COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOUR OF KVK OFFICIALS : A CASE STUDY

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The Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) are the key farm science centers established by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) at different SAUs, NGOs, educational and ICAR institutions aiming to develop human resources (farmers and extension officials), conducting front line demonstrations, on-farm trials for development and adoption of location demand driven technologies and generating employment opportunities to rural youths. These institutions have strong linkages with state line departments for taking their inputs in finalization of action plan of KVKs in participatory mode. There is in-built monitoring and reviewing mechanism facilitated by the Zonal Coordination Unit (ICAR) and SAUs. In the series, organization of training-cum-review workshop on FLDs/OFTs is one of them which planned specific university / institution / area wise once a year. In this workshop, annual progress of FLDs, OFTs and human resource development achievements were presented and documented for further review and reference. In all this process, communication plays an important role in transmitting one's views and information, etc. Effective communication controls the human behaviour and reduces the barriers in the way of interaction.

METHODOLOGY

A training cum-workshop on FLDs / OFTs was organized by the Zonal Coordination Unit, Zone IV (ICAR), Kanpur at KVK, Gopalgram, Gonda (U.P) during July, 2003. The main objectives of this workshop were to critically review the progress made by the KVKs regarding FLDs/OFTs, FLDs other than oilseed and pulses during 2002-03 and to finalize the action plan of FLD/OFT by having the scientific discussion among the experienced scientists and subject matter specialists for the year 2003-04. In total, 40 extension professionals were participated from multi-disciplinary fields working in 14 KVKs belonging to NDUA&T, Faizabad (10), NGOs (2) and educational institutions (2) of eastern Uattar Pradesh. A study was conducted to know the constraints faced in conducting FLDs/OFTs by KVK officials and to obtain suggestions for further improvement through interaction process during presentation. All the KVK officials (participants) were included in this study. The data were collected by using semi-structured interview schedule. Observations were also recorded during presentation and interaction by a team of subject matter specialists, which was purposely constituted. The collected data were further analyzed by using simple statistical techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The KVK officials mostly engaged in adaptive research viz., organization of FLDs and OFTs at their KVK farms and farmers' fields, produced data and submitted to the sponsored agencies. They do good adaptive research work at farmers' fields but avoid going to depth in terms of analyses, interpretation and publishing in research journals. It has also been noticed during review

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workshops that they were unable to highlight the main observations and crux of the experiments. The reasons may be different. Keeping these facts in view, this study was planned and conducted. The major findings of the study are given below:

Interaction Process–The data presented in Table 1 revealed that majority of respondents had belonged to satisfactory category (71.5 per cent) of interaction process. It was interesting to note that no one found in excellent category, which shows that KVK officials are having average communication skill, which requires improvement in their main job is interacting with farmers at one hand and on the other hand they have to present their reports and interact with other officials and subject matter specialists regularly. Effective communication and interaction skill will help them in keeping their views & interaction more effectively to their audience, sub-ordinates and super-ordinates. Further, more critically reviewing the data through ten different aspects of interaction process, the picture became more clear (Table 2). Preparation for presentation was found poor (1.6 out of 4 obtainable score). However, most of the aspects such as initiative of interaction, addressing the main points, way of presentation, level of discussion, preparation of reports, involvement of participants, and concluding communication behaviour were found in average category (2.1 to 2.3 out of 4 obtainable score). Role of facilitators and time management aspects covered in excellent group, but it was not reflected in part of communication behaviour of KVK officials.

Table 1 Categorization of interaction during FLD/OFT workshop

Categories	Range	F (%)
Unsatisfactory	<20	4 (28.5)
Satisfactory	20-30	10 (71.5)
Excellent	>30	-

Finally, it may be concluded that KVK officials need special attention to get prepared in advance for presentation and style of presentation and interaction among extension personnel as well as farmers the real clients. The main points to emphasize were on farm trials or demonstration data need to be transformed or refined and that should be transferred among the farming communities and development functionaries within the district.

Table 2. Different aspects covered in interaction during FLD/OFT workshop

S. No.	Different aspects covered	Mean*	Categories
1.	Initiation of interaction	2.3	Average
2.	Addressing the main points	2.3	Average
3.	Preparation for presentation	1.6	Poor
4.	Way of presentation	2.3	Average
5.	Concluding	2.1	Average
6.	Level of discussion	2.2	Average
7.	Time management	3.2	Excellent
8.	Preparation of reports	2.2	Average
9.	Role of facilitators	2.9	Excellent
10.	Involvement of participants	2.2	Average
	*Range 1-4		

Opinion about the FLD/OFT workshop–The respondents were asked with a question "How important this workshop is for you?" The answer was obtained on a 3-point scale (Useless, Good and Very Good). Majority of respondents (60 per cent) had perceived the workshop as more important and belonged to very good category. Though, about 40 per cent of the respondents were also found in good category, which require more critical analysis (Table 3).

Table 3 Opinion of KVK officials about FLD/OFT workshop

Activities	Categories	Percent
Importance of workshop	Useless	0
	Good	40
	Very Good	60
Preparation for workshop	Alone	0
	With colleagues	70
	By FLD concerned scientist	30
Time spent for preparing reports and presentation	average 6-7 days	

In another question "How have you prepared for this workshop?" The answer was given on 3 point continuum (Table 3). The majority of respondents expressed that preparation for workshop was done with consultation of other colleagues (70 per cent) followed by the concerned officials dealing the FLDs/OFTs (30 per cent). It reflects that in-charges of KVKs have a tendency of sharing the information and involving other colleagues. It is also noteworthy that at a certain extent full responsibility was given to the concerned staff those dealing the particular activity. On an average about 6-7 days were used for preparation of the workshop including reports, etc.

Table 4. Constraints faced by the KVK officials in conducting FLDs/OFTs

Constraints faced	f(%)
Non-availability of inputs (seeds, bio-fertilizers, insecticides, etc.)	24 (60)
Non-availability on budget in time	40 (100)
No faith in government organization by the farmers	6 (15)
Low risk bearing capacity of farmers	6 (15)
Lack of devoted staff	6 (15)
Lack of sufficient staff	6 (15)

Constraints faced in conducting FLDs/OFTs have been reported in Table 4. Almost all the respondents were expressed about non-availability of budget (finance) in time. About 60 per cent respondents felt regarding non-availability of inputs like quality seeds, fertilizers, biofertilzers, etc. The other problems faced by the scientists were lack of faith in government organizations by the villagers, low risk bearing capacity of the farmers, lack of devoted staff and sufficient staff at the center. It is clear that budget (finance) and inputs availability in time play an important role to effective transfer of technology among the villagers, but at the same time it is also necessary that communication behaviour of KVK staff should be strengthened so that the communication gap between officials and farmers as well as other officials can be minimized.

CONCLUSION

Appropriate technologies can be developed only when in real farm situation on-farm trials are conducted for assessment and refinement. Such proven technologies are put in frontline demonstrations for wider promotion and dissemination among the farmers. The KVK scientists involved in these important activities need an orientation about suitable methodology for refinement and impact assessment. They should also be trained for showing their adaptive research inputs to the common village people and extension workers. The sponsoring agencies are required to mitigate the constraints faced by the KVK officials for conducting FLDs/OFTs at field level. Extension personnel may be trained to improve their communication, competencies and diagnostic skills. Due weightage may be given for the effective dissemination network by the policy makers, administrators, higher authorities, etc. to promote development initiatives related to agricultural development.

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