing leadership.

7. Minimize conflicts:

Many conflicts like conflict of resources, conflicts of personalities, etc. may arise while executing a program. These can easily be removed at the planning stage. A good program planning process will avoid unnecessary conflicts.

8. Local support:

A program planned with the cooperation of the people and based on their needs will get full support from them. For any program in extension education, which is not supported by the local people, it is difficult to achieve its goals.

9. Avoiding future problems:

A good planning always identifies and monitors future developments that will have a major impact on performance or results.

Assumptions for Extension Program Planning:

Extension program planning is based on a number of assumptions. Boyle (1965) has listed the following assumptions in this regard:

1. Planned change is a necessary prerequisite to effective social progress for people and communities.
2. The most desirable change is predetermined and democratically achieved.
3. Extension education programs, if properly planned and implemented, can make a significant contribution to planned change.
4. It is possible to select, organize and administer a program that will contribute to the social and economic progress of people.
5. People and communities need the guidance, leadership and help of extension educators to solve their problems in a planned and systematic way.

Concept of Extension Program planning:

1. Program requires a design:
Effective program is a result of design, not drift; it results from a plan, not from trial and error. The pay off for educational effort comes when people change their behavior to improve their situation. These results come most rapidly when careful planning is done and when effective teachings are used.

2. Planning gives direction:

In planning, the extension works should be guided by five major

factors:

- (i) The purpose for which the program is offered and its aims
- (ii) The characteristics and needs of the people
- (iii) The environment
- (iv) The sources of information available
- (v) The requirements and demands of the vocation or other uses

3. Effective Learning requires a Plan:

The directions of teaching effort can best be stated in terms of objectives. They must be developed with the people to teach and must be capable attainment by and with the people concerned.

4. Planning Precedes Action:

The results of an action are dependent on the following adequacy of analysis of the problems, situation of objectives and involvement of the people. Through the planning process, questions such as these are posed:

- What information do people need more?
- Which kind of information shall be extended?
- What kind of information shall be extended first?
- How much time shall be devoted to this line of work?
- How much effort shall be devoted to this line of work?

The answer to these questions lies in the program planning process. A few points need to be interpreted to understand the nature of extension program planning.

Nature of extension program planning

1. Extension program planning is a process:

The concept of process involves a method i.e. a process should be viewed as a sequential set of steps or several systematically ordered steps of planning, the performance of which leads to the accomplishment of a goal. In extension program planning, the immediate goal would be the development of a program document. Many programs program planning process takes place at any particular time and at different levels of extension organizations. For example, program planning occurs at a national level (5years planning), at the state level state plans, annual plans); and at block level.

2. Extension Program Planning is a Decision making Process:

The scientific are put to value judgments of the people through implementation of a national planning model in order to decide a program which will be carried out through the extension teaching activities.

3. **Extension Program Planning requires Advance Thinking:**
Good extension program planning is an intellectual activity since it usually involves a study of use facts and principles. It requires knowledge, imagination and reasoning ability. It is a complex exercise and involves people and their needs, their interests, useful technology, analyzing a situation and making decisions about what should be done, determining useful actions, projecting the desired shape of things in future and several other components which are rarely simple.
4. **Extension Program Planning requires skills and Abilities on the part of Planner:**
Effective program planning requires higher-level professional skills, abilities and understanding in the following broad areas:
 - (i) Understanding the nature and role of extension education organization
 - (ii) Knowledge and understanding of the technology related to the subject for which the program is concerned
 - (iii) Ability to clarify, the objectives of a program and to state that they are useful in guiding its execution
 - (iv) Skills at seeing the relationship between principles and practices
 - (v) Skills in inquiry and human relationship
5. **Extension Program Planning is built around Content:**
It is built around available improved technology, the people, their resources, problems, needs and interests. Without some expressed purpose, there can be no planning.
6. **Extension Program Planning is a Social Action Process:**
Extension program planning involves interaction and the decisions so taken in the form of a program, which affect others. Extension planning involves specialists and people representatives in this process and the scientific data is put to value judgment so as to decide the intensive direction of change, appropriate methods to be used to reach the goals.
7. **Extension Program Planning is a collaborative effort:**
Extension program planning is a collaborative effort involving identification, assessment or evaluation of needs, problems, resources priorities and solutions.
8. **Extension Program Planning is a system:**
It is a system as its procedure and process are interrelated, ordered and linked progressively to form a collective whole. It includes several sub-processes such as planning, designing, implementing and evaluation etc.
9. **The end product of Extension Program Planning is an Extension Program:**
The first consideration for anyone who is to concern himself with a process or set of procedures for planning is to clearly identify the primary purpose of planning process to be developed. According to Vande Berg (1965), the primary purpose of any planning first and foremost is that developing a sound, defensible and progressive codes of action or

plans. In the process followed, many other benefits might occur, such as the education of participants but we want a plan, which can and will be used.

Summary:

Program planning is essential for any systematic attempt to achieve desired goals. It is the process of bringing about planned change. The use of planning is to discover and prepare the way for action that should be taken. Program planning must, therefore, result in programs that help people to find satisfactory modes of living and of making a living. The knowledge of the program planning process helps in gaining a sense of clear direction, which adds to work efficiency and increases personal satisfaction. Thus, a good program planning is very important for achieving the success in extension work, which helps to identify the educational objectives, facilitates the selection of learning experiences to attain these objectives and evaluation in relation to objectives becomes possible. It is the duty of the program planners to inform, educate and persuade the people so as to involve them in the planning and execution of the program.