

➤ Introduction

Extension work has been defined as ‘the bringing of education to people who are not ordinarily in close contact with an educational institution and who are likely to remain with the education, training or information needed for an improvement in their living conditions unless it is brought to them’. Extension implies the dissemination of information, and the diffusion of this from a local point to a large number of people capable of benefiting from it. This can occur with or without specific organizations or institutions as their farmers come to learn from others that new crops (e.g groundnuts and cocoa in the early 1900s) could be adapted. Here an extension function’ was performed through the vehicle of communication and dissemination of information?

Wildlife extension can then be define as the art and science of the process of disseminating wildlife related information to end users.

In other cases, extension is tied to an educational organization or agency which operates a highly formalized activity and for which large inputs human, financial and other resources are required. It is an essential feature of government development strategies.

The theory of extension is the sum total of all those ideas and thoughts that underlay the learning process which they function, and the process of bringing about this change. Its point of departure is the capability of man to learn to profit by experience, to adapt, to innovate; in short to change. Extension theory draws from the realization that learning is a continuing process that knows no age limit, or other barriers. It grows out of a situation of need, for ignorance and backwardness, a desire for knowledge and improvement. Extension work is an out of school education for both young and old to learn by doing.

The theory of extension is a dynamic one. It is ever – changing, getting modified, adapted and revaluated. In almost all disciplines we hear of new development: - New Mathematics, Modern Economics, the New Economic History, etc Extension is not an exception. This is because man for whom extension has its object is not static but subjected to perennial changes internally and externally. It follows therefore that proponents of extension methods must for ever be searching for new ways, new dimensions, processes and methods of meeting the challenges which life presents.

Assignment (1): write short note on the theory and philosophy of write brief extension.

➤ **WILDLIFE EXTENSION EDUCATION**

The greatest obstacle to an intelligent wildlife management programme is the lack of clear public thinking based on sound information. There is therefore a fundamental necessity for better public information to generate support.

Any project dealing with living creatures requires time and continuity to accomplish anything. A conservation department must have a competent staff to collect accurate information on which productive programmes and harvesting regulating can be based and it must also develop a strong educational programme to acquaint the public with the basic facts on which programmes are based. A conservation department staff without a strong and well trained enforcement staff is almost hopelessly inefficient in its efforts.

➤ **FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATION STAFF**

1. To get people (especially the rural dwellers) into a frame of mind and attitude conducive to acceptance of conservation ideas.
2. To educate the general public on the importance of wildlife as a basic natural resource.

3. To carry out extension courses to reach directly both the young and adult population inhabiting the land.
4. To disseminate the facts on which regulations and limitations of the harvest of wild animals are based.
5. To secure public assistance and support in applying knowledge of methods of improving and conserving the habitat.
6. To train technicians and teachers in wildlife field.
7. To disseminate constantly enough information to the field staff to allow them to present programmes intelligently and accurately.
8. To disseminate to the rural dwellers results of relevant research and to carry their problems back to research organization. For instance, relevant information on wild animal domestication should be given to the rural populace in that this is expected to reduce hunting pressure on wild populations of animals concerned.

➤ **Historical Importance of Extension**

The importance of extension was realized early enough by our colonial masters. They were aware of the fact that their own socio-political economic interests would suffer if the people were left in ignorance for too long. They could not be satisfied with the use of catechists or interpreters, so they came down from their Olympian heights to impart what they considered relevant knowledge to the people.

This was the rationale for agricultural extension as an educational science, within a unified Department of Agriculture for Nigeria in 1921. Sir Hugh Clifford Justified his budget for the supply for agricultural extension officers in the legislative council of 1920 thus: the average native of West Africa derive little benefit from an European agricultural station because he

cannot be induced to visit it similarly, as experience in the Gold Coast has shown, the only instruction which can be rammed into the understanding of African farmer is that which is imparted to him personally and directly by officers of the department who visit him in his own village and accompany their advice by practical demonstration.

Finally, we must mention that extension work is not limited to any discipline. It can be applied to any field of learning in which man is interested: education, agriculture, arts and crafts, music and dance, home economics and so forth. It is necessary to bear this in mind, so that we can know where to locate the field worker, what expertise to expect of him and what peculiar inputs he demands.