

Opinion of the Extension Personnel Regarding Different Aspects of Institutional Training Programmes

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ABSTRACT

Punjab is agriculturally progressive and a major contributor of national food reserve. To propel agriculture into 21st century, the quality, technical skill and management of agricultural manpower must improve in consonance with the rapidly changing need of society both nationally as well as internationally. It was found that most of the extension personnel were satisfied with the contents covered in the training programmes, place of training and training schedule but were found dissatisfied with the theory-practical ratio, duration, selection of trainee and training notifications. Most of the respondents preferred lecture-cum-discussion method. The respondents were quite satisfied with the physical arrangements made in the training programmes. Training areas preferred by extension personnel were use and handling of audio-visual aids, training planning and implementation and subject matter technology.

Over the year, agricultural technology has changed rapidly. New ideas and developments are taking place continuously as a result of research and communication. The dynamic environment and fast changing technology has resulted in shrinking the cycles of learning, applying and relearning. These changes have brought in the necessity for change and improvement in competencies of people in all walks of life. Globalization, liberalization and market-oriented economy have also added new dimension. Similarly in agriculture, the standards of professional efficiency and competency are constantly rising due to explosion of technology. In view of the changing scenario, the extension personnel require latest knowledge and skill for educating and training the farmers. Lack of appropriate knowledge and skill not only waste their potential and other resources of organization and farming but also create problems of disinterest and damaged morale. Therefore, the extension service must provide reasonable and regular training opportunity for extension personnel. More and more specialized and flexible training programmes need to be organised by concerned institutions for extension personnel to face the

emerging problems and challenges. State Agricultural Universities, Central and other regional institutes have the responsibility of organizing training programmes for extension personnel. Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana as resource organization in the Punjab state, share a major responsibility in promoting professional competency of the extension personnel of various development departments including agriculture department of the state. Thus, the present study was undertaken to know the opinion of the extension personnel towards different aspect of training programmes.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in the three purposively selected districts of Punjab state viz. Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Amritsar. All Agriculture Development Officers (ADOs) working at the district head quarters and block level were taken as the respondents. In all 148 ADOs were selected for this study. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, a questionnaire was designed for the collection of data by consulting relevant literature and concerned experts in the field. The data were collected

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through distributed questionnaire approach. Further analysis of the data was through frequency distribution and mean score.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Opinion of the extension personnel regarding the contents covered in training programmes:

The figures in table 1 revealed that 75.37 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that the contents covered in the training programmes were upto the opinion that the contents covered in the the training programmes were upto the data while 68.83 per cent and 18.12 per cent opined it to be need based and accurate respectively. The contents were found to be applicable and timely by 60.88 per cent of the respondents respectively. A little less than half (43.48 per cent) of the respondents were of the opinion that the contents were flexible. Majority of the extension personnel were found satisfied with the contents covered in the training programmes.

Table 1. Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion about the contents covered in training programmes attended.

Opinion about contents	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
Need based	95	68.83	33	23.91	10	7.24
Applicable	84	60.88	28	20.28	26	18.84
Timeliness	84	60.88	28	20.28	26	18.84
Accurate	94	68.12	38	27.54	6	4.34
Upto date	104	75.37	18	13.04	16	11.59
Interesting	92	66.67	24	17.39	22	15.94
Flexibility	60	43.48	40	28.98	38	27.54

Content of the respondents about general aspects of the training programmes:

A perusal of the data in table 2 revealed that 97.10 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the place of training, training schedule (91.31 per cent) and with the break timing during the training (98.55 per cent). Training time was found to be suitable notification, the respondents were divided in almost equal halves while giving their opinion. A little more than half (42.02%) of the respondents were dissatisfied with the duration as well as selection of trainees. The duration of most of the training was 2-4 days, which was found to be short by the extension personnel. The main reasons of the

dissatisfaction with regard to selection of trainees as felt by the respondents were that selections were neither based on qualifications nor on interest, rather repeated deputing is done. Similar findings were reported by Sodhi (1992). Majority of the respondents were dissatisfied with the training notification as it usually arrived late. Three-fourth of the respondents were dissatisfied with the balance of theory-practical ratio as more emphasis was laid on theoretical parts of the contents.

Table 2. Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion regarding different aspects of training programmes

Aspect of training	Satisfied		Dissatisfied	
	F	(%)	F	(%)
Place of training	134	97.10	4	2.90
Time suitability	122	88.40	16	11.60
Duration	58	42.02	80	57.98
Selection of trainee	58	42.02	80	57.98
Timely notification	68	49.27	70	50.72
Training schedule	126	91.31	12	8.69
Break timings	136	98.55	2	1.45
Balance of theory to practical ratio	46	33.34	92	66.66
Training frequency	70	50.72	68	49.27

Table 3. Distribution of the respondents according to their preferred theory/practical ratio.

Preferred theory to practical ratio	F	(%)
30:70	10	10.87
40:60	79	85.87
50:50	2	2.17
60:40	1	1.08

Suggestions regarding theory to practical ratio:

Further, suggestions of the trainees were sought for preferred theory-practical proportion. A look at table shows that 85.87 per cent of the respondents preferred 40:60 theory of practical ratio. This clearly indicates that more practicals should be incorporated in the training programmes. The same was suggested by Sharma and Singh (1968) and Singh and Srivastava (1970).

Extent of use of different training methods in the training programmes :

It is apparent from the information in table 4 that all respondents reported that lecture method was always used, whereas 88.42 per cent, 79.72 per cent and 78.26 per cent of them indicated that demonstration, field trip and practices were sometimes used respectively during the training programmes. Further ranks were assigned to the different training methods and from the weighted

scores it is clear that lecture method was the most commonly used method followed by lecture-cum-discussion, with second rank. Field trip, demonstration and practical work were used to a lesser extent by the trainers. These findings are in line with the findings of Reddy (1985) and Sharma and Singh (1968). Moreover, training methods such as symposia, seminars and brain storming were the least used methods as expressed by the respondents. Similar findings were reported by Mishra (1986).

Table 4 : Extent of use of different training methods in the training programmes.

Training methods	Always		Sometimes		Never		Total Score	Rank
	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)		
Lecture	138	100	-	-	-	-	410	1
Demonstration	10	7.24	122	88.42	6	4.34	280	4
Lecture-cum-discussion	46	33.34	86	62.32	6	4.34	316	2
Field trip	22	15.94	110	79.72	6	4.34	292	3
Seminar	-	-	38	27.54	100	72.46	176	6
Symposium	-	-	25	18.11	113	81.89	163	7
Brainstorming sessions	-	-	20	14.50	118	85.50	158	9
Buzz sessions	-	-	22	15.95	116	84.05	160	8
Practical work	10	7.24	108	78.26	20	14.50	236	5

Preference of respondents to different training methods :

Data in table 5 clearly indicates that lecture-cum-discussion was the most preferred method with highest score of 927, followed by practicals, field trip and demonstrations which with ranks 2nd, 3rd and 4th

respectively. The same was reported by Prasad et al (1990). Exhibitions, panel discussion, seminar and brain storming were ranked as 5th, 6th and 7th respectively while the least preferred method by the respondents was the lecture method with last overall rank.

Table 5 : Distribution of the respondents according to the order of preference regarding the different training methods to be used in the training programmes.

S. No.	Training methods		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total Score	Rank
1.	Lecture only	F	4	4	6	8	4	12	0	24	76	338	9
		(%)	2.89	2.89	4.34	5.76	2.89	18.69	-	17.39	55.07		
		Score	36	32	42	48	20	36	0	48	76		
2.	Lecture-cum-discussion	F	34	40	20	6	24	8	6	0	0	927	1
		(%)	24.63	28.98	14.49	4.34	17.39	5.79	4.34	0	0		
		Score	306	320	140	36	120	32	18	0	0		
3.	Field trip	F	26	26	30	36	8	6	0	6	0	944	3
		(%)	18.84	18.84	21.73	26.08	5.79	4.34	-	4.34	-		
		Score	234	208	210	216	40	24	-	12	-		
4.	Demonstration	F	24	36	40	14	8	2	0	0	14	930	4
		(%)	17.39	26.08	28.98	10.14	5.79	1.44	-	-	10.14		
		Score	216	208	280	84	40	8	-	-	14		

S. No.	Training methods		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total Score	Rank
5.	Practical work	F	34	26	24	30	16	0	8	0	0	966	2
		(%)	24.63	18.84	17.39	21.73	11.59	-	5.79	-	-		
		Score	306	208	168	180	80	0	24	0	0		
6.	Exhibition	F	0	0	0	38	46	30	10	14	0	636	5
		(%)	-	-	-	27.53	33.34	21.73	7.24	10.14	-		
		Score	0	0	0	228	230	120	30	28	0		
7.	Panel discussion	F	0	0	0	0	18	46	42	30	4	464	6
		(%)	-	-	-	-	13.04	33.34	30.43	21.73	2.89		
		Score	0	0	0	0	90	184	126	60	4		
8.	Seminar	F	14	0	0	6	18	18	38	34	10	390	8
		(%)	10.14	-	-	4.34	13.04	13.04	27.53	24.63	7.24		
		Score	126	0	0	36	90	72	114	68	10		
9.	Brainstorming	F	0	6	0	8	20	8	26	26	44	402	7
		(%)	-	4	-	5.79	14.49	5.79	18.84	18.84	31.88		
		Score	0	48	-	48	100	32	78	52	44		

Opinion about the organizational aspects of training programmes:

The figures in table 6 revealed that majority of the respondents were satisfied with different organizational aspects of the training programmes viz. reception (86.96 %), inaugural sessions (85.50 %), concluding sessions (82.60 %), inter contact (81.15 %) and an equal percentage (79.72 %) were satisfied with the orientation and intra contact. However, 70.28 per cent of the respondents were dissatisfied with the educational visit (s) and a little more than half of the respondents were dissatisfied with the recreational visits. The respondents opined that the educational visit (s) and recreational visit (s) were of short duration. Moreover, repeated visits were made to the same place and also the frequency of these visits was very less.

Extent of use of different teaching aids in the training programmes :

It can be inferred from the figures in table 7 that chalk board was the most commonly used non-projected aid as expressed by 94.22 per cent of the respondents. Among the projected aids overhead projector was the only aid reported to be used always in the training programmes by 34.80 per cent of the respondents. While 73.19 per cent, 68.12 per cent, 62.32 per cent of the respondents

Table 6. Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion about organizational aspect of the training programmes.

Aspects of training	Satisfied		Dissatisfied	
	F	(%)	F	(%)
Reception	120	86.96	18	13.04
Orientation	110	79.72	28	20.28
Inter contact	112	81.15	26	18.85
Intra contact	110	79.72	28	20.28
Inaugural sessions	118	85.50	20	14.50
Concluding sessions	114	82.60	24	17.45
Educational Visit (s)	41	29.71	97	70.28
Recreational Visit (s)	66	47.83	72	52.17

opined that display board, graph and photographs were sometimes used in the training programmes respectively. However, 98.55, 98.55, 95.65, 85.51, 84.04 and 73.19 per cent of the respondents expressed that magnetic board, computers, flannel board, movies, video cassettes and models respectively were never used in the training programmes. Thus, chalk board was the most frequently used non projected aid while overhead projector was the commonly used projected aid by the trainers in the training programmes.

Table 7: Extent of use of different teaching aids in the training programmes

Training aids	Always		Sometimes		Never		Rank
	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	
1. Non projected aids							
i) Chalk board	130	94.22	8	5.78	-	-	1
ii) Display board	25	18.12	101	73.19	12	8.69	6
iii) Flannel board	-	-	6	4.35	132	95.65	12
iv) Magnetic board	-	-	2	1.45	136	98.55	13
v) Posters	44	31.89	82	59.42	2	8.69	4
vi) Charts	42	30.44	82	59.42	14	10.14	5
vii) Photograph	46	33.33	86	62.32	6	4.35	2
viii) Graphs	20	14.49	94	68.12	24	17.39	8
ix) Models	-	-	37	26.81	101	73.19	9
x) Specimen	45	32.60	65	47.11	28	20.29	7
2. Projected aids							
i) Overhead projector	48	34.80	82	59.42	8	5.78	3
ii) Movies	-	-	20	14.49	118	85.51	11
iii) Video Cassettes	-	-	22	15.95	116	84.05	10
iv) Computers	-	-	2	1.45	136	98.55	14

Opinion regarding the performance of the trainers :

The data in the table 8 showed that 76.81 per cent of the respondents opined high level performance with respect to subject matter knowledge of the trainers. Whereas 66.67, 52.19 and 56.19 per cent of the respondents expressed moderate level of performance of trainers in terms of organization, simplicity and clarity of the subject matter respectively while delivering the subject matter during the training programmes. The data further revealed that 65.21 per cent and 62.31 per cent of the respondents felt moderate level of performance of trainers with regard to making the presentation interesting and speed to presentation respectively during the training programmes. The trainers were found skillful in handling the audio-visual aids by 53.63 per cent of the respondents. However, 71.02 per cent of the respondents felt that trainers performance was moderate in selection of appropriate aids in addition the trainers performance was expressed to be moderate in the use of training methods by 86.96 per cent of the respondents. The trainers were found self-confident as 56.52 per cent of the respondents felt their performance to be high and 43.48 per cent reported it to be moderate. With regard to encouraging participation and skill in human relations during the training programmes, 56.52 and 50.72 per cent of the respondents reported moderate level of performance of trainers. However, 59.43 per cent of them indicated low level of

performance with regard to trainer's ability to admit mistakes.

Table 8. Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion regarding the performance of the trainers.

Items	High		Moderate		Low	
	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
1. Subject Matter						
i) Knowledge	106	76.81	32	23.19	-	-
ii) Clarity	60	43.48	72	52.19	6	4.35
iii) Organisation	42	30.43	92	66.67	4	2.90
iv) Simplicity	56	40.58	76	55.07	6	4.35
2. Presentation						
i) Speed	52	37.69	86	62.31	-	-
ii) Interesting	36	26.09	90	65.21	12	8.70
3. Use of AVAs						
i) Skillful in handling	74	53.63	48	34.78	16	8.70
ii) Appropriateness of aids	12	8.70	120	86.95	6	4.35
4. Use of training methods						
12	8.70	120	86.95	6	4.35	
5. Personal Traits						
i) In Human relation	48	34.78	70	50.72	20	14.50
ii) Self confidence	78	56.52	60	43.48	-	-
iii) Ability to admit mistakes	8	5.79	48	34.78	82	59.43
iv) Encourage participation	46	33.34	78	56.52	14	10.14

Opinion about physical facilities :

A perusal of the data in table 9 revealed that 84.06 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the canteen and drinking water facility provided during the training programmes. An equal percentage of the respondents (79.71 %) were satisfied with the seating arrangements, library and boarding facility. Majority of the trainees (78.26%) were satisfied with both audio-visual equipments and lodging facility provided during the training programmes. However, 70.29 per cent of them were not satisfied with the transportation facility. The same was reported by Sodhi (1992) and Bhatnagar and Singh (1973).

Table 9. Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion about the physical facilities.

Facility	Highly Satisfied		Satisfied		Not satisfied	
	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
i) Lecture hall	34	24.64	98	71.01	6	4.35
ii) Seating arrangement	22	15.94	110	79.71	6	4.35
iii) Audio visual	8	5.80	108	78.26	22	15.94
iv) Library	6	4.35	110	79.71	22	15.94
v) Laboratory	4	2.90	104	75.36	30	21.74
vi) Boarding	4	2.90	110	79.71	24	17.39
vii) Lodging	16	11.60	108	78.26	14	10.14
viii) Canteen and	10	7.25	116	84.06	12	8.74
ix) Transportation	-	-	41	29.71	97	70.29

Preference of respondents to different training area :

It is clear from the weighted score given in table 11 that use and handling of AVAs is the most preferred training area with first rank. Similar findings were reported

Table 11: Distribution of respondents according to their preference to different training areas.

S.No.	Training area	Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Score	Rank
1.	Subject matter and technology	F (%)	54	10	10	24	33	7	552	3
		Score	39.13	7.24	7.24	17.39	23.91	5.07		
			324	50	40	72	66	7		
2.	Management	F (%)	10	16	30	14	50	18	420	4
		Score	7.24	11.59	21.73	10.14	36.23	13.04		
			60	80	120	42	100	18		
3.	Communication	Score	24	140	64	90	56	32		
		(%)	2.89	20.28	11.59	21.73	20.28	23.18		
		Score	24	140	64	90	56	32		

Opinion about usefulness of training programmes :

The data in table 10 revealed that 95.63, 94.20 and 84.05 per cent of the respondents opined that the training programmes brought positive change in them in terms of skill, knowledge and attitude respectively. Further 94.20 and 85.50 per cent of the respondents felt that the training programmes were helpful in exchange of experience and updating subject related information respectively and 84.05 per cent of them were of the view that training facilitate in improving linkage between research and extension. These findings are in line with Rao (1990).

Table 10. Opinion of respondents about the usefulness of training programmes.

Different aspect of usefulness	Yes		No	
	F	(%)	F	(%)
1) Positive change in				
i) Knowledge	130	94.20	8	5.80
ii) Skill	132	95.63	6	4.35
iii) Attitudes	116	84.5	22	15.95
2) Helps in updating subject related information	118	85.50	20	14.50
3) Improves linkage between research and extension	116	84.05	22	15.95
4) Helps in exchange of experience	130	94.20	8	5.80

by Singh (1980) and Shrestha (1982). This was followed by training planning and implementation, subject matter and technology, management, communication and human relation.

S.No.	Training area	Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Score	Rank
4.	Training, planning and implementation	F (%) Score	50 36.23 300	24 17.39 120	20 14.49 40	10 7.24 30	18 13.04 36	16 4.34 16	582	2
5.	Human relation	F (%) Score	0 - -	8 5.79 40	8 5.79 32	36 26.28 108	20 14.49 40	66 47.82 66	286	6
6.	Use and handling of AVAs	F (%) Score	14 10.14 84	16 1.59 80	18 13.04 72	20 14.49 60	8 5.79 16	24 17.39 24	622	1

12. Preferred interval of training :

A look at table 12 showed that the preferred interval of institutional training programmes were one year, six months and two years respectively.

Table 12. Distribution for respondents according to their preference regarding time interval for institutional training.

S. No.	Time interval	F (%)	1	2	3	Total score	Rank
1.	Six months	F (%) score	120 86.95 360	4 2.89 8	14 10.14 14	382	2
2.	One year	F (%) score	4 10.14 12	132 95.64 396	2 1.44 2	410	1
3.	Two year	F (%) score	14 10.14 14	2 1.44 4	122 88.40 122	168	3

SUGGESTIONS

In view of the changing scenario, there is a need to review the training programmes so that they give maximum benefits to the extension personnel who in turn can guide the farmers more efficiency. The extension personnel should be given proper motivation and encouraged to participate in the training programmes by sending notification in time. Opportunities should be provided to different extension personnel in different training programmes. More number of training programmes should be organized pertaining to emerging issues like sustainability in agriculture through diversification, motivating farmers to reduce agricultural pollution, training,

planning and implementation of various training courses for farmers, etc. The duration of the training programmes should also be increased and the trainers should make maximum use of the advanced methods of teaching and Audio-Visual Aids. The trainers need to emphasize more on practical and problem solving training methods rather than theoretical portions of the subject matter. Therefore, incorporation of various practicals and field visits should be done in the training programmes. The extension personnel can be taken on educational tours to various agricultural institutes and private agencies to analyze latest field and market situations. Transportation facilities should also be improved to attract more trainers.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that majority of the extension personnel were satisfied with place of training, time suitability and schedule but dissatisfied with the duration, selection of trainee, the training notification, and theory to practical ratio. Most commonly used method during the training courses was found to be lecture method whereas lecture-cum-discussion, practical work and field trip were the first three preferred methods by respondents. Majority of the respondents were satisfied with reception, orientation, inaugural and concluding sessions of the training programmes. Chalk board was the most commonly used non-projected aid whereas overhead projector was commonly used among the projected aids. The facilities except transport facility. The respondents believed that training programmes brought positive changes in them in terms of knowledge, skill and attitude. The most preferred training areas were handling of audio-visual aids and training planning and implementation and the preferred interval for training programmes was one year.

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