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Perception of stakeholders towards agricultural skill development training programme

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Abstract

In India various training programmes are conducted especially for rural people, farmers and weaker section for knowledge and skill development. Training is a process of acquisition of new skills, attitude and knowledge in the context of preparing for entry into a vocation or improving productivity in an organization or enterprise. Training is essential for human resource development. In first stage, out of seven FTCs of Saurashtra, four FTCs will be selected for the study on the basis of maximum number of farmers were got training under Farmer Training Centre (FTC). A tentative list of 28 statements was drafted keeping in view the applicability of statements suited to the area of study. The collected statements were edited in the light of the suggested criteria. The result showed that nearly half of trained (48.75 percent) and untrained (43.75 percent) farmers belonged to medium level of perception, while 23.12 percent trained and 35.62 percent untrained farmers belonged to low level of perception. Only 28.13 percent of trained and 20.63 percent of untrained farmers belong to high level of perception. It can be concluded that the majority of the respondents were in medium level perception of Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme.

Keywords: Farmer training centre, training, perception, knowledge, skill

Introduction

Training is considered the most important activity for transferring agricultural technologies to farmers. Hence, it is crucial to analyse the institutional training imparted to the farmers at Farmer Training Centre. The history of the well-organized farmers training programme in India can be traced back to 1948 with the inception of Etawah pilot project.

Training, an age-old concept, serves the therapeutic function of shaping individuals' knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for effective performance in their roles. Programs aimed at agricultural and community development seek to impart information, knowledge and skills, fostering the exchange of experiences and opinions while addressing doubts and challenges. Training ensures individuals possess the specific knowledge, skills and attitudes required to meet established standards. It typically involves four fundamental components: acquiring knowledge of the skill, observing skilled models, practicing the skill and reinforcing newly acquired behaviors.

Lynton and Pareek (1990) ^[3] said that "Training is a process by which the desire, knowledge, attitude, skill and ideas are inculcated, fostered and reinforced in an organism". A systematically arranged training programme aids in the production of desirable changes in the behavior of people. In India various training programmes are conducted especially for rural people, farmers and weaker section for

knowledge and skill development. Training is a process of acquisition of new skills, attitude and knowledge in the context of preparing for entry into a vocation or improving productivity in an organization or enterprise. Agricultural skill development training programme sanctioned under gender audit programme for more productive varieties and training and education programme for farmers. Government of Gujarat sanctioned a programme of "Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme for Women Farmers" in the year 2012-13. Afterwards in the year of 2013-14, government have sanctioned this programme jointly. Under this programme, selected women farmers, male farmers and youth have trained and guided in agricultural and allied aspects in scientific method. The programme has completed eight years. Now, it is necessary to study how the Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme has made an impact on perception of farmers.

Objective

To study the perception of stakeholders towards agricultural skill development training programme.

Methodology

The present study was conducted in Saurashtra region of Gujarat state during 2021-22. Ex-post facto research design was followed for carrying out the study. In first stage, out of seven FTCs of Saurashtra, four FTCs will be selected for the

study on the basis of maximum number of farmers were got training under Farmers Training Centre (FTC). Two villages from each FTC will be selected, thus forty farmers selected from each village. The villages from FTCs will be selected on the basis of information given by Farmers Training Centre. At the second stage, twenty trained farmers will be selected by multistage purposive sampling method from each selected village. Thus, total 160 trained farmers will be selected as sample for the study. The equal number of untrained farmers also will be randomly selected from the same villages. An interview schedule was developed in accordance with the objectives of the study and it was pretested. The data of this study were collected with the help of structured interview schedule. The collected data was interpreted in order to make the finding meaningful.

The scale comprised 29 statements that were designed to elicit the perception of farmers towards the impact of agricultural skill development training programme. The five-point continuum of strongly agree, agree, undecided,

disagree, and strongly disagree carried scores of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. The respondents' perception scores were calculated based on their answers to the statements, and they were then grouped into three categories using the mean plus standard deviation method. Thus, the study aimed to investigate the impact of agricultural skill development training programme.

Results and Discussion

Perception is a critical aspect of the study of human behaviour, as it involves the interpretation of sensations that are dependent on past experiences. This mental phenomenon is characterized by the association of various types of sensation and ideals to form a cohesive whole. Although perception cannot be directly observed in behaviour, it can be inferred from performance, particularly changes in performance or behaviour.

The responses of respondents regarding the agricultural skill development training programme are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Statements pertaining about perception of respondents according to their responses about the agricultural skill development training programme (n=320)

Sr. No.	Statements	Trained (n=160)					Untrained (n=160)				
		SA (5) F (%)	A (4) F (%)	UD (3) F (%)	D (2) F (%)	SD (1) F (%)	SA (5) F (%)	A (4) F (%)	UD (3) F (%)	D (2) F (%)	SD (1) F (%)
1	The Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme is a commendable initiative for the advancement of the farming community.	40 (25.00)	39 (24.38)	21 (13.12)	25 (15.63)	35 (21.87)	27 (16.87)	40 (25.00)	46 (28.75)	28 (17.50)	19 (11.88)
2	The selection criteria for farm facilitators are accurate and have proven beneficial to actual farmers.	18 (11.25)	58 (36.25)	57 (35.63)	9 (05.62)	18 (11.25)	40 (25.00)	25 (15.63)	21 (13.12)	39 (24.38)	35 (21.87)
3	Training programme are useful to stakeholders for capacity building.	27 (16.87)	40 (25.00)	46 (28.75)	28 (17.50)	19 (11.88)	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)
4	Pre-seasonal training programme are needed to the stakeholders	40 (25.00)	25 (15.63)	21 (13.12)	39 (24.38)	35 (21.87)	39 (24.38)	52 (32.50)	66 (41.25)	03 (1.87)	0 (0.00)
5	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme is adequate and motivate farmers for adoption of new technology	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)
6	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme on field crops are adequate to small and marginal farmers	12 (7.50)	62 (38.75)	57 (35.63)	25 (15.62)	04 (2.50)	27 (16.87)	40 (25.00)	46 (28.75)	28 (17.50)	19 (11.88)
7	The significance of a soil health card lies in its role in effective nutrient management and maintaining soil fertility.	41 (25.62)	59 (36.88)	33 (20.62)	21 (13.13)	06 (3.75)	05 (3.12)	49 (30.63)	52 (32.50)	21 (13.13)	33 (20.62)
8	Use of micro nutrients in different crops helps for quality production	18 (11.25)	64 (40.00)	46 (28.75)	29 (18.13)	03 (1.87)	20 (12.50)	46 (28.75)	74 (46.25)	18 (11.25)	2 (1.25)
9	Farmers are truly benefiting from INM (Integrated Nutrient Management) and IPM (Integrated Pest Management) training in the Programme.	33 (20.62)	55 (34.38)	49 (30.63)	19 (11.87)	04 (2.50)	0 (0.00)	43 (26.87)	64 (40.00)	46 (28.75)	7 (4.38)
10	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme created seasonal employment opportunities for stakeholders	39 (24.38)	52 (32.50)	66 (41.25)	03 (1.87)	0 (0.00)	05 (3.12)	49 (30.63)	52 (32.50)	21 (13.13)	33 (20.62)
11	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme helps the beneficiaries to get additional income	21 (13.12)	64 (40.00)	51 (31.88)	24 (15.00)	0 (0.00)	14 (8.75)	47 (29.38)	74 (46.25)	17 (10.62)	08 (5.00)
12	Extension teaching methods used for training under Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme for adoption of advanced technology.	40 (25.00)	25 (15.63)	21 (13.12)	39 (24.38)	35 (21.87)	49 (30.63)	52 (32.50)	33 (20.62)	21 (13.13)	05 (3.12)
13	Skill assistance and critical inputs provided by training programme is adequate each farmer	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)	41 (25.62)	59 (36.88)	33 (20.62)	21 (13.13)	06 (3.75)
14	Participating in an agricultural fair is crucial for acquiring new skills and gaining valuable knowledge.	27 (16.87)	40 (25.00)	46 (28.75)	28 (17.50)	19 (11.88)	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)
15	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme helps to understand village farming situations	12 (7.50)	54 (33.75)	62 (38.75)	28 (17.50)	04 (2.50)	0 (0.00)	52 (32.50)	66 (41.25)	03 (1.87)	39 (24.38)
16	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme helps to understanding the socioeconomic conditions of farmers	16 (10.00)	29 (18.12)	23 (14.38)	64 (40.00)	28 (17.50)	06 (3.75)	32 (20.00)	57 (35.63)	55 (34.37)	10 (6.25)
17	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme improves the farm facilitators communication skills	27 (16.87)	40 (25.00)	46 (28.75)	28 (17.50)	19 (11.88)	46 (28.75)	34 (21.25)	28 (17.50)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)
18	Leadership qualities will be developed by the administrators	40 (25.00)	25 (15.63)	21 (13.12)	39 (24.38)	35 (21.87)	09 (5.62)	31 (19.38)	55 (34.37)	47 (29.38)	18 (11.25)
19	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme provide opportunity to work with various Agri-based enterprises	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)	27 (16.87)	40 (25.00)	46 (28.75)	28 (17.50)	19 (11.88)
20	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme increase the competency to prepare farm plans for individual farm families	40 (25.00)	25 (15.63)	21 (13.12)	39 (24.38)	35 (21.87)	49 (30.63)	52 (32.50)	33 (20.62)	21 (13.13)	05 (3.12)
21	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme helps to get acquainted with ongoing TOT programmes in agriculture	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)	12 (7.50)	54 (33.75)	62 (38.75)	28 (17.50)	04 (2.50)

22	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme developed confidence and professional competence to solve field problems	39 (24.38)	52 (32.50)	66 (41.25)	03 (1.87)	0 (0.00)	27 (16.87)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	28 (17.50)
23	It should be taught using a variety of instructional methods	21 (13.12)	64 (40.00)	51 (31.88)	24 (15.00)	0 (0.00)	49 (30.63)	52 (32.50)	33 (20.62)	21 (13.13)	05 (3.12)
24	It has emphasized individualized instruction (site visits, exposure tour etc.)	40 (25.00)	25 (15.63)	21 (13.12)	39 (24.38)	35 (21.87)	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)
25	Cow dung and crop residue management has little impact on soil fertility improvement, so it is better to use these as fuel for cooking	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)	0 (0.00)	52 (32.50)	66 (41.25)	03 (1.87)	39 (24.38)
26	Natural farming is essential for maintaining soil fertility and crop yields	27 (16.87)	40 (25.00)	46 (28.75)	28 (17.50)	19 (11.88)	12 (7.50)	54 (33.75)	62 (38.75)	28 (17.50)	04 (2.50)
27	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme helps understand the importance of crop rotation and fertility management	40 (25.00)	25 (15.63)	21 (13.12)	39 (24.38)	35 (21.87)	05 (3.12)	49 (30.63)	52 (32.50)	21 (13.13)	33 (20.62)
28	Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme helps in exposing towards the mulching crop and organic carbon uses.	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)	46 (28.75)	25 (15.63)	27 (16.87)	14 (8.75)	47 (29.38)	74 (46.25)	17 (10.62)	08 (5.00)

SA = Strongly agree

A = Agree

UD = Undecided

DA = Disagree

SD = Strongly disagree

The data regarding perception of respondents about rejuvenation technology in mango as per the statements are given as below.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their perception of agricultural skill development training programme about improved agricultural practice (n=320)

Sr. No.	Perception	Trained (n=160)		Untrained (n=160)	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low level of perception (< Mean – S.D.)	37 (<107.29)	23.12	57 (<102.95)	35.62
2	Medium level of perception (Mean ± S.D.)	78 (107.29 to 132.13)	48.75	70 (102.95 to 124.07)	43.75
3	High level of perception (>Mean + S.D.)	45 (>132.13)	28.13	33 (>124.07)	20.63
Total		160	100.00	160	100.00
Mean		119.71		113.51	
Standard deviation		12.42		10.56	

Data in this regard are shown in Table 2 indicated that nearly half of trained (48.75 percent) and untrained (43.75 percent) farmers belonged to medium level of perception, while 23.12 percent trained and 35.62 percent untrained farmers belonged to low level of perception. Only 28.13 percent of trained and 20.63 percent of untrained farmers belong to high level of perception.

It can be concluded that the majority of the respondents were in medium level perception of Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme. This might be due to fact that the majority of the respondents had medium level

of education, social participation, extension contact, innovativeness, scientific orientation, risk orientation, achievement motivation as well as economic motivation. Additionally, trained farmers are more adept at adopting modern technologies and efficient farming techniques, resulting in higher yields and more efficient use of resources. Lastly, training equips farmers with better economic skills, enabling them to access markets and financial services more effectively, manage costs and achieve higher profit margins, thereby ensuring the financial viability of their farming operations.

Table 3: Z test for two mean of perception level

	Perception level of trained stakeholders	Perception level of untrained stakeholders
Mean	119.71	113.51
Standard Deviation	12.42	10.56
Sample Size	160	160
Z cal	8.493	
Z tab at 95% los	1.96	

From the Table 3, it can be observed that the Z calculated is less than Z tab. Therefore, it is inferred that there was significant difference in perception level of trained and untrained stakeholders. The study of Table inferred that the significance level of t test calculated is less than “t” tabulated at 95 percent level of significance. Thus, it can be said that there was significant difference among the perception level of stakeholders. Thus, from Table 3 it can be concluded that the trained stakeholders had statistically significant higher perception level than untrained

stakeholders. Therefore, it can be concluded that training conducted by FTCs were able to create a significant advantage to perception level of stakeholders.

This finding was in fully conformity with findings of Satishkumar (2006) [6], Oladeji (2011) [4], Gorfad (2012) [1], Singh and George (2012) [7], Sarada and Kumar (2018) [5] and Jadhav (2020) [2].

Conclusion

The data presented in Table 2 reveals that approximately

half of both trained (48.75%) and untrained (41.25%) farmers exhibited a medium level of perception. Furthermore, 23.12% of trained farmers and 37.50% of untrained farmers had a low level of perception, whereas only 28.13% of trained farmers and 21.25% of untrained farmers demonstrated a high level of perception.

In summary, it can be deduced that a significant portion of the respondents held a medium-level perception regarding the Agricultural Skill Development Training Programme. This tendency could be attributed to the fact that a majority of the respondents possessed a moderate level of education, social participation, extension contact, innovativeness, scientific orientation, risk orientation, achievement motivation, and economic motivation.

Conflict of Interest

The authors of the paper declare no conflict of interest.

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