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TRAINING NEEDS OF ATMA PERSONNEL

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ABSTRACT

Training is one of the important tools of human resource development. Knowledgeable well trained people and effective institutions are critical for achieving growth in any of the sectors, more so in the field of agriculture as it is the threshold point where in the economy the entire farming community is dependent. To help farmers face these challenges, the extension system should be strengthened. The Extension Education Institute (EEI), Anand is one of the premier institutes for training of extension personnel in India. This institute caters the training needs of Western Zone States. A regional workshop was organized to assess the training needs of ATMA personnel in Gujarat. For assessment of their training needs, a model questionnaire was prepared incorporating all the possible issues to be addressed for assessing the training needs of the ATMA personnel. The results showed that majority of the respondents were belong to young age group, general category and having education more than graduation. Cent per cent of the ATMA personnel has attended up to 3 days training programme; 75.00 per cent of the ATMA personnels are contractual basis and had medium level of service experience. Further, the data revealed that among the 48 training titles the "training programme on Promotion of Organic Farming for Sustainable Agriculture" ranked first with a weightage mean score of 2.95, followed by "Training Programme on Good Agricultural and Allied Practices of Doubling Farmers Income" ranked second with a mean score of 2.92, and "Water Conservation Techniques to Improve Water use Efficiency" ranked third with the mean score value of 2.89.

Keywords: *ATMA personnel, profile, training need*

INTRODUCTION

In India, the public extension system has gone through many renovations and modifications in order to function as a single line agency by integrating different stakeholders, departments and organizations for improving the livelihood standards of farmers in rural areas and different models of transfer of technology are being adopted like diffusion of innovation model, farming system research/extension, integrated pest management FFS model, and farmer first farmer last (FFL) model. Decentralized extension (ATMA) model is one of its kind emerged in delivering the extension services at district level which has different categories of personnel at different levels. ATMA personnel required knowledge of agricultural technologies as well as communication skills for transfer the same to the farmers which can be achieved through training in a specific area. Knowledge and skills involved and also to develop and find appropriate resources and information to aid trained people and effective institutions are critical for achieving growth in any of the sectors, more so in the field of agriculture as it is the threshold point where in the economy, the entire farming community is dependent. The success of agricultural extension and its role in agricultural development doesn't stop its ability to transfer know-how to farmers, but also on its capacity to create active and positive interactions between agriculture and the other officials involved in the process of agricultural development in order to understand and learn from practice and help them identify and clarify where the needs and experience (Saleh, 2015).

Identifying training needs, the diagnostic phase of the training process, as the doctor could not prescribe treatment before examining the patient and identify the type of disease, it is difficult to identify persons covered by training, training objectives, and program content, and the method can give him training and objective assessment of the training activity without precise and objective training needs. (Omoregbee, 2009; Desai *et al.,* 2021; Makwana and Bhatt, 2021). The Extension Education Institute (EEI), Anand has conducted various workshops on communication and Extension Methodology for SMSs / Assistant Directors / SDAOs etc. working in T & V system of Western Zone states, line deparments, ATMA personnels. EEI, Anand is one of the four premier institutes for training of extension personnel in India. It was established on 17th September, 1962 with initial financial assis-

tance from "Ford Foundation" through Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India, New Delhi. This institute caters the training needs of Western Zone States viz. Gujarat, Mahasrastra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, UTs of Dadra Nagar Haveli, Diu and Daman. Hence, it was thought worthwhile to study the the training need of ATMA personnel.

OBJECTIVES

(1) To study the profile of the ATMA personnel

(2) To find out the training needs of theATMA personnel

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Gujarat state. The Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) is an autonomous organization responsible for technology dissemination activities at the district level which has different categories of personnel at different levels. The list of ATMA Personnel working in District and Block level was collected from the Directorate of ATMA, Gandhinagar. From that list, 50 ATMA personal from district level (PDs and DPDs) and 50 ATMA personal from block level (BTM and ATM) were selected randomly comprising the total sample of 100 respondents. The questionnaire was developed in consultation with the Extension Scientist in accordance with the objective of the study. Each respondent was asked to mention their response against the training needs on three point continuum viz 'most needed', 'needed', and 'least needed' for which a score of 3, 2 and 1 respectively was given. Mean scores were used to rate specific areas.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the ATMA personnel

The data presented in table -1, reveals that slightly more than half (51.00 per cent)of the ATMA personnels were belong to young age group, followed by 34.00 and 15.00 per cent were belong to middle and old age group, respectively. Further the data presented in the same table shows that 54.00 per cent of the ATMA personnel were having a Post Graduate degree followed by 44.00 per cent were graduated and 02.00 per cent were Ph.D. holder. The data depicted in the above table shows that almost half (49.00 per cent) of the ATMA personnel were belong to general category followed by 28.00, 12.00 and 11.00 were belonged to OBC, ST and SC category, respectively.

The data presented in table-1, shows that 75.00 per cent of the ATMA personnels are contractual basis. It is due to the ATM, BTM and DPDs working in the ATMA is generally on contractual basis while the PDs are on the permanent basis. Moreover the data regarding the service experience reveals that slightly less than three fifth (59.00 per cent) of the ATMA personnel had medium level of service experience followed by 27.00 and 14.00 per cent had low and high level of service experience respectively. The finding of this study is in line with Gummagolmath *et al.,* (2012), Nongtdu, (2012) and Das and Borua, (2017).

Table-1: Distribution of ATMA personnel according to their personal characteristics (n=100)

Sr. No.	Charactrisitics	Frequency	Per cent
1	**Age**		
	Young age (35 Yrs and below)	51	51.00
	Middle age (between 36 to 50 Yrs.)	34	34.00
	Old age (51 Yrs. and above)	15	15.00
2	**Academic qualification**		
	Graduate	44	44.00
	Post-Graduate	54	54.00
	Ph. D. Holder	02	02.00
3	**Caste /Category**		
	SC	11	11.00
	ST	12	12.00
	OBC	28	28.00
	General	49	49.00
4	**Type of Employement**		
	Permanent	25	25.00
	Contractual	75	75.00
5	**Service experience**		
	Low (Up to 3 Years)	27	27.00
	Medium (4 to 15 Years)	59	59.00
	High (More than 15 Years)	14	14.00

Training Received by the ATMA personnel

Table-2: Distribution of the respondents according training received (n=100)

Training received	Duration of the Training		
	Up to 3 Days	1 to 7 Days	Above 7 days
Attended	80	87	6
Not Attended	20	13	94

It is apparent from the above table-2, that out of 100 ATMA personnel 80 has attended up to 3 days training programme; 87 has attended 1 to 7 days trainingprogramme and only 6 personnel had attended above 7 days training programme.

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to their preference of training needs (n=100)

Sr. No	Title of the course	Mean Score	Rank
1	Training programme on promotion of organic farming for sustainable agriculture	2.95	1st
2	Training programme on good agricultural and allied practices of doubling farmers income	2.92	2nd
3	Water Conservation Techniques to Improve Water use Efficiency	2.89	3rd
4	Promotion of FPO	2.87	4th
5	Orientation training on National Mission on Agricultural Extension & Technology (NMAET)	2.85	5th
6	Integrated farming systems approach for sustainable livelihoods	2.82	6th
7	Value chain and supply chain management for enhancing profitability	2.81	7th
8	Workshop on value addition & post harvest management of agricultural & horticultural crops	2.78	8th
9	Schemes of agricultural & allied sectorsfor fta's of kisan call center & atma staff	2.77	9th
10	Training programme on communication skills for effective extension services	2.75	10th
11	Training programme on use of social media for transfer of technology	2.68	11th
12	Training programme on agri-business & marketing information systems	2.58	12th
13	Training programme on leadership development & team building skills for extension personnel	2.57	13th
14	Promotion of Natural Farming	2.56	14th
15	Workshop on pra tools & techniques for SREP Development	2.55	15th
16	NFSM, NFSM (OS & OP) and Schemes of Agriculture	2.54	16th
17	Integrated pest management (IPM) with Natural farming	2.53	17th
18	Strengthening of rainfed production system sustainable agricultural	2.52	18th
19	Training programme on development of soft skills for better performance	2.50	19th
20	Disaster management & mitigation strategies for Extension professionals	2.50	19th

The data presented in the table 2 reveals that among the training titles the "training programme on Promotion of Organic Farming for Sustainable Agriculture" ranked first with a weightage mean score of 2.95, "Training Programme on GoodAgricultural and Allied Practices of Doubling Farmers Income" ranked second with a mean score of 2.92, "Water Conservation Techniques to Improve Water use Efficiency" ranked third with the mean score value of 2.89, "Promotion of FPO" ranked forth with a mean score of 2.87 and "Orientation Training on National Mission on Agricultural Extension & Technology (NMAET)" ranked fifth with the weightage mean score value of 2.85.

CONCLUSION

The present research study has shown that the half of the ATMA personnels were belong to young age group and having a post graduate degree in agriculture; had medium level of service experience. Moreover, ATMA personnels has shown the need of the training area were "Training Programme on Promotion of Organic Farming for Sustainable Agriculture" (rank 1st), "Training Programme on Good Agricultural and Allied Practices of Doubling Farmers Income" (rank 2nd) and "Water Conservation Techniques to Improve Water use Efficiency" (rank 3rd). The first and foremost step in improving the skills of extension functionaries is to assess their training needs. It is of utmost importance to conduct need based trainings on new agricultural technologies to update knowledge and skills of ATMA extension functionaries. The training programmes for ATMA personnel should be organised keeping in view of the identified area of training need with selectively higher mean score values in order of importance. Also, in order to make the training more effective the programmes need to be conducted well in advance.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors of the paper declare no conflict of interest

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