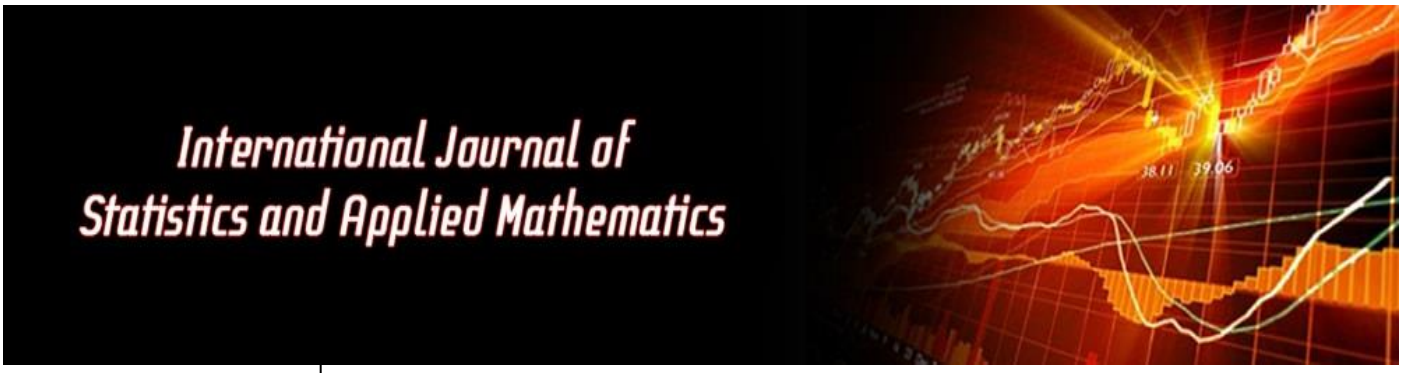

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Bridging the gap: Exploring farmer feedback on agricultural extension training

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Abstract
The study was conducted to investigate farmer's perceptions and response towards agricultural extension training programmes**.** The sample comprised of 101 trainees who attained training at Directorate of extension Education, Dr YS Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry. The result of the study presented that the information provided in training sessions was perceived relevant by the trainee farmers. Most of the farmers agreed that training needs are realistic, useful and based on farming training programme. Respondents also agreed that their performance has increased after attending training programmes. Majority of the farmers enjoy the training session. Training programme increase both farm productivity and quality of farm productivity. The study dismisses the notion that extension is inefficient, ineffective and invisible. The overall finding suggests that the most of farmers believe that the extension training help to increase productivity and quality of farm quantity. On the other hand, the study found that trainers take too lengthy lectures and most of the training sessions are unplanned. Unplanned. The study also reported that there is lack of motivation and encouragement in training session.

Keywords: Training, farmer perception, productivity, challenges

Introduction
A training program is one of the remedies for organizational sluggishness, which can result from organizational inertia. Training is also defined as the systematic process of acquiring knowledge and/or skills for a specific purpose. The purpose of training is to provide an individual with a relatively permanent change that will improve his or her ability to perform on the job. Human resources are mainly procured and hired by the personnel department. To ensure that newly hired employees are competent for the jobs they will be handled, training should be imparted to them after they join the organization. Training is widely recognized as a necessity in modern industrial environments to keep employees abreast of technological advances. It is imperative that every company has a training program for its employees in order to develop them and help them grow. There is a difference between 'training' and 'development', as the former refers to teaching specific skills and the latter to developing an employee's overall personality. There are various methods of training and development used by various organizations, especially those involved in business and industry. Engaging your employees goes beyond your organization's goals. Career advancement and job security are both enhanced by this arrangement. In addition to being an asset to the organization, a skill acquired through training is also an asset to its employees. Investing in training pays off for a very long time. Technology may cause training to become obsolete only when it completely eliminates the desired skills and knowledge. A change in technology, a demanding customer, an emphasis on productivity, improved motivation, accuracy of output, and better management can all lead to the need for training.
An intensive learning activity, led by competent trainers for a selected group of farmers, is referred to as farmers' training. It involves understanding and practicing the skills needed to adopt new technologies in an environment where adequate facilities are available and at a time and duration considered appropriate by farmer.
Kilpatrick (1997) [11] investigated the impact of education and training on farm management practices. Farmers are more likely to make successful changes in their management practices when they receive training and education.

According to the study, training events provide participants with the opportunity to interact with expert trainers. Educators should design education and training programs to provide opportunities for interaction and skills sharing.

Objective

1. To assess the feedback on training conducted.
2. To study the perception of farmers towards the training program.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Dr Yashwant Singh Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry, Nauni, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. For this study, the population consisted of farmers who received training at Directorate of Extension Education UHF Nauni, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. The sample size is of 101 farmers. Both primary and secondary have been collected for the present study. Primary data for the study was collected through personal interview method using structured questionnaire and by interacting with the farmers. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part 'A' was designed to seek information on the demographic variables such as name, gender. Age income etc. Part 'B' consisted of general views and statements based on likert scale to evaluate the farmer's attitude, awareness, problems, challenges, farmer's opinion, farmer's expected satisfaction level etc.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Author own compilation from survey. Gender wise classification of the respondents.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	74	73.26
Female	27	26.74
Total	101	100

Table 2: Author own compilation from survey. Age wise classification of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
less than 18	1	0.99
19-30	38	37.62
31-50	57	56.44
above 50	5	4.95
Total	101	100

Table 3: Author own compilation from survey. Annual family income of respondents

Family income	Frequency	Percentage
less than 1 lakh	65	64.94
1-2 lakh	17	16.36
2-3 lakh	9	8.9
4-5 lakh	5	4.9
More than 5 lakh	5	4.9
total	101	100

Table 4: Author own compilation from survey. Educational status wise distribution of respondents

Educational status	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	50	49.51
Primary	31	30.7
Middle	14	13.89
Secondary	6	5.9
Graduate	0	0
Above Graduate	0	0
Total	101	100

A sample of 101 individuals is presented in the table. There are 73.26% of male participants and 26.74% of female participants, according to the gender distribution. Majority of participants (56.44%) are between 31 and 50 years of age, with few participants under 18 (0.99%) or over 50 (4.95%). A substantial percentage (64.94%) of families earn less than 1 lakh, with smaller percentages in higher income brackets. Nearly half (49.51%) of the sample lacks a primary education, while 30.7% have completed secondary education. One interesting finding is that none of the sample members are graduates or above.

Table 5: Occupational status of the respondents

Occupational status	Frequency	Percentage
Private job	16	15.84
Business	14	13.87
Government job	1	0.99
Only agriculture	70	69.3
Total	101	100

Table 6: Land holding status of respondents

Land holding	Frequency	Percentage
less than 5	45	44.59
6 to 10	46	45.61
11 to 30	7	6.9
more than 30	3	2.9
Total	101	100

Table 7: Experience status of respondent's reference to farming

Experience status	Frequency	Percentage
less than 5 year	65	64.45
5 to 10	17	16.85
10 to 15	9	8.9
15 to 20	5	4.9
more than 20	5	4.9
total	101	100

Table 8: Family member's involvement in farming of respondents

Family member	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 2	13	12.87
2 to 4	68	67.34
4 to 6	12	11.89
More than 6	8	7.9
Total	101	100

The data provide insights into the occupational status, landholdings, experience, and family size of the surveyed individuals. According to survey respondents, agriculture accounts for 69.3% of their occupations, followed by private employment (15.84%) and business (13.87%). Almost no government employees are employed (0.99%). A balanced distribution of landholdings is observed, with 45% holding less than 5 acres, and 45.61% having 6 to 10 acres. The majority of respondents (64.45%) do not have more than five years of experience, and the majority (67.34%) have two to four family members. Agricultural extension and support programs need to be tailored to the diverse needs and characteristics of farmers in order to be effective.

Table 9: Importance of Farmer Training

Training program is beneficial	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	97	96.2
No	2	1.9
Can't say	2	1.9
total	101	100

Table 10: Number of training programmes attended by respondents

Training programmes attended by farmers	Frequency	Percentage
2	65	64.35
2 to 3	34	33.67
3 to 4	2	1.98
4 to 5	0	0
More than 5	0	0
Total	101	100

Table 11: Training expectations of respondents

Understand by training	Frequency	Percentage
learning about their interest	16	15.9
knowledge about new technology	4	3.9
getting practical knowledge	9	8.9
all of the above	72	71.3
Total	101	100

Table 12: Training method preferred

Types of training	Frequency	Percentage
workshop	8	15.9
field experiments (practical work)	91	3.9
Camping	1	8.9
Online training	1	71.3
Total	101	100

Table 13: Improved efficiency due to training programmes

Improved efficiency	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	97	96.03
No	3	2.98
Never	1	0.99
Can't say	0	0
Total	101	100

Table 13: Regular updates regarding training programme

Regular updates	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	79	78.21
No	22	21.79
Total	101	100

Table 14: Nature of training programme

Nature of training	Frequency	Percentage
Mostly related to work	83	82.17
General	18	17.83
Not related to work	0	0
Useless or of no use	0	0
Total	101	100

In addition to providing information regarding the perceived advantages and various aspects of training programs, the above table presents data about the nature and types of training that farmers attend. Frequencies and percentages for each category are provided based on data collected from a sample of 101 farmers. A majority of respondents (96.2%) stated that the training program was beneficial to them. There is a large variation in frequency of training programs attended by farmers, with 2 training programs being the most common (64.35%), followed by 2 to 3 programs (33.67%). Majority of farmers (71.3%) selected "all of the above," indicating a diverse range of understandings, including learning about their interests, learning about new technology, and gaining practical knowledge. There was a wide variety of training types reported by farmers, with the highest percentage (71.3%) reporting online training, and the lowest percentage (15.9%) attending workshops and camping (8.9%). A significant majority (96.03%) of those who attended the training program commented on improved efficiency. A substantial percentage (78.21%) of respondents said they would like to receive regular updates. In addition, most respondents considered their training to be mainly work-related (82.17%), followed by a smaller proportion who considered it more general (17.83%). Most farmers have a positive perception of the training program, increasing efficiency and understanding of the content. There is also a preference for online training and a need for regular updates among participants in the study.

Table 15: Farmer's views for problems during training session

S. No.	Statements	Total Responses					Total Score (code*TR)	Mean	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1			
1	Takes too much time of farmers	62	11	1	20	7	202	2	1.43
2	Training Sessions are unplanned	66	16	4	10	5	175	1.73	1.21
3	Boring and not useful	66	20	8	4	3	161	1.59	1
4	Training staff are not cooperative and not trained	72	13	1	6	9	170	1.68	1.29
5	Lack of motivation among farmers about training	60	15	2	15	9	201	1.99	1.42
6	Irregularity of trainee's attendance	61	16	6	9	9	192	1.9	1.35

5 Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - No response, 2 - Disagree and 1 - Strongly Disagree

Table depicts the farmer's views for training sessions. As a result of a mean analysis, the statement "takes too much time from farmers" scored the highest (M=2.00), followed by a lack of motivation among farmers about training (M=1.99), irregularity in trainee attendance (M=1.9), unplanned training sessions (M=1.73), ineffective training staff (M=1.68), boring and ineffective training sessions (M=1.59). According to further analysis, all the mean values for all the statements are above the average mean of (M=1.82), suggesting that farmers are agreeable to all statements regarding farmer problems during training sessions. Clearly, the majority of trainees face problems during training that need to be addressed by authorities, based on the results of the analysis.

Table 16: Quality of training programme of respondents

Quality of training program	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	66	65.34
Good	29	28.71
Normal	5	4.96
Bad	0	0
Worst	1	0.99
Can't rate	0	0
total	101	100

Table 17: Training helps to increase Motivation level of Farmers

Motivation level of farmers	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	101	100
No	0	0
Total	101	100

Table 18: Respondents satisfied with present method of training

Satisfied with present method of training	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	99	98.01
No	2	1.99
Total	101	100

As for the training program's quality, 65.34 percent of farmers rated it "Excellent," while 28.71% rated it "Good." Only a small percentage of respondents rated the quality as "Normal" (4.96%), and a small proportion rated it as "Worst" (0.99%). The high level of positive perception regarding the quality of the training program was evident from the fact that none of the respondents reported a "Bad" quality rating. The farmers were all motivated (100%) according to the survey, which indicates a high level of motivation and commitment. There is a very small percentage (1.99%) of farmers who are dissatisfied with the current training method, while the majority of farmers (98.01%) are satisfied. There is strong satisfaction with the current training approach as demonstrated by this finding. In general, the data indicates that the training program is of high quality, and farmers are highly motivated and satisfied with it. Clearly, participating farmers are motivated and satisfied by the training program, which demonstrates its effectiveness and well-receivedness.

Table 19: Perception of respondents towards training session

S. No	Statements	Total Responses					Total Score (Code*TR)	Mean	S.D
		5	4	3	2	1			
1	The information provided by trainer during the training session are relevant	78	19	0	3	1	473	4.68	0.72
2	Training needs identified are realistic and useful	74	26	0	0	1	475	4.73	0.57
3	Training result in better performance	80	20	1	0	0	483	4.78	0.43
4	Do you enjoy the training session	79	21	1	0	0	482	4.77	0.44
5	Training session was a positive experience	81	20	0	0	0	485	4.8	0.4
6	Training program helped to increase both the farm productivity and quality of farm quantity	76	19	6	0	0	474	4.69	0.57
7	Would you like to get training from this institute again	86	14	1	0	0	489	4.84	0.39

5 Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - No response, 2 - Disagree and 1 - Strongly Disagree

Relevant information provided by trainer

There is an analysis of farmers' perceptions regarding the trainer's statement that training provided by him is relevant. The majority of respondents (77.22 percent) either strongly agree or agree (18.81 percent) with the statement. Based on the aggregate responses, the mean score is 4.68, indicating that the responses are skewed toward agreement.

Training needs identified is realistic and useful

Significant majority of the respondents (73.26 per cent) either strongly agree or agree (M=25.74) with the statement. The mean score of the responses is (M = 4.73).

Training result in better performance

Farmers' performance is improved by training. 79.20 percent of respondents strongly agree or agree with the statement that training increases performance. The mean score of the responses (M=4.78) indicates the tendency towards agreeability.

Training session is enjoyable

There is a high level of satisfaction with training sessions among respondents (78.21%). As shown by the result (M = 4.77), the results are in line with the results of the survey.

Positive experience

All the respondent trainees either strongly agree or agree with the statement that training was a positive experience. The mean score of the response (M= 4.8).

Training program helped to increase both the farm productivity and quality of farm quantity

The perceptions of the farmers regarding the statement that training program helped to increase both the farm productivity and quality of farm quantity have been depicted in table 4.20. Out of the total number of respondents 84.14 per cent believe that the training program helped to increase both the farm productivity and quality of farm quantity. The mean value of the statement is 4.69 which shows the inclination of responses towards agreement.

Would you like to get training from this institute again?

All the respondent trainees either strongly agree or agree with this statement. The mean score of the response (M= 4.84).

Conclusions

According to the study, trainee farmers perceived training sessions as containing relevant information. It has been agreed by most farmers that training needs are realistic, useful, and based on farming training programs. A majority of respondents agreed that they have been able to improve their performance after attending training programs. Training sessions are generally enjoyed by farmers. Agricultural training increases both the productivity and the quality of agricultural production. Trainers, on the other hand, are too longwinded and most training sessions are unplanned, according to respondents. In training sessions, other farmers do not motivate or encourage the trainees. Based on the study's findings, farmers perceive certain extension methods to be effective. Visits to farms are crucial for dissemination of extension massages, and they should be encouraged. Positive impact can be achieved through meaningful and purposeful visits. The impact of agricultural extension education on farmers and farming communities at large can only be achieved if all stakeholders work together and plan together. Compared with other types of education, extension education is efficient, effective, and invisible, according to the study. Due to this, most farmers find the training sessions enjoyable, gain positive experiences from the training, and feel motivated to attend this institute's training sessions again in the future.

Suggestions

An extensive majority of farmers believe that extension education plays a key role in enhancing both productivity and quality of farm produce. To ensure that trainees are encouraged and motivated, training sessions need to be meticulously planned, not only informative, but also motivational and encouraging. Furthermore, adequate

resources need to be provided to trainees to enhance the quality of extension education services, which will make the training process more effective and conducive to knowledge enrichment. Agricultural Extension Officers should be encouraged to employ a diverse range of instructional techniques, and farmers should be introduced to various learning methods that can facilitate more efficient information transfer. Also, Krishi Vigyan Kendra's (KVKs) should intensify their efforts in imparting training and promoting improved agricultural practices as a result of this study. Consequently, several evaluation systems should be used in extension activities in order to enhance dissemination of knowledge and best practices.

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