

**AN ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES OF THE  
POLICYMAKERS, PLANNERS AND ADMINISTRATORS  
TOWARDS FUNCTIONALITY, FEASIBILITY AND  
PRACTICABILITY OF THE TRAINING AND VISIT  
SYSTEM OF EXTENSION IN BANGLADESH\***

**A.K.M. Abdul Hannan Bhuiyan<sup>1</sup>, O.F. Sison  
G.T. Castillo and L.A. Chua<sup>2</sup>**

*Department of Agricultural Education and Rural Studies,  
University of the Philippines at Los Banos, College, Laguna, Philippines*

**Abstract**

This paper attempts to ascertain the attitudes of policymakers, planners and administrators, consisting of top government bureaucrats, extension experts, high level researchers, senior executives of service agencies and politicians, who are directly or indirectly involved in policy formulation and execution of the Training and Visit (T & V) System of extension. Findings indicate that researchers and politicians had favourable attitudes toward the functionality, politicians and service agency people toward feasibility while government bureaucrats and politicians showed favourable attitudes toward the practicability. The overall attitudes of all groups except bureaucrats and extension experts showed positive attitudes toward the functionality, feasibility and practicability of the Training and Visit System.

*Key words* : Attitudes, Functionality, Feasibility, Practicability. T and V System

**Introduction**

Bangladesh, according to many experts, is a 'test case of development'. It presents all the characteristics of a third world country but its real "problem lies in the country's

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor and Head, Department of Agricultural Extension Education, Institute of Postgraduate Studies in Agriculture (IPSA), Salna, Gazipur-1703, Bangladesh.

<sup>2</sup> President, University of the Southern Mindanao, Bukidnon, Philippines.

\* Part of Ph. D. Dissertation of the senior author, University of the Philippines at Los Banos (UPLB), Philippines.

inadequately productive ecosystem and in the legacies it has inherited from the system of agricultural management of past centuries" (Stevens, 1976).

Agricultural development is a complex process. A rational development demands transfer of appropriate technologies to the majority of its clientele. For that matter, an effective agricultural extension delivery system is of vital importance. But it cannot work alone. It involves a number of interrelated and interdependent factors, particularly of those who are mattered in the policy formulation as

well as manipulation of resources (Baral, 1981).

Management of the entire development process necessitates a clear understanding of the attitudes of people who are responsible, directly or indirectly, for implementation of such interventions. Unless their attitudes, favouring/unfavouring the whole process, are adequately internalized, it is difficult to further advance the process of the intervention (Chumsri, 1982).

The Training and Visit (T & V) System of extension, conceived and designed by Daniel Benor, a World Bank Consultant on Agricultural Extension, has been highly favoured and patronized by the World Bank as a new 'Model' of agricultural extension.

Benor and Harrison (1977) identified some major deficiencies and problems in the operation of traditional extension system. To overcome those shortcomings and inherent weaknesses of the traditional extension system, the new approach of the T & V System was introduced under World Bank sponsorship in 16 new districts of north-west region of Bangladesh in 1978 and then expanded phase-wise to other districts in the subsequent years.

But since then a silent skepticism tends to have been surfacing among the policymakers and implementors as to whether this system could be functionally workable, economically feasible and practically sustainable in the long run. And for that matter alone, the concepts of functionality, feasibility and practicability were used in this paper. Although studies on various aspects of the T & V system are not wanting but very little or no research attention seems to have been paid to determine the attitudes of policymakers. Against this background, this study was undertaken to ascertain the attitudes of the policymakers, planners and administrators towards the functionality, feasibility and practicability of the T & V system of extension in Bangladesh.

## Methods

The study was conducted through face-to-face interpersonal survey method using semi-structured questionnaire. Data were gathered through this process from a group of top 40 policymakers, planners and administrators consisting of 5 government bureaucrats, 5 extension experts of both national and international stature attached to the DAE\* for implementation of the T & V system, 5 senior executives of service agencies, 5 politicians who were presently or previously connected with Training & Visit system implementation, and 20 senior level researchers (PSO and above), five from each of four national agricultural research systems (NARS) like 'BARC\*', BARI, BRRI and BARD'. They were interviewed by the first author himself when they were available at their respective offices. The survey took about a month from May through June 1987.

### *Measurement of Attitudes*

Review of literature shows that the personal attitude of a person conditions his mind to react positively or negatively towards certain things or objects. Attitude is, therefore, a state of readiness of mind to react favourably or unfavourably towards certain objects or situations. It is an implicit response or predisposition to act toward or away from an individual, object or social values. Bonner (1959) said that "attitude is a determining tendency set' which predisposes a person to behave in certain ways towards specific objects".

Attitude towards the T and V system refers to the general ideas, views, feelings or immediate reactions (favorable or unfavorable) of the respondents who are directly or indirectly associated with it.

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\* BARC (Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council), BARI (Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute), BRRI (Bangladesh Rice Research Institute and BARD (Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development), respectively and DAE (Department of Agriculture Extension).

An attitude scale with 30 statements covering each attitude area was constructed to measure the attitudes of the policymakers, planners & administrators (composed of civil bureaucrats, extension experts, researchers, service agency executives and politicians) towards functionality, feasibility and practicability of the T and V system.

The responses to each of these 30 statements were measured using a five-point Likert scale such as 'Strongly Agree' (SA), 'Agree' (A), 'Neutral' (N), 'Disagree' (D), and 'Strongly Disagree' (SD). Each statement was then given a score varying from 1 to 5, one for the lowest degree of agreement or disagreement and five for the highest degree. Accordingly, for favorable statements, a 'SA' response was assigned a score of 5; 'A' 4; 'N' 3; 'D' 2; and 'SD' 1, respectively. For unfavorable statements, a reverse order of scoring was followed. Then the total scores of both favourable and unfavourable statements of

each respondent were obtained and the mean attitude score of the respondents was computed which served as the cut-off scale of respondents' attitude towards a particular aspect of the attitude area. The level of attitude scale was then categorized into 'Favourable', 'Neutral', and 'Unfavourable', respectively. Respondents securing scores above the mean were categorized as having 'Favorable' attitude, those below the mean, 'Unfavourable' attitude, and those equal to the mean, as having 'Neutral' attitude.

In order to ensure consistency of the respondents' feelings, one half of the statements were arranged randomly in positive order while the other half was arranged in a reverse order as was followed by Chumsri (1982), Baral (1981), Lim (1977), and Duldulao (1975).

## Results and Discussion

The success of the T and V program

**Table 1.** Distribution of policymakers, planners and administrators according to their levels of attitude toward functionality, feasibility and practicability of the T and V system.

Level of Attitude	Policymaker Respondents (N=40)				
	Government Officials (n=5)	Researchers (n=20)	Extension Experts (n=5)	Service Agency Executives (n=5)	Politicians (n=5)
Attitude toward Functionality :					
	Percentage				
Favourable	40	65	40	40	60
Neutral	40	20	0	0	0
Unfavourable	20	15	60	60	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Attitude toward Feasibility					
Favourable	20	45	40	60	60
Neutral	0	15	20	0	0
Unfavourable	60	40	40	40	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Attitude toward Practicability					
Favourable	60	15	20	40	60
Neutral	0	0	0	40	0
Unfavourable	40	85	80	20	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Attitudes toward Functionality, Feasibility and Practicability (combined together)					
Favourable	40	55	40	60	60
Neutral	0	5	0	0	0
Unfavourable	60	40	60	40	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100

cannot be ascertained unless it gets the reactions or feedback from the people or agencies connected with its implementation. The respondents were asked to express their degree of agreement/disagreement on certain attitude statements.

Table 1 shows that majority of the researchers and politicians (65% vs 60%) had favourable attitudes toward the functionality of the T and V system while the extension experts and personnel of supportive agencies (both 60%) had unfavourable attitudes. Although 40 percent of the government officials (decision-making levels i.e. Joint Secretary and above) were neutral in their feelings, another 40 percent showed favourable attitudes. However, in case of feasibility and practicability, more of the politicians (60%) and service agencies people (60%) than the other groups indicated favourable attitudes toward the T and V system. However, the combined attitude of all the groups, except the government officials and extension experts, was favourable toward the functionality, feasibility and practicability of the T and V system. Similar views were also shared by Baral (1981) and Karim (1987).

Statistically, there were no significant differences among and between different groups. The Chi-square approximation value of the Kruskal-Wallis test also showed no significant difference between the groups in their attitudes toward any one of the three

attitude areas (Table 2). This means that they had equally unfavourable attitudes toward these three attitude areas of the T and V system.

## Conclusion and Implications

Although the T & V system of extension claims some success of the program particularly in the production behaviours of farmers, the policymakers, planners and administrators, it seems, are still skeptical and had reservation about the future of its success in Bangladesh. Reasons as perceived by them may be that the system appears to be very expensive and demands an investment of huge inputs in terms of both technical manpower, overhead management and logistic infrastructure with no/less immediate returns. Among the different groups of policymakers, only the politicians showed positive attitudes toward the functionality, feasibility and practicability of the T & V system. This may attribute to their flexibility as well as having different values and insights towards the government policies and programs.

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Table 2. Analysis of variance using one-way Kruskal-Wallis by ranks for group difference among government officials, researchers, experts, supportive agencies people and politicians on their attitudes toward functionality, feasibility and practicability of the T and V system.

Source	DF	Functionality		Feasibility		Practicability		Total of Three	
		MS	F-Value	MS	F-Value	MS	F-Value	MS	F-Value
Group (Among)	4	34.10	2.26 <sup>ns</sup>	34.24	2.21 <sup>ns</sup>	36.55	1.74 <sup>ns</sup>	302.54	2.47 <sup>ns</sup>
Error (Between)	35		* $(\chi^2=7.65)^{ns}$		* $(\chi^2=6.05)^{ns}$		* $(\chi^2=2.82)^{ns}$		* $(\chi^2=5.33)^{ns}$
Total	39	15.12		15.51		21.03		122.26	

\* Kruskal-Wallis Test (Chi-square Approximation Values)

<sup>ns</sup> Not Significant at 0.05 Level.

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