



## **Conceptual Explanation of Structure and Function of Cooperative Extension System**

**Gholamhossein Abdollahzadeh<sup>\*1</sup>, Abolqasem Sharifzadeh<sup>2</sup>, Gholam hossein Hosseininia<sup>3</sup>, Ali Gholi Heidari<sup>4</sup>**

1Assistant Professor, Gorgan University of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, 2Assistant Professor, Gorgan University of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, 3Assistant Professor, Faculty of Entrepreneurship, University of Tehran, 4 Deputy Manager of Education, Extension and Researches of Cooperatives, Ministry of Cooperative, Labour and Social Welfare  
Abdollahzade1@gmail.com

Cooperative sector accompany government and private sector, is one main economic sector in Iran. This sector play key role to reduce structural – institutional, functional – performance gaps among mentioned sectors and led to capacity building for national sustainable development. Considering importance of cooperative sector as a main part of economy, this paper want to identifies conceptual and theoretical foundations of cooperative extension. In spite of diversity of concept, function (covered areas) and a structure (institutional entity, diversity of service delivers, organizational structures, etc.) of Extension, Agricultural Extension seems as established form of institutionalized extension, universally. Using a deductive approach, this paper attempts to recognize fundamentals, principals and components of extension systems and generalize them to functional context of cooperative context as a subject area for extension function. As a result, concept, philosophy, principals, objectives, functions, target groups, organizational structures, and periphery environment of cooperative extension were illustrated. Also, group entrepreneurship approach was discussed as an appropriate approach for cooperative extension. Finally, two conceptual models of structure and function of cooperative extension were drawn and some impacts and measures were explained for establishing cooperative extension system.

**Key Words:** Cooperative, Cooperative Extension, Extension System, Cooperative Extension.