

## **Assessment of Training Needs for Improving Professional Competencies of Extension functionaries**

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### **ABSTRACT**

A vast pool of extension workers engaged in the technology dissemination needs their knowledge and skill to be periodically updated so as to keep abreast of latest technology and modes of their dissemination in the fastly changing global and national scenario. Present research was carried out to assess the training needs of extension functionaries of state line development working in the Jammu and Kashmir State. The study sample consisted of 150 respondents. It was found that majority of the field functionaries lacked the requisite skills of the latest extension techniques regarding technology transfer. The functionaries of agricultural department needed training in diversified agricultural approaches in which wide knowledge and skill gaps were observed. Likewise respondents from animal husbandry department needed trainings in latest pharmacological development. Functionaries from department of horticulture, forestry and rural development lacked required human relation skills, which need to be updated for improving the professional competencies of the functionaries. It is, therefore, suggested to prepare the training modules best suited to the needs of the extension functionaries of the state line departments and implementation of it by the concerned training institutes.

Training is the process of acquiring specific skills to perform a job in a better way (Jucious, 1963). It helps workers to become qualified and proficient in doing jobs (Dhama, 1979). Capacity building of extension functionaries is immensely important for state like Jammu & Kashmir, where the developmental efforts have to be strengthened for sustainable livelihoods.

Jammu and Kashmir is the northern most state of India, which sprawls over on an area of 2,22,236 sq. kilometers and is divided into three regions i.e. Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Entire state is divided into different agro climatic zones i.e. sub-tropical, intermediate, temperate and cold arid. Most of the tenants are marginal to small. Though the state of Jammu & Kashmir is suffering from uncertainties like militancy, turmoil and insurgency since last two decades, state line departments are doing their excellent job in making developments in their respective fields. There is vast potential in sector

of horticulture, agriculture and forestry. State is specially known for apple production, saffron and black cumin cultivation in specific chunk of land besides the best quality scented basmati rice known worldwide. More than 25 lakh people are directly or indirectly involved in horticulture only. Extension functionaries of different line departments like agriculture, horticulture, forestry, animal husbandry and rural development are engaged in dissemination of technologies and needs to be updated time to time so that they can show their better existence in their professionals fields. Keeping in view, the research pursuit was carried out in Jammu region to assess the training needs of extension functionaries of state line department with the following specific objectives as to stratify the extension functionaries of different departments on the basis of felt training needs and to assess the extent of training needs of extension functionaries of different line departments.

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## METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was carried out in Jammu Division of Jammu and Kashmir state Jammu Division comprises of six district of which districts Jammu, Kathua and Udhampur were selected for the present investigation. From each of the selected districts, 10 field extension functionaries each from the Department of Agriculture (DOA), Department of Horticulture (DOH), Department of Animal Husbandry (DOAH), Department of Forests (DOF) and Department of Rural Development (DORD) were randomly selected. Thus, study sample consisted of 150 field functionaries i.e. 30 each from the above mentioned 5 departments. The data were collected by personally interviewing the respondents and recording their responses on a comprehensively designed interview schedule and corelated accordingly.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Stratification of the extension functionaries of different department on the basis of felt training needs.

A perusal of data presented in Table 1 indicates that the need of high training is 60 per cent for Department of Agriculture, 46.66 per cent for

Department of Horticulture , 66.67 per cent for Department of Animal Husbandry, 26.66 per cent for Department of Forests and 70 per cent for Department of Rural Development. The medium training need has been found to an extent of 23.34 per cent for Department of Agriculture, 40 per cent for Department of Horticulture , 26.66 per cent for Department of Animal Husbandry, 43.34 per cent for Department of Forests and 6.67 per cent for Department of Rural Development . As far as the low training need is concerned this need came to be 16.66 per cent for Department of Agriculture, 13.34 per cent for Department of Horticulture, 6.67 per cent for Department of Animal Husbandry, 30 per cent for Department of Forests and 23.33 for Department of Rural Development.

This table also shows that if the data from all the departments are combined then the overall high training need is 54 per cent, medium training need is 28 per cent and low training need is 18 per cent. It is a clear indicator that all the extension functionaries drawn from the various line departments require specific training in their respective fields for enhancing their professional competencies.

**Table1. Stratification of the extension functionaries of different department on the basis of felt training needs.**

S.No.	Category of Training Need	DOA		DOH		DOAH		DOF		DORD		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	High training need	18	60.00	14	46.66	20	66.67	08	26.66	21	70.00	81	54.00
2.	Medium training need	07	23.34	12	40.00	08	26.66	13	43.34	02	06.67	42	28.00
3.	Low training need	05	16.66	04	13.34	02	06.60	09	30.00	07	23.33	27	18.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>

### Extent of training needs to extension functionaries of different line department

The data presented in Table 2 illustrate the extent of training needs of extension functionaries of different line departments . For Department of Agriculture training area no. 4 i.e. latest extension techniques for technology dissemination obtained mean percent score 74.4 and ranked first . Diversified Agriculture with MPS 73.33 gained second rank and third rank was secured by training area no. 10

i.e. skill in enabling people to take collective decisions. Extension functions desired to seek knowledge of subject matter , which scored 62.33 MPS and ranked at 4<sup>th</sup> position. Modern communication technologies obtained 58.89 MPS with 5th rank. While 6th rank was gained by human relation skills with MPS 52.22 with 7th rank. Similarly 8th, 9th and 10th ranks were obtained by training areas of Developmental approaches and Latest need assessment methodologies

It is evident from the table that extension

**Table 2. Extent of training need of extension functionaries of different departments**

S.No.	Category of Training Need	DOA		DOH		DOAH		DOF		DORD		TOTAL	
		MPS	Rank	MPS	Rank	MPS	Rank	MPS	Rank	MPS	Rank	MPS	Rank
1.	Human Relation Skills	53.33	VI	64.44	II	60.00	VI	56.66	V	63.34	II	59.55	IV
2.	Diversified Agriculture/ Horticulture/ AH/Forestry /Development approaches	73.33	II	56.67	V	67.78	II	51.12	VII	48.89	VII	59.56	III
3.	Latest Need assessment methodologies e.g. PRA, PLA etc.	35.55	X	43.33	IX	41.12	IX	24.45	X	38.89	IX	36.66	X
4.	Latest extension techniques for technology dissemination/ knowledge dissemination	74.44	I	68.88	I	68.89	I	67.78	I	62.22	IV	68.44	I
5.	Knowledge of subject matter	62.23	IV	58.89	IV	61.12	V	28.89	IX	44.45	VIII	51.12	VII
6.	Modern communication technologies	58.89	V	62.22	III	54.475	VIII	58.89	III	62.22	V	59.33	V
7.	Develop- mental/ programmes/ policies	45.55	VIII	36.66	X	58.89	VII	48.89	VIII	63.33	III	50.66	VIII
8.	Managerial skills	52.22	VII	54.45	VII	36.67	X	56.67	IV	58.89	VI	51.78	VI
9.	Latest herbicide/ pharmaco logicals/ developments approaches	42.22	IX	48.88	VIII	66.67	III	66.67	II	25.54	X	50.00	IXPLA

10.	Skill in enabling people to take collective decisions	64.45	III	55.56	VI	62.23	IV	53.34	VI	67.78	I	60.67	II
<b>Total</b>		<b>56.23</b>		<b>54.99</b>		<b>57.78</b>		<b>51.34</b>		<b>53.56</b>		<b>54.78</b>	

- DOA : Department of Agriculture
- DOH : Department of Horticulture
- DOAH : Department of Animal Husbandry
- DOF : Department of Forestry
- DORD : Department of Rural Development
- MPS : Mean Percent Score

functionaries from department of Agriculture are very much concerned with latest technical know-how.

The extension functionaries from department of Horticulture also gave first preference to latest extension techniques with 68.88 MPS while human relation skills obtained IInd rank with MPS 64.44. Modern communication technologies were placed in IIIrd rank with MPS 62.22. Knowledge of subject matter secured IV rank with MPS 58.89. Diversified horticulture was given Vth rank with 56.67 MPS. Training area no. 10 gained VIth rank with MPS 55.56. Managerial skills VIIth and latest horticulture approaches VIIIth rank. The latest need assessment methodologies and developmental programs/policies were ranked IXth and Xth, respectively.

Extension functionaries from department of Animal Husbandry also didn't differ from their counterparts from Agriculture and Horticulture department in giving their top most priority to the training areas. Further, the data revealed that latest extension techniques for technology dissemination was ranked Ist with 68.69 MPS. Training area namely diversified Animal Husbandry approaches scored IInd rank followed by latest pharmacological approaches, skill in enabling people to take collective decision knowledge on subject matter, human relations, developmental policies, modern communication techniques, latest needs assessment methodologies and managerial skills.

The extension functionaries from department of Forest had more or less the similar ranking pattern. The training area no. 4 i.e. latest extension techniques ranked Ist with 67.78 MPS. Developmental approaches ranked IInd whereas modern communication technologies ranked IIIrd with MPS

66.67 and 58.78 respectively. Managerial skills Human relation skill in enabling people to make collective decisions, diversified forestry approaches occupied IVth, Vth, VIth and VIIth ranked respectively VIIIth, IXth and Xth ranks were conferred to developmental policies, knowledge of subject matter and latest need assessment methodologies, respectively. The data suggest the training area no. 4 i.e. latest extension techniques is the choicest area of training.

The ranking pattern was different for the extension functionaries of Department of Rural Development. The training area no. 10 i.e. skill in enabling people to take collective decisions was ranked Ist with 67.78 MPS followed by human relation skills, developmental policies, the latest extension techniques, modern communication techniques, managerial skills. Development approach, knowledge of subject matter, latest and assessment techniques and the latest developmental approaches were placed at ranks VIIth, VIIIth, IXth and Xth, respectively.

**Suggestions from extension functionaries**

In depth discussion with the respondents revealed following suggestions conveyed by the extension functionaries.

- Trainings should be imparted fortnightly with improvements in the existing methodologies being adopted.
- Residential facilities should be provided during the training programme to be conducted at university headquarters as well as the district headquarters/ state headquarters.
- Efforts should be made to organize practical exercises during the conduct of training programmes.

- Training chart should be formulated on location specificity and availability of extension functionaries be ensured for the same. Literature/ printed material should be ensured on the courses and subject matter should be made available to the trainees for their future reference
- Area specific extension training methodologies are periodically inculcated for ensuring efficient and effective outcomes from the trainings exercises .

### CONCLUSION

The present study showed that latest extension techniques for technology dissemination is the prominent area of training for the need for extensive training of extension personnel . As the state of Jammu and Kashmir is an agrarian state with predominant hardships of climate and political turmoil, which would provide impetus to capacity building of the extension functionaries, as well as the farmers who operate in difficult remote areas. The policy makers need to impress upon the development of such policies. State Agriculture Universities also need

to play a vital role for achievement of the goal of effective and speedy technology transfer .

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