

Assessment of Extension and Educational Programs of Agricultural Extension Service on Improving the Rural Life Skill (Factor Analysis)

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ABSTRACT

Human confront most challenges in his life over recent decades, because of new requires, rapid cultural & social changes, changed structural family, widespread and complex network of human relationship and onset of information resources. Effective opposition with these challenges required mental & social abilities. Shortage of these abilities and skills make vulnerable human against the problems. In this situation Learner's feelings will change on itself and others with Success in Life skills. Also catching these skills was change the attitude of some people. This study aim is assessment of extension and educational programs of agricultural extension service on improving the rural life skill. This research was applied research and in terms of the data collection process was a non-experimental investigation. A well designed-questionnaire was used to collect the data through interview and observation. Statistical population consisted of all 78 rural service center experts in Qazvin province. (64 returned questionnaires). Reliability of instrument was determined through opinions of faculty members and for its validity Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated (0.86). Data were analyzed by SPSS. Based on the perception of the respondents and ordinal factor analysis, the life skills were categorized into four groups, namely team work, self understanding, decision making and Communication skills. These factors explain totally 71.41 percent of trained life skills in rural service centers variance.

KEY WORDS: Life Skill, Rural, Service Center, Extension and Education.

INTRODUCTION

As the majority of the world's poor, illiterate and undernourished live in rural areas, it is a major challenge to ensure their access to quality education. The lack of learning opportunities is both a cause and an effect of rural poverty. Hence, education and training strategies need to be integrated within all aspects of sustainable rural development, through plans of action that are multisectoral and interdisciplinary. This means creating new partnerships between people working in agriculture and rural development, and people working in education (1). Rural people commonly suffer from unequal access to education, healthcare, infrastructure, technology, institutional support and markets. It is generally inequitable and inefficient to deny basic services to rural people, especially education. Although over the last decade international aid has rightly stressed the importance of concentrating on the poor, it has neglected rural areas and thus the majority of disadvantaged people, a phenomenon which is particularly true for education (2).

The difference in the levels of knowledge and education between rural and urban areas is called the urban-rural education divide. It is the main barrier to achieving universal primary education by 2015. It is also a key obstacle to eradicating poverty and hunger, promoting gender equality and empowering women (3). Why Focus on Rural Education? One could reasonably ask: With the global trend toward urbanization, why focus on rural education? In considering this it is worth noting that:

1. Over 70 percent of the world's poor live in rural areas;
2. the majority of the of the world's 774 million illiterate youth and adults in the world live in rural areas where illiteracy is 2-3 times higher than in urban areas;
3. Rural people have relatively poorer access to schools and other educational services, health services, transportation, technology and markets (3; 2, 4); and,
4. The quality of education is poorer in rural areas (2).

Education for Rural People (ERP) aims is to improve rural people's access to quality education. ERP is dedicated to bringing about transformation of rural communities through capacity building of rural people. The ERP flagship objectives are:

- building awareness on the importance of education for rural people as a crucial step toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals of eradicating poverty and hunger and achieving universal access to education;
- overcoming the urban/rural education gap;
- increasing access to basic education for rural people;

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- improving quality of basic education in rural areas; and,
- fostering national capacity to plan and implement basic education plans to address learning needs of rural people (5).

Also based on last population census in 2009 about 31.5 percent of country population (22227771 people) are live in rural area (6). Accordingly, the role of rural community issues and problems facing this community, the necessity and importance of rural development plan for this area is quite clear.

In Chambers view, lack of effective communication, inappropriate development activities and poor understanding of social and cultural factors in the development process, has stopped rural development in the planning process (7). Thus the priorities and needs of program beneficiaries, are different with rural needs and priorities. "Life skills" is examples of these factors.

Change in social and family structure, extensive and complex network of human relationships, and multiple information sources are cause of multiple challenges and pressures in human life (8). Migration Rural young generation will be followed by change on urban - rural balance and rural development projects equilibration.

Because the lack of life skills in rural society, these people are vulnerable to confront with problems. (9). Successful acquisition of life skills is changing the attitudes toward society.

Making people free from illiteracy, providing them with appropriate knowledge or know-how, promoting their health and nutritional status and ending their state of destitution or marginalized social position and low esteem and so on, all are important components of empowerment. This is particularly true for rural women in Bangladesh who are fettered by chains of tradition, prejudice, superstition and poverty. Their empowerment implies fulfillment of all the requirements for development of peoples. Education, both basic, life skill, technical and vocational education/training, can play a pivotal role to inhibit empowerment (10).

Ability alone is not the signal of skill, but when the ability led to action, it is called skill. Therefore the main criterion for being skilled is effective action and action for work in different conditions (11). Life skills defined as "abilities for adaptive and positive behavior, which enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life" Without hurting yourself and others (12). Life skills include knowledge and talent that is necessary for independently performance in person (13). Life skills' training is located in most educational systems, due to the increasing capabilities and mental capacity of people, to deal effectively with everyday challenges and issues. Rural adult as active element of the society to effective doing of multiple duties and improvement their situation needs to learn life skill (14). Six constructs of life skills including teamwork, self-understanding, leadership, decision making skills, communication skills, and volunteerism (15, 16 and 17).

Agricultural extension is « a service or system which assists farm people, through educational procedures, in improving farming methods and techniques, increasing production efficiency and income, bettering their levels of living and lifting the social and educational standards of rural life" (18). Educational programs in rural areas need to expand to include a variety of life skills appropriate for rural areas.

Educators need to develop teaching strategies that emphasize and help learners develop their affective reasoning skills. Since the attitudes and values that people possess are difficult to change, educators need to place greater emphasis on the psychology of the change process, thus improving the likelihood that change in practice will come as a result of educational efforts (19).

Spot role of education for human capacitate on acquiring ability of life skill & role of extension rural centers could efficient in other non-agricultural sectors (20). It was consider to main role of agents & change agents on rural services for training living skills and also, improving way of living agricultural users & especially deprived peasants & increase social power & investigations.

With consider to the role of education to learn life skills led us to serious thinking about the role of rural service center in providing successful training in nonagricultural fields. This research tries to identify the share of agricultural service centers in improve rural life skills. And also to identify the priority of required rural life skills from experts view point. The main goal of this study is "Assessment of extension and educational programs of agricultural extension service on improving the rural life skill" and to achieve these aims specific goals are:

- To assess the role of extension activities to improve the skills of internal factors.
- Investigating the importance of these skills in improve performance of rural and agricultural service centers.
- To identify the internal and external actors familiar with these skills.
- To identify the priority of required rural life skills.

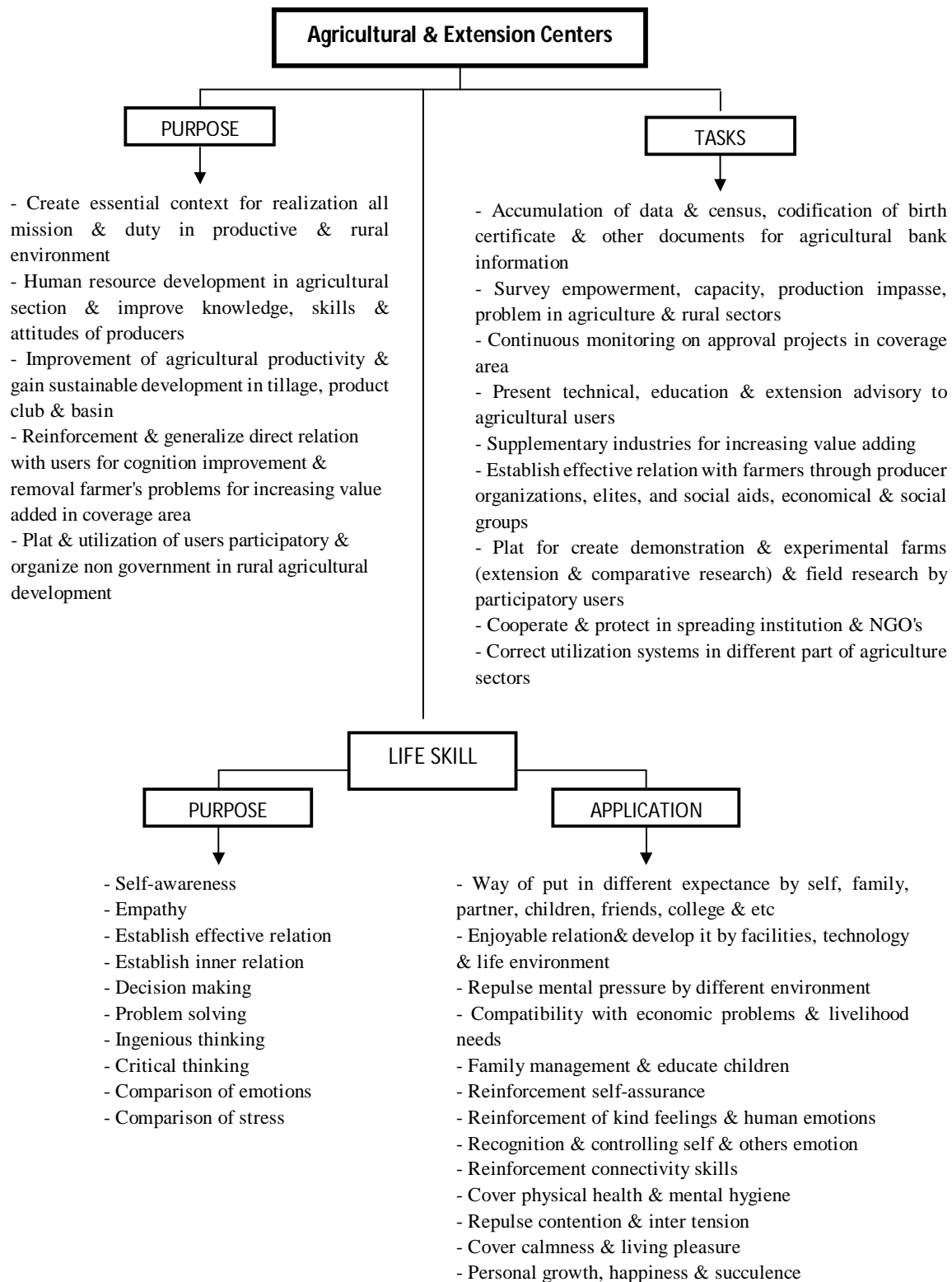


FIGURE 1: Theoretical framework for Assessment of role of presented education on improvement of peasant life skills by change agent of rural agricultural service and extension center

METHODOLOGY

The research in term of goal was applied survey and in term of data analysis was cause-effect research. Statistical population consisted of all 78 rural service center experts in Qazvin province. (64 returned questionnaires). To ensure More 109 students were selected as the sample based on proportionate stratified sampling method. The research

instrument was a questionnaire. In this research we asked life skills in rural service centers with a 5-point by Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). And some question about individual characteristics of respondents and service centers. Reliability of instrument was determined through opinions of faculty members and for its validity Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated (0.86) that showed the suitability of instrument. For data analysis in descriptive and inferential parts SPSS_{win15} was used.

FINDINGS

The result of the study showed that 30 percent of experts were between 31 -40 years old and the average age of respondent was about 38 years and 81.7 percent of service center experts were male. Also 74.6 percent of experts had bachelor degree and 94.4 of them were employed full-time. The result showed that 36.2 percent of farmers had 21-30 years experience in agricultural affairs and the mean of experience in agriculture was 27 years.

For assessing the role of agricultural service centers in rural life skills expert were asked about life skill control and interaction of life skills training and service centers on rural life skill. Base on the research findings 45% of surveyed experts stated that service centers have high effect on life skill control. Also about 37.5 percent of them mention to high interaction of life skills training and service centers on rural life skill.

Table 1: Distribution of expert's attitudes towards the services centers in increasing life skills

Type of employment	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very low	5	7.8	7.8
Low	7	10.9	18.8
Average	16	25	43.8
High	30	46.9	90.6
Very high	3	4.7	95.3
No answer	3	4.7	100
Sum	64	100	--

Factor analysis of trained life skills in rural service centers:

Table 2 shows the grouping of factors (determined via ordinal factor analysis) into four latent variables: team work, self understanding, decision making and Communication skills. That these factors explain totally 71.41 percent of trained life skills in rural service centers variance. The basic idea of factor analysis is to find a set of latent variables that contains the same information. The classical factor analysis assumes that both observed and latent variables are continuous variables, but in practice, the observed variables are often ordinal. Also To determine that the data are suitable for factor analysis we used KMO test. And the KMO was calculated 0.788 and Bartlett was 213.850 in $p=0.000$ that indicated suitable variable correlation for factor analysis entrance.

Table2: Factors Eigen value, variance and Cumulative percent

Factor	Eigen value	Variance	Cumulative percent
Learning and adjustment	8.94	25.55	25.55
Problem solving	5.58	15.95	41.50
Ability to prevent	5.46	15.62	57.13
Communication skills	4.99	14.28	71.41

Table3: Classification of Factors that Influence the rural life skill by Using Ordinal Factor Analysis

Category	Variable	Loding
Team work	Education collaborative learning	0.802
	Learning to trust to group	0.751
	Education desire to collaboration and cooperation between rural	0.721
	Training for other diagnostic choices among a set of choices	0.717
	Education ability to identify the causes for the problems	0.674
	Education for creating positive thinking between rural people	0.666
	Teaching strategies to confront with difficult situations	0.661
	Training planning and accept responsibility for their actions	0.659
Self understanding	To help Realistic image of themselves	0.565
	Education to rural people for awareness from their weakness	0.785
	Education to rural people for awareness from their strength	0.801
	Training methods to resolve conflicts	0.599
Decision making	Ability to make decisions based on careful evaluation of real positions	0.553
	Help to awareness of rights and responsibilities	0.739
	Education to awareness of inequalities, prejudices and injustices	0.756
	Timing skills	0.673
	Perceive the impact of social and cultural values on attitudes and behaviors	0.711
	Learning Readiness to change and adapt with new situations	0.574
Communication skill	Effective verbal and non verbal communication	0.503
	Training about how to start and end relationships	0.649
	Learning the ability to say no	0.525
	Learning to cognition interpersonal boundaries	0.499
	Training the listening skill	0.779
	Training to negotiation ability	0.661
	To fight with anxiety and special circumstances	0.529
	Training about respect to others	0.528
	Earn Ability to assert	0.498
	Learn to decisions based on facts	0.485

Conclusion

In most of developing world, rural life often involves poverty, illiteracy and food insecurity. Basic education is a fundamental human right in itself, and essential for reducing poverty and improving the living conditions of rural populations. Life skill training is costly process in the starting. Also:

- 1- This 4 factor (tam work, Self- understanding, Decision making and Communication skills) is very important for training chance agent.
- 2- The results of factor analysis showed that the most of factor is axiology so it used for Educating of positive thinking, awareness of in equality, Social impact on value, attitude and explain of value to rural.
- 3- The results of regression show that axiology factor can improve peasant life skills.
- 4- Self – understanding is improved empowerment and self direction of peasant.

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