

The Role of Personality Development in Agricultural Extension

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SUMMARY

Effective extension agents are essential to the success of extension programs. This study looked at how extension workers' personality characteristics affected and how well they have to perform on the job in agricultural extension programs. The study specifically outlined the traits of extension personnel. People that are extraverted tend to communicate more and form close bonds with others. People who are helpful and trustworthy are described as having agreeableness attributes. Furthermore, conscientious people are well-organized, punctual, and emotionally stable, which implies they have excellent control over their mental state and are receptive to new experiences because they are creative, inquisitive, and inventive. Highly driven extension professionals use their time and ideas to improve the situation and make an effort to prove themselves when interacting with farmers.

INTRODUCTION

Economic development in general and poverty reduction in particular depend on the agriculture sector. (Ngongo, 2016). Many people agree that agricultural extension is crucial to agricultural development, especially in developing nations like India where agriculture is the primary source of income for the populace. Adoption of agriculture extensions remains a challenge in the agriculture sector. Adoption of new technologies is required in the current economy to meet agricultural supply and demand. In order for farmers to boost agricultural productivity, agriculture extension agents are seen to be essential for developing, adopting, and assessing new agricultural technology. Extension services, which are provided by trained extension staff such as frontline extension workers, or extension agents, block extension agents, and block extension supervisors, etc., carry out the operations of the agricultural extension programs.

Since the extensionist is the most important component of all extension activities, the entire process depends on them. It makes no difference how creative the extension technique is or how great the supply of inputs and resources for extension activity is if the extension agent is unable to respond to a given scenario and function successfully. The success or failure of an extension program is frequently determined by the effectiveness of the extension agent. Additionally, agriculture extension agents are regarded as organizational leaders (Luvanda, 2015). They provide agricultural farmers with modern agricultural technologies. A person's attitude toward other people is a function of his personality and is used to measure personality. Since personality has been discovered to account for unique variance in performance, it is crucial to establish the personality type or types that would enable efficient extended service delivery at all levels of extension work. Their behavior is differentiated by their personality traits, and this study outlines the main model of personality traits like extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability and openness to experience.

Personality characters of external personnel

Agreeableness

The personality trait of agreeableness includes those who behave in a helpful, focused, joyful, and cooperative manner at work. Additionally, a person with a high degree of agreeableness is reliable, understanding, helpful, altruistic, and compassionate. Conversely, a person with low agreeableness is egotistical, irresponsible, and suspicious. (Patrick, 2011 and Hofmann and Jones, 2005).

Extraversion

When someone exhibits extraverted behavior, they are more likely to embrace innovation and new technologies. A person exhibiting extrovert features is gregarious, driven, ambitious, and enthusiastic (Nasir et al., 2011; Raja et al., 2004). They are outspoken, expressive, and driven to overcome obstacles without fear (Sulaiman et al., 2013). Additionally, these people are driven to learn new things and improve their abilities. Extraverted

people are also more likely to welcome change and innovation since they are driven, curious about their everyday duties, and risk-takers.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is another term for how people assess their own effectiveness, and it influences their performance choices, decisions regarding growth, and consistency in the face of adversity. (Bandura, 1982). A person with low self-efficacy may avoid situations that diminish their abilities because they are terrified of encountering difficulties. Conversely, a person with high self-efficacy is more risk-taking and persistent, and they have strong beliefs. Self-efficacy is also a component of social cognitive theory. Previous studies elaborate that self-efficacy provided behavioral outcomes. Accordingly, "the degree to which individuals perceive themselves as having the ability to successfully organize and execute tasks such as recognizing opportunities, planning, managing financial resources, and other activities critical to successfully launching and managing a new business" is the definition of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in this study"(McGee & Peterson, 2019).

Openness to Experience

Grehan et al. (2011) state that other characteristics of the openness-to-experience trait include reasonable curiosity, propensity for various feelings, accessibility to new ideas, and focus on inner sentiments. However, in order to create new technologies for agricultural development, extension leaders in agriculture extension organizations need to be creative thinkers. According to Naami, Behzadi, Parisa, and Charkhabi (2014), employees that are open to experience are better equipped to embrace new technologies, seize opportunities, and make better decisions regarding change in novel and difficult settings.

Emotional Stability

Emotional stability lowers stress, anxiety, and sadness while boosting self-confidence. People that exhibit this feature are able to cope with stress, worry, and despair with ease, but those who lack emotional stability are disorganized and may face hostility and shame (Patrick, 2011; Zhao & Seibert, 2006). Emotionally stable people are more likely to govern their lives and regulate themselves, and they also tend to be less critical of their circumstances. They are also happier, more at ease, and less concerned with issues. In order to get the optimum degree of happiness, emotional stability is required.

Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness attributes foster optimism and a positive outlook, which promotes mental and physical well-being as well as adaptive actions (Icekson, Kaplan, & Slobodin, 2019). Furthermore, if extension leaders possess this skill, they can save time for farmers by completing all responsibilities in a disciplined manner and increase efficiency and effectiveness by lowering costs. The importance of these characteristics and the existence of their behaviors are emphasized in light of the responsibilities of extensions. Extensions depend on tasks and activities like annual planning, creating an agricultural calendar, time-dependent agricultural tasks like planting and gardening, determining the best time to combat pests, maintaining and documenting diaries, creating village identity documents, making effective use of office supplies, and maintenance.

Competencies needed for extension workers

According to Armstrong (2006), high levels of performance on both an individual and organizational level are a result of skills. The extension process, human development, educational processes, teaching strategies, program planning, implementation, and evaluation, teaching clients how to make decisions, developing volunteer leaders, working with key leaders, and communication skills are some of the competencies that have been identified in previous studies as being necessary for extension workers in agricultural extension education (Tiraieyari et al., 2011; Miller and Cox, 2006). It was discovered that in order for extension workers to carry out their jobs efficiently, they should possess these competences.

A. Knowledge skills

- The agent needs to be well-versed in the primary components of the agricultural system he works in and have had sufficient training in the technical parts of his job.
- He ought to be somewhat familiar with the customs, culture, and values of the rural area in which he works, as well as anthropological and sociological research on the subject.

- The agent should be knowledgeable about the primary laws of the government, other institutional policies that impact rural areas, credit programs, development programs, and administrative and bureaucratic processes.
- The agent has to understand the primary methods of group dynamics and adult education.

B. Personal skills

- The extension agent needs to be able to plan extension work, coordinate its execution, and oversee an extension office's operations in general.
- An extension agent needs to be able to communicate both orally and nonverbally. This ability is the cornerstone of all extension activities.
- The extension agent needs to be able to analyze the scenarios that come up, identify and comprehend the issues that are there, and suggest solutions.
- The extension agent should lead the initiative in starting operations, set an example for the farmers he works with, and instill confidence and trust in them.
- He must possess the self-motivation and self-assurance to accomplish this without relying on the direction and assistance of his superiors.

Qualities of Extension Worker

- A solid understanding of the topic and familiarity with rural social values
- A strong drive to learn new things
- Explicitness: Extension workers must offer suitable solutions to people's issues. Therefore, he should always be ready to act quickly and offer a clear solution.
- To earn people's trust and establish themselves as a trustworthy individual, Extension workers should make an effort to extract pertinent advantages from their resources, issues, and experiences.
- He should be aware of the kind of work that will be done, the results that will be obtained, and the effects that the work will have on individuals.
- He should have compassion, service orientation, amiability, and organizing ability
- Extension workers should act in a cheerful and courteous manner so that individuals from all walks of life can approach them without hesitation.
- He should have passion, bravery, tolerance, integrity, and a modest lifestyle
- Dignity of labor, tolerance, effort, growth, endurance, and discipline were the most notable characteristics of the workers working in this province. Among the successful extensions, all of these characteristics were evident.

CONCLUSION

The Extension Service's goal is to empower people to make informed decisions about their economic, social, and cultural well-being by offering research-based information, educational initiatives, and technology transfer that are centered on their needs and concerns. He should possess some of the personality traits appropriate for this position in order to carry out the aforementioned tasks. Extension person who are extraverted tend to communicate more and form close bonds with others. Extension person who are helpful and trustworthy are described as having agreeableness attributes. Furthermore, conscientious persons are well-organized, punctual, and emotionally stable, which implies they have excellent control over their mental state and are receptive to new experiences because they are creative, inquisitive, and inventive. Highly driven extension professionals use their time and ideas to improve the situation and make an effort to prove themselves when interacting with farmers. These traits are essential to the Agricultural Development Program's success (Akinsorotan and Adah, 1997).

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