

PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL LEADERS IN EXTENSION WORK IN LYALLPUR TEHSIL

MOHAMMAD MUNIR* ZAFAR ALI**

The local leaders play pivotal roles in community development. Any such programme must, therefore, involve local leaders for its successful completion. Since the field staff of the provincial Agriculture Department are doing work of similar nature, it was thought proper to see as to what extent they were involving the local leaders.

An interview schedule was prepared to get the response of the 150 local leaders randomly selected from 30 villages of Tehsil Lyallpur. In all these villages, the headquarters of the field assistant was located.

Although most of the respondents knew the field assistant of their village by face, they did not have much of acquaintance with him. Probably, therefore, most of the respondents opined that the field staff neither arranged group meetings nor they involved the local leaders in the preparation of any development plan. As a matter of fact, the staff never prepared such plans for their areas.

"The position of a local leader is an essential mechanism of effective group organization." (Sanderson, 1965). Obviously, a leader has certain responsibilities to shoulder for the betterment of his community and to lead it to a desired stage of development. However, the local leaders cannot possibly achieve, on their own, all that they want. Generally, they need the help of certain agencies for making extension programmes of their areas effective. Specifically, in Pakistan, such well-established agencies are the Provincial Departments of Agriculture. The extension staff of these departments are supposed to work in close collaboration with the local leaders to make the extension programmes more effective.

In view of the above situation, it was considered important to see the extent to which local leaders were involved in extension programming by the extension field staff of the Punjab Agriculture Department.

*M.Sc. student

**Media Production Officer, Department of Agricultural Extension. Univ. of Agr. Lyp.

The present study was, therefore, conducted to 1) determine awareness of local leaders about extension field staff and their activities in the area; 2) determine the opinion of local leaders towards the extension service and its field staff; 3) know the extent to which the extension field staff is being used as a source of information; 4) determine the opinion of local leaders to work with extension field staff; 5) identify the involvement of local leaders in extension activities; 6) and determine the effect of age, education, size of land holding, and type of tenure on the opinion towards extension service and field staff.

This study was limited to the response of five local leaders, drawn from each village, where a field assistant of the provincial department of agriculture was headquartered, and to the local leaders practising agriculture as their profession. The validity of the study was further limited to the extent to which the respondents were able to provide accurate information.

METHODOLOGY

There are 76 villages in the Tehsil Lyallpur, each with a headquarters of a field assistant. Out of these, 20 villages were selected at random. Five local leaders from each of the 30 villages, having agriculture as their profession, were randomly selected for interview. Thus, there were, in all, 150 respondents who were included in the study. The interview schedule was pre-tested on local leaders in two of the sample villages and the needed modifications were made in it. Then it was finalised and the data collected through interview schedule were statistically analysed and tabulated.

The Chi-square test was used to test the significance of data. (not given in the text.)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The majority of the respondents knew the local field assistant by face and also knew that his office existed right in their village. It was, however not true about the concerned Agricultural Assistant and the Extra Assistant Director of Agriculture. Perhaps, this is understandable in view of the progressively larger areas of jurisdiction allotted to relatively upper tiers of staff members. And also in view of the fact that quick transfers of the Agricultural Assistant and Extra Assistant Director of Agriculture do not provide sufficient time to the officials to develop acquaintance with the local leaders. Or the field staff do not spend sufficient time in getting to know the local leaders of their area. This contention was supported by the majority of the respondents who found the local field assistants rarely visiting their farms and homes. Similar observations were made by Mohammad (1967) and Jamil (1972).

Nevertheless, most respondents considered the extension service useful and found the field staff cooperative in arranging result demonstrations. But, then, the respondents were rarely taken to sites. The feeling which one may get from these responses is that, probably, owing to wide area of jurisdiction, the field staff do not find enough time to work the details of their extension programmes. Ahmad (1966) and Hussain (1969) obtained similar response from their respective respondents.

The present study also shows that the majority of respondents thought they were not consulted by the field staff for preparing any development plans. As a matter of fact, they said the field staff never prepared any such plans for their areas. Likewise, the respondents were of the opinion that, although group meetings were useful, they were never arranged by the field staff. The findings of Wattoo (1971) and Khan (1971) show similar trend.

Lastly, the present study shows that age, education, type of tenure, and size of landholdings do not bear any relationship with the ability of the respondents to form the opinion about the extension service and the field staff.

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