

Emergent Themes

External Environment

- ❖ Urbanization
- ❖ Education with online technology
- ❖ Conflicting messages
- ❖ Diverse audiences

Mission and Strategies

- ❖ Science-based information
- ❖ Building partnerships
- ❖ Engaging stakeholders

Structure

- ❖ Extension personnel

Systems

- ❖ Funding Extension
- ❖ Revenue enhancement

Task Requirements and Individual Skills

- ❖ Disaster preparedness

Direct Quotes

Richard gave an example of urbanization, “take the corridor for Daytona Beach to Tampa . . . that area just keeps getting bigger, and bigger, and bigger. So, that’s just going to become like one giant blob of urban or suburban enclaves.”

Carla felt like despite all stakeholders being “invited to the party,” not all were genuinely welcome.

Emily explained that Extension should improve “social media, videos and be up to date on the newest things and use the market and be out there and get in front of our clientele and consider things like online courses, distance learning, virtual reality.”

James said that it is difficult to engage stakeholders because “people are bombarded with lots of other opportunities.”

Sandra said that Extension has “very strong support from Florida Cattleman’s and the Florida Dairy Industry – very political. What if a plant-based diet is better, then do we make our supporters very angry?”

Trends Impacting the Future of Florida Extension

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The most impactful trends in Florida were its increasingly urban and demographically diverse audiences, demands for online delivery, science skepticism, and difficulty engaging stakeholders.

Introduction

- Explore the future of the Florida Cooperative Extension Service (CES)
- Identification of perceived impacts from factors such as population growth, natural disasters, funding, etc.

Theoretical Framework

- Social constructivism
- Burke and Litwin change model

Methodology

Florida CES faculty were interviewed from the 1862 and 1890 land-grant universities. Interview transcripts were checked, and constant comparative method was used. Thick descriptions, member checking, and an internal audit established trustworthiness.

Results

Five themes: (a) External Environment, (b) Mission and Strategies, (c) Structure, (d) Systems, and (e) Task Requirements and Individual Skills.

Conclusions

Factors such as health and serving urban clientele were in the literature but Florida differed from national trends regarding the increase in diversity.

Implications

Transformational factors represent significant catalysts for change followed by transactional factors which are detail-oriented changes. Florida CES should focus on addressing the transformational factors: (a) external environment, and (b) mission and strategy.

Recommendations

Specialized training could be valuable for Extension faculty in critical areas vital to addressing Florida challenges. Also, Florida CES could conduct research on the challenges identified, which may guide long-term planning.