

Extension teaching methods-definition, meaning, functions, selection and classification

Meaning and Definition

A method is a way of doing something, an orderly arrangement of a set of procedures. Thus it involves a sequence of progressive steps in an orderly and logical regularity in order to accomplish some task or purpose.

An extension teaching method may, then, be defined as a sequence of progressive steps, undertaken to create situations that are conducive to effective learning.

According to Leagans (1961), extension teaching methods are the devices used to create situations in which communication can take place between an instructor and that learner.

As Ensminger (1957) said, before an extension worker can become efficient in the use of methods, he must know what methods are available, when to use a given method, and become effective in using each.

Extension teaching methods may be defined as devices used to create situations in which new information can pass freely between the extension worker and the farming communities.

The extension-teaching methods can also be defined as the tools and techniques used to create situations in which communication can take place between the rural people and the extension workers.

They are the methods of extending new knowledge and skills to the rural people by drawing their attention towards them, arousing their interest and helping them to have a successful experience of the new practice. It is the function of the extension worker to use the extension methods which provide opportunities for rural people to learn and which stimulate mental and physical activities among the people. For extension workers to be successful they must be proficient in technical knowledge and educational process and must also have the right attitude towards rural people.

However, normally no extension worker has ability to use all methods with equal skill. Further, there is no one method that is best for all situations alike and hence calls for different method (s). It is also obvious that no one method can reach all the audience. Behavioural changes required on the part of the learners may also require several exposures with the same, different or a combination of methods. Research bears ample evidence to

suggest that a combination of methods or media-mix is required for effective technology transfer.

An effective learning situation requires the following essential elements:

1. An instructor (an extension worker, e.g. an extension officer or a village-level worker)
2. Learners (the farmers, the processors, the farm women and the youth).
3. Subject-matter (the recommended improved practices, such as the seeds of high-yielding varieties, fertiliser, balanced diet, etc.)
4. Teaching material, such as a flannel-board, a black-board, charts, models, samples, slides, film strips, etc.
5. Physical facilities, such as sitting accommodation, good visibility, etc.

Functions

- The following are the functions of extension teaching methods:
- To provide communication so that the learner may see, hear and do the things to be learnt.
- To provide stimulation that causes the desired mental and or physical action on the part of the learner.
- To take the learner through one or more steps of teaching-learning process, viz. attention, interest, desire, conviction, action and satisfaction

CLASSIFICATION

Wilson and Gallup (1955) classified extension teaching methods according to their use and form. Bains (1987) attempted to classify them according to their use, form, stages of learning process, stages of adoption process, categories of adopters, initial cost involved, cost per unit of results obtained, skill required in using them, time consumed in using them and according to behavioural changes intended. However, most of these classifications are only of academic interest. The most widely used as well as useful classification of extension teaching methods is according to use.

Classification of Extension Teaching Methods according to use

| S.No | Individual Contact | Group Contact | Mass Contact |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Farm and home visits | Result demonstration | Farm publications |
| 2. | Farmer's call | Method demonstration | Mass meeting |
| 3. | Personal letter | Group meeting | Campaign |
| 4. | Telephone call | Small group training | Exhibition |
| 5. | Adaptive trial | Field day | Newspaper |
| 6 | | Study tour | Radio |

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|---|--|--|------------|
| 7 | | | Television |
| 8 | | | Posters |

Another classification of extension teaching methods which is very common in extension publications is according to their form

| S.No | Written | Spoken | Visual | Spoken and Visual |
|------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Bulletins | Meetings | Result demonstrations | Method demonstration |
| 2 | Leaflets | Farm and home visit | Exhibits | Result demonstrations |
| 3 | Personal letters | Office calls | Posters | Television |
| 4 | Circular letters | Radio and recordings | Charts | Movies |
| 5 | Farm journals | Telephone calls | Slides | Puppets |
| 6 | | | Film strips | Campaigns |
| 7 | | | Flash cards | |
| 8 | | | Flannel graphs | |
| 9 | | | Bulletin boards | |