

Role of Capacity Building and Training for Sustainable Livelihood of Farming Community in Pakistan

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Abstract:

Agriculture sector has crucial role in the economy of Pakistan and facing lot of challenges, which can be tackled by providing capacity building and training opportunities to poor farmers to flourish sustainable agriculture development more rapidly. Keeping this in view the present study was designed to investigate the significance of capacity building/ training for livelihood of farming community. Training has key role to make the farmers equipped with skills and competencies for crop production and protection to raise their house hold income and improve their living standards. A sample of 135 respondents was selected from Rawalpindi region who obtained

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different agricultural and livestock trainings. Collected data was analysed by using statistical package for social sciences. The results reveal that before training most of the respondents were in low income category as compared to after training, majority of respondents shifted from low income to medium and medium to high. So the government should design and implement capacity building/ training programs for farming community to make them capable to improve their livelihood by raising their farm and household income.

Key words: function, income escalation, rural community, skill development

Introduction

Agriculture sector has momentous role in the economy of Pakistan, sharing 21.4 percent to National GDP which contribute livelihood to 45 percent of total employment force. Performance of this sector remained waning with low growth rate of 3.3% over the last decade (Govt. of Pak., 2013). Agriculture sector is the core foundation of foreign exchange earnings in Pakistan and it plays vital role in food security, growth and export. The sector is facing numerous challenges that decline farm produce (Sattar, 2012). These challenges can be tackled by providing capacity building and training opportunities to poor farmers with the assurance that they would be able to build up their skills, capabilities (KGF, 2011) and approaches for sustainable agriculture development (Power and Maclean, 2011). Over the past few years it has become visible that capacity building is fundamental to pursue sustainable development (UNEP 2002). The term capacity building is also supposed as training, professional development, and professional education (UNOSD, 2012). Rola-Rubzen and Gabunada (2003) concluded that capacity building has helped farmers in improving their farm produce and its marketing, as well facilitates in improving assessment, critical thinking, and

decision-making which would help them critically assess innovations and options for improvement, translating to better incomes and welfare of farm households. Capacity building for sustainable development should be considered a most important tool (Ceccon & Cetto, 2003) and it requires effective coordination with in an organization and with other departments working for advancement (Alam, et al., 2009) of farming community by making them competent to utilize the training efficiently (Hartl, 2009). Capacity building of farming community by providing training is imperative mechanism for enhancing and updating farmer's knowledge. Training engages the transfer of new knowledge, skills, technology, behavior and attitude to build up and continue the farmers' competencies to carry out their allocated task more efficiently and resourcefully. Likewise farmers necessitate training to magnify yield per unit area because agricultural knowledge and technology is constantly changing and farmers need to keep abreast of new technologies (Ahmad, et al., 2005). In other words training, capacity building and education are key elements to reduce poverty and improve livelihood of farming communities. Learning and training facilitates individuals to be escaped from poverty by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to raise their produce and income (Ogundele et al., 2012) ultimately to improve living standards. The significance of training and capacity building of individuals is extensively recognized at national and international levels by different researchers. The basic purpose of training and capacity building of individuals is to endure a process of individual as well as organizational change and to facilitate and empower organizations, individuals and groups to attain their developmental targets. Any programme related to capacity building wishes to be vigilantly planned toward desired goal (UNEP, 2006). Collett and Gale (2009) reviewed literature and past experiences and accomplished that agriculture trainings play an authoritative and imperative role in facilitating small

land holders to overcome financial, social, environmental and market oriented problems and constraints being faced by them. Furthermore, they claimed that trainings can be victorious in sustaining development, by utilizing the local available resources in the form of manpower and materials of rural farm families. However, it is very much essential to ensure that the trainings should be related to the real demands or needs of local community means that assessing the training needs of the community is very much essential part and parcel of the development process. Apparently it is considered that training is gradually accumulation of knowledge, resources, administration skills, expertise and political influence. The ultimate objective of training and capacity building is to improve livelihoods of community by using the approaches of development process. Training helps to lift up the competencies and skills of communities to provide guidance and management for modernization and innovation in agriculture (Ian Wallace and Esse Nilsson, 1997) as training concentrates on learning associated to sustainability (Garforth and Lawrence, 1997). Farmers raise their household income; improve farms and adjacent environments through training. The increased income stability allows the farmers to consistently direct resources to basic necessities for family, including better nutrition, medicines, books, school uniforms, and educational opportunities (Esper, et al. 2013). It is essential to observe the education and training system in a holistic approach and identify the need for skills in both developing and advanced countries (King and Palmer, 2007). Keeping all this in view the present study was designed to assess the role of capacity building and training on livelihood of the farming community by comparing household income before training and after training, which provide clear picture about the importance of capacity building and training programs for farming community.

Methodology

Population of the Study

Rawalpindi region of Punjab province comprises of districts, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal and Jhelum. Islamabad, capital of Pakistan and Rawalpindi are considered twin city because of close boundaries, keeping this in view it was also included in the study area. All the farmers residing in four districts and Islamabad who acquired training/s in agriculture and livestock sector were considered as the population of the study.

Sampling Procedure

The sample of the population was limited to 135 farmers selected through random sampling technique. From each district including Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal and Jhelum, two tehsils were selected randomly and 15 farmers from each tehsil and Islamabad were selected who obtained training/s in agriculture and livestock.

Data Collection Mechanism

Interview schedule was developed vigilantly and pre-tested by 15 non sampled respondents to make necessary amendments in the tool; data was collected by conducting personal interviews.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Personal interviews were conducted at home and farm of the farmers keeping in view their expediency. The collected data was analyzed for descriptive statistics by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was arranged in tabulated for interpretation.

Results and discussion

Improving human resources in agriculture is particularly significant (Lindley, et al., 1996) to raise income of farming

community. Income is an objective characteristic indicating the earning of an individual. It may be the total money value received by an individual from the services from all sources. In the present study the income refers to total earning of the farmer i.e. from farming, non-farming and both of them. Respondents were asked about their annual income before and after training, which is shown in figure 1.

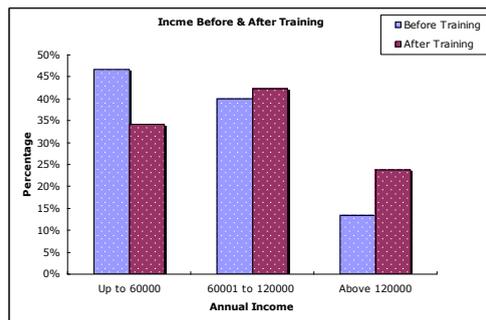


Fig. 1: Distribution of respondents according to their annual income

Annual income of majority of the respondents (86.70%) was up to 120000 PKR and only 13.30% of the respondents have annual income above 120000 PKR before training. The results also reveal that after the trainings received by the respondents there was a significant change in annual income of the respondents and majority (76.30%) were in the category up to 120000 PKR, which indicates that 10.40% of the respondents increases their income level and cross the annual income 120000 PKR and 23.70% of the respondents were above 120000 PKR annual incomes. This significant change in house hold income plays an important role for encouraging and concentrating on socio-economic differences and alleviating poverty (Filemon & Uriarte, 2008).

The figure 2 indicates that the 79% of the respondents are directly or indirectly dependant on farming, only 21% belong to non farming and they depends on income generation

activities after getting trainings. So trainings can also create income generation opportunities for rural communities.

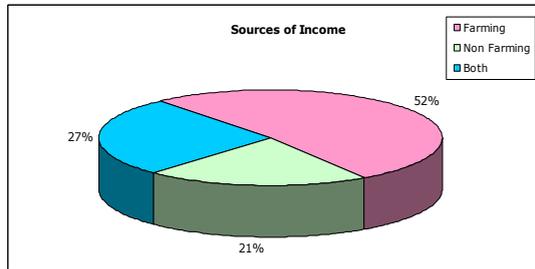


Fig. 2: Distribution of respondents according to Source/s of income

Table 1 indicates the demographic characteristics of the respondents, which shows that 80.7% of respondents have age above 25 years and only 19.3% are 25 years and below, 65.2% of respondents have education above primary to matriculation while 21.5% are above matriculation and 13.3% are illiterate persons. 18.5% of respondents are farm less and 72.6%, 8.1% and 0.7% possess small, medium and large farms respectively. 81.5% percent of respondents don't have dairy farm while 18.5% percent of respondents also possess dairy farms out of them 9.6% possess up to 10 animals in their dairy farm, 7.4% and 1.5% have 11-20 animals and above 20 animals respectively.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their geographical attributes

Attributes	Freq.	% age	Attributes	Freq.	% age
Age(Years)			Farm Size in Acres		
Young (up to 25)	26	19.3%	Farm less	25	18.5%
Middle Age (26-40)	60	44.4%	Small Farm (up to 12.5)	98	72.6%
Old Age (Above 40)	49	36.3%	Medium Farm (12.6 - 25)	11	08.1%
Education			Large Farm (above 25)	01	00.7%
Illiterate	18	13.3%	Dairy Farm Size (No. of Animals)		
Primary	19	14.1%	Farm less	110	81.5%
Middle	28	20.7%	Small Farm (up to 10)	13	09.6%
Matriculation	41	30.4%	Medium Farm (11-20)	10	07.4%
Above matriculation	29	21.5%	Large Farm (above 20)	02	01.5%

(Freq. = Frequency, % age = Percentage)

Conclusions

Capacity building and training programmes have important role to boost up house hold income of farming community so the government should launch massive programs for capacity building and training of rural communities in agriculture and livestock, so that the poor farmers become capable and skilled to raise their farm production and improve their livelihood. This will not only improve the living standard of farming communities but also reduce poverty and risks for food security. Hence this will bring change in agriculture sector and fetch sustainable agriculture development for prosperity of country, region and humanity.

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