



TRAINING NEED ASSESSMENT OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS OF THE FARMER PRODUCER COMPANIES IN HASSAN DISTRICTS OF KARNATAKA

Manikanta* Dr.Jagadeesh Babu,H.K**

**Research Scholar Department of Studies and Research in Public Administration, KSOU, Mukthagangothri, Mysore -570006,Karnataka.*

***Supervisor and Head of the Department of Studies and Research in Public Administration, KSOU, Mukthagangothri, Mysore-577006.*

Abstract

The Farmer Producer Organizations plays a vital role for upliftment of farmer community. The farmers are facing challenges such as reduced land holdings, globalization, unpredictable weather conditions due to climate change, less value realization of Agri produce. In spite of the government vision for these producer companies are in many places observed to be not working as expected. The sustainability and viability of these producer companies are in doubt and hence it is believed that training of BODs and members shall help them to overcome these problems by offering certain training interventions. Hence this study has attempted to identify the training needs and gaps in the functioning of FPOs. The study revealed that, more than the demographic attributes prior training experiences exert an influence on the training assessment and hence need to be considered while designing the appropriate training modules. Water management and crop-based training for better production receives highest relevance amongst all types of training areas for farmer members. Hence there is an urgent need for incentives for effective functioning of this organization for the betterment of FPOs in the future.

Keywords: Farmer Producer Companies, Training Assessment, Sustainability of producer.

1. Introduction

Farmers' Organizations are seen as a useful organizational mechanism for mobilizing farmers' collective self-help action aimed at improving their own economic and social situation and that of their communities. Such organizations were perceived to have the ability to generate resources from their members. They could operate at different levels from the local to the national. Many governmental and non-governmental organizations have been trying to organize farmers into groups and integrate them into the development process by actively involving them in the transfer of technology, production, marketing, planning, implementing and monitoring of different projects on rural development, agriculture, and allied sector development, natural resource management, etc. Some of the popular examples of Farmers' Interest Groups (FIGs)/Farmers' Organizations (FOs) under the National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP), Farmers' federation under UPDASP, Watershed Associations under Participatory Watershed Management Programs, VanasamrakshanaSameti under Joint Forest Management Projects, Farmers' Clubs under NABARD scheme, Self-Help Groups of farmers organized by MYRADA and CEAD in Andhra Pradesh and Rythu Mithra Groups (RMG) in Andhra Pradesh are some of the initiatives taken to mobilize and organize the farmers. The Kerala Horticultural Development Programme (KHDP) formed Self Help Groups (SHGs) of vegetable and fruit growers to help and promote new technology and participatory technology development (PTD) skills, to help farmers access credit and strengthen their negotiating power through collective marketing, namely the Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council, Kerala.



Farmers' organizations of all types have an important role in development – they provide space for participation, which contributes to group members' ownership of the issue at one hand as well as any solutions. This in turn builds group cohesiveness and solidarity and promotes mutual support. They can be the platform for building a sense of community, a social support system, increasing self-confidence, learning together and providing a sense of equality. A well-organized group can be taken seriously in a wider environment. Groups with common interests can secure access to services that individuals cannot such as training, credit or equipment, infrastructure etc. Lack of access to any of these could be the vital issue that an individual farmer faces. This is particularly the case where farmers organize as a response to marketing concerns, as there are clear economic benefits of working in groups. These include the ability of groups to buy inputs in bulk, access 5 more distant markets and access to information. Working together can increase members' bargaining power, which helps to share, and lower risks and costs. In areas where farmers are scattered geographically, and transport and communications are difficult, the importance of such organizations is even greater. Everywhere in the world, a limited number of farmers are collaborating in some way or the other and forming groups for sharing information and working together. Under the right circumstances, farmers' groups can make a very positive difference to the lives of those working to improve their livelihood options as well as to the sustainable development of agriculture. Working together can take many forms, and a variety of terms are used to cover the scope of this idea – collective action, farmers' organizations, women's groups, unions, co-operatives, self-help groups, networks, alliances, associations, committees, clubs, partnerships etc. These terms imply a range of methods for joining forces, at different levels, in a variety of sizes and scopes, with different aims or with different legal statuses.

Training Need Assessment (Sajeev and Singh, 2010) · Training needs analysis is one of the important steps towards identifying the area of farmer's interest, design & development of curriculum that can be best suit to the existing condition of the farmers. Though training need identification should be done internally Aghai (2012) pointed out that identification of training need often remains the responsibility of outside training operators. Effective training requires a clear picture of how the trainees will need to use information after training in place of local practices.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Study Area

Karnataka State is one of the top states for FPC establishment and the number of successful FPCs, the study was carried out to find out of the training needs of the farmer producer organisations and farmer members in the study area. The primary goal is to examine training needs of the Farmer producer organisations and member farmers.

2.2 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The ex-post facto research design of social research was used for the present study. Three FPOs, namely Chennambika FPO, Mosalehosalli, Hassan, Yagachi Horticulture Former Producer Organisation, Hebbala, Belur and Sri Manjunatheshwara- HFPC, Nuggehalli, Chennarayapatna was selected purposively. Primary data were collected by using a well-structured interview schedule from sample respondents. A total of 30 member farmers and Board of directors from the functioning area of FPO were randomly chosen to find out training needs of FPO. Thirty farmer members representing the small, marginal, and big categories, two directors, and one employee who works for the company were chosen for the study from each of these chosen companies.



3. Results and discussion

I. Training needs on formation and compliance of FPO

Training is most important for the better working and formation of FPO and it leads to better supplies of quality of agriculture equipments. The pertaining information from the respondents about training needs of BODs and members were shown in Table 1.

Table: 1, Training needs on formation and compliance of FPO, N=30

SI No	Skill areas	Yes	%	Rank
1	Strict following of all statutory compliance of the producer company.	23	76.67	1
2	Incorporating FIGs as building blocks of FPC	21	70.00	2
3	Motivating members for participation in all activities	15	50.00	3
4	License and approval	14	46.67	4
5	Functions of FPC	13	40.00	5
6	Marketing and networking	13	40.00	6

Source: Field Survey

Statutory compliance regarding the Farmer producer company was the most required training area (Table 1). Statutory compliances are the rules, policies, specifications, standards, or laws for a particular company. These compliances are compulsory to comply with the relevant regulations for avoiding any penalties. Initially incorporation compliances need to be followed for conducting the first Board Meeting within 30 days from the date of incorporation of FPC, issuing share certificates, conducting first Annual General Meeting (AGM) within 90 days of incorporation adopting the company's Article of Association (AoA), etc. In the study area BODs were dependent upon the Chief Executive Officer of the company or expert from promoting agency. They had very little knowledge regarding the above-mentioned compliances and most of them didn't have proper literacy levels except few educated BODs to understand the intricacies of those compliances. Adding Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs) as building blocks of FPC was perceived as the second most important training need area. As per the policy and process guidelines issued by GoI for the formation of FPCs the needs to be formed based on common interest and geographical location and then federate them as FPC. The third training need area was incorporating new members and motivating the existing farmer members for active participation, It was observed that low competence of the BODs to incorporate the new members. BoDs expressed that many of the registered members inactive as they were unable to derive any benefits from the FPC within a year, Obtaining all licenses and approvals for FPC was observed as the fourth important training need area. In the initial stage, every FPO may avail PAN and GST registration for sales and purchases related activities, shop establishment license, fertilizer license, pesticide license and seed license to trade in agricultural inputs, mandi license for selling the primary produce of the members in bulk at regulated markets, FSSAI license for packaged and processed food products, APEDA license for import and export of vegetables and fruits, third party organic certification for organic produce, and other few statutory licenses like fire safety license, weight, and measure license, etc. It was observed that many of the BoDs availed of a few of the above-mentioned licenses for their respective FPCs. Functioning of FPC was the least important training area.



II. Ranking of Training in technical areas

The details of Ranking of Training in technical areas according to their relative relevance by the FPO members are provided in Table 2.

Table: 2, Ranking of Training in technical areas according to their relative relevance by the FPO members N=30

Sl No	Skill areas	Yes	%	Rank
1	Water management	25	83.33	1
2	Crop based training	23	76.67	2
3	Seed quality and seed treatment	21	70.00	3
4	Organic farming training	20	66.67	4
5	On farm processing	18	60.00	5
6	Value addition activities	15	50.00	6
7	Grading and processing	14	46.67	7

Source: Field Survey

From the table-2 it can be observed that 83.33 percent of the respondents ranked water management as one of the most relevant areas for training. 76.67% of the respondents ranked second for crop-based training for better production as one of the most relevant areas for training. 70% respondents ranked seed quality, seed treatment and procurement in the initial phase as most relevant area of training. 66.67% respondents ranked organic farming training objective as the relevant training objective. On farm processing and value addition activities were ranked fifth and sixth ranks as training needs.

4. Conclusion

In summary it can be concluded that water management and crop-based training for better production receives highest relevance amongst all types of training areas for farmer members. Whereas for board of directors statutory compliance regarding the Farmer producer company was the most required training area, Adding Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs) as building blocks of FPC was perceived as the second most important training need area. As per the policy and process guidelines issued by Government of India for the formation of FPCs is the need to be formed based on common interest and geographical location and then federates them as FPC. Policy makers and CBBO should concentrate of these training needs of the farmers for effective functioning of FPOs and welfare of the farmer members.

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