

RESEARCH NOTE

Observation of Contact Farmers on Rural Agricultural Work Experience Programme

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ABSTRACT

It is confined from the study that as high as 59.09 percent of contact farmers observation the Rural Agricultural Work Experience Programme (RAWEP) as useful and 27.27 percent as more useful. Enhancement of knowledge of crops/enterprises and skill development in preparation value added products were perceived as the benefits of RAWEP by the majority of contact farmers. Further, majority of contact farmers perceived videos and presentation with projectors were not used in all training programmes, less number of demonstration, use of more technical word by students, less number of training programmes, use of more English words by students as the limitations of the RAWEP. The majority of contact farmers suggested for more use of videos and projector presentation in training programmes, more use of common and local words by students, more number of demonstrations to be conducted, less use of English words by students, less use of technical words of students, give more publicity to make RAWEP more effective.

Key words: *Farmers observation; Rural Agricultural Work Experience Programme (RAWEP);*

The agricultural universities of the country introduced a course of Rural Agricultural Work Experience Programme as the best opportunity, which can orient and equip the required potential among the students of agricultural sciences. It is a course organized by SAUs normally in the final year (VIIth or VIIIth semester) of undergraduate degree programme. The main theme of this course is the learning through experiences.

RVSKVV, Gwalior came in to existence in 2009, but the RAWEP Programme has been introduced earlier when it was under JNKVV, Jabalpur. It underwent several changes in the subsequent years based on the feedback from teachers, students, and other stakeholders. During the 2005-06 the university has introduced a new model for RAWEP. Under the programme one farmer/farm woman is allotted to each student as contact farmer. Each student has to collect data from their contact farmer using a practical manual. Based on the data collected, the student have analyze the situation, identify the problems, develops a plan of work, write a detailed report about the contact farmers and visited their allotted villages in the stipulated period

of one week. The students have to stay in the main village for six months and to conduct educational activities on different subject matter areas through various extension methods by using different teaching aids with the help of subject matter specialists of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Khargone (MP). The students need to conduct Krishi Goshthis, training programmes, method demonstrations, general and group meetings, farm and home visit, agricultural exhibitions, teach the school children on agricultural and allied subject and soil testing. The designated RAWEP teachers of different disciplines guide, supervise and evaluate the students as per the prescribed subject time-table. Keeping this view in mind, the study was undertaken with the following specific objectives -

1. To know the view of the contact farmers on usefulness of RAWEP.
2. To know the preference of teaching aids/methods under RAWEP.
3. To identify the benefits of RAWEP as perceived by contact farmers.
4. To identify the limitations and suggestions from contact farmers in making RAWEP more effective.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted during 2011 in Khargone district of Madhya Pradesh. Under the patronage of KVK, ZARS, Khargone, B. M. College of Agriculture, Khandwa has sent the RAWEP students to Zonal Agricultural Research Station, Khargone for conducting the programme. The Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Khargone has assigned one contact farmer to each student from the selected villages. The Oon, Thibgaon, Mehraja, Surpala, Baijapur, Danawal, Maingaon, Piparata, Jamli, Gopalpura etc. villages were selected for the RAWEP purposes from 2004-05 to onwards. The list of contact farmers of RAWEP 2004-05 to 2011-12 was prepared. A sample of 110 contact farmers selected through random sampling technique as respondent. In order to ascertain the information, 110 contact farmers were personally interviewed using pre tested interview schedule. The data was tabulated and analyzed accordingly to obtain the percentage. To analyze the benefits perceived and constraints experienced based on responses obtained from the contact farmers and then calculating the Rank Based Quotient (RBQ) (Sabrathanam, 1988), which is as follows:

$$R.B.Q. = \frac{\sum fi(n+1-i)}{N \times n} \times 100$$

Where,

fi = Number of contact farmers reporting a particular benefits/ constraint under ith rank

N = Number of contact farmers

n = Number of benefit/ constraint identified

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall view of the farmer on the usefulness of RAWEP: Data from the Table 1, it is clear that 59.09 percent contact farmers said that the RAWEP is useful followed by 27.27 percent, 10.91 per cent as more useful and to some extent useful respectively. Whereas only 2.73 per cent of contact farmers are disagreed with the usefulness of RAWEP.

Table 1. Overall view of the contact farmer on the usefulness of RAWEP (N=110)

Opinion	No.	%
More useful	30	27.27
Useful	65	59.09
To some extent useful	12	10.91
Not useful	03	02.73
Total	110	100.0

The possible reasons for having good opinion about RAWEP by the contact farmers may be due to –(a)

good rapport with farmers by students and KVK scientists and (b) dissemination of complete information on crops/enterprises through training programmes, demonstrations and field visits at village level.

Preference of contact farmers for teaching aids/methods under RAWEP: Table-2 shows that about 89.09 per cent contact farmers preferred video and presentation through projector in training programmes followed by method demonstration (83.63%), group discussion and meetings (78.18%), Farm and home visit (71.18%), field visit (61.81%) and lecture by using charts/poster (36.36%) as teaching aids/methods under the RAWEP. While only 7.27 per cent contact farmers preferred lecture using blackboards under the RAWEP for educating the farmers on different subject matter.

The finding of the present study revealed that the advance communication media should be used for the purpose of training programmes. The possible reason for the finding of the present study may be due to the fact that; (a) the modern extension teaching methods improve teaching learning process as it helps in providing the enrichment of learning, creative thinking problem solving with its capacity to provide instant response and its flexibility to suite the learners need; and (b) the method demonstration, group discussion meetings, farm and home visits and field visit help in developing good rapport, joint identification of problems and solution and clarification of doubts personally.

Table 2. Preference of contact farmers for teaching aids/methods under RAWEP (N=110)

Teaching aids/methods	No.	%
Videos and projector presentation in training programmes.	98	89.09
Method demonstration.	92	83.63
Group Discussions and Meetings.	86	78.18
Farm and Home Visit.	79	71.18
Field Visit.	68	61.81
Lecture by using charts/posters.	40	36.36
Lecture by using blackboards.	08	07.27

Table 3. Benefits of RAWEP as perceived by contact farmers (N=110)

Benefits	R.B.Q.	Overall Rank
Increase in knowledge on crops/enterprises.	83.63	I
Increase in yield of crops/enterprises	31.36	III
Skill on preparation of value added products.	56.08	II
Reduction of cost of cultivation.	12.95	IV

Table 4. Constraints of RAWEP as perceived by contact farmers (N=110)

Constraints	R.B.Q.	Overall Rank
Videos and projectors presentation not used in all training programmes.	94.54	I
Less number of training programmes	58.84	IV
Use of more technical word by students	68.42	III
Less number of demonstrations.	80.99	II
Use of more English words by students.	49.17	V
Less effective presentation of technical information by the students.	20.16	VIII
Less publicity.	26.03	VII
Conducting agricultural exhibitions in limited space.	38.67	VI
Hesitation of farmers to learn from students.	1.48	XI
Under estimation of students competence by the farmers.	3.47	X
Programme timing is not suitable to farmers/farm women.	5.95	IX

Benefits of RAWEP as perceived by contact farmers: Table 3 reveals that increase in knowledge on crops/enterprises was emerged as important benefit and based on RBQ value (83.63) given highest priority by the contact farmers. The next most frequently priority was Skill development on preparation of value added products on the based of RBQ (6.08). The third priority was increase in yield of crop/enterprises with RBQ value (31.36). While the last priority was reduction of cost of cultivation with the RBQ value of (12.95). Organizing the method demonstration and group discussion at the village level on the locally available and cheaper ingredients to the farmers/farm women may be the reasons for knowledge enhancement and skill development.

Constraints of RAWEP as perceived by contact farmers: Based on the ranks given by the contact farmers for the different constraints experienced by them, the rank based quotients were calculated and presented in Table 4. Among the various constraints experienced by the farmers, the video and presentation with projectors were not used in all training programmes emerged as most important constraint and based on RBQ value (94.54) given highest priority.

The second highest constraint emerged by the farmers was the less number of demonstration with the RBQ value (80.99%). The third priority was given based on RBQ value (68.42) to the use of more technical words by students.

The programme timing is not suitable to farmers/farm women, under estimation of students competence by the farmers and the hesitation of farmers to learn from students were the last three priority of the contact farmers based on RBQ value (5.95), (3.47) and (1.48) respectively.

Similar results were also reported by *Shivramu et al. (2011)*, *De et al (2004)* and *Sanjeev (2003)*

Table 5. Suggestions of contact farmers to make RAWEP more effective (N=110)

Limitations	No.	%
More use of videos and projector presentation in training programmes.	101	91.10
More use of common and local words by students.	99	90.00
More number of demonstration to be conducted.	98	89.09
Less use of English words by students.	97	88.18
Less use of technical words of students.	89	80.90
Give more publicity.	76	69.09
More number of contact farmers to be allotted per student.	71	64.54
Organizing agricultural exhibition at village level by the students.	64	58.18
Repeating RAWEP in the same village in 4-5 years.	45	40.90
Enhance the duration of village stay camp.	24	21.81

Suggestions of contact farmer to make RAWEP more effective : Table 5 inferred that 91.1 per cent contact farmers suggested for more use of videos and projector presentation in training programmes followed by 90 per cent, 89.09 per cent, 88.18 per cent, 80.90 per cent, 69.09 per cent, 64.54 per cent and 58.18 per cent as more use of common and local words by students, more number of demonstration to be conducted, less use of English words by students, less use of technical words of students, give more publicity, more number of contact farmers to be allotted per student and organizing agricultural exhibition at village level by the students respectively to make RAWEP more effective. Only 40.90 per cent and 21.81 per cent contact farmers suggested that repeating RAWEP in the same village

in 4-5 years and enhance the duration of village stay camp respectively to make RAWEP more effective.

CONCLUSION

The present study confined that the conduction of RAWEP in the villages gives significant impact on the farmers basically on enhancement of knowledge of crops and enterprises and also on skill development in

value added products as well as it is also found that most of the farmers were preferred the use of video and other projector presentation in the trainings besides the method demonstration and group discussion and meetings to make more effective trainings.

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