

PERCEPTION OF GRASS-ROOT LEVEL EXTENSION WORKERS TOWARDS IN-SERVICE TRAINING

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ABSTRACT

Training has assumed a pivotal place in the development. A vast infrastructure of extension training has come up of late to support rural development. The paper aims to evaluate the performance of extension training programme for village level extension functionaries. Perceptions of participants were sought on various aspects of training viz. trainers, training programme organisation, subject matter and logistics through field survey. Even though majority of the participants perceived training to be partially helpful in job, there were several gaps in programme organisation. Use of teaching aids, provision of food and refreshment and size of the group were perceived below the acceptable level. Content of the course was not befitting for all the participants.

Key words: Training, Infrastructure; Extension functionaries; Refreshment

INTRODUCTION

Training has assumed a pivotal role in rural development. A systematic and serious effort has been made in India in gearing up training activities at all levels. In fact, training had received fresh impetus in the wake of new system of agriculture extension under which systematic planning, execution and evaluation of training has well set in. Grass-root level extension workers need competencies not only in technical areas but also with regard to implementation of development programmes. However, the success of training depends on various factors viz. trainer, subject matter, training programme organisation, logistics, etc. Evaluation of training may involve many approaches but the perception of trainers regarding the performance of different aspects of training matters the most. There is a need to determine the degree to which the intended objectives and goals of training have been met. Thus, the measures of trainees' perceptions about various aspects of trainings can be of great help. The present study has been aimed to seek the perception of the trainees on the quality of different aspects of training programmes.

METHODOLOGY

The field investigation was carried out at the Regional Institute of Rural Development, Rudrapur (Uttaranchal) meant for imparting training to grass-root extension functionaries. Two in-service trainings entitled '*Training Programme for Assistant Development Officers in Integrated Rural Development and other Running Programmes*' (Almost similar in content and trainees). The data were collected with a pre-tested structured questionnaire designed for the purpose. The perception of trainees on four broad areas viz. trainers, training programme organisation, content and logistics were collected

during closing session of the training programme.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

(A) *Trainers:* Table 1 reveals that the trainees were satisfied with the behaviour of the trainers (WMS 4.40), whereas the use of teaching aid was rated poor with WMS of 1.59. The other aspects related to trainers viz., discipline in sessions, language of trainers, trainers' knowledge of the subject matter, training methodology, speed of trainers in training sessions, trainers' ability to motivate trainees and training plan of trainers were rated at the medium level.

(B) *Content:* The overall reactions of trainees were sought in terms of content coverage and content utility. Content coverage referred both to treatment of technical content during the lessons according to the objectives as also at the level of trainees. Table 2 describes the trainees' opinion regarding the extent of coverage and utility of the topics covered.

(i) *Content Coverage:* It is evident from the table that the topics viz. TA rules, training for rural development, alternate sources of energy, dry land farming, plant protection techniques, biogas, cultivation of cereal crops, smokeless *chulhas*, IRDP and extension communication approach, TRYSEM, conduct rules, rural development programmes and their implementation, objectives of IRDP, minimum need programmes, importance of economic register, JRY and other programmes, DWCRA and ANP, Gardening techniques and environmental programmes were covered in descending order of extent.

(ii) *Content utility:* The Table 2 further depicts that major content area 'Government rules' was perceived as highly utilitarian. The other content areas viz. developmental

programmes, agriculture and technologies for rural areas were useful in descending order. On the contrary, environmental programmes, DWCRA and ANP, dry land farming and smokeless *chulhas* were ranked least useful content areas. The reasons for this may be that the government rules are common to all the participants and the topics covered under the broad head development programmes were general in nature and of direct relevance to each grass root level extension worker. However, the topics environmental programmes, DWCRA and ANP were perceived least useful because none the programme were implemented in their work areas of majority of the trainees. The topic DWCRA and ANP is directly concerned with ADO (women) but no woman participant had reported to the training programme. The broad area agriculture occupied third place. It may be due to the reason that 50 per cent trainees were from agriculture, plant protection or multiple cropping. Under this head the topic dry farming was perceived least useful because the work area of none of the participants fall under dry region. Thus, it can be concluded that the perceptions regarding utility of topics were influenced by the background and the work context of the trainees.

Table 1. Reactions of trainees about trainers

S.No.	Aspects of Trainers	Weighted mean score	Category
1	Relations with trainees	4.40	Satisfactory
2	Discipline in class	4.13	Fair
3	Language of trainers	3.95	Fair
4	Knowledge of the subject matter	3.54	Fair
5	Training methodology	3.54	Fair
6	Speed of training	3.45	Fair
7	Ability to motivate trainees	3.36	Fair
8	Training plan	3.27	Fair
9	Use of teaching aids	1.59	Unsatisfactory

Table 2. Reactions of trainees on training programme organisation

S.No.	Aspects of Trainers	Weighted mean score	Category
1	Duration of training	3.35	Satisfactory
2	Time management	3.18	Satisfactory
3	Balance of theory vs practical	3.13	Satisfactory
4	Month/season of training	3.00	Satisfactory
5	Use of training methodology	2.86	Satisfactory
6	Size of the trainees' group	1.94	Unsatisfactory

(C) *Training Programme Organisation:* Table 3 depicts the trainees' opinions about the organisation of the training programme. As revealed from the table that the size of the trainees' group attending programme was rated most unsatisfactory whereas the other aspects viz. duration of training programme, time management, balance of the theoretical and practical topics, month/season of training programme and

use of training methodologies were rated of moderate level by the trainees.

Table 3. Content coverage and its utility score as perceived by the trainees

S.No.	Topic	Score of extent of utility	Score of extent of coverage
1.	<i>Government rules</i>		
a.	T.A. rules	4.00	4.00
b.	Conduct rules	3.54	3.31
c.	Leave rules	3.26	3.13
2.	<i>Development programme</i>		
a.	TRYSEM	3.40	3.36
b.	IRDP and extension communication approach	3.31	3.40
c.	Training for rural development	3.28	4.14
d.	Objectives of IRDP	3.13	3.13
e.	Importance of economic register	3.13	3.00
f.	Rural development programmes and their implementation	3.09	3.18
g.	Minimum need programme	3.06	3.06
h.	JRY and other plans	3.06	2.93
i.	Environment programme	2.81	2.45
j.	DWCRA and Applied Nutrition Programme	2.63	2.81
3.	<i>Agriculture</i>		
a.	Cultivation of cereal crops	3.50	3.54
b.	Plant protection techniques	3.42	3.57
c.	Gardening techniques	3.36	2.54
d.	Dry land farming	2.71	3.71
4.	<i>Useful technologies for rural areas</i>		
a.	Alternate sources of energy	3.42	4.42
b.	Biogas	3.40	3.50
c.	Dry toilet facilities	3.40	3.13
d.	Smokeless <i>Chulhas</i>	2.57	3.42

(D) *Logistics:* It is revealed from Table 4 that the sitting arrangement in the class and the lodging facility were satisfactory whereas, the tea during the sessions/training, meal facility and drinking water facility were rated most unsatisfactory. The aspects viz. lighting/ illumination facility, fans, cleanness of classroom, toilet facility and transport facility were rated to be of moderate level by the trainees.

Trainees' reaction on overall effectiveness of training programme presented in table 5 clearly indicates that the trainees had an overall good impression of the training programme. They found it only partially helpful to perform their responsibilities. The trainees also reported that the objectives were met partially. The findings supportive to that of Kumar

and Roy (1991), Parsad et.al.(1991), Bajaj *et. al.* (1993) and Sharma *et al* (1993).

Table 4. Trainees' reactions on logistics

S.No.	Aspects of logistics	Weighted mean score	Category
1	Sitting arrangement	4.33	HS
2	Lodging facility	4.25	HS
3	Lighting/ illumination facility	4.09	S
4	Fans	4.00	S
5	Cleanness of learning space	3.57	S
6	Toilet facility	3.19	S
7	Transportation facility	3.04	S
8	Drinking water facility	1.71	US
9	Meal facility	1.25	US
10.	Tea during sessions	1.09	US

HS-Highly Satisfactory, S- Satisfactory, US-Un Satisfactory

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the organisation of training demands attention in terms of physical facilities like proper seating, alternate arrangement for power, drinking water, intersession tea, meal facilities in the hostel. Above all, the trainers need to give more time to planning of details concerning training. There is need to devise ways and means for making

Table 5. Trainees' reactions on overall effectiveness of the training

Extent/Level	% age	Pooled Mean
<i>a) Help received in fulfilling responsibilities</i>		3.13
Fully	27.28	
Partially	59.09	
Very Less	13.63	
<i>b) Fulfillment of objectives</i>		3.04
Fully	22.73	
Partially	68.18	
Not at all	09.09	
<i>c) Overall impression of the training</i>		3.86
Excellent	09.09	
Good	27.28	
Fair	59.09	
Poor	04.54	

training more in-teractive and interesting. Poor use of teaching aids, differential perceptions regarding content utility, trainees' group size, unsatisfactory meal and refreshment facility certainly speak of the quality of training. In fact, such grass root level training meant to improve the effectiveness of developmental programmes must be planned and monitored systematically keeping trainees' need and interests in view.

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