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KNOWLEDGE GAIN BY FARM WOMEN IN A TRAINING ON DUCK FARMING

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted on 50 farm women of Kamrup district of Assam, who attended training programmed on "Scientific Duck Farming" organized and conducted by Livestock Research Station, Mondira from 4th to 5th April, 2013. A structured interview schedule was prepared to study the personal characteristics of the farm women and to list their knowledge level on Scientific Duck Farming before and after training programme. The reliability of the instrument was tested on non-sample respondents with test-retest method. The findings revealed that majority of the trainees reported to acquire medium knowledge gain during training course. On the other hand relational analysis revealed that out of the seven variables only one variable i.e. education was found to have significant correlation with knowledge gain. Multiple regressions showed that out of the seven variables only three variables could significantly contribute to knowledge gain. These were income source, education and information source. These variables together could explain 50 per cent of the variation in knowledge gain (R^2 = 0.5097).

Key words : Knowledge gain, farm women, training

Training is one of the several means of human capital formation. The person who undergoes training acquires knowledge and skill on the particular subject and learns some skill which ultimately enhances productivity because with knowledge and skill acquired in a training programme, he can participate in the related activities where he is expected to perform in a better way than earlier. But the quantum of gain in knowledge of the trainees varies and is dependent upon many factors which may be personal characteristics of the trainees themselves or some other factors like resource person, physical facilities, audio-visual aids etc. Therefore, a study was conducted with a view to find the socio-personal and economic characteristics of the farm women who participated in the training programme and to ascertain their knowledge gain during training and the relationship of such knowledge gain with their socio-personal and economic characteristics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted upon 50 farm women of Kamrup district of Assam who attended a training programme on "Scientific Duck Farming" organized and conducted by Livestock Research Station, Mondira from 4 to 5 April, 2013. A structured interview schedule was prepared to study the personal characteristics of the farm women and to test their knowledge level on Scientific Duck Farming before and after the training programme. The reliability of the instrument

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was tested on non-sample respondents with test-retest method. Data were collected twice from the respondents once before and once after the training programme. The total knowledge score was calculated for each individual respondent both before and after the training programme. The before-training score was subtracted from the after-training score of each respondents and the difference was the knowledge gain in the training programme. The following statistical methods were applied – Frequency, Percentage, Mean, Standard deviation (SD), Correlation and Regression.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Socio-personal and economic profile of the trainees

The study revealed that a large majority (78%) of the trainees were middle aged in comparison to almost equal number (12% and 10%) being young and elder. Albeit their age ranged from 21 to 60 years, majority being at middle age was a right pointer that at early age the trainees hardly felt any training need while at elder age it is felt to be of no use. Similar finding was reported by in West Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh[2].

In respect of land holding, majority of the trainees' family belonged to marginal farmers' category (52%), while equal number ie. 24 % were landless and small farmers. It was easily understandable that the families with paucity of land resources were constrained in many ways to meet both ends and hence, the female members were found eager to explore some ventures by way of attending training programme with a hope of subsequently taking up some vocation like duck farming for income generation. Similar finding was reported by earlier worker [5].

Majority of the trainees (58%) had medium level of income source in contrast to 24 % having low income source and 18 % high income source. It was interesting to note that 24 % of the trainees belonged to landless category families .While their male members were engaged in daily wages or any other occupation of that sort, the female members being confronted with pecuniary financial condition at home got motivated to attend training programme on duck farming as it needed little investment and was good enough for utilization of family labour for subsidiary income. Therefore, it was rightly exhibited in the study that, 24 % of the trainees belonged to landless category and had low income source.

In respect of educational classification, majority of the trainees i.e. 26% were found to have read up to high school followed by 18% having read up to degree level. However, equal number of respondents (16%) was illiterate and could read and write only and rest being below middle school. This has reflected the extent of backwardness of the area which the trainees represented in so far as educational infra-structure was concerned. This was a really a dismal picture at this 21st century when the country is expected to emerge as knowledge-society. However, considering the result of latest census report, 2011 in respect of literacy rate in Assam, the findings were not too unexpected. Earlier workers [1, 3] reported that majority of the farmers had medium level education i.e. metric level followed by graduate level of education.

It was also revealed in the study that a fairly large majority of the trainees had medium length of experience in poultry farming, while 20% and 12% had long and short length of experience respectively in poultry farming. The length of experience in years ranged from 1 year to 25 years. Earlier workers [6] revealed that average experience of farmers in poultry farming was relatively longer (15.65 years). However, observed 49% of farmers in Dibrugarh had been doing poultry farming consistently for 1-2 years while 29% and 22% had been doing for 3-10 years and 11-20 years respectively[1]. In this context worker [4] reported that experience had significant influence on knowledge gain.

A large majority (58%) of the trainees had medium sized flock in contrast to 34% and 8% having small and large flock size. It was also found that a large majority (70%) of the trainees could avail medium (3-8) information source in comparison to 18% and 12% having high and low level of information source. Earlier worker [4] reported that information contact was significantly related with knowledge gain training programme.

2. Level of knowledge gain

The study revealed that majority ((48%) of the trainees reported to acquire medium knowledge gain during the training course in comparison to 38% and 14% having achieved high and low knowledge gain respectively. Viewing it from other side it can well be said that as high as 86% of the trainees could achieve from medium to high level of knowledge gain in comparison to 19% having acquired low of knowledge gain. This seems from all accounts to be a happy augury and confirms the efficiency and efficacy of the training programme, its infra-structure, audio-visual aids used and as a whole the expertise of the resource person who happened to be associated with the training programme. Earlier worker [4] reported that there was significant impact of the training programme on increasing the knowledge of the participants. Maximum participants (53.33%) achieved medium knowledge gain followed by high (24.45%) and low (22.22%) level of knowledge gain.

3. Relationship of Knowledge gain

The correlation and regression co-efficient of knowledge gain by the trainees with their socio-personal and economic traits were worked out. Out of the 7 variables only one variables viz. education was found to have significant correlation (5%) with of knowledge gain. The trainees with higher educational qualification were at much ease to be communicated with resource person, for having their better understanding capacity, writing and reading ability and overall orientation to teaching-learning situation. A similar finding was reported by earlier worker[4].

Multiple regression analysis showed that out of 7 variables only 3 variables could significantly contribute to knowledge gain. These were income source, education and information source. These variable together could explain 50% of the variable in knowledge gain (R^2 =0.5097).

The F-value for R was 3.59 which was significant at 5% level of probability. Therefore, the above six variables may be good predictors of knowledge gain and hence may be taken into consideration while selecting trainees.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that knowledge gain by majority farm women in the training programme ranged from medium to high. The variables viz. education showed significant correlation with knowledge gain of the trainees while three variables viz. income source, education and information source were found to be good predictors of knowledge of farm women. Hence these need to be taken into consideration while selecting trainees in order to maximize training output in terms of knowledge gain and subsequently knowledge utilization pattern for enhancing productivity of the farm women and ultimately women empowerment through duckery enterprise.

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