

11. SELECTION AND TRAINING OF LEADERS

Selection of leaders

Various methods have been used by different researchers for identification of leaders. Some of the common methods of locating leaders are discussed here.

1. Sociometry: All the members of a community, group or organization are asked to name three persons in order of preference as their leaders from the same group. The name obtaining the maximum choice is accepted as the possible leader. In this method, every member of the group has to mention his choice. Assumption is that, a person liked by majority of the people is the most popular in the group and is capable of leading the group.

Advantage

1. It is easy and valid method.
2. Suitable to most of the situations.
3. Leader selected through this method may be able to organise group activities in a better way, because he has the majority support.
4. More than one leader can be located for different jobs at the same time.

Limitations

1. It is difficult to contact all the members of the group especially in big communities.
2. Selected person may not be interested to take up various responsibilities.
3. He may not be neutral person.
4. Statistical analysis of this method is complex and time consuming.

2. Active participants: In any group activity, the persons taking more active part can be spotted out. These are the persons who are taking initiative to make or lead in making the decisions relative to the events or actions selected. Active participants can also be located in the community meetings. Active participation is an indication of their leadership ability.

Advantages

1. It is a simple method and does not need special efforts.
2. It is possible to find out a willing and hardworking person.
3. In addition to locating leaders, one can get other information also.
4. Replacement of a leader, if not found suitable is easy.

Limitations

1. There are chances of making wrong choices.
2. Selected person may not be popular among other members.

3. Real leader may not be present at the occasion.
4. Suitable person for a particular job may not be taking active part in that activity.

3. Social Participation: Higher the social participation of a person the more is the promise in him of becoming a leader. It is assumed that a person already having active participation in the existing organizations will be useful to provide leadership in the new situation. In this method, the selection is made of those people who are already in positions in other organisations.

Advantages

1. Less chances or risk because, selection is made of a person who has already exhibited his leadership qualities and is popular among the people.
2. Past experience of the leader can be made use of in the new situation.
3. It will be possible to get support from other organizations.
4. He can also get official support for the programme due to his social contacts.

Limitations

1. As he is already busy, it may not be possible for him to find time to participate in the new activities.
2. Social distance may be more between these leaders and the people.
3. This method can be applied in those situations where very few or no social organization exists.
4. These operators may not be active members of a particular group.
5. **Informal meetings:** In this method, the opinion of the group members selected at random is obtained through informal meetings. They are asked to name those persons to whom people go to seek for ideas or help in emergencies. Persons having respect of the neighbourhood or groups can be nominated as leaders.

Advantages

1. Risk is less in this method, as one is contacting members of all the sub-groups.
2. This method is applicable in almost all the situations.
3. It can be used as an extra advantage to other activities.
4. It is possible to find a popular and acceptable man.

Limitations

1. In certain cases it may not be a representative selection.
2. Sometimes it becomes difficult to find a person acceptable to all the sub-groups in a community.
3. It takes comparatively long time.

4. It may not be possible to choose a representative sample.

5. Formal leaders: Formal leaders are those persons who hold offices in formal organizations. They are very easy to locate. One has to pick persons who are in formal organizations and public official positions. Any how, it is essential to win the confidence of these leaders; otherwise they can create many obstacles for the successful implementation of the new programme.

Advantages

1. It is easiest method.
2. Being in formal position, these leaders may have more influence among the people.
3. They have more contacts with formal change agencies.
4. They are generally resourceful persons.

Limitations

1. They may not be practical persons, (e.g.) Active farmers.
2. Generally, there is more social distance between them and the common man.
3. They may not have enough time for the new programme.
4. In most of the cases they are not action-leaders.

6. Persons with Reputation: These are certain persons who have the reputation for actual or potential leaders for a particular job. Even the persons having reputation being honest, intelligent and helping-hand can be selected to act as leaders because people have faith in the integrity of these people. This method is similar to the history method.

Advantages

1. Few chances of wrong selection.
2. This method is easy, simple and needs less time.
3. Past reputation will help in win the confidence of others.
4. There will be better social climate.

Limitations

1. Selected person may not be suitable for a particular type of leadership role.
2. Persons selected through this method might lack technical knowledge.
3. He may not be interested to act as a leader.
4. He might be lacking in other leadership qualities.

7. Self - rating Technique: In self rating technique each respondent is asked to evaluate his own abilities to act as a leader. How far others think him as influential? The success of this method depends upon frankness and boldness of a person to express his feelings.

Advantages

1. Only those persons who are willing to act as leaders will be selected.
2. It also measures that perception of individuals.
3. It is easy to work with these leaders.
4. It proved unsuccessful, there will be less difficulty in replacing these leaders.

Limitations

1. Success depends upon the accuracy of the information. There are chances of over estimation or wrong evaluation of the self.
2. It is a difficult method and needs more time to contact persons individually.
3. Persons selected through this method may not be very popular among other members of the group.
4. There are chances of getting too many people or none.

8. Information Ratings: In this method, three or four judges are appointed to nominate the persons suitable to act as leaders for a particular activity. The names obtained in this way are sorted out by frequency mentioned, and those of high frequency are accepted as possible selectees. Only those persons with good reputation, (e.g) school teachers, officials religious persons, in a village be asked to act as judges.

Advantages

1. It is simple method and needs less effort.
2. It is also a time-saving method.
3. There are more chances of getting an accurate and detailed picture.
4. It is based on their ratings of the judges.

Limitations

1. Judges may have biased opinion
2. Informants may not be having through knowledge.
3. In certain situations, suitable informants may not be available.
4. It may become difficult to have unanimous choice.

Some of the other methods used for the selection of leaders are:

9. Election: The members of the group elect the leaders through vote.

10. Discussion Method: A discussion is arranged to find own one's proficiency on a subject matter. Individual's ability is assessed and recognised. On any subjects the person has sound knowledge a discussion is arranged and an individual's ability is soon recognised. Discussion gives encouragement and assurance to the potential leader to express himself, and over a period of time may make him more confident in ac some position of leadership and emerge as a value leader.

11. The Workshop Method: Through this method, where the large group breaks smaller groups and the responsibility of the programme and decision-making rests upon the smaller unit, leadership emerges in each group. Over a period of time, the extension worker can spot certain leaders who come to the front in taking responsibilities. The Extension worker or professional leader in the workshop has the position of an observer, discussion group leader, etc.

12. The Group Observer: The extension worker should watch a community or group in action and then he will be able to spot potential leaders. He may observe the community in any type of situation. For obtaining the best results, the group should not be aware of this.

13. Seniority and Past Experiences: In some communities the oldest person is supposed to have the most knowledge and experiences and normally can able to stabilize the group. But this may not be a proper way of locating leader.

Training the leaders

Need for training

Persons identified as leaders may sometimes lack some of the essential attributes of leadership and may not be up-to-date in their knowledge and experience. Therefore make best use of them as leaders in extension work, they need to be given adequate training to improve their caliber, and develop their latent capacities for leadership.

Objectives of training: According to Singh (1987) the training objectives is to:

- i. Attract the genuinely interested persons who are either self motivated or externally stimulated to take part in the course,
- ii. Impart new knowledge, teach better skills and bring about the desirable changes in their behaviour,
- iii. Place the latest knowledge in the hands of desirous persons,
- iv. Develop acquaintance between the farmers and specialists and also the scientists,
- v. Encourage mutual exchange of experience among the participating farmers,
- vi. Pave way for the flow of problems of farmers to the research system and
- vii. Enhance faith in the research findings.

When to organize farmer's training

The following pre-requisites are essential or the success of training programmes.

- i. Availability of sound technology that is superior to the prevalent practice.
- ii. Farmers realize that by adoption of technology they can get more profit.
- iii. Qualified and trained personnel who can successfully transmit new technology.
- iv. A desire on the part of the farmers on the specialized topic.

- v. There are increasing numbers of problems that can be solved by the specialists rather than a generalist.
- vi. There is large segment of clientele which is neither affluent enough to take initiative to obtain information individually by their places to pick any ideas.

In view of the above pre-requisites it can be hypothesized that there is a necessity to train the farmers.

These training programmes for farmers should be timed so as to synchronise with slack seasons or periods when the local leaders will have leisure or relatively less pressing items of work.

It has also been found more desirable to have training camps of short duration of 3 to 5 days, followed by frequent and systematic contacts between extension workers and local leaders.

Where to Train

Using well-established training institutions for this purpose has been found to have some disadvantages such as:

- i. The need for leaders to travel long distance and stay at the institutes resulting in more expenditure in terms of both money and time, and
- ii. The nature of training imparted by such institutions is not of local interest to the trainees. Due to the above limitations the trainings are conducted in local environment itself (i.e.) in villages, providing training to leaders in their own home environment are becoming popular in several places.

What to Train

- i. Theoretical information should always be related to practical situations at every step.
- ii. The subject should be in the nature of problems encountered by the local leaders in their respective areas. Hence the content of the training programme should be problem-centered.
- iii. The following contents may be considered.
 - a) aims of rural development
 - b) leadership in rural society
 - c) community organisation principles, methods and techniques including methods of stimulating group thinking, group planning and group action.
 - d) Co-operative principles and methods with particular reference to coordination of local bodies.
 - e) Practical activities of community life like education, recreation, anti-crime, public

health, agriculture etc.

How to Train

There can be either informal methods or formal method of training.

Informal Methods: It may be (i) Observation, (i.e.) noticing how others have performed. This may be a visit to farmer's holdings; (ii) Reading the printed literature, circular letters, etc. from community development workers and (iii) Talking with other leaders progressive farmers or others in the field of interest.

Formal Methods: (i) Lecture. It may be supplemented with other formal methods, (ii) Discussion and workshop, (iii) Forum, panel or symposium, (iv) Audio-visual aids, (v) Field trips, (vi) Apprenticeship-learning things by staying with others who have adopted improved practices, (vii) Training groups formal leader training camps, (viii) Direct assistance from experts, (ix) Buzz group-discussion by all in the group of less than seven persons and (x) Giving responsibility to local leaders so that they develop self confidence.

Suggestions for Improving Farmer's Training

- a) Training must reach the farmers where they are. Attendance of institutional training will always be thin than off-campus training. Further in institutional training participating farmers feel that many innovations demonstrated on institute farms may not be successful at their own farms. It is always better to have the training in villages.
- b) Training must be directed, especially to farmer's present interests and needs. It should also be directed to the farmer's monetary interests.
- c) Training must accept the fact that the trainees are adult farmers. They are not children. So they should not be trained in the way children are trained.
- d) Training must be fitted into the period when farmers are not too busy, during evening or off-season.
- e) The subject must be a new or changed practice, explaining why is it? Why it is superior, how can it be carried out? etc.
- f) Training must be accomplished by immediate opportunities for farmers to try the new things they have learnt like application of fertilizers, use .of equipment etc., and also make the things available to them.

Farmers need encouragement to try things. Acquiring knowledge and skill, is not enough.

They also need encouragement to try out new practices.