

TRAINING NEEDS FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN FARMERS AND RURAL YOUTH OF JAMMU & SAMBA DISTRICTS OF UT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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Abstract

Training is a indispensable instrument for HRD at any level and cannot be ignored. First and foremost activity for planning a good training programme is to access the local needs. Need assessment helps to indentify the present problems and future challenges to be met through training and development. The present study was conducted in four rural tehsils of Jammu & Samba districts of UT of J&K. From each selected tehsil, 25 farm families were randomly selected. Thus a total of hundred farm women respondents were selected for data collection. The villages were purposively selected, as they wherein consultance with KVK's operational in the area. For the study specific and relevant trainings needs were collected by administering interview schedules for data collection. The farm women responses were collected on a three-point continuum scale. The results reveal that maximum respondents sought trainings in area of " income generating activities for empowerment" and "Stitching, tailoring and handicraft making" (58% and 55% respectively) as most sought after training needs assessment in both the districts under study. This was followed by "marketing and branding of value added products." (53%), "value addition", "kitchen gardening" "post harvest technology" and Gender mainstreaming through SHG formation were reportedly other activities in demand. Thus requiring stake holders to prioritize and readdress through specialized interventions.

Keywords: Training needs assessment, women empowerment.



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INTRODUCTION

Training assumes special recognition in view of growing sophistications in agri and allied technologies. It is a process of acquisition of new skills, attitude and knowledge in context of preparing for entering into a vocation or enhancing one's productivity in an organization or in an enterprise. Training is an important process of Capacity Building of an individual so as to

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improve his or her performance. The first and foremost step for planning a good training programme is to assess its needs, Lynton & Pareek, (1990), stated that training consists of well organized opportunities for participants to acquire the necessary understanding and skill. However no training programme would bring changes in the behaviour, knowledge, attitude and practices and other behavioural aspects unless it is a need based training module. Training needs assessment is one of the crucial steps towards identifying the area of farmer interest, design and development of curriculum that can best suit to the existing real conditions of farmers. Barbazette, (2006) noted that before any actual training is conducted, the training institute must determine why and how of training. Training need assessment process helps to determine the priority of changes in knowledge, skill, attitude and behaviour that will provide greatest impact on achieving organizational and individual goals. Today there is a growing realization and commitment of global community to achieve more sustainable and broad Agricultural growth by addressing gender related issues in agriculture through National, Regional, and Global initiatives. Training needs of women farmers have been operationalised on felt needs regarding various subject matter areas of agricultural production and allied farming technologies which can be readdressed through specialized training programmes/interventions owing. Rural women with multiple roles and responsibilities at farm and household require technologies to reduce their work stress and improve agricultural productivity, family nutrition and cash flow. Despite their high involvement in agriculture, women lack adequate knowledge and technical competency related to technological advances. In order to make any training meaningful it is imperative on the part of training organizers to identify the training need of women farmer based on which a suitable training module can be developed so that appropriate training is given to right people in right form at right time. So that degree of Productivity and Profitability can be achieved. A systematic process of farmers training thus must include need assessment, role and objective setting, organizing instructional methods and techniques and monitoring and evaluation (Caffaula, 2002).

1. Material and Methods:

The present study was conducted in four rural tehsil of Jammu and Samba districts of UT of J&K. From each selected tehsil 25 farm families were randomly selected. Thus total of hundred farm women respondents were selected for data collection. The villages were purposively selected, as they wherein consultancy with KVK's operational in the area. For

the study specific and relevant training needs were assessed and pretested interview schedules were administered for data collection. In this regard, women were requested to respond to three response categories i.e. very important (V.I), Important (I), not important (N.I) Under each major perceived trainings need for providing training to them for further improvement in their livelihood and farming system. The data was collected through well structured pretested interview schedule in the light of objectives of the study. The selected respondent were interviewed extensively to objectively review the responses. Participant observation technique was also employed to increase the objectivity of information and thereafter responses were recorded.

For the present study an extensive training- need, Item list pertaining to women area of interest, skill and work in farm and home was collected by reviewing literature available, discussion with extension functionaries, ICDS field staff, community mobilizers operational in the area and investigators zone field experiences.

Results and Discussion:

The farm women responses were collected in a three-point continuum scale, as Very Important (VI), Important (I), Not Important (N.I) by assigning scores 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Results were calculated as weighted scores for each specific and relevant training need item weighted scores were calculated as

$$(WS = \frac{(No\ of\ VI \times 3) + (No\ of\ I \times 2) + (NI \times 1)}{Total\ number\ VI + I + NI})$$

Weighted score in the range of two to three were ranked within each training item and first five rankings were identified as training needs of the farmers of the district.

Table: weighted scores (1-3 Scale) of training needs of rural farmers.					
Training needs		VI*	I*	N.I *	W.S*
S. No.	Courses				
1.	Women health nutrition and child care	36	23	41	1.95
2.	Rural crafts	18	37	45	1.73
3.	Value addition/processing of milk products	38	20	42	1.96
4.	Gender mainstreaming though S.H.G's.	22	38	40	1.82
5.	Storage loss minimization techniques	29	32	39	1.90
6.	Household food and nutritional security by kitchen gardening.	45	33	22	2.23

7.	Income generating activities for empowerment.	58	25	17	2.41
8.	Drudgery reducing technology	13	43	44	1.69
9.	Small scale processing and value addition	30	23	47	1.83
10.	Formation and management S.H.Gs	43	31	26	2.17
11.	Post harvest technology	44	15	41	2.03
12.	Marketing and Branding of Value Added Products	53	25	22	2.31
13.	Stitching, Tailoring/Handicraft	55	24	21	2.34

VI*, I=Important, NI=Not Important, W.S.- Weighted Score.

2. Training on Stitching, tailoring & handicraft making, and Income generating activities for Empowerment on rural women (58% and 55% respectively) was found to be most sought after training need of the women in rural tehsils of both the districts. Marketing techniques and branding of locally processed/ value added products from fruits, vegetables, milk etc were other areas of high demand (53%,and 44%) among women farmers. Training need in post harvest technology (44%)was also high. A large number (43%) were found to be interested in acquiring information and training with regard to formation of SHGs for micro finance availability, as few government and public sector organization were operational in the area supporting self help group formation. However owing to unreliability of the Naïve farm women on private organizations, they were anxious in getting training in this particular area as they viewed SHG to play an important role in providing credit facility readily to women for small entrepreneurial ventures and their day to day needs. These findings were also reported by Sanjeev and Singha (2010) while analyzing training needs of farmers of Arunachal Pradesh. This was followed by training on Post harvest technology (44%) and micro processing. Similar results were reported by Sharma et. Al. 2010 while assessing training needs for empowerment of rural women of Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. Training on kitchen gardening was also demanded by a large number of women farmers (45%) as another area of importance, Owing to continuous supply of fresh safe organic fruits and vegetables round a year for family consumption and its economic gain and in some cases home-scale processing and value addition for future use.

Conclusion:

It is evident from the results that the large majority of rural women were interested in attending the trainings which could provide them opportunities for raising their economic status and make them economically independent and socially empowered. Therefore they

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were receptive to wide variety of Agri Enterprises such as Skill training in micro processing, Value addition, Stitching, and Tailoring, Handicraft making, Mushroom production and Beekeeping, Kitchen gardening etc. Respondents were of the view that such trainings do empower them by not only gaining knowledge but also motivate them to translate this knowledge into action for sustainable living by creating and additional generating avenue for them.

Recommendations:

Based on the finding of the study, it is recommended that both theoretical and practical/hands on training should be emphasized for farm women and rural youth through proper assessment of needs in the training areas such as Marketing, Packaging and Branding of various value added products and formation and management of SHGs should be given due place and importance while planning training courses for the target groups Respondents high demand (53%) towards training/capacity building inputs for marketing and branding of wide variety of value added products significantly indicate the rediness of rural women towards entrepreneurial endeavours. There is a need to orient the training agencies to fill the existing gap with respect to imparting need based trainings. The concerned stakeholders should emphasize on the specific needs identified by the study through their efforts.

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