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THE PROCESS OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT FOR ADULT
LEARNERS: INFORMATION USED BY COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION SERVICE HOME ECONOMISTS

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THE PROCESS OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT FOR ADULT
LEARNERS: INFORMATION USED BY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
SERVICE HOME ECONOMISTS

By

Jeanne Esper Brown

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ABSTRACT

THE PROCESS OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT FOR ADULT LEARNERS: INFORMATION USED BY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE HOME ECONOMISTS

By

Jeanne Esper Brown

Adult education literature stresses the importance of audience need assessment as the basis for the design of educational programs. Because of the lack of research on processes actually used by persons who plan educational programs, the present study identified the implicit and explicit sources of audience need information received by Extension home economists, examined differences and similarities between the responses of the subjects, generated hypotheses for further study and developed general suggestions for the enhancement of needs assessment, priority setting and socialization of new workers into an educational organization.

The sample of five subjects was selected from a population of twenty-three Cooperative Extension home economists who met the criteria of the study. A focused interview was employed to obtain data on the sources of audience need information available to the subjects and what particular sources of information influenced the development of 1980-1981 educational programs.

Jeanne Brown

The Glaser-Strauss constant comparative method was selected to analyze the qualitative data. This approach involves coding each incident in the data into an appropriate category, comparing and integrating categories and generating developmental theory. This study is limited by the extent to which the persons interviewed were able to recall past events and their willingness to share.

The data suggests that needs assessment and priority setting is not a superficial activity but a complex process not always obvious or in control of the educator or the educational organization. Decision points on the best alternative actions in program development appear to be shaped by explicit and implicit input from the organization, the audience, environmental constraints and the personal background of the educators.

The data also suggests the educator's stage in his or her work-life cycle with the organization influences which sources of information have the most impact.

Structuring experiences and support systems to move a new educator from a high level of dependency upon perceived organizational directives to more autonomous modes of action is essential to fulfill the mission of the organization, meet education needs of the audience and satisfy the educator with his or her work-life.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES.	vi
LIST OF APPENDICES	vii
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
Statement of Problem and Rationale. . .	1
Objectives.	4
Plan of Presentation.	5
Definitions	6
Cooperative Extension Service	9
Summary	10
II. METHODOLOGY	11
Population.	11
Sample.	12
Instrumentation	13
Data Collection	14
Data Analysis	15
Profiles of the Subjects.	17
III. NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND THE EXTENSION	
HOME ECONOMIST.	20
Literature.	20
Findings.	28
Discussion.	40
IV. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND THE EXTENSION	
HOME ECONOMIST.	44
Literature.	44
Findings.	54
Discussion.	72

Chapter	Page
V. THE EXTENSION HOME ECONOMIST AS AN ADULT WORKER.	78
Literature.	79
Findings.	86
Discussion.	89
VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	94
Summary	94
Conclusions	98
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.	106
APPENDICES	111

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Sources of Audience Need Information. . . .	29
2	Sources of Information in Plans of Work	56
3	Sources of Information and Reason for Use.	75
4	Source of Information by Length of Employment.	88

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Curriculum or Program Development Cycle. . .	46
2	A Proactive/Interactive Model for Planners .	47
3	Processes of Extension Program Development .	52
4	Resolutions and Integration of Conflicts and Changes Evolved by the Extension Worker in each Stage of Work-Life.	87

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix	Page
APPENDIX I - Interview Questions and Rating Scales	112
A. Interview Question I Recording Form	113
B. Interview Question II Recording Form	114
APPENDIX II - Coding Scheme and Examples	115
A. Categories for Data Analysis	116
B. Examples of Coding - Question I	117
C. Examples of Coding - Question II	118
APPENDIX III - Letter of Transmittal and Consent Form	119
A. Letter of Transmittal	120
B. Consent Form	121

CHAPTER I

Problem and Rationale

Modern adult education literature emphasizes the importance of audience needs assessments as the basis for the design of programs which fulfill the educational requirements of an identified population. Yet some critics suggest that many adult education programs are developed on the basis of what was appropriate in another setting, what is available, snap judgements and intuition (Easley, 1976; McKenzie, 1973; Atwood, 1973; Parker, 1972). However, adult education research has paid scant attention to needs assessment or explored the reasons why certain adult education programs are developed. This is unfortunate, for the nature of information sources concerning the needs of audiences may have important implications for understanding how adult educators select priority needs. The challenge for adult education administrators and the problem investigated in this research, is to develop a better understanding of the implicit and explicit sources of information available to the educators and the impact these sources have on the development of educational programs. This increased understanding may be of help in developing more efficient program development processes and improving training programs for adult education personnel.

Program development in adult education is a process which encompasses a number of activities on the part of an educational organization. Some activities are aimed directly at educational efforts, while others are directed toward the maintenance functions of the organization.

Rapid environmental and economic changes in recent years make it more difficult for educational organizations serving adult audiences to keep their focus primarily on educational activities as funding sources increasingly insist that programs must demonstrate concrete benefits for monies spent. Thus an adult educational organization must efficiently identify consumer needs; identify priority problem areas which can most readily be affected by improved educational services; determine what specific contents, formats, modes, delivery channels and awareness techniques are most appropriate for the high priority areas; determine whether educational programming in these areas should be undertaken by organizational representatives or by the private sector; allocate resources; and aid policy makers to understand budget requests in support of educational programs. Effective educational programming, therefore, depends upon systematic and deliberate efforts to develop a plan of action which includes consideration of the organization mission and links to other organizations, resources, audience needs, priorities, educational objectives, learning experiences and evaluation of the total effort.

The classical model of program development in adult

education depicts this process as a linear progression from needs assessment to evaluation while an emerging model suggests program planning involves a series of decision points which allow the educator to select the best alternative at the time (Mazmanian, 1977). Both of these models imply that the educational planner has the freedom to develop programs based on comprehensive needs assessment of the intended audiences. English and Kaufman (1975), however, believe that the needs of the audience, educators, organization, community, society and the available resources must be taken into consideration when setting priorities for educational objectives. Thus educators in organizations, according to English and Kaufman, may use both formal and informal methods of determining needs and receive information on needed or expected programs from a wide variety of information sources.

Pennington and Green (1976) have noted that the processes used by persons who plan learning activities for adults is largely an unexplored area in adult education research. Studies in the area of determining adult educational need have been limited largely to opinion surveys of intended audiences (e.g. Wheelock, 1978; Evans, 1978; Sparling, 1978; Evans, 1977; Center for Research and Education, Denver, Colorado, 1977; Owings, 1976). A few studies have employed a variety of techniques: interviews, observations, document analysis and questionnaires to diagnose the educational needs of particular audiences (Clifton, 1971; Green, 1977).

Both types of studies permit the accumulation of data in the area of educational needs and interests, but they represent only one source of information. Only recently has research been directed toward the process of determining priority of educational need, an activity generally accepted as a step beyond needs assessment in program development (Sork, 1978).

Sork's review of the literature found that although most authors acknowledge the need to establish priorities in a systematic, purposeful way, and all approaches implicitly encourage the user to consider more than one factor when making educational priority decisions, few of the authors have provided conceptual or theoretical foundations for their suggested approaches. Sork is of the opinion that not many educators have been concerned with how or why educational program priorities are established. Perhaps one reason for the lack of conceptual foundations is that a single form of research methodology tends to isolate the responses of the selected sample from integration with other factors (Donahue, 1976), and does not consider the relationship of priority setting to organizational needs, audience needs and the personal needs of the educators (English and Kaufman, 1975).

Objectives

The four objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the sources of information a county Extension home economist draws upon to determine the educational needs of adults within her geographic and

institutional area of responsibility.

2. To determine the extent the Extension home economist's 1980-1981 plan of work reflects the various sources of information.

3. To examine the similarities and differences between the sources of information listed by Extension home economists.

4. To build concepts and hypotheses which can be tested in further research.

Plan of Presentation

The purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of the implicit and explicit sources of information on the needs of adult audiences available to Cooperative Extension home economists and the impact these sources have on the development of educational programs. The literature relevant to needs assessment, program development and the adult worker will be reviewed in separate chapters along with presentation of findings rather than in the more traditional manner of one literature chapter. Thus literature, findings and discussion will be incorporated within a single chapter in order to avoid confusing the reader. The responses to Interview Question I (all sources of audience need information available to the Extension home economist) and Interview Question II (sources of audience need information used in developing the Extension home economist's 1980-1981 plan of work) will be combined, respectively, with the appropriate literature and discussion in Chapters III and IV. The

Extension home economist as an adult worker will be examined through literature review, data from this study and discussion in Chapter V. A summary of the study and the concepts and patterns uncovered will be presented in Chapter VI.

The study is limited by the extent to which the persons studied were able to recall past events and their willingness to share.

Definitions

Adult. A person who has achieved full physical development and who expects to have the right to participate as a responsible member of society (Houle, 1973).

Adult Education. The process by which adults seek to increase their skills, knowledge or sensitiveness. Any process by which individuals, groups or institutions try to help adults improve in these areas (Houle, 1973).

Cooperative Extension Service Content Specialist. A faculty member of a department within a land grant university who is employed by the state Cooperative Extension Service to provide information, training and teaching materials to county Cooperative Extension Service personnel. These people will be referred to as content specialists.

Cooperative Extension Service Family Living Program. A state-wide Cooperative Extension Service program area which includes the content of home economics and other areas as they relate to families. There is a state level office in the land grant university which houses the program director and his/her staff.

Cooperative Extension Service Family Living Program Staff. The people employed by the Family Living director to promote state-wide educational programs and carry out management obligations. This will be referred to as the Family Living program staff.

Cooperative Extension Service Impact Committee. A committee of Family Living program staff, content specialists and home economists who meet to share state-wide concerns, develop state-wide programs and suggest appropriate teaching materials that need to be developed. There are several impact committees which represent content areas in home economics and other areas which relate to families. This will be referred to as the Impact Committee.

Cooperative Extension Service Home Economist. A person employed by a state Cooperative Extension Service and housed in a county Cooperative Extension Service office, to provide information and educational programs to the citizens of a county or counties in the content area of home economics and other related areas.

Cooperative Extension Service Need Assessment. The identification of potential audiences and the definition of their educational needs and interests.

Cooperative Extension Service Plan of Work. A written outline of strategy for one year for each problem or concern included in a program, that sets forth educational, operational and/or organizational objectives. For simplicity this will be referred to as plan of work.

Cooperative Extension Service Program. Agreed upon priority needs, concerns, problems and interests that fall within the scope of the Extension unit's responsibilities together with the relevant objectives that are to be achieved.

Cooperative Extension Service State Program Review. A periodic in-depth evaluation of county programs by state level Cooperative Extension Service administrators and content specialists.

Need. A condition or situation in which something necessary or desirable is required or wanted. Often used to express the deficiencies of an individual or some category of people. A need may be perceived by the person possessing it or by some observer (Houle, 1973).

Process. A course of action, procedure, or a series of steps leading toward an end.

Educational Program Development. The continuous series of processes which include organizing, preparing a plan of work and teaching plans, evaluating and reporting accomplishments.

Regional Field Supervisors. Those people employed by the state Cooperative Extension Service to supervise and evaluate programs and personnel within geographic regions of the state. They are housed at the land grant university within the state.

Sources of Information. All spoken, written and visual inputs received by Extension home economists that provide information about the educational needs of audiences and which may influence programming decisions.

Explicit Sources of Information. Those sources of information that are externally visible to the Extension home economist.

Implicit Sources of Information. Those sources of information inferred by the Extension home economists from something else.

Cooperative Extension Service

The Cooperative Extension Service is an agency of the federal government created by the passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 (Boone, 1970). The Act authorized educational programs in agriculture, home economics and related subjects to be funded, and administered, by federal, state and local governments.

The Cooperative Extension Service is the world's largest publicly supported, informal adult education and development organization (Boone, 1970). Its mission is to extend lifelong, continuing educational opportunities to the people of the United States in those areas in which Extension has the competence and the legal and moral obligation to serve.

The Cooperative Extension Service helps people identify needs, problems and opportunities; study their resources; and arrive at desirable courses of action in line with their desires, resources and abilities (Extension Program Development, 1974).

There are four educational program areas within the

Michigan Cooperative Extension Service: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family Living Education, 4-H Youth and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. Within Family Living Education, specific educational programs relate to subject matter content in health, food and nutrition, housing, resource management, human development and public affairs and policy (Family Living Education....its operation and mission, 1980). County based Extension home economists are charged with carrying out the mission of the Michigan Cooperative Extension Service program in Family Living education. All Extension home economists in Michigan are women.

Summary

Although adult education literature stresses the importance of extensive audience needs assessment as a basic requirement for the design of educational programs, many writers point out this step is apparently neglected in many cases. Very little research, however, has centered on the process of needs assessment and priority setting nor on the nature of explicit and implicit information sources concerning the needs of audience appropriate for program development. It may be that the nature of an information source has impact on the selection of priority needs.

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to develop a better understanding of the explicit and implicit sources of information available to the educators and the impact these sources have on the development of educational programs.

CHAPTER II

Methodology

To develop a better understanding of the implicit and explicit sources of information available to Extension home economists and the impact these sources have on the development of educational programs, the investigator conducted a series of case studies which provided qualitative data for the generation of concepts and hypotheses concerning the nature of these information sources and their use in plans of work.

Population

The subjects for the study were five Michigan Extension home economists. The population from which the subjects were selected was that of county Extension home economists who had not undergone a state program review within the past two years, who had been employed by the Cooperative Extension Service for at least two program development periods, and who were located within a 75 mile radius of a metropolitan center. It was felt that if an Extension home economist had participated recently in a state program review of her county it might influence her to respond in a manner perceived as "correct." On the other hand, an Extension home economist who had been employed for less than two program development

periods would have little needs assessment information to contribute or knowledge of how various areas of interest were selected for the 1980-1981 plan of work. The limit of a 75 mile radius was arbitrary and set simply because of the expense involved in seeking a larger population. At the time of the study, 23 Extension home economists met these criteria.

Sample

Subjects were selected from the population by systematic random sampling. A sample size of five was determined by following the chi square rule of thumb that the expected value in a cell should be five or more. The period of selection and study was set for the 1980-1981 program year.

Prior to selection of the sample, an appointment was made with the director of the Cooperative Extension Service Family Living Program to explain the purpose and intended procedure of the study. Oral permission was received but the director requested the study be explained and approved by the field supervisors of the Extension home economists. When approval was received from the supervisors, a personal telephone call to explain the purpose and procedure of the study was made to each selected subject. Following this contact, the promise of confidentiality and a consent form was sent to each Extension home economist in the study.

Instrumentation

The investigator utilized a focused but open-ended interview to obtain specific information without the constraints of preconceived lists. The structured interview schedule helped the interviewer and the respondents focus on the variables under study but gave considerable liberty to the respondents in defining the situations presented to them. This type of interview also contributed to the reduction of any interviewer bias that may have existed. Thus the advantages of greater uniformity and reliability found in a fixed-alternative schedule of items was combined with the advantages of open-ended items to allow greater flexibility, clarification and probing. Though it is impossible to assume the validity of purportedly factual data about past events obtained by interview, the method has a powerful ability to probe into many areas so that the observer should be able to more clearly visualize reality (Weiss and Davis, 1960).

Interview Question I (all sources of audience need information available to the Extension home economist) and Interview Question II (sources of audience need information used by the Extension home economist in developing 1980-1981 plans of work) were designed to elicit knowledge about the sources of audience need information perceived and utilized by Extension home economists, the importance of each source, which of the sources were actually used in the 1980-1981 plans of work; and if any source(s) of information exerts a greater influence over areas of educational program than

other sources do. In addition, items of demographic information were requested: length of employment with the Cooperative Extension Service; how many counties the home economist had responsibility for; and whether the county was primarily rural, urban or mixed rural/urban. The age of each respondent was already known from Cooperative Extension Service records.

To enhance reliability, the interviewer pretested a draft interview schedule with four Extension home economists who were representative of the population under study and conducted two trial interviews to develop skills in asking questions and recording responses and to check the format and ease of administration.

Following the pretesting of the interview schedule, the wording of the questions was corrected and a final format devised. A sample of this schedule is included as Appendix I.

Data Collection

Each interview lasted approximately two and one-half hours. All interviews were conducted by the investigator to insure that the order or pattern of questions, probes and the interpretation of responses remained as consistent as possible.

Great care was taken by the investigator not to probe beyond the boundaries of the study questions so that the information exchanged between the interviewer and respondent remained appropriate and useful. The interviewer also

stressed to respondents the importance of quality and accuracy in their responses. At the time of each interview, but prior to actually asking the questions, the purpose of the study and the format of the interview was again explained and the promise of confidentiality repeated. The questions were asked of each respondent exactly as written and in the same order. No questions were omitted. Care was taken not to suggest answers and to keep interview probes neutral in content. Responses were immediately recorded in the Extension home economists' own words so that a full picture of their expressed knowledge and attitudes were obtained.

In each case the respondents seemed willing to provide a great deal of information, so much so that at times the interviewer had to redirect the conversation back to the question at hand. The recording of responses to the first questions (sources of education need information) was time consuming, as the Extension home economists attempted to recall all sources of information they receive. Answering Interview Question I appeared to help them answer the next question more easily.

Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed by using the Glaser-Strauss (1967) constant comparative method for analyzing qualitative data. In this approach the analyst codes each incident in his data into categories: compares codes, recodes, integrates categories, reduces categories and

generates a developmental theory. This type of analysis is particularly useful when concept and hypothesis development is desired.

Glaser-Strauss suggests the researcher start by coding each incident in his data into as many categories as possible, as categories emerge or as data emerge that fit an existing category. While coding an incident for a category, it is compared with previous incidents in the same group to generate theoretical properties of the category. As the coding continues, the comparative units change from comparison of incident to incident to comparison of incident with the properties of the category. As the theory solidifies, modifications become fewer. The analyst may discover underlying uniformities in the categories and their properties and can then formulate the theory with a smaller set of higher level concepts.

After the interviews had been completed, the data from the two questions were coded and reduced to four categories. These categories follow:

- 1) Organization. The Cooperative Extension Service sources of information on educational needs of audiences, e.g., Extension administrators and Extension colleagues.
- 2) Audience. The audience sources of information on their educational needs, e.g., county program advisory groups and telephone calls.

- 3) Audience Related. The information received from those who interpret or describe the educational needs of audiences, e.g., mass media and other agencies and organizations.
- 4) Personal. The information derived from each Extension home economist's unique background, e.g., education and personal judgements.

A more detailed listing of descriptors for each category can be found in Appendix II A.

The coded responses of each Extension home economist were then used to describe the individual's expressed responses and perceptions. The categories were also used to examine the similarities and differences between the Extension home economists.

Profiles of the Subjects

The demographic data collected permits a profile of each Extension home economist in the study. Information on the length of employment with the Cooperative Extension Service, prior employment, geographic area of program responsibility, and an age range for each Extension home economist is presented in the profiles.

Each Extension home economist was given an alphabetical code name (Ann, Betty, Carol, Donna, Edith) to provide an order for presenting findings throughout the text.

Ann. Ann has been an Extension home economist for two years although she served as an assistant to a home economist in another county. Her work experience and training is the most limited of all the home economists interviewed. Ann is responsible for the Family Living Program in her county, but also works with Extension home economists in the surrounding counties to present educational programs. She is between 20 and 30 years of age.

Betty. Betty has worked for the Cooperative Extension Service eight years and is between 40 and 50 years of age. She participates with two other Extension home economists in planning and presenting programs for three counties and is also responsible for Family Living programs in her own county. Betty has considerable formal and non-formal training in home economics and related areas.

Carol. Carol has worked in one county for all of her eight years as a Cooperative Extension home economist. She is between 40 and 50 years of age. Carol completed her Master's degree in home economics and has had extensive in-service training in both Cooperative Extension Service work and employment with other organizations.

Donna. Donna is the oldest of the Cooperative Extension Service home economists interviewed, both in age and in years of employment. Fourteen of her employment years

have been with Cooperative Extension Service. She is between 50 and 60 years of age and thinking ahead to retirement.

Donna's formal training is in home economics. She has completed a Master's degree and has extensive non-formal training in a variety of subjects. She has the responsibility for planning and presenting Family Living programs in one county and "contributes to the programs of two other counties."

Edith. Edith has been employed by the Cooperative Extension Service for nearly two years and is responsible for planning Family Living programs in her county. She also cooperates with two other Extension home economists in adjacent counties to plan and present programs for all three counties. She has had extensive formal training in home economics and non-formal training in a variety of subject areas. Edith is the only Extension home economist who has had needs assessment training. She is between 40 and 50 years of age.

CHAPTER III

Needs Assessment and the Extension Home Economist

This chapter includes a review of the literature on needs assessment in adult education; findings desired from the data collected in Interview Question I; the sources of educational need information available to the Extension home economists; and discussion.

Literature

Adult Education

The concept of need is one of the most widely used concepts in the literature of adult education. Though its popularity can be traced to Dewey, its current favor may be due to the powerful influence of the Tyler rationale in curriculum theory (Monette, 1977). Whatever the case may be, much of the popular thinking about needs is "fuzzy," according to Monette.

Certainly modern literature stresses the importance of audience needs assessment as the basis for the design of programs which fulfil the educational requirements of an identified population. Easley (1976) feels needs assessment is a sine qua non of program planning and McKenzie (1973), in a summary statement for a collection of essays, states it was the judgement of all essayists that adult education

programs cannot be totally effective unless they rest on a solid foundation of systematic diagnosis.

Yet Atwood (1973) points out that, in reality, often little attention is given to an orderly procedure for diagnosis. He believes that many programs are developed on the basis of what was appropriate in another setting, what is available, snap judgements and intuition. Parker (1972) suggests the major criticism made against adult education programs is that they do not meet the needs of the audience because educators rarely ask the potential students what they want or need to know. Knowles (1970) tempers this view by suggesting this may be true in numerous programs but many other adult education programs have active advisory councils to help educators make repeated surveys of the educational needs of the adults they are trying to serve.

Boyle and John (1970) believe that researchers and writers essentially reflect two interpretations of educational need. The first is based upon the assumption of a need-fulfilling tendency in humans. An example is Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, with the proposition that the emergence of one need usually rests on the prior satisfaction of another more basic need.

A second interpretation is based upon the assumption that equilibrium is a natural state toward which humans strive. Therefore a need is a condition that exists between what is and what should be and a "need" always implies a gap. Havighurst and Orr's description of

developmental tasks in adulthood is an example. They believe that an urgency to accomplish a developmental task produces anxiety. This anxiety produces a need or gap.

Malcolm Knowles (1970) also defines an educational need as a gap between desire and reality and Mazmanian (1977) reports that the most common definition of need in the literature pertaining to needs assessment is the gap between what is and what is desired. In addition, Knowles makes a distinction between basic human needs, educational needs and educational interests. He thinks both types of needs and educational interests have meaning for educators in planning adult education programs.

Needs assessment, according to English and Kaufman (1975), formally determines the gaps between current happenings (or outcome, products) and required or desired results; places these gaps in priority order; and selects those gaps (needs) of the highest priority for action. For this assessment to be valid and useful, it should include learners, educators and community members. Walker (1971) further defines needs assessment as a systematic process for identifying and documenting human or organizational need which educational services can help fulfill.

There is no one "correct way" to do a needs assessment, according to English and Kaufman. Each educational setting and situation is different. The process and the selection of tools, techniques, instrument and procedures should be based upon the unique characteristics and requirements of

the community, the learners, the educators and the mission of the educational organization, not upon what is available from other settings.

Mazmanian (1977) identifies four needs assessment models. Each uses a different process for identifying needs.

In the first model, all adults in a community are viewed as potential participants in programs and are surveyed to determine individual interests potent enough to insure participation. Need is identified when an economically sufficient number of persons indicate they will participate.

The second model focuses on the needs of a known segment of the population. Programs are generally based not on local diagnosis but on research data, packaged materials and program formats already tested with the specialized population.

In the third model, the learners determine their own learning needs. They may do it by themselves, with a counselor or as members of a group.

The fourth model either assumes the existence of or attempts to identify the gap between "what is" and "what should be" in a social system. This system is usually an organization, a sub-unit of an organization or a community.

Monette (1977) challenges this particular model:

It is immediately obvious that systems in themselves do not have needs in the sense of desires, wants, interest, or felt needs. The individuals within the system have such needs, some of which may be closely related to the performance of the system. Nevertheless, the needs of a system are not the sum total of the needs of the individual within it. Systems have

problems as well as ends to which they are ordered; however, and this is what needs talk masks, systems as such cannot be educated. Education properly refers only to individuals and only by analogy to systems. What a system is said to need is basically what an observer needs or wants for the given system. (p. 122)

The following sources of data on the needs and interests of individuals are identified by Knowles (1970): 1) from the individuals themselves; 2) from the people in the helping roles with individuals; 3) from the mass media; 4) from professional literature; and 5) from organizational and community surveys.

Thirteen methods of identifying educational needs and interests are listed by Kempfer (1955). They are: individual requests; check lists and other "interest finders"; a check with other known interests of people such as library reading interests and newspaper or magazine readership surveys; sensitivity to civic, personal and social problems which can be alleviated by education; hunches; examination of catalogues, schedules, publicity materials and programs of comparable schools; examination of published surveys of other communities; systematic survey of the industrial, business, civic and cultural life of the community; examination of data from the census and similar sources; study of deficiencies of adults (e.g., poor nutrition, lack of civic participation, poor methods of child rearing); requests from business, industry, labor and community groups; systematic cultivation of groups of "coordinators" in industry, business

and other community organizations and agencies who watch for opportunity for education to perform a service; and maintenance of extensive personal acquaintance with a wide range of community leaders and groups.

Barbulecso (1976) identifies ten needs assessment techniques that are quite similar to Kempfer's list.

Maurice Monette (1979) questions the widespread advocacy of needs assessment in service-oriented adult education. He believes that needs assessment is an information-gathering task which asks "what should be done?" But he thinks that the very nature of the needs assessment function necessitates philosophical considerations and that it is a fallacy to suppose that "what should be" can immediately be derived from the "what is" of information gathering instruments. Indeed, needs must be sifted through a "philosophical screen" of the sponsoring institution to define objectives.

Cooperative Extension Service

All Cooperative Extension Service program development guides emphasize the importance of needs assessment. The 1963 Federal Extension Service Program Development Guideline (Knowles, 1970) advised that an analysis of the county social and economic situation should be made to determine the economy, relevant social systems, interests and geographic areas in the county. Furthermore, based upon such an analysis, a program development committee was to be enlisted which represented the relevant social systems, interests,

geographic areas and professional leadership.

Boyle's (1965) program planning principles recommend including the needs of the agency and the potential program participant and the interests of the entire community. These principles are quite similar to the assessment components of English and Kaufman's Curriculum Development Cycle (1975): learner needs, educator needs, society needs and requirements for survival needs.

In 1966, Pesson contributed to a book designed to stimulate and support training programs for Extension educators. He placed needs assessment under the heading "determining the situation."

Needless to say, a precise identification of clientele and their behavior patterns are absolute requirements in formulating sound objectives. Among the things to look for are the practices of the individuals in the clientele group and their knowledge, ideas, attitudes, interests, and expressed needs. (p. 97)

Pesson recommends

- 1) the use of state level specialists to ascertain the "real" problems inherent in the situation;
- 2) the study of population characteristics and changes, migration patterns, changes occurring within the community and natural and human resources for community problems;
- 3) the collection of social data for audience characteristics and economic and technological data for relevant problem areas; and
- 4) the examination of census report, economic studies and governmental records for useful data in determining the situation.

The suggested sources of data are systematic observation, questionnaires, interviews, surveys, records and reports.

The 1974 Extension Program Development Committee's report suggested the need for balanced inputs from various sources into program development strategies because programs sometimes vacillate from one felt need to another or are based on personal needs, on biases or on interests of influential lay persons. The committee also recommended establishing educational needs by considering the following: 1) expressed needs of actual and potential clientele---viewpoints of people served or to be served; 2) analysis of the environment and other conditions of society, including previous program inputs and accomplishments and viewpoints of Extension staff members; 3) research results, viewpoints of specialists, university departmental staffs and others with access to research information; and 4) recommendations and pressures of support groups, agencies and organizations and viewpoints of administrators.

In summary, though there are several interpretations of educational need, the most common definition is a gap between what is and what is desired. Need assessment is seen as the process of determining the gaps between current happenings; placing these gaps in priority order; and selecting particular gaps for action. There is no "correct" way to carry out a needs assessment. The process should be based upon the unique characteristics of those people immediately

involved.

Findings

The sources of information reported by the Extension home economists in this chapter seem to represent a potpourri of sources utilized over time. Table I summarizes the sources of information as reported by the five Extension home economists.

The differences between Extension home economists in the emphasis they placed on the importance of particular categories of sources, as well as the methods they used to process the information they received, is most interesting. Ann indicated the need to fulfill the perceived dictates from people in power positions and to collect need information from representatives of audiences. Betty felt the dictates from people in local positions of power to be important, but also depended on synthesizing information about audience needs from diffuse sources. Donna reported county co-workers, audiences, agencies and organizations as providing all her information on audience educational need, while Edith indicated she relied heavily on contacts with clientele, professional literature and her own expertise. Carol reported using primarily inputs from audience or audience related sources of information and she felt quite comfortable in using her own judgement as a source of information.

Table 1. Sources of Audience Need Information^a

Extension Home Economist	Ann	Betty	Carol	Donna	Edith
Organization Category					
Supervisors	X				
Program Staff			X		
State Impact Committee	X		X		
State Teaching Materials	X		X		
County Commissioners	X	X			
County Co-Workers	X			X	X
Other Extension Home Economists	X	X			
Aides				X	X
Audience Category					
County Program Committees	X		X		
Extension Study Groups	X	X		X	
Community Group Requests	X				
Informal Contacts		X			
Telephone Information Requests	X	X	X	X	
Bulletin Requests		X	X		
Program Evaluations			X		
Home Visits					X

Table 1. (Cont'd.)

Extension Home Economist	Ann	Betty	Carol	Donna	Edith
<hr/>					
Audience Related Category					
Survey Data	X	X	X	X	X
Professional Literature					X
Television, Radio, Newspapers					X
Other Agency Personnel	X		X	X	X
Community Group Requests			X		
School Requests				X	
Personal Knowledge Category					
Own Judgement	X		X		
Professional Conferences	X				

^aAll sources of audience need information available to the Extension home economist.

Ann

Organization Sources of Information. Packages of teaching materials prepared by Impact Committees, content specialists and Family Living program staff were identified as important sources by Ann. "These are ways to expedite programs without having to do further research and I feel it is creditable material."

Regional field supervisors also provide very important information: "If they tell me I had better do certain programs I will, because raises are tied to their annual ratings (of me). They share successful programs that have been done in the region too." Because Ann did copy the successful programs that had been described to her, she listed programs developed by other Extension home economists as important sources of information. "They (the programs) were recommended by the supervisors. It is better use of my own time and energy to use others' materials and other people. The home economists are a support group."

Ann also mentioned her office co-workers as her "support group and our work represents a team effort. Their knowledge enlarges the number of potential audiences. There is good opportunity to do some team programming across the total county Extension program."

The state level Family Living Impact Committees "try to do a needs assessment around the state. Lots of field staff are involved. They are a sounding board and can make things happen statewide."

One source of information Ann emphatically rated as very important was audience needs as viewed by the county commissioners. These needs were always carefully considered in planning educational programs: "It is politically astute to meet the needs they identify. We depend on them for basic (financial) support."

Audience Sources of Information. Extension study groups, because "they are a support group to Extension" and the classes Ann presents to organized community groups, based on the groups requests, were perceived as important sources of information. "The community groups help you gain visibility. If they are organized you don't have to organize your own groups."

A planning committee, which meets with Ann twice a year to decide appropriate program offerings, is considered to be a very important source of information: They represent my 'feelers' from the community." This group is composed of citizens from one community and includes people from the intended audiences and agencies. The responses to a "mail back" interest survey Ann included in her monthly newsletter also provided program planning information: "I feel the response rate to the send-in sheet indicates interest and concern. This is the largest group of people that I have direct contact with." She believes telephone calls are important sources of information because "repeated requests on the same topic do indicate a strong need to receive information or help."

Audience Related Sources of Information. Ann reported that two organizations provided important audience related sources of information. A tri-county council provided "support to my programs. I knew I was not duplicating programs because the council shares information about what programs the other agencies and organizations in the three counties are doing. The council also has done its own needs assessment of audiences." A county coordinating council gives Ann the opportunity to do joint programming with other agencies and organizations in her county.

Personal Sources of Information. Ann listed one source of information that could be categorized as personal. Her "hunch" as to what programs will "sell" is a very important source to her. "I view offerings as a product which must be merchandized. Sometimes I must do window dressing to merchandise the product. In reality, we are competing with television and continuing education programs for people's time. We are also competing for operating dollars."

Betty

Organization Sources of Information. Betty felt county commissioners were very important sources of information as Ann did and for essentially the same reason: "Commissioners are very influential." She also listed Extension home economists. "They are very creditable, they are directly related to my line of work and I can see their program successes." For Betty, the regional field

supervisors provide important information as "regional field supervisors represent the major thrusts (of state programming)."

Audience Sources of Information. The one formal and extensive needs assessment of intended audience Betty conducted was rated as an important source of information: "I feel when people commit something to paper, we should pay attention." As an afterthought Betty added: "I haven't seen the results of this."

The Extension study groups were viewed as sources of information but of lower value than the other sources "because my personal involvement is less. This is another Extension home economist's responsibility."

Like Ann, Betty thought telephone requests were "important because they are direct input from clients and we should pay attention." Requests for Extension publications that Betty mentioned in her newspaper column indicated to her the type of information audiences wanted: "It is direct input from clients and we should pay attention." When Betty meets friends on the street, they sometimes comment on the information in her newspaper column too and this "may have some importance. With some, it may be politeness and may not tell a whole lot."

Audience Related Sources of Information. For Betty, newspapers, radio and television provide information about audience needs. It is "very important to be informed on what's going on internationally, nationally and locally. It's 'taking the temperature' of the community."

Personal Sources of Information. When the interviewer asked Betty if there was any other information she felt was important to understanding how she determined the educational needs of audiences, Betty responded: "...sometimes people are afraid to admit what their needs are in the family life area because they think they'll be perceived as failure. The areas we deal in are touchy areas. Like if we had a survey and we said 'Do you need help in parenting?' I don't think the answers would be valid, even if anonymous. Some would be true, like if you asked 'do you need help in planning meals?' I think some of the ways we assess needs are more important and valid (than formal surveys). For example, (we can present) a program on making toys for children to bring people in and then talk about communication. Needs (as expressed in an audience survey) are just one piece of the pie. There are some topics people won't come out for, although they may need them." Betty felt her powers of observation provided her with very important information.

Carol

Organization Sources of Information. Carol believes two sources of information provide dictates from the state level and thinks they are important to consider: "I feel a lot of thought has gone into the Impact committee recommendations and programs at the state level and so at least some of it applies to my county. Of course, I have other ways of determining need, too." The Family Living program

staff requested Carol to carry out one program: "I have only received one dictate and had to do it. It was one of the best things I've done."

Audience Sources of Information. Carol first mentioned two advisory boards. One board is primarily concerned with its own group of people: "A lot of their input is good for their programs only and not overall programs." She considers her program advisory board, however, to be quite important: "This is a group that represents the overall program and is chosen carefully to represent the county population. We have trained them to give unbiased advice."

Evaluations of educational programs give information to Carol, too. "These are important, but many times they don't tell you the most helpful information---the needs unmet and where to go from here." When Carol receives requests for repeats of programs, she feels "it indicates what people need. When people ask for it, they know what they're going to get."

Although Carol does not keep a written account of the telephone requests she receives, she remarked: "I feel they are quite important because we get lots and lots of telephone calls, and when people call, they really have an important need." Requests for Extension publications are rated as highly as telephone calls: "So many people respond and that takes an effort and indicates a need (for certain kinds of information)."

Audience Related Sources of Information. Requests for programs from another agency, and audience need surveys conducted by Extension staff members in other counties provide quite important information in Carol's estimation. The agency "is my main contact with the disadvantaged. Because the agency staff works with these people they have a valid way of determining needs." Carol thinks surveys are helpful "although I haven't done any, but the ones done by others pointed out what the needs were and the methods of delivery wanted (by audiences)."

Personal Sources of Information. Carol listed her own judgement, interests and expertise as quite important in assessing needs of audiences. She perceived her own judgement to be a valid source of information: "I feel that because of the experience I've had with people in the county, I can tell the needs and the best way to provide help." Her expertise is important as it helps her "be more alert to needs in this area and I look for them." Carol then added "but because of this there may be a big area of need I'm missing."

Donna

Organization Sources of Information. Donna felt her program aides were very important sources of information on audience need. "They bring back information on what it's really like with a particular clientele." And, like Ann, she mentioned her office co-workers as important sources of

information.

Audience Sources of Information. Extension study group members were viewed as providing information about their interests only. Telephone requests for information were quite important sources of information.

Audience Related Sources of Information. Donna listed two agencies, a coordinating council, the Intermediate school district, an officer of a local bank and radio and television surveys as sources of information. The bank officer requested Donna's help in developing money management programs for the local community because of budgeting problems the bank's customers were experiencing. The two agencies "are housed close by and we confer on a regular basis (about audience need)." The Intermediate school district has "facilities we can use so we reciprocate with programs (they request)." The coordinating council is important to Donna because "we have a chance to find out what other agencies are doing and why."

Personal Sources of Information. Donna's responses to Interview Question I did not include any sources which could be classified as personal.

Edith

Organization Sources of Information. Edith indicated program aides were very important sources of need information for her. "My aides have direct contact with homemakers over time. Because staff members are experienced, I feel

they can pinpoint needs." (These aides work with a specific population and not with county residents in general.) Edith also believes her interactions with other professional staff members in the Extension office provides information. "I need to hear how they are assessing needs, but guess I question whether what any of us is doing is on target. Frankly, we do not spend enough time on needs assessment."

Audience Sources of Information. Home visits to clientele were rated as very important "because the direct contact helps me to observe firsthand what the needs of that particular person are. Also, the verbal feedback from the homemaker is frank." These visits are also to a specific population.

Audience Related Sources of Information. Other agency personnel, scientific journals and the data from her own reports provide quite important audience need information to Edith. The other agencies "deal basically with some of the same clientele but in different areas." The scientific journals are used to "look in for scientific research to confirm and give credence to my own information and what can be translated to my own work." The report data gives Edith a "quick view of how we're effective and what we need to do in programming to meet needs."

Newsletters received from legislators were rated as somewhat important sources of information: "They give me information on the statistics of needs, personal anecdotes and description of methods."

Personal Sources of Information. Edith mentioned professional conferences as being somewhat important in planning programs: "I go for enlightenment, for how to work and reach additional low-income audiences."

Discussion

All five respondents reported receiving information from sources in the Organization, Audience and Audience Related categories with 28 of the 45 responses falling in the Audience and Audience Related categories. In particular, all five Extension home economists stated they used either regional or local audience surveys as a method of identifying educational needs, four reported using other agency staff and telephone inquiries as sources of information and three indicated Extension study groups were useful as sources of information.

No Extension home economists indicated that content specialists, county Extension directors, community leaders, other adult education programs, census data, professional or popular literature, their own educational training or materials in their personal files were used as sources of information. Yet many of these sources of information were identified in the literature as important to educational program development.

On the basis of the data analyzed, there is little evidence to support the criticisms by Parker (1972) that adult education programs are developed on the basis of what

is available and snap judgements. The Extension home economists did not report using sources of information that fell under the rubric of what was appropriate in another setting or snap judgements. All respondents reported using a variety of methods for collecting information directly from the intended audience. The personal judgements or "hunches" of the Extension home economists were apparently based on educational training, personal observations and the educator's needs to advance self and/or the organization.

Many of the sources of information identified by Ann fit Mazmanian's (1971) fourth needs assessment model which assumes either the existence of, or attempts to identify the gap between, "what is" and "what should be" in a social system. In this study the social systems as included in the Mazmanian model were the Cooperative Extension Service and the community. The reasons Ann gave for listing some sources of information also supported Monette's (1977) contention that what a system is said to need is basically what an observer needs or wants for the given system. Evidence on this point was emphasized when the interviewer had difficulty understanding how classes that are presented to organized community groups could be considered sources of audience need information and Ann replied "they give you visibility, you don't have to organize your own groups." This was not a snap judgement or an easy solution to finding an audience; it appeared to be a pragmatic way to advance the programs of the organization and the educator. This

source of information may not indicate direct audience need but it is a source of information for program development. The same reasoning applied to her hunches as to what programs would be acceptable to the public, "(We have) a product which must be merchandized...we are competing with television and continuing education people for people's time (and) for operating dollars." Ann indicated concern, perhaps almost fear, of the people in power positions.

Edith, on the other hand, focused on the needs of a known segment of the population and thus fit Mazmanian's second needs assessment model. She reported using research data and personal observations to determine audience need and looked for tested methods to reach and bring about change in her audience. This also represents what the observer wants for the system(s)---the known population and the Cooperative Extension Service.

Betty's sources of information also displayed a similarity to the fourth needs assessment model although more of the observer's wants and needs for the community system are evident than for the Cooperative Extension Service system. Donna's sources of information, like Betty's, are similar those described in the fourth model as she was concerned with the needs of the community as a whole. Donna also focused on the needs of a particular audience, as Edith did, but did not mention research data, personal observations or tested methods as a basis for local diagnosis. She evidently relies on the observations of her program aides.

Carol's initial list of sources of information and her reasons for using them indicated several processes for identifying needs. She responds to a known segment of the county population---those audiences she has worked with or those who request her to present certain programs receive high priority in needs assessment. Telephone requests for information and requests for Cooperative Extension Service publications tap those learners who have determined their own learning needs and who might be willing to participate as members of a group. The needs of the community as identified by the program advisory board, information from other agencies and Carol's own observations are considered sources of information by her. These need assessments promote the needs and wants of Carol and her organization for the community. She also views the requests and recommendations from the organization as positive and useful and which, in the main, may be accepted or rejected.

The Extension home economists' responses did include inputs from various sources of information as suggested in the 1974 Extension Program Development Committee's report but did not reflect the viewpoints of the university departmental staffs except by the use of materials prepared by content specialists.

CHAPTER IV

Program Development and the Extension Home Economist

In this chapter the literature of program development in educational organizations will be reviewed. The findings from Interview Question II which dealt with the sources of information used in planning the Extension home economists' 1980-1981 plans of work, will be presented and discussed.

Literature

Adult Education

In the view of Boyle and Jayne (1970), program development is an all-inclusive term covering a variety of activities on the part of an educational organization. Some activities are aimed at educational efforts, while others are directed toward the maintenance of the organization. Essentially, educational program development is a method of planning, with the efforts of the organization focused primarily on educational activities.

Program planning models by contributors in the field of adult education fall into two major categories, described by Mazmanian (1977) as either classical or naturalistic. The classical model includes consideration of audience need, educational objectives, development of learning activities and evaluation of the total effort (Knox, 1968).

Walker (1971) views this model as being prescriptive in nature. An example is the English and Kaufman (1975) curriculum or program development cycle which uses a needs assessment base. They suggest needs assessment provides the anchors of a) the current state of affairs and b) the required state of affairs to which program development is to be built. Figure 1 indicates the "flow" of curriculum as seen by English and Kaufman. Needs assessment is viewed as the reality base which is sorted into two categories---needs which are agreed upon and those which are not agreed upon. At this point non-agreed upon needs can be cycled back into the reality base. Otherwise there is no recycling of information and the model assumes an orderly completion of satisfying selected needs.

The emerging naturalistic model is descriptive and consists of a series of decision points relating to both explicit and implicit design. These points allow the educator to select the best alternative at that time (Schwab, 1979). Zaltman, Florio and Sikorski (1977) have synthesized a proactive/interactive change model for planners based on the assumption that educational systems are self-renewing and have a need for diversity and flexibility. Figure 2 illustrates this conceptualization. Although the model indicates a linear progression as does the classical model, it is possible to skip a stage or start at different points in the process. It is seen as a linking system and a network with various formal and informal relationships between

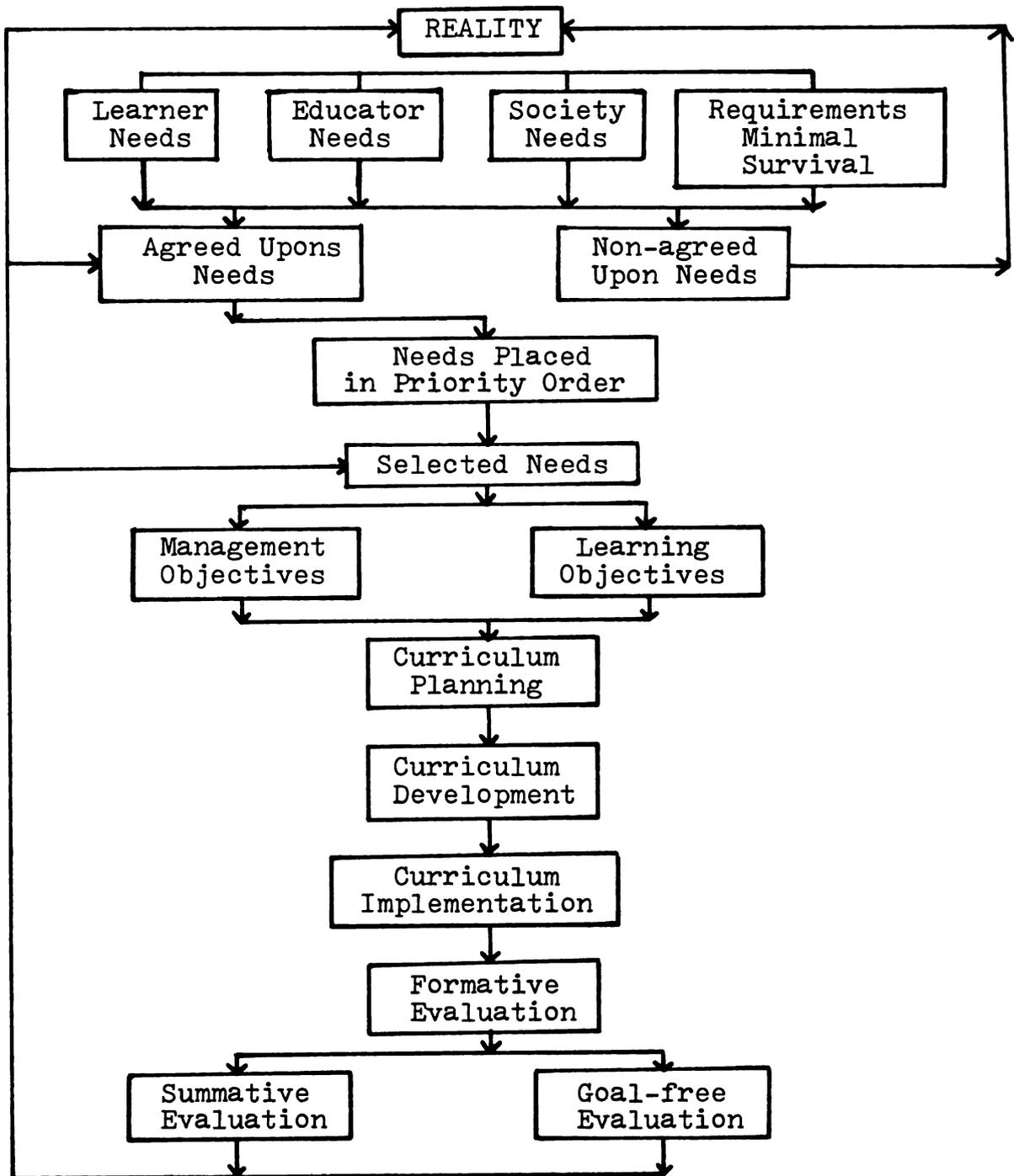


Figure 1. Curriculum or Program Development Cycle.
English and Kaufman (1975).

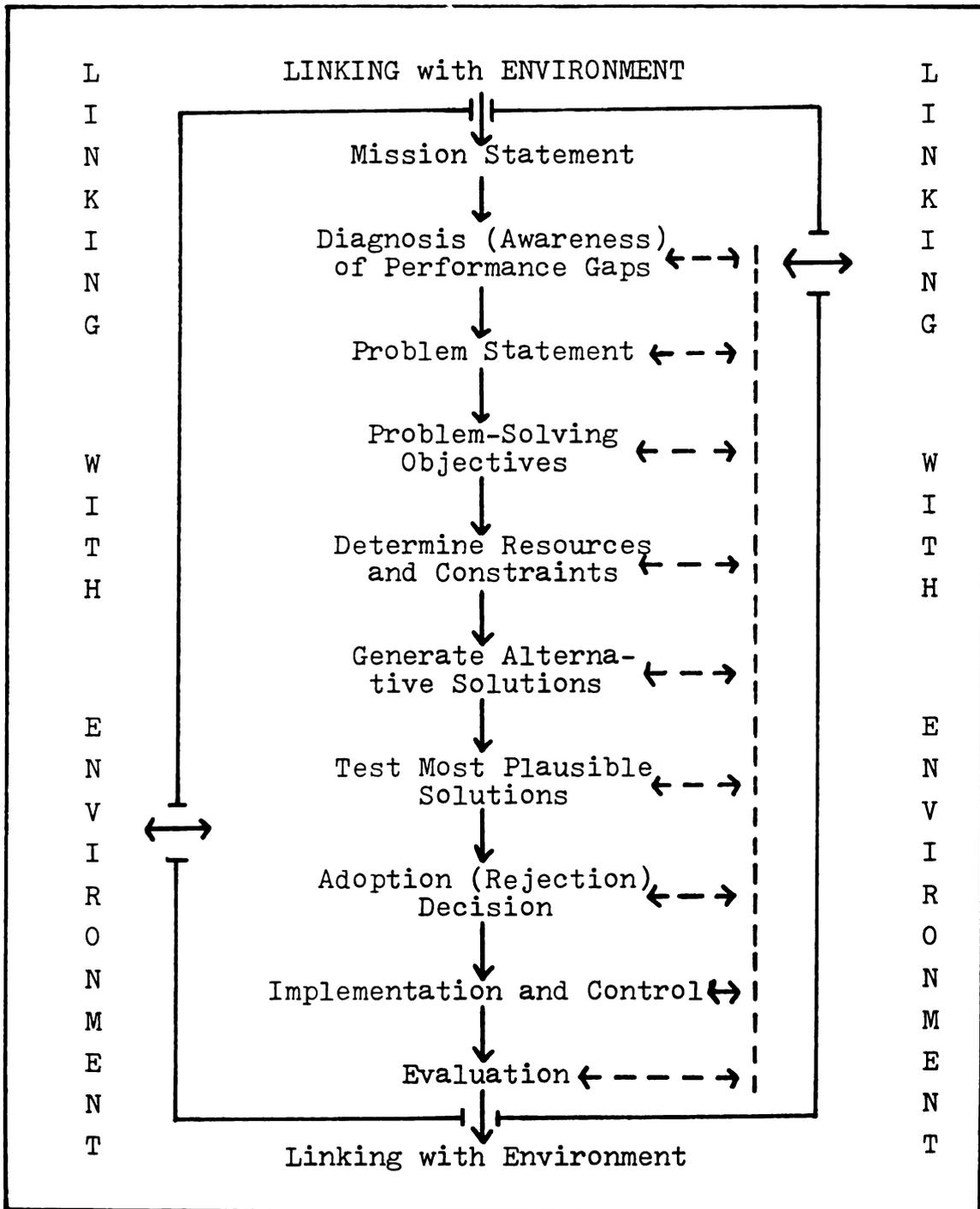


Figure 2. A Proactive/Interactive Change Model for Planners. Zaltman, Florio and Sikorski (1977).

the planning group and various elements and organizations in the environment.

Most current theoretical frameworks of educational program planning in adult education are borrowed by Tylerian curriculum development models used in primary and secondary education. These models are in the classical category.

The processes used by persons who plan educational programs for adults is largely an unexplored area in educational research, according to Pennington and Green (1976). Sork (1978) also found this to be true. He discovered that education literature had not paid attention to the process of determining educational priorities until the early 1970's. Even the references in current literature are quite elusive in nature.

Pennington and Green, in a study to develop a substantive theory of program planning found that the program development processes of six "successful" educational organizations blended the classical and naturalistic models. Planners used the language of the classical model to label their planning actions. However, as the respondents described their actions, it became clearer that personal values, environmental constraints, available resource alternatives and other factors impinged on the program development process.

The study also found major discrepancies between program planning models within the literature and actual practice in diverse fields of adult education. Pennington and Green concluded that program development is a form of

administrative decision making.

Some stimulus from inside or outside of the organization received the attention of the planning agent. The planning agent responded to the stimulus, usually a request or idea for a continuing education activity, in a preliminary fashion to check its strength. If the strength of the stimulus was sufficient, resources were gathered to respond. The response took the form of a number of critical decisions and a consideration of alternative activities which would lead to the execution of those decisions that in the end shaped the educational activity. (p. 20)

Cooperative Extension Service

Cooperative Extension Service program development has changed over time with the shift in emphasis from the general diffusion of information to individual learning, and finally to cost-benefit considerations of program development. The organizational suggestions for establishing the educational needs of audiences reflect these changes.

Boone (1970) characterizes the Cooperative Extension Service as having an ingenious system of programming that utilizes the efforts of professional and lay leaders in developing educational activities designed to meet immediate and projected needs of people. At each level of the Cooperative Extension Service there is an interrelation of the internal and external forces that affect program decisions; though specific objectives should evolve primarily from the county Cooperative Extension agent's interaction with lay people.

Steele's (1978) analysis of eras in the Cooperative Extension Service's noted changed in the interpretation of its mission and also the methods used in program development. The first era was concerned with diffusion of information, demonstrations and practice adoption. The second era was highly influenced by Tyler's curriculum development ideas and was concerned with education, group instruction and learning changes.

Steele points out that the Cooperative Extension Service is now entering a third era, which she labels "Extension scrutiny" (by all levels of government and citizens) and competition for available funds. All elements in the program development process have become complex and confused, but it is clear that cost-benefit considerations must be an integral part of program development.

In the late 1950's and 1960's, when the Cooperative Extension Service adopted the Tylerian approach to program development, the Federal Extension Service published a set of guidelines for county program development and evaluation (Knowles, 1973). The guidelines were organized around six elements: 1) organization for program development; 2) process for program planning; 3) planning county Cooperative Extension Service program; 4) annual county Cooperative Extension Service plan of work and teaching plans; 5) program action; and 6) program accomplishments, evaluation and reporting. Each element had precise guidelines, including a check list of appropriate personnel and their

degree of responsibility for each guideline. It had the characteristics of the classical model of program development.

Boyle (1965) proposed four program planning concepts for the Cooperative Extension Service. These were based on concepts from the literature of adult education which were applicable to the Cooperative Extension Service. These did not include decision making or interconnection between principles but only the traditional considerations of 1) the situation which is to be changed or improved; 2) educational needs of the target population; 3) learning experiences and plans for the implementation; 4) the design for determining the accomplishments of the program and assessing its strengths and weaknesses.

The report of a national ad hoc Cooperative Extension Service Committee (Extension Program Development, 1974) states that Cooperative Extension Service program development should be a continuous series of complex, interrelated processes which include: 1) organizing to accomplish mission; 2) determining program content; 3) preparing objectives; 4) developing plans to accomplish the objectives; 5) implementing the plans; 6) evaluating and reporting results; and 7) utilizing results in planning subsequent programs. Figure 3 illustrates this model.

The committee made the following program development strategy recommendations:

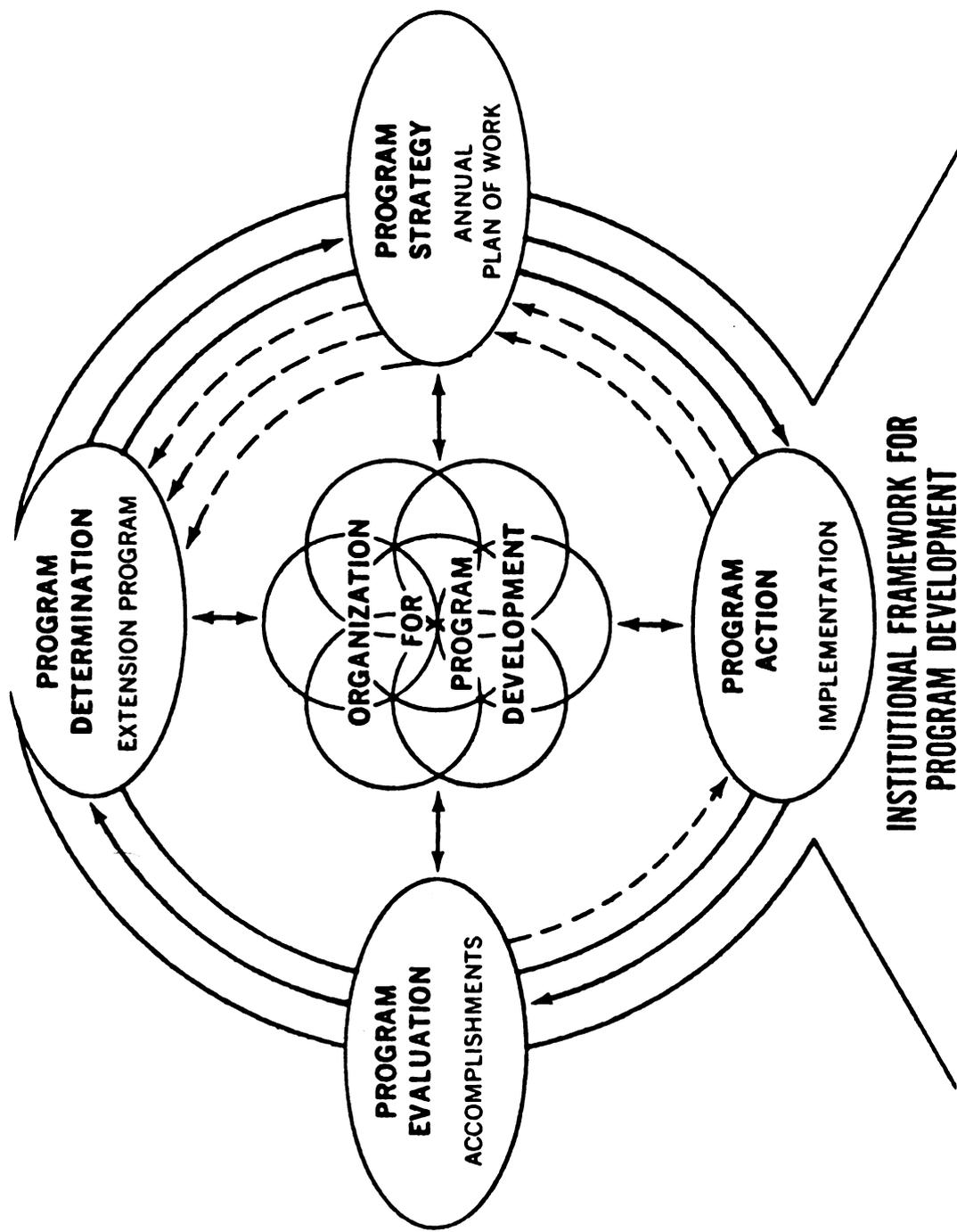


Figure 3. Processes of Extension Program Development. Program Development and Its Relationship to Extension Management Information Systems, 1974.

...new dynamics, including new and different resources, audiences, content needs, and concerns, necessitate modification in operational approach and strategy to secure desired results in our increasingly complex and dynamic society...Program planning and replanning needs to be conducted in such a way that components in the Extension program and in the plan of work may be added to or changed throughout the year.
(pp. 12-13)

Yet in 1978 Steele stated that it was unfortunate that the Cooperative Extension Service has simplified its view of the program development process with planning on one end and evaluation on the other, when recent work demonstrates the interlocked nature of the needs analysis and the evaluation.

The Michigan Family Living Education Guidelines for Audience Selection and Programming (1980) state that programming for the general public is viewed as necessary to insure widespread dissemination of practical information to families. In-depth programming for specific groups of families is seen as critical to help people gain knowledge and develop skills to deal with special challenges.

The same document emphasizes that decisions about a local Family Living Education program direction, content and audience are made by county Extension home economists, based on clientele needs as determined by local audiences, advisory groups and secondary data sources. Activities of other community organizations and agencies; dollars, staff and educational resources available for programming;

and identified statewide priorities were also to be taken into consideration.

The guidelines also suggested the local program development advisory groups might carry out the following functions:

Review data relating to county family situations to assess needs

Identify social and economic trends

Suggest programming needs and priorities

Develop and carry out programs

Identify program resources

Assist with program evaluation

Develop support for Family Living Education programs with key decision makers

Plan and assist with specific events

Findings

Prior to writing their plans of work, each Extension home economist received a list of the content areas administrators would be using to write state plans of work and evaluation reports. All of the Extension home economists interviewed developed objectives in their plans of work that fit into the listed content areas.

Although some of the respondents indicated available materials and programs were sources of information in developing objectives in their plans of work, their explanations indicated a) a need of the Extension home

economists for the security of using materials developed by experts in content areas they did not feel comfortable in, or b) the availability of attractive materials the Extension home economists had judged to be reliable.

Responses from two of the Extension home economists indicated that organization sources of information were much more influential in the development of their 1980-1981 plans of work than any other source category. For two other Extension home economists, the audience and audience related categories were the most influential in developing plans of work with the organization category of little or no importance. Another Extension home economist indicated using nearly equal numbers of sources of information in the organization, audience and audience related categories but only one personal source of information in developing her 1980-1981 plan of work.

Table 2 displays the frequency with which sources of information were mentioned by Extension home economists over all objectives in their 1980-1981 plans of work and provides an interesting illustration of the similarities and differences between respondents. The data demonstrate that the majority of sources of information listed by Ann and Edith fall in the organization category; the majority of Betty's sources of information fall equally in the audience and audience related categories; and Carol and Donna's sources are primarily in the audience category.

Table 2. Sources of Information in Plans of Work^a

Extension Home Economist	Ann	Betty	Carol	Donna	Edith
Organization Category					
Supervisors	1				
Program Staff	1			1	2
Content Specialists	1				
State Impact Committees	1				3
State Teaching Materials	4				
County Commissioners	1	1			
Other Extension Home Economists					1
County Co-Workers					4
Aides				2	1
Audience Category					
County Program Committee	1	1	3		
Extension Study Groups	1		1	1	
Community Group Requests			2	1	
Informal Contacts		3	1	1	
Telephone Information Requests		2	3	1	
Bulletin Requests		2			
Program Evaluations			2	2	
Home Visits					1

Table 2. (Cont'd.)

Extension Home Economist	Ann	Betty	Carol	Donna	Edith
Audience Related Category					
Survey Data				1	1
Popular Literature		2			1
Professional Literature		1			
Television, Radio, Newspapers		4			
Other Agency Personnel	1		3	2	1
Other Adult Education Programs	1	1			
Request of Court				1	
Personal Knowledge Category					
Education/Interest/Expertise			1		1
Own Judgement	1	2	4	1	
Materials in Files	1				

^aA particular source of information might be listed more than once by each Extension home economist because of multiple objectives within a plan of work.

Ann

Ann estimated she spends about a month "...in bits and pieces," determining audience educational needs prior to planning the yearly program and she follows very specific steps when actually developing the program plan. "First I used a newsletter (survey) as a means of collecting (need) information. Then I tallied the information to see where the greatest interest was, these were votes. And then I gathered a planning group together (primarily from organizations, agencies and the intended audience) to further assess needs. These people were also to bring lists of the interests and needs of the people they work with."

At the group meeting Ann wrote all the interests and needs on a chalkboard and with the committee's help crossed off the ones other groups were already responding to. The remaining interests were rated according to their importance for programming. She then requested the committee to indicate if they wished to receive this information by newsletter, workshop, newspaper or by other methods. When this process was completed, Ann evaluated the resources available to her, considered the directives she had received from her superiors and then wrote her plan of work.

The content of Ann's programs remains the same no matter where she presents them, but she "adapts the content to the specific groups with the size of the group being the largest factor in any change."

When the interviewer asked Ann if there was any other

information she felt was important to know in understanding how she determined the educational needs of intended audiences, Ann replied: "The county (Extension) director's support or non-support is very important. He is my direct supervisor."

Organization Sources of Information. The state level Impact Committee was not as important to Ann in developing her 1980-1981 plan of work as she had indicated in her responses to the first interview question because the teaching materials being prepared by the committee were only "in the process of being done." But a content specialist was mentioned as an important source of information in planning one objective. The specialist had developed materials that Ann used to carry out a teaching objective (the specialist did not supply direct information on audience need).

The importance to Ann of packaged teaching materials produced by state level staff was emphasized when she listed the materials as sources of information in planning four educational objectives. Each time she rated them as very important. Pointing to one objective Ann remarked, "Those materials were really the total of my knowledge." In another objective, she expressed the same feelings: "They are important. They are the base from which to work and create a comfort zone for me in dealing with the topic." From a third objective: "I couldn't do without these packaged materials." And a fourth objective: "They are the brains for the program. They are done so well we can pick them

up and go with it (present educational programs.)"

Ann pointed out two other state level sources of information that had impact on her plan of work. The regional field supervisors suggested she include a particular objective in her plan of work and Ann's remark to the writer about this input was a crisp, "do or die. The supervisors control reemployment and raises." In another instance, the Family Living program staff was the source of information. Ann rated their input as very important because "It is a budget year and this area (of programming) represents a statewide emphasis. It is important for political reasons and for clientele." Another information source for the same educational objective was the county commissioners. "It was a direct request from the commissioners, so I felt obliged."

Ann did not indicate that other Cooperative Extension Service home economists or coworkers in her office were sources of information in preparing her 1980-1981 plan of work, even though in responding to Question I she had indicated they were very valuable sources of information.

Audience Sources of Information. When Ann examined her 1980-1981 plan of work, she mentioned only two sources of information which could be classified as audience. Extension study groups were again listed as very important "because of the state emphasis on strengthening this group", as was the planning committee, "because of its general interest, support and willingness to generate audiences."

Audience Related Sources of Information. An agency's request for help in presenting programs was a very important source of information for Ann as was another community adult education organization's success with a particular course. This program's success led Ann to plan a similar workshop: "It established a need for this kind of thing."

Personal Sources of Information. Ann mentioned two sources of information that fit this category. "The materials in my files are very important sources to me and help me do programs. I have accumulated them over the years and they include commercial materials and (my) past program materials. They are my comfort zone, my security. They let me know how programs can be done."

In another objective a hunch was seen as quite important: "I have a hunch that if I help the group increase their leadership skills the group will really grow. I see this as a real need in my county. I'm hoping it will happen."

Betty

Betty described her program planning process as "evaluating last year's plan of work in terms of today's political and economic conditions." She and the other Extension home economists in the county office studied the 1979-1980 plan of work and decided what would "go" in 1980-1981 and "meet both the public interest and our (own) interests."

Betty watches the television news and reads the local newspapers to "get a feeling of what's going on in the community" and an assessment of audience needs was carried out by asking her newsletter readers to respond to a survey form.

The hundreds of telephone requests for information give Betty "a notion of what people want to know." She also picks areas of educational emphasis for programming by "what I'm interested in and able to do and if it also fits the need of audiences and what will bring in people. Over the years I have nurtured certain groups."

"Specific programs for specific audiences" and "standardized" programs that are suitable for a variety of audiences are developed for her urban county.

Organization Sources of Information. Betty indicated only one organization source of information had input into planning her educational program for 1980-1981. A special interest of a county commissioner was a very important influence in developing one objective. The interviewer received the strong impression that the commissioner and the Extension home economist really shared a common, intense interest in the subject matter, although Betty did not mention her own interest as playing a part in developing the objective.

Like Ann, Betty did not list other Extension home economists as information sources in developing her own plan of work.

Audience Sources of Information. Five audience sources of information were identified by Betty as helping her make program decisions for the 1980-1981 plan of work, with two of these being listed in several objectives. Informal contacts with persons belonging to the audiences Betty works with provided information used in the development of three educational objectives. Citizen requests for bulletins were cited as quite important sources of information, as were telephone information requests (both were mentioned twice). They "are direct input from clients." For the first time Betty mentioned her advisory council as a source of information. One member had mentioned there was a definite need to develop an educational objective that would help families develop skills in selecting and maintaining their homes.

Audience Related Sources of Information. Betty said that talk shows on television and popular publications were important in developing one objective, while local television news programs, the newspaper and a program of another organization were the basis for another objective. The other organization provided an already identified audience for Betty and she shared the teaching responsibilities with the organization staff.

Television news and newspapers were mentioned as being quite important in developing a third objective. In addition, "slick and beautiful" federal publications in this objective's subject matter area were an important source of information according to Betty, as were the "proliferation

of books on the market (on this topic). If they're selling, there must be a demand."

The media was cited as an important source of information in a fourth objective.

Personal Sources of Information. In the list of sources that were used to develop her 1980-1981 plan of work, Betty mentioned two that fit the personal category. Her perceptions of the state of the economy were very important in developing one objective, as was her judgement about "hot issues circulating now."

Carol

"When I receive the instructions (from the Cooperative Extension Service administrative staff) for putting together next year's plan of work is not the time when I start planning. It is a continuous process. First I check what the needs are. Then the things I didn't do and still want to get done. Also, at the same time, I'm looking at the next step. Then I look at the resources to do things. Some things I'd really like to do I don't have the money or people. At this time I look for resources. Then I plan my methods, figure out how I'm going to evaluate it and write it down."

The educational programs Carol presents in various parts of the county have basically the same content, but she "makes some changes for different audiences."

Organization Sources of Information. None of the sources of information used by Carol in developing her 1980-1981 plan of work could be categorized as organization.

Audience Sources of Information. The audience sources of information used by Carol in planning for 1980-1981 included four sources that were listed in more than one educational objective. Community requests for programs in specific subject matter areas were listed in three objectives: "When they request the program, I feel there is a real need" and "more and more groups keep requesting this program, groups that otherwise would not go to Extension meetings." All were listed as very important sources.

Telephone requests for information were used as sources in planning four educational objectives. In one objective, Carol commented that the "number of calls that come in is very great. I don't feel there is need for other input." In connection with another objective, Carol remarked that telephone calls were quite important because "they (the people) had to do something to get information; that indicates a real need."

Evaluations by participants in Carol's programs were also rated quite important sources of information in planning three objectives: "This is where the group tells what they want and how they feel about what they've been given."

A program advisory board provided information that led Carol to plan two educational objectives in 1980-1981. In one instance the source was rated as very important: "When they request it, I feel there is a real need." In another objective, the board was rated as not quite as important: "They really request this (a particular subject) a lot and

therefore I see it as a need. I have confidence in them." Another advisory board, which serves a limited audience, was listed as a source of information only in the educational objective that concerned their own programs.

Informal contacts with people on the street who requested information were listed as quite important in developing one objective: "To me, to approach a professional on the street indicates a great need."

Carol mentioned all the audience sources of information in her second list that she had named in the first and also added a new one. The relative importance of sources showed little changed from one list to another.

Audience Related Sources of Information. When Carol examined her 1980-1981 plan of work with the interviewer, she mentioned many sources of information but only one fit the audience related category. Program requests from agencies were listed in four different objectives as being very important. Carol repeated her prior comments about agency requests: "It's one way I often begin working with disadvantaged. Often they accept certain programs which can lead to other things."

Personal Sources of Information. Five of the nine objectives in the 1980-1981 plan of work, according to Carol, were based partly on her judgements and/or training and interests. In an objective centered on energy conservations, her own judgement was rated as quite important: "You make judgements based on what you hear people saying, fuel costs

and waste, and your readings in the literature." Carol's interests and training played a part in this objective too: "In this area I have some background and expertise. It's easier for me to see needs in this area." But in another objective her judgement was given a lower rating: "It was important but my judgement may not be as objective because I see the subject area as an important need (of audiences) and may project it on others." She evaluates her own judgement the same way in two other objectives. Carol gave the example of seeing many fat people in her community and "judging this to be a health and self esteem problem for many people." Programs were then planned for these two problem areas.

Donna

Donna follows specific steps in developing a yearly program plan. "I keep call-in slips (telephone information requests) and try to categorize (the requests) and find trends. Sheets (survey forms) are sent to study clubs asking them to rate past programs and check their interests from a list of possible programs. I usually contact the local radio and television stations to see what their surveys say are the problems in the community and what leaders and lay people would like to see and hear. If there is any correlation between telephone calls and radio and television surveys, it is a pretty good indication of what to offer. I plan programs that meet audience needs as audience may express in a number of ways, but perhaps not in specific words. For

established groups, I provide monthly mini-lessons that they have expressed interest in and I feel are important."

Although programming is the same for all parts of the county, Donna adapts the content to specific audiences, with "economic differences being the largest factor in any change. I'm also sensitive to ethnic groups."

Organization Sources of Information. Two organization sources of information were identified from Donna's responses. Program aides were listed in three educational objectives and Donna felt she had received a message from the Family Living program staff that it was an "Extension obligation" to include another objective for a special group. Donna added she, too, thought the objective to be "essential as they cannot be excluded. They should be nurtured and supported."

Audience Sources of Information. Donna identified telephone requests for information, program requests from "potential clientele," Extension study groups and written and verbal reports from participants of past programs' usefulness as having input in developing different objectives in the plan of work.

The many telephone requests for information in specific subject matter areas were cited as very important sources: "The diversity of the calls keeps me tuned in with what is happening." The requests from potential clientele "represents a real need" but the Extension study groups provide only "important information about their own needs."

Evaluations from programs received a high rating as a

source in developing one educational objective: "I got excellent feedback from participants in a similar group. I feel they have all been honest, they have nothing to gain otherwise." Verbal reports from clients about the usefulness of information received through various methods were rated as very important by Donna too: "I feel they are honest responses and there are a large number of responses."

Audience Related Sources of Information. Donna indicated that the mandate of a local judge for parent education classes was a very important source of information in developing one objective: "I felt obligated and I wanted to do it." An agency also had input in developing this objective: "They need help and we need to work with them." Although recommendations from agencies were mentioned in another objective, they were not viewed as "particularly useful" in that case.

One of the audience related sources of information Donna labeled very important was the market survey carried out by the county Cooperative Extension Service staff. "We look at differences in prices and competition and use this information a lot to show how much difference there really is."

Personal Sources of Information. One source fit the personal category. Donna used her own judgement in making decisions on the appropriate structure and function of a group: "Doing something was better than doing nothing."

Edith

Edith believes she spends about a week determining audience educational needs prior to planning the yearly program. The plan of work is developed by drawing upon the objectives that "have come down from the state level and Impact Committees. I rely on audience information from my staff and other Extension home economists."

For programs in her own county, Edith adapts basic program ideas to fit rural and urban audiences.

When Edith specified the sources of information utilized in developing her plan of work for 1980-1981, not only did she list new sources of information but she also changed the degree of importance for sources previously mentioned. The degree of importance also changed at times for the same sources when they were listed in different objectives.

Organization Sources of Information. Professional staff coworkers were now perceived to be important sources of need information, particularly in program areas that were outside the focus of Edith's educational training. In speaking of another Extension home economist, Edith remarked, "This is her area of expertise and we discuss the various problems and needs of audiences." Edith also seemed to feel an obligation to plan programs in some of these areas. "I assume needs had already been assessed by the other home economist and I felt there was a need." While discussing the sources of need information used in planning objectives in the 1980-1981 plan of work, Edith remarked that her

professional colleagues were really quite important to her because of "our mutual background of expertise and education."

One source that Edith had not mentioned initially, now appeared in three educational objectives. The state level Impact Committee was rated as very important in planning two objectives. "They have overall knowledge of a variety of audiences. Some excellent (teaching) materials have come out (from the committee) on families." The Impact committee was mentioned as being an important source in planning another objective, "...because of the research and study information that has been collected."

Another organization source of information not previously mentioned was the state level Family Living program staff. In one objective, Edith rated them as moderately important sources because of "the general information received." But in another objective, she rated the group as very important because "they have provided some excellent materials."

Edith viewed her program aides as quite important sources of information in planning one objective "because all (aides) work with a variety of audiences and we have determined these needs (are important)." But she downgraded aides in importance in another objective because "They do not do quite as extensive information gathering on economic problems (as they do in other areas) of people."

Audience Sources of Information. Home visits were again Edith's only direct audience input: "I get more information out of my own visits."

Audience Related Source of Information. Social agencies and statistical data from service groups were very important audience related sources of information in several objectives. The social agencies were valuable because, "we relate to them in the course of work and discuss needs," and the service group date "because of the research and study that has brought about the data."

Edith also mentioned the various popular magazines in the subject area of one educational objective: "They give general information---I sometimes question the information."

Personal Sources of Information. Reexamining the objectives in her 1980-1981 plan of work prompted Edith to list her own "storehouse of knowledge, experience and education" as being a quite important source of information in one objective: "I've had considerable formal education and extensive work experience."

Discussion

The program development processes used by the Extension home economists were unique to each individual, but all five respondents reported they were the ones who made the final decisions on what educational programs to include in their 1980-1981 plans of work. All of the Extension home economists grouped the objectives in their plans of work under the general Family Living areas of program emphasis set by the state level program leaders. The data seems to indicate that for this sample Pennington and Green's (1976)

conclusions that program development is a form of administrative decision making held true.

Although only one Extension home economist described a planning process that had elements of the classical model, their verbal descriptions suggest that personal values, environmental constraints and other factors impinge on the program development processes. Decision points had been reached, according to the naturalistic program planning model, and the best alternative action had been identified by each educator in developing her 1980-1981 plan of work. The data also suggests the best alternative action might favor the organization, the educator or the audience.

To some extent all Extension home economists followed the Family Living Guideline for Audience Selection and Programming (1980), however the needs of the local audiences were largely interpreted for them by the Extension home economists and advisory groups. Secondary data sources were utilized by only two respondents.

Ann, Betty and Carol used advisory groups to help assess educational needs in their counties. Ann's group not only provided needs information but helped set priorities and carry out the programs, while Carol and Betty's groups provided information for the Extension home economists planning decisions.

Donna and Edith described a planning process in which they utilized information from a variety of sources to make program decisions. Edith's decisions are greatly influenced

by organizational directives and her own expertise while Donna's programs are developed on what she feels is right--based on compiled data, programs that were successful in the past and to some extent, organization mandates.

There was no particular source(s) of information mentioned by Extension home economists which seemed to be highly influential in the development of the 1980-1981 plans of work examined in the study.

Table 3 summarizes the information presented in the discussion and demonstrates the similarities and differences between the Extension home economists.

Further discussion of the findings presented in this chapter will be continued in Chapter V.

Table 3. Sources of Information and Reasons For Use

Category	Ann	Betty	Carol	Donna	Edith
Organization	Yes. Regional field supervisors, program staff, content specialist, Impact Committees, teaching materials.	Yes. County commissioner.	No.	Yes. Program staff.	Yes. Program staff, Impact committees, teaching materials, other Extension home economists.
	Indicated she felt controlled by sources. Teaching materials are credible.	Commissioner is very influential. They share common interests.		Felt obligated because they pointed out the importance of working in a particular area.	Sources are viewed as helpful and informative.
Audience	Yes. County program committees, study groups.	Yes. County program committees, informal contacts, telephone requests, bulletin requests.	Yes. County program staff, study groups, requests from groups, informal contacts, formal requests, telephone requests, program evaluations.	Yes. Study groups, requests from groups, informal contacts, telephone requests, program evaluations.	Yes. Home visits.

Table 3. (Cont'd.)

Category	Ann	Betty	Carol	Donna	Edith
Audience Continued	Received program direction, support and audience recruitment.	Need information from overall impressions received from above contacts.	Formal and informal methods used to gather information directly from audience.	Informal contacts most helpful, particularly reports of program usefulness, success	Received more information from own observations.
Audience Related	Yes. Agencies, other adult education programs.	Yes. Surveys popular publications, media, other adult education programs.	Yes. Agencies.	Yes. Agencies.	Yes. Surveys, popular publications, other agencies.
	Agency supplied operating money, staff and a successful program that could be copied.	Believed sources helped her know what was "going" on.	Gave information about particular audiences and a channel to reach them.	Believed sources indicated they needed her help.	Provided generally good research based information and insights of professional colleagues.

Table 3. (Cont'd.)

Category	Ann	Betty	Carol	Donna	Edith
Personal	Yes. Own judgement, materials in files.	Yes. Own judgement.	Yes. Education, interests, own judgement.	Yes. Own judgement.	Yes. Education, experience.
	Hopes program will work. Materials provide security and comfort in developing programs.	Her assessment of current issues.	Judgement based on what she saw, heard, read and knew from educational training.	Made own decisions.	Education and experience provide a storehouse of knowledge.

CHAPTER V

The Extension Home Economist As An Adult Worker

This chapter further investigates the similarities and differences between the Extension home economists' reported sources of information utilized in 1980-1981 plans of work and includes literature, data from this study and discussion.

As discussed in the previous chapter, each Extension home economist displayed unique characteristics in her utilization and perceptions of sources of information. Yet similarities were found between the sources of information utilized by a) Ann and Edith and b) Betty and Carol in developing 1980-1981 plans of work. Donna's responses did not match either of these sets of Extension home economists. Differences were found between Carol and Edith's responses and, to a lesser degree, between Ann and Betty's responses.

The information describing the Extension home economists was reexamined for factors which might explain the similarities and differences between the subjects. Age as a factor was tentatively discarded because no relationships could be found either within or between pairs. Ann and Edith were dissimilar in age; Betty and Carol were similar. Carol and Edith were similar in age; Ann and Betty dissimilar. The factor of county characteristics was also discarded as no Extension home economist indicated this was important in making program decisions. The length of time an Extension

home economist had been employed by the Cooperative Extension Service, however, seemed a fruitful avenue to explore. Ann and Edith had been employed between one and two years while Betty and Carol had each been employed for eight years. Donna had been employed for fourteen years and was anticipating retirement in a few years.

The review of the literature prior to undertaking the study had alerted the investigator to expect evidence of organization need, audience need and educator need as a basis for program development (English and Kaufman, 1975) but not how the educator need might be exhibited. Therefore, a brief discussion of the literature on the adult worker will be presented and form the basis for a further discussion of the findings in light of this additional literature review.

Literature

The Adult Worker

Freiberg (1979) notes that most men and about one-half of adult women pursue careers outside their homes and for these people their jobs are part of their identity. Jobs help determine mobility patterns, social status, lifestyles and the quality of satisfaction with one's life. The satisfaction received from employment is influenced by expectations from others as well as by personal needs.

The twenties are considered years of job preparation, job exploration and settling in according to Freiberg, while the thirties and forties are spent in pursuing career

advancement through classes, reading, working overtime and attending meetings. People in this stage of life may concentrate on gamesmanship skills: socializing, learning when to compete and when to cooperate, discovering when to comply to directives and when to ignore them and determining how to develop the "right" friendships.

The fifties and early sixties are often peak years for status and power. People in other stages of life look to middle-aged persons for advice, direction, problem solving and changes in society. Some persons in this stage of life, however, become bored with work and may literally or figuratively retire from the job.

The view that occupational choice is made during young adulthood as a "one-time" decision is giving way to the perspective that views occupational development as a process that continues throughout much of adult life (Hultsch and Deutsch, 1981).

The process of entering an occupation is more than just choosing a job, it is a process by which a person becomes matched with an occupation according to Kemmel (1974). The individual selects an occupation to meet his or her needs and is socialized or resocialized into the occupational role by training and the role demands of the job itself.

Hultsch and Deutsch note that research on occupational success suggests there are age-related differences in different career fields. For fields that demand physical endurance, peak performance occurs in the early twenties and thirties.

In art and science fields, which utilize intellectual capacities, peak performance occurs in the thirties and early forties. Peak performances tend to be even later in fields that require social capacities.

A model of developmental changes in the work-life of a county Extension person was developed by Griffin in 1970. While the model is limited because it does not take into consideration new information about adults and excludes women workers, it provides a suggestion of how and why workers change their behaviors as they move through their work-life cycle within one organization.

Griffin (1970) describes the stages of work-life as follows:

Stage 1. The stage 1 county Cooperative Extension worker is a neophyte in a situation which makes a wide variety of complex demands on him. He deals with these demands through devoting much energy to imitative learning, an egocentric concentrating on himself and the present immediacies of his work, and an intense and willing dependence on his co-workers, supervisor and clients. Thus the worker focuses his concern and activities largely upon and within himself. Although busy going to meetings and working with clients, he is focused on his own learning, adjusting, conforming, observing and testing himself.

A rational for program purposes is acquired from the organization through a process of assimilating it from specific directives given to the worker and from experiencing

the ways that others in the organization interact with him and with clients.

The worker feels controlled by others (primarily his supervisor and close co-workers, but also the clients) and reacts to this control positively; he seeks and welcomes guidance and direction.

Stage 2. After an intense dependence, the worker now engages in a search for freedom. He achieves much freedom from organizational constraints, but does not reach a state of having firmly established internal controls, a rationale for his work, or a secure knowledge of the ends for which he wants to use his new freedom. Rather than independence, he develops a negative individualism. The worker does not recognize the difference between these two states.

The worker now has concern for clients, organization, and self. He turns to the clients for definitions of his proper work, success and rewards, and becomes very busy trying to respond positively to all of their requests.

He feels increasing control over his life and work, yet recognizes that many external controls remain. He reacts negatively to those controls exerted by the organization and feels many frustrations because of the complexity of the tasks, the ambiguities within the organization, and its apparent lack of ability to help him. When these frustrations become too great, the worker responds by rejecting the organization.

Stage 3. The stage three county Cooperative Extension worker achieves a positive independence, an autonomy of purpose, priorities and criteria. He tries to enhance his status within the organization and gives attention to strategies for advancing. A major strategy is selective dependence: being loyal to the organization when possible without internal conflict, exercising freedom in most areas, negotiating important differences until an accommodation is reached that will not hinder his advancement.

Although the worker broadens his concern so that it includes organization, clients and community, most of his concern for the organization and some of his concern for clients and community is aimed at using it and them to his advantage to achieve higher status and power. His concern for the future is one for his future.

The worker's need to establish priorities leads him to a deeper consideration of purposes, and he turns to some academic discipline (through graduate study) and organizational literature for help. He integrates these ideas with his own to form a rationale.

His response to his independence---selective dependence stance is positive. He feels that even when he has to yield to the organization it is to his advantage for purposes of advancement.

Stage 4. During this stage, the county Cooperative Extension worker advances to his peak position (position in a "better" county), power and prestige. He is assertive,

habit-based, independent and yet loyal to the organization. The worker basis his purposes and priorities on habits of thought developed in stage three.

As an active, present-oriented, assertive and confident person, the worker is no longer concerned with self; he directs his concern and activity outward--toward the organization. Supervisor and others are used for purposes of affirming his status and improving the organization; they in turn use him to test and legitimize their ideas to other agents. He exercises an insightful proficiency in working with clients and community.

In spite of his skills, power and independence, the organization is given his rather total commitment and an increasing acceptance of its purposes and accomplishments. It has treated him well and he feels his loyalty is fair payment. The worker typically accepts a responsibility for the welfare of the organization in this situation and thus deepens his loyalty to it. His feelings toward the organization and to his own independence are positive. He is, however, insensitive to the subtle controls the organization exercises over him.

Stage 5. This stage is one of stress, stock-taking and some reorientation. In addition, the worker finds he is developing a negative reaction both to the organization (because of a build-up of its inconsistencies and inability to meet his needs) and to the abstract forces impinging on him.

He believes strongly in the Cooperative Extension Service, is dedicated to its purposes, and believes there is a higher good than self and that this higher good is the organization. Yet he has negative feelings about that organization and reacts either by 1) fleeing the conflict, "retiring" in effect while still going through the motions of his work or more probably by 2) creating an idealized, mythical Cooperative Extension Service as he thinks it ought to be.

The worker becomes intensely aware of the shortness of his future; he discerns startling differences between the quality of his past and the anticipated quality of his future. These insights influence his work significantly.

Two concerns are added now, largely because of his changed time orientation: self and society. The worker's revised concern for self comes from the stresses common to this stage and his need to find ways to cope with them. A concern for society grows from his increased need and opportunity to take a larger view of life as well as from his long experience of involvement in community issues.

Stage 6. In his final work stage, the county Cooperative Extension worker submerges his ideal organization device, forms reorientations toward work, redefines success, and becomes more truly autonomous. There is dependence on others to affirm the success of the contribution he has made in his career, but the criteria are ones the worker develops; he depends on other people to perpetuate his goals and plans, but selects those others from among favorite colleagues or

clients, and the ideals and goals he hopes will be perpetuated are ones he has developed; he shares his unique wisdom with those who will remain after his retirement; and becomes more conscious of personal goals as he makes plans for his post-retirement life.

Figure 4 illustrates Griffin's model of developmental changes in the work-life of a county Extension person. Hultsch and Deutsch (1981) assume this is a process that continues throughout much of adult life and, perhaps, several occupational choices. Kemmel (1971) suggests that a worker is socialized, or resocialized, when entering a new occupation, by training or the role demands of the job itself. Thus the stages of work-life may not be specifically age or time related, but occur in a sequential order with some stages being shorter or longer than others because of prior experiences or age.

Findings

No great differences were found between Extension home economists in their responses to Interview Question 1, Table 1 (Chapter III). Patterns of similarities and differences did arise though, when the sources of information identified as inputs in the 1980-1981 plans of work in Table 2 (Chapter IV) were counted and the data arranged by each person's length of employment time as an Extension home economist. This information is displayed in Table 4.

Category of Change, Conflicts, Focus of Concern	Stage					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Alternative Resolutions	Self	Self	Self	Organization	Self	Self
Organization Client Community Society	Organization Client Community	Organization Client Community	Organization Client Community	Organization Client Community	Organization Client Community Society	Organization Client Community
Focus of Activity	Within	Both	Both	Upon	Both	Within
Time Orientation	Present	Present	Present	Present	Future	Fast
Source of Rationale for Purposes, Priorities	Organization	Client	Self	Self	Mythical Idealized Organization	Future Past Present Self
Perceived Locus of Control	Others	Both	Both	Self	Both	Both
Reaction to Locus of Control	+	- (org.) o (client) + (self)	+	+	-	-
General Mode of Integration	Egocentric, Imitative, Intense, Willing, Dependence	Client-pleasing, Negative Individualism	Positive Independence, Decisive, Self-enhancing, Selective Dependence	Assertive Habit-based, Orgly Loyal Independence	False Autonomy; Negative Independence Creation & Use of Mythical Idealized Organization	Reorienting, Redefining, Integrity-seeking, Counterdependence; Selective Disengagement

Figure 4. Resolutions and Integrations of Conflicts and Changes Evolved by the Extension Worker in each Stage of Work-life. Griffin (1970).

Table 4. Source of Information by Length of Employment

	Ann	Edith	Betty	Carol	Donna
Length of Employment	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	8 yrs.	8 yrs.	14 yrs.
Age Range by Years	20-30	46-50	40-50	40-50	50-60
<u>Number of Sources:</u>					
Organization	9	10	1	0	3
Audience	2	1	8	12	6
Audience Related	2	3	8	3	4
Personal	2	1	2	5	1

It can be seen that Ann and Edith were similar in the number of sources reported in most categories. Betty and Carol were also similar in that they had few or no sources in the Organization category and more sources than other Extension home economists in the Audience category. If the Audience and Audience Related categories are combined, the similarities within and differences between both sets of Extension home economists become more pronounced. Donna is not similar to any other Extension home economist, falling numerically between the two sets.

Discussion

On the basis of the available data it is possible to characterize each subject's choice of sources of information in her 1980-1981 plan of work and to understand the reasons behind these choices.

Ann and Edith, who are in the beginning years of employment, relied heavily on organization sources of information for guidelines to follow, reliable information and materials. Edith also was concerned about the importance of her training, experience and observations. Ann also was concerned with conducting successful programs. Both persons exhibited characteristics of stage one and two in a worker's life cycle (Figure 4) as described by Griffin (1970). Their focus of concern was self, organization and audience.

Betty and Carol displayed little reliance on organization sources of information. They utilized both formal and informal methods to determine audience need. Betty was concerned about audience need in a global sense while Carol expressed concerns about the needs of particular audiences. Betty and Carol relied heavily on the Audience and Audience Related categories. Both persons exhibited characteristics of stages three and four in a worker's life cycle. They felt competent, successful and fully capable of making correct decisions. They were moving briskly ahead to develop programs that served the needs of audiences and themselves.

Donna felt some obligation to follow the organization guidelines and trusted her own decisions. She liked to repeat successful programs and also developed programs in areas where she felt audiences had requested her help. The largest proportion of Donna's sources of information fell in the Audience Related and Audience categories. Donna displayed characteristics of stages five and six in the work-life cycle. She still considered the organization important but was highly concerned with serving the community in ways she thought were the most meaningful.

These findings illustrated Griffin's description of workers in the beginning stages of employment (Ann and Edith); the middle stages (Betty and Carol); and the ending stages (Donna).

Carol and Edith's dissimilar number of responses in three of the four categories are equally interesting to examine.

All but five sources of information reported by Carol as being used in developing her 1980-1981 plan of work came from the intended audiences or those who represented them. The majority of these came from the intended audiences. The five sources of information listed in the Personal category represented Carol's interpretation of educational need from direct observations, her educational training and prior employment experiences. She felt confident these were valid sources of information. While Carol was aware of Organization sources of information (Table 1, Chapter III), none of these sources had impact on her 1980-1981 plan of work.

Edith, however, reported using almost the exact opposite sources of information in developing her plan of work. While Carol used no sources of information in the Organization category, Edith's responses indicated that 10 of the 15 sources fell in this category. Edith also mentioned only one Audience sources of information; Carol listed 12. Although Edith had a high level of educational training and employment experience prior to becoming an Extension home economist, she only listed this background once as a source of information.

Although Carol and Edith are similar in age, educational training and have had prior employment experience, their dissimilar behavior in selecting sources of information for the development of plans of work may be due to Edith's need to be socialized or resocialized into her relatively new occupational role (Kemmel, 1974) and Carol's maturation

in her role to the point of being active, assertive, confident and independent of, yet loyal to, the organization.

Edith can be viewed as a person who is being resocialized. She has focused her own learning, adjusting and observing with an egocentric concentration on self enhancement within the Cooperative Extension Service. She can be viewed as displaying dependence on Organization sources of information for guides to the correct educational activities and audiences.

Because Carol no longer needs to be concerned with learning about the organization and her role within it, she was free to use her skills in working with audiences to meet their educational needs. Carol used the organization to enhance the educational programs she determined should have priority.

This same dissimilarity is found between Ann and Betty's responses although in this case their ages, educational training and length of prior employment are also dissimilar. Ann can be viewed as in the process of being socialized in the organization while Betty can be viewed as having reached a point of maturation in her role.

This small sample illustrated unique differences between Extension home economists who were in the beginning, middle and ending stages of the work-life cycle. Similarities were found between those in the same stages. The Extension home economist who is nearing retirement used a moderate number of Audience, Audience Related and Organization sources

of information. If the work-life model (Griffin, 1970) is correct, this person will continue to concentrate on the audiences and colleagues she hopes will perpetuate the educational goals she has developed.

CHAPTER VI

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of the implicit and explicit sources of audience need information available to Cooperative Extension Service home economists and the impact these sources have on the development of educational programs. In this chapter the writer will review 1) the problem, 2) the methodology followed, 3) the findings and 4) the general conclusions drawn from the study.

Summary

Although adult education literature stresses the importance of audience needs assessment as the basis for the design of educational programs, and recent studies have examined how needs are prioritized, the processes actually used by persons who plan learning activities for adults is largely an unexplored area. It has been observed that Extension home economists receive and utilize a wide variety of information in developing their annual plans of work.

The research methodology in this study utilized Glaser and Strauss's (1967) suggestions for purposefully discovering theory through social research rather than arriving at theory generated by logical deduction from a prior assumption. Five case studies were conducted to provide qualitative data

to develop a better understanding of the implicit and explicit sources of information about the educational needs of audiences which are available to Extension home economists and the impact these sources have on the development of educational programs.

The investigator employed a focused interview to obtain data on the sources of information available to Extension home economists and the influence particular sources had on the development of 1980-1981 educational programs.

After the interviews had been completed, the data were coded and delimited to four categories of sources: Organization, Audience, Audience Related and Personal. The coded data were used to describe each Extension home economists responses. The categories were also used to examine the similarities and differences between the respondents.

Analysis of the Extension home economists' responses identified a wide variety of sources which provided information on the needs and interests of potential adult audiences. These sources were quite similar to the methods of identifying educational need found in the literature.

All five subjects reported receiving information from sources of information in the organization, audience and audience related categories with the majority of the sources falling in the audience and audience related categories. What personal judgements or "hunches" were mentioned seemed to be based on educational training, personal observations and the educator's needs to advance self and/or the

organization. All respondents reported using a variety of methods to collect needs information from intended audiences.

Three of the five Extension home economists' responses to Interview Question I (general sources of information) illustrated a needs assessment model which assumes either the existence of, or attempts to identify the gap between, "what is" and "what should be" in a social system. The particular social systems in this study were the Cooperative Extension Service and the community.

One Extension home economist focused on the needs of a known segment of the population although this particular audience represented only a portion of her program responsibility while another Extension home economist's list of sources displayed elements of the second, third and fourth needs assessment models described by Mazmanian (1977). She gave high priority to the needs of known segments of the population; took into consideration the needs of people who plan their own learning episodes; gave attention to the needs of organizational systems; and acknowledged her wants as an experienced educator.

The program development processes used by the Extension home economists in developing their 1980-1981 plans of work were unique to each individual, but all five subjects believed they alone made the final decisions on what educational activities to include in their 1980-1981 plans of work.

Analysis of the sources of information which were

instrumental in the development of the Extension home economists' plans of work indicated that Organization sources of information were highly influential for two respondents; Audience and Audience Related sources of information were the most influential for two other respondents; and one Extension home economist indicated using nearly equal numbers of sources of information in Organization, Audience and Audience Related categories but only one Personal source of information.

The frequency with which sources of information were mentioned by each respondent over all the objectives in their 1980-1981 plans of work illustrates similarities and differences between the Extension home economists. The majority of sources of information listed by Ann and Edith fell in the Organization category; the majority of Betty's sources of information fell equally in the Audience and Audience Related categories; and Carol and Donna's sources are primarily in the Audience category.

From the data available, it was postulated that the length of time an Extension home economist had been employed would make a difference in the sources of information utilized in program development. Ann and Edith, who have only been employed by the Cooperative Extension Service for a few years, listed sources of information characteristic of stages one and two in the work-life cycle of Griffin (1970). Their focus of concern appeared to be for self, organization and then audience. Betty and Carol, on the other hand,

listed sources of information characteristic of stages 3 and 4 in the work-life cycle. Their focus of concern was for the needs of audiences and self. Donna's sources of information were characteristic of a person in the ending stages of work life and indicated a concern for community needs as she viewed them and for the needs of the organization.

Conclusions

Needs assessment and priority setting by the Extension home economists at first appeared to be as superficial as Pennington and Green (1976) described finding in their study of adult education planners. Certainly there were major discrepancies between the models described in the literature and what was practiced by the Extension home economists. And yet when the reasons for attending to certain sources of information or needs were examined, it appeared that needs assessment and priority setting may be a complex process not always in the control of the educators. In addition, the more informal methods of determining educational need seem to provide quite useful information.

Needs assessment and the concomitant priority setting by the Extension home economists was influenced by explicit and implicit sources of information. The implicit sources, which included such diverse elements as prior experiences of the Extension home economists and the Extension home economists' interpretation of verbal comments by superiors, seemed to have impact on the identification of audience needs.

The explicit sources of information were both formal and informal in nature.

On the basis of the data collected, Extension home economists perceived they were influenced in audience needs assessment largely by organization members, audiences in their counties and sources that represented the audience. Analysis of the Extension home economists' remarks though, indicated all respondents also used their own judgements in assessing needs, but only one respondent identified herself as an important source of information.

Sources of information on audience need tended to be informal in nature and rarely committed to a precise written form. Informal contacts with potential audience members, telephone calls for information (often not recorded but general content remembered), number of particular information bulletins requested, program evaluations, various media and verbal comments by supervisors are all examples of sources of information received by the Extension home economists and retained in their memories.

Program committees and members of the organization, primarily at the administrative level, provided information that was formal in nature and in written form.

Although the Family Living Education Guidelines for Audience Selection and Programming (1980) exhorts Extension home economists to base program direction on clientele needs as determined by local audiences, advisory groups and secondary data in a formal written process, only one

respondent actually did so in developing her 1980-1981 plan of work. It should be noted that in their responses to Interview Question I, all five respondents indicated they used the needs assessment techniques listed in the Guidelines, but in reality when asked to describe actual sources of information they did not follow the Guidelines.

Needs assessment and priority setting in adult education program development may be interlocked, even though the literature depicts them as separate entities. One example of this phenomenon occurred when the Extension home economists indicated they quickly made decisions as to the reality of an observed need and its appropriateness for program inclusion, and either accepted or rejected it based on the implicit guidelines perceived by them. Thus needs assessment and priority setting often appeared to occur simultaneously. Certain needs may never even be "seen" because the implicit guidelines may screen them out.

One of the themes found in both adult education and Cooperative Extension Service literature is that needs assessment should be a formal harvesting of information from a variety of sources. The resultant data should then be subjected to a logical, orderly process of prioritizing for program development purposes. Critics of adult education programs feel that many educators fail to carry out this process and therefore fail to meet the needs of audiences. In this study, however, it appears that informal needs assessment and priority setting, which sometimes occurs

simultaneously, may be a valid way to develop successful adult educational programs---successful in a pragmatic way for audience, organization and educator---if the educators and administrators recognize and legitimize the process. Likewise the educators and administrators need to recognize and acknowledge the impact of the implicit sources of information on needs assessment and priority setting.

The data suggests that, for these Extension home economists, decision points on the best alternative actions in program development were shaped by explicit and implicit input from the organization, the intended audience, environmental constraints and personal values. The best alternative action might favor the organization, the educator or the audience.

The possible influence of the Extension home economist's stage in her work-life cycle with the organization cannot be ignored. When a new employee enters the work place, the environment and expectations of the organization are relatively unknown. The employee, in seeking to establish herself within the organization, will follow the guidelines of those people who are perceived to have the power to continue or terminate employment. During this time the employee is developing her job competency in what has been described as a combination of behaviors which will demonstrate effective interaction with the environment.

Those persons in the middle years of employment with the organization have generally achieved work competence, feel secure in the organization and utilize sources of

information that will serve audience needs, promote the organization and enhance their stature in the organization.

The ending stages in the work-life cycle bring the worker back to considering the needs of self, both in preparing for retirement and leaving a legacy to particular audiences and the community. Carrying out the mission of the organization, however, is still important.

Further studies should focus on clarifying these preliminary findings. Specific hypotheses should be precisely investigated to examine educational need and the impact these sources have on the development of educational programs. To understand fully the interaction of needs assessment and priority setting, the studies should take place at the time when educational plans of work are being developed. By enlarging the scope of the study, it would be possible to more thoroughly examine the behaviors of adult educators in the beginning, middle and ending stages of the work-life cycle.

The following propositions, drawn from the findings, are suggested as hypotheses for further study:

1. Needs assessment and priority setting are influenced by explicit and implicit sources of information. Often the implicit sources are not recognized by the educator or the organization administrators.

2. Needs assessment for program development is carried out by using formal and informal assessment techniques. Both formal and informal techniques provide valid information.

3. Needs assessment and priority setting have an interlocked nature although they are often viewed as separate entities.

4. Needs assessment and priority setting may occur simultaneously.

5. Priority setting may be an informal process which produces valid results.

6. The needs of audience, organization and educator are important in program development and should be acknowledged as legitimate inputs.

7. The sources of information the educator responds to in developing educational programs is related to his/her work-life stage within a particular organization.

8. A competent approach to needs assessment and priority setting, as it is related to program development, requires the educator to feel competent and secure in the position.

9. The movement of an educator from the characteristics of a beginning stage worker to the characteristics of a middle stage worker can be speeded by training that increases his/her sense of competency and self-esteem.

On the strength of this research, some general suggestions can be offered to foster the socialization of adult educators to new organizational systems and enhance needs assessment and priority setting in the development of adult education programs.

It is essential to structure experiences and support

systems that move the new worker from a high level of dependency upon perceived organizational directives to more autonomous modes of action. The well socialized worker fulfills the mission of the organization, meets educational needs of the audience and is generally satisfied with his or her work life.

Since the beginning worker is highly influenced by concern for how his or her performance is viewed by supervisors and audiences, the organization's role should be to give adequate time for the worker to assimilate and understand the wide variety of complex demands in the new role, provide nurturing support through positive comments, suggestions and training, and gradually withdraw as the worker gains competency.

The competent mid and late work-life stage person can be a valuable resource to beginning workers after they have had adequate time to develop an understanding of the new role. To provide this resource too early might have a negative impact on the new worker's developing ego structure.

The organization administrators and the educators should be sensitized to the impact of implicit sources of information which may or may not have been intended. The overall mission and yearly goals of the organization should be clearly and fully communicated to and by all parts of the educational system. These goals provide the criteria for the educators to evaluate the appropriateness of the implicit sources of information on those audience educational needs which should receive priority in program development.

Since formal needs assessment techniques are not always possible to carry out, the informal techniques should be identified and legitimized. These sources of information can be combined with formal sources to provide a base of knowledge on which to plan educational programs.

Any program development plan should take into account the needs of the organization, the audience and especially the educator. The needs of the educator, a component often overlooked, are influenced by the person's stage in their work-life with an organization.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND RATING SCALES

Appendix IA: Interview Question I Recording Form

FIRST SEQUENCE

In your county who and what help you determine appropriate family living programming?
 (Your sources of information about audience's educational needs.)

<u>Sources of Information on Audience Need</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Reasons for Rating</u>

<p>Rating Scale:</p> <p>1 little importance</p> <p>2 some importance</p> <p>3 important</p> <p>4 considerable importance</p> <p>5 very important</p>
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Appendix IB: Interview Question II Recording Form

SECOND SEQUENCE

In your 1980-81 plan of work, what were the sources of information on audience educational need used in planning for:

Objective	Sources of Information on Education Needs of Audiences	Rating	Reasons for Rating
	<div data-bbox="675 880 1150 1500" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>Rating Scale:</p> <p>1 little importance</p> <p>2 some importance</p> <p>3 important</p> <p>4 considerable importance</p> <p>5 very important</p> </div>		

APPENDIX II: CODING SCHEME AND EXAMPLES

APPENDIX IIA

CATEGORIES FOR DATA ANALYSIS

<u>Delimited Categories</u>	<u>Descriptors</u>
Organization (information received from organization representatives or funding sources.)	Cooperative Extension Service administrators, county administrators, colleagues within Cooperative Extension Service, state level content specialists with Cooperative Extension Service, teaching materials prepared by Cooperative Extension Service content specialists or administrators, Cooperative Extension aides/assistants, Impact committees.
Audience (Information received directly from audience.)	Contacts with county citizens, community groups, county program boards or advisory groups, Cooperative Extension Service study groups/clubs, county audience surveys, telephone requests for information, bulletin requests.
Audience Related (Information received from those who interpret or describe the educational needs of adult audiences.)	Other organizations or agencies, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, compiled regional, state, or national survey data, schools, judicial systems, business.
Personal (Information derived from each Extension home economist's unique background.)	Education, training, employment, experiences, observations, interests, interpretations, "hunches."

APPENDIX IIB

EXAMPLES OF CODING - QUESTION I

Question I -- General Sources of Information on Audience Educational Need

In your county who and what help you determine appropriate family living programming? (Your sources of information about audience educational needs.)

(Selected Excerpts from Responses)

<u>Sources of Information</u>	<u>Category Code</u>
State level prepackaged materials	Organization
My work with groups of people	Audience
The state Impact committee	Organization
The programs other Extension home economists have done	Organization
Other (Cooperative) Extension co-workers	Organization
What will sell	Personal
Newsletter response sheet sent in by readers and used by my planning committee	Audience
Advisory boards	Audience
My own judgement	Personal
(State) program leaders	Organization
My own interests and expertese	Personal
Requests for information or bulletins received because of (my) radio broadcasts and newspaper columns	Audience

APPENDIX IIC

EXAMPLES OF CODING - QUESTION II

Question II -- Sources of Information Used in Developing the
Extension Home Economists' 1980-1981 Plans
of Work

In your 1980-1981 plan of work, what were the sources of
information on audience educational need used in planning for:
objective 1, objective 2, etc.

(Selected Excerpts from Responses)

<u>Sources of Information</u>	<u>Category Code</u>
A member of the advisory council stated a definite need	Audience
Requests for bulletins	Audience
There is a preretirement program operated by the _____ University for employees (and) therefore an audience.	Audience Related
My understanding of the state of the economy	Personal
Talk shows on television	Audience Related
Publication of books for special audiences	Audience Related
County commissioners	Organization
Increase in slick, beautiful government publications that can be used in programs	Audience Related
My judgement. I saw a lot of fat people on the streets.	Personal
Agency requests	Audience Related
Requests for repeat programs	Audience
Personal contacts with people in the street	Audience

APPENDIX III: LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL AND CONSENT FORM

APPENDIX IIIA

September 19, 1980

Dear

In a current research investigation, I am interested in talking with Michigan Extension home economists. I am hopeful that my study will add to the knowledge of how adult educators identify the educational needs of potential audiences and use this information in developing programs.

The home economists interviewed will not be identified by name in the study and the results will be shared with all participants upon conclusion.

Thank you for your help in this project. If you have any questions, please contact me at 517-353-3998.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Brown, M.A.
Principal Investigator

APPENDIX IIIB

CONSENT FORM

for a study of the sources of information used by Michigan home economists to assess needs in adult education programs.

I understand that the information I give will be used for a research study as a part of a doctoral program at Michigan State University. I know that my name will not be connected to this information. I also understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time should I desire to do so.

Signed _____

Date _____