

10. LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP

It is difficult for any country to provide enough number of extension workers to reach each and every family for its development programmes. It is rather more difficult for the developing countries where the resources are scarce. This problem can be solved to some extent through the use of local leaders.

A local leader who has adopted improved practices extends the same to others. The common man has much faith in local leaders. A villager would like to hear and imitate his own neighbour as compared to accepting the advices of an outside change agent. Moreover there is a healthy competition among the villagers which promotes action among them.

There is no doubt that extension worker also has to play the role of leader but he may confine his role to the few selected contact farmers. The information from the extension workers will reach these leader farmers which will further trickle down to other people from the leader farmers. These leaders would like to act as local leaders and feel pleasure in serving to others. They must have certain qualities. He should be a person from the same community and has the same type of resources. It has been often observed that innovators and big farmers do not pass on freely their knowledge to other people in the village due to some gap. It is, therefore, essential for the students of extension education to study the process of leadership. Once the process of dissemination through leaders is known the introduction of new ideas through village leaders can be solved to a great extent.

Leader

- 1) Leader is a person who has been spontaneously considered or chosen as being influential. - Dahama & Bhatnagar
- 2) Leader is the servant of the group. The position of leader is an essential mechanism of effective group organization. - Sanderson
- 3) Leaders are persons who are selected by the people because of their special interest or fitness to work on several phases of the local programmes. - J. S. Gang
- 4) A leader is one who, in a social situation, can elicit (stimulate) positive reaction from other members of the group. - B.M.Stogdill

Leadership

According to Niderfrank (1966) leadership is essential in simply influencing attitudes and actions of one or more persons leading towards the achievement or so purpose.

"Leadership is an act that influences" says Tead (1926).

Cartwright and Zender (1960) perceived leadership as the performance of all that help the group to achieve its preferred outcome.

Lester (1975) defines leadership as the resource that an individual or group uses to enable the organization to do what it needs, should or wants to do.

According to Davis (1977) "Leadership is the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically".

Dahama and Bhatnagar (1985), leadership is the process where in any social situation with his ideas and actions influence the thoughts and behaviour of others. Leadership is the process of influencing the thoughts and behaviour of others towards goal setting and goal achievement.

Functions of Leaders

There is no unanimity of opinion as to what the functions of leadership are. Generally speaking leadership functions are related to goal achievement and to the maintenance and strengthening of the group.

According to Barnard, a leader performs four main functions. They are:

- Determination of objective
- Manipulation of means
- Control of the instrumentality of action; and
- Stimulation of coordination action.

According to Dahama and Bhatnagar (1985) following are the functions:

- a) Executive
- b) Planner
- c) Policy maker
- d) Expert in human relations as well as technical field.
- e) External group representative
- f) Controller of internal relationship
- g) Purveyor of reward and punishment
- h) Arbitrator
- i) Exemplar
- j) Group symbol
- k) Surrogate of individual responsibility
- l) Idealist

- m) Father figure and
- n) Scape goat.

Classification of Leaders

Different authors classified the leaders in different ways. Some of the classifications are:

1) Beal, Bohlen and Raudabaugh (1962) classified the leaders into four types as;

- a) Born leaders
- b) Passive leaders (personal power or characteristic leader)
- c) Bureaucratic leaders and
- d) Democratic leaders

2) Mott (1972) spoke about three major leadership categories

- a) Democratic
- b) Multifactor and
- c) Situational

3) Henning (1962) analyzed the leadership and given the following three:

- a) Autocrat
- b) Bureaucrat and
- c) Neurocrat

4) Lester (1975) also pointed three types as:

- a) Autocratic
- b) Democratic and
- c) Free rein

5) Haiman (1951) described five categories as the

- a) Executive
- b) Judge
- c) Advocate
- d) Expert and
- e) Discussion leader

6) Carter (1961) identified three leadership patterns according to the manner in which the leader was mostly oriented. They are,

- a) Personal
- b) Institutional and
- c) Flexible

7) Sachdeva and Vidyabhushan (1974) studied three main leadership types as;

- a) Authoritarian
- b) Democratic and
- c) Laissez-faire

8) Dahama and Bhatnagar (1985) found several ways of classifying leaders, some of them are;

- a) Democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire
- b) Formal and informal leaders
- c) Professional and lay (voluntary) leaders
- d) Political, religious, social and academic
- e) Elected, selected or nominated
- f) Popular and unpopular
- g) Traditional and progressive leaders

Characteristics of Leaders

The characteristics of leaders differ. The characteristics of three types of leaders are as detailed:

1) Autocratic

- a) Determines all policies, activities and goals of the organization.
- b) Takes no part in work except when conducting meeting, telling others what to do or demonstrating.
- c) Members are uncertain about what to do and usually take actions they are told to take.
- d) Leader is personal in both praise and criticism of the work.

2) Democratic

- a) Produces a shared leadership that permits a feeling of satisfaction and achievement.
- b) Helps the members of understand the steps required in working.
- c) Members take more responsibility for group maintenance and task performance.
- d)

3) Laissezfaire

- a) Gives minimum guidance
- b) Remains in the background and seldom express an opinion or works with a minimum of roles.
- c) Members often act as leaders in making decisions that guide the organization.

Democratic leadership

In extension education, the extension worker will be dealing mainly with democratic leadership. Therefore it will be worthwhile to know their advantages and limitations.

Advantages

- People fully understand those ideas which they have helped to formulate.
- Decision made by the group members will get more support from the members.
- Democratic leadership enables the society to grow upon all of the human resources that are available to it.
- Democratic leadership creates strong, responsible and self-reliant individuals.
- It builds a group which will not fall apart if something happens to the leaders.
- Democratic leadership makes for higher morale in a society than does the autocratic leadership.
- Those who disagree with group decisions are free to express their discontent, even though they may have to abide by the group decisions.
- It is always opened to the possibility of change.
- The method of making social decisions is important as the decisions themselves.

Limitations

- The vocal and powerful members become dominant, thus creating sense of inequality in the group.
- Policies are agreed upon verbally in groups which do not automatically provide an answer to every specific question which arises.
- Problem of individual who refuses to conform to group decisions.
- Decision making is a time consuming process. The officials have to face the tyranny of indecisions.
- Participation of large number of people becomes a problem, because the physical limit to the number of people who can work together conveniently at one time.

Quality of leaders

Dahama and Bhatnagar (1985) brought out the determinants of effectiveness in leadership functions (ten 'A's).

1. Awareness of the functions of the group.
2. Ability (self-adjustment) in performing the functions
3. Achievement of goals
4. Assignment of group functions to members
5. Appraisal of effects of distribution of functions
6. Accomplishment of different purposes under different environments
7. Attainment of positive value as a leader

8. Attaching a high code of conduct, ethical values and high morale in the group
9. Arrangement of communication structures
10. Acceptance of failure

They have also identified through researches the most important factors for effectiveness of leaders. The factors identified are given below:

1. Need fulfillment
2. Prestige
3. Valued membership
4. Co-operative relationship
5. Heightened interaction
6. Clarity of goal
7. Small units
8. Homogeneity
9. Outside events
10. Increased position
11. Attack from environment

Reddy (1987) tested the following traits or qualities as desirable for effective leadership.

1. Physical fitness
2. Mental ability (intelligence)
3. Sense of purpose (having definite ideas regarding the aims of the group)
4. Social insight (sensitivity to other person's position problems or points of view)
5. Communication (including good listening and speaking acceptably in public)
6. Love for people (friendliness without favoritism or without giving scope for indiscipline)
7. Democracy (giving all members equal opportunities for participation, etc.)
8. Initiative
9. Enthusiasm
10. Authority (based upon mastery of knowledge and skills in a particular field)
11. Decisiveness (ability to make good and prompt decisions or judgments)
12. Integrity or character
13. Teaching ability
14. Convictions and faith

Role of Leaders

Reddy (1987) brought out the following eight important roles.

1. Group Spokesman

Leader has the responsibility to speak for the group and representing the group's interests and position faithfully and accurately.

2. Group Harmonizer

All groups will usually have both uniformities and differences of opinion. The leader is responsible for pointing out to the group when potential conflict situations arise, that the common purpose is sufficiently worthy of co-operation that the differences be resolved peacefully.

3. Group Planner

Generally persons are chosen for leadership positions because it is assumed that they know a little more about the problems confronting the group and their possible solutions than do the other members of the group. The group expects its leader to have new ideas for initiating activities. To meet this expectation leader must be able to plan, and visualize in his imagination, the ways by which the group can satisfy its needs.

4. Group Executive

Most groups have established some methods of conducting business and achieving consensus of opinion on issues that come up before them. The leader is one who presides when the group is conducting business. As a group executive the leader is responsible for seeing that the business of the organisation is carried on according to democratic principles.

5. Group Educator or Teacher

Leader must share with the followers' his knowledge and experience. Such sharing of experience and insight is teaching. Good leadership depends a large part upon because the good teacher is not a dictator.

6. Symbol of Group Ideals

All social groups have implicit or explicit norms or ideas. As a rule, persons accepted as leaders are those who have accepted these norms and live by them. The group expects his leadership to embody the ideals of group.

7. Group Discussion Chairman

This role is more related to that of group executive. In recent years there has been an increased interest in group discussions. Generally a group meets for a panel discussion or a forum or a group thinking conference as something apart from the routine business of the organization.

8. Group Supervisor

The leader has to work with followers and also with group organizations like youth

clubs, co-operatives, farmer's associations, etc. Therefore this role becomes important for the leader.

Dahama and Bhatnagar (1985) ascertained the role expectations of farm leaders in view of the new strategy of agricultural production from the experts in the field of agricultural extension. By working out the index, following were identified as the expected role of farm leaders.

1. Raising demonstration plots and showing it to others.
2. Keeping themselves abreast with the latest agricultural technology.
3. Adopting themselves all the improved agricultural practices.
4. Organizing meetings and other discussion groups.
5. Serving as marketing advisers.
6. Supplying the improved seeds to the farmers.
7. Assisting the farmers in getting credits.
8. Serving the innovative farmers in the village.
9. Educating the farmers to grow more than two crops a year.
10. Acting as liaison officers between the extension workers and the farmers.
11. Educating the farmers in the latest agricultural technology.
12. Helping the fellow-farmers in getting the needed agricultural inputs.

Singh and Saraswat (1968) as quoted by Singh (1987) studied the important roles of leaders in promoting the rural development efforts. They are:

1. They co-ordinate the efforts of the group to achieve its goals.
2. It is the responsibility of group leaders, to establish proper social climate in the group.
3. Leaders assist the groups to organize themselves.
4. They promote the message of the extension agencies.
5. They help extension workers in planning and executing various development programmes.
6. They act as demonstrators for the innovations.
7. It is their job to create better inter-group and intra-group coordination.
8. They also act as spokesman for their respective groups.
9. Local leaders help the group to make the effective decisions and develop scientific decision-making process.
10. They encourage the members to learn from each other's experiences.
11. They develop self confidence in the followers to solve their own problems.
12. They act as model for other members.

13. They help in establishing favourable climate for various developmental agencies to start their work.
14. They support and motivate the followers to make self efforts for realizing their needs.
15. They take an active part in organizing and the functioning of various institutions.

Advantages of Leaders in Extension

Reddy (1987) brought out the following advantages and limitations of leaders in extension.

Advantages

1. Local leaders virtually play the role of extension teachers and hence the volume of coverage with improved practice is increased.
2. Cost of extension is reduced, as local leaders are not paid for their work.
3. Local leaders themselves become better taught, because of the experience they gain in teaching and influencing others.
4. People accept a new idea more readily from a local person who has practically tried it, while they may resist if the ideas were to come from a paid extension workers.
5. The frequent association of extension personnel with the local leaders enhances his prestige.

Limitations

1. Persons selected as leader may not have the expected following among neighbours.
2. Sometimes they may not be willing to devote required time to work or may be a poor teacher.
3. Considerable time is required to locate and train local leaders.
4. Local leaders may try to use prestige with position for personal advantage.

Public recognition and publicity given to informal local leaders may sometimes jeopardize their position, and adversely affect their influence among the people.