

Introduction to extension education and fisheries extension- concepts, objectives and principles

The word extension is derived from the **Latin root** “ex” meaning “out” and “tensio” meaning “stretching”. Extension is that type of education which is **stretched out to people in the rural areas for and near, beyond the limits of educational institutions** to which the formal type of education is usually confined. The word ‘Extension’ is used in the context which signifies an out of school system of education.” Education is an integral part of extension.

The concept of Extension

The use of the term “extension” originated in England in 1866 with a system of University extension which was taken up first by Cambridge and Oxford University and later by other educational institutions in England and in other countries. The term “extension education” was first used in 1873 by Cambridge University to describe this particular educational innovation. **The objective of university extension was to take the educational advantages of universities to ordinary people.** James Stuart of Trinity College, Cambridge University is being called “Father of University Extension”.

In addition to practicing in the field, extension is formerly taught in colleges and universities leading to the award of degree. Research is also carried out in extension. What is unique for extension is the application of the knowledge of this discipline in socio economic transformation of the rural communities. In this context *extension may be defined as the science of developing capabilities of the people for sustainable improvement in their quality of life.*

The concept of extension is based on the following basic premises:

1. People have unlimited potential for personal growth and development.
2. The development may take place at any stage of their lives, if they are provided with adequate and appropriate learning opportunities.
3. Adults are not interested in learning only for the sake of learning. They are motivated when new learning provides opportunity for increased productivity and improved standard of living.
4. Such learning is a continuous need of rural populations and should be provided on a continuous basis because the problems as well as the technologies of production and living are continuously changing.

5. Giving the required knowledge and skills, people are capable of making optimal choices for their individual and social benefits.

Objectives of Extension

Objectives are expressions of the ends towards which our efforts are directed. The fundamental objective of extension is to develop the rural people economically, socially and culturally by means of education. More specifically the general objectives of extension are-

1. To assist people to discover and analyse their problems and identify the felt needs.
2. To develop leadership among people and help them in organising groups to solve their problems.
3. To disseminate research information of economic and practical importance in a way people would be able to understand and use.
4. To assist people in mobilizing and utilising the resources which they have and which they need from outside.
5. To collect and transmit feedback information for solving management problems.

Principles of Extension

Principles are generalized guidelines which form the basis for decision and action in a consistent way. The universal truth in extension which have been observed and found to hold good under varying conditions and circumstances are presented.

1. **Principle of cultural difference:** Culture simply means social heritage. There is cultural difference between the extension agents and the farmers. Differences exist between groups of farmers also. The differences may be in their habits, customs, values, attitudes and way of life. Extension work, to be successful, must be carried out in harmony with the cultural pattern of the people.
2. **Grass roots principle:** Extension programme should start with local groups, local institutions and local problems. It must fit the local conditions. Extension work should start with where people are and what they have. Change should start from the existing situation.
3. **Principle of indigenous knowledge:** People everywhere have indigenous knowledge systems which they have developed through generations of work experience and problem solving in their own specific situations. The indigenous knowledge systems encompass all aspects of life and people consider it essential for their survival.

4. **Principle of interest, and needs:** People's interests and people's needs are the starting points of extension work. To identify the real needs and interests of the people are challenging tasks. The extension agents should not pass on their own needs and interests as those of the people. Extension work shall be successful only when it is based on the interests and needs of the people as they see them.
5. **Principles of learning by doing:** Learning remain far from perfect, unless people get involved in actually doing the work (Cone of experience). Learning by doing is most effective in changing people's behaviour. This develops confidence as it involves maximum number of sensory organs. People should learn *what to do, why to do, how to do and with what result*.
6. **Principle of participation:** Most people of the village community should willingly cooperate and participate in identifying the problems, planning of projects for solving the problems and implementing the projects in getting the desired results. It has been the experience of many countries that people become dynamic if they take decisions concerning their own affairs, exercise responsibility for, and are helped to carry out projects in their own areas.

The participation of the people is of fundamental importance for the success of an extension programme. People must share in developing and implementing the programme and feel that it is their own programme.

7. **Family principle:** Family is the primary unit of society. The target for extension work should, therefore, be the family. That is, developing the family as a whole, economically and socially. Not only the farmers, the farm women and farm youth are also to be involve in extension programmes.
8. **Principle of Leadership:** Identifying different types of leaders and working through them is essential in extension. Local leaders are the custodians of local thought and action. The involvement of local leaders and legitimization by them are essential for the success of a programme.

Leadership traits are to be developed in the people so that they of their own shall seek change from less desirable to more desirable situations. The leaders may be trained and developed to act as carriers of change in the villages.

9. **Principle of adaptability:** Extension work and extension teaching methods must be flexible and adapted to suit the local conditions. This is necessary because the people, their situation, their resources and constraints vary from place to place and time to time.

10. **Principle of satisfaction:** The end product of extension work should produce satisfying results for the people. Satisfying results reinforce learning and motivate people to seek further improvement.
11. **Principle of evaluation:** Evaluation prevents stagnation. There should be a continuous built-in method of finding out the extent to which the results obtained are in agreement with the objectives fixed earlier. Evaluation should indicate the gaps and steps to be taken for further improvement.

Education: Informal, Formal and Non-Formal

Education is the process of developing capabilities of the individuals so that they can adequately respond to their situations. Coombs and Ahmed (1974) drew a distinction between the three types of education as follows

Informal Education is the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences and exposure to the environment at home, at work, at play etc.

Formal Education is the highly institutionalized, chronologically graded and hierarchically structured education system', spanning lower primary school and the upper reaches of the university.

Non-Formal Education is an organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population, adults as well as children according to their needs. Example: agricultural extension.

Extension education differs from formal education in a number of ways. Some of them:

Formal Education	Extension Education
Teaching is largely confined to the premises of the institution.	Teaching is largely outside of four walls of the Institution.
The learners are homogeneous with common goals.	The learners are heterogeneous and have diverse goals.
Strict adherence to institutional norms and no free choice for the learner.	Freedom and choice of subject matter left to the learners.

<p>There is a fixed curriculum after completion of which the students are examined and degrees are awarded.</p>	<p>There is no fixed curriculum. It is flexible depending on the needs of the learners. No examinations are taken and no degrees are awarded.</p>
<p>Knowledge flows from teacher to the learners.</p>	<p>The extension agent also learns from those whom he or she teaches.</p>
<p>The teacher only instructs the students.</p>	<p>The extension agent teaches a great deal through local leaders.</p>
<p>Formal education starts with the theoretical and works upon the practical.</p>	<p>Extension education starts with the practical situation of the learners in which they live and work, and develops into theoretical or basic understanding.</p>