

Original Research Article

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Performance of the Agricultural Extension Personnel in the Revitalized Extension System in Manipur, India

R. Akoijam*, M.K. Singh, Daya Ram, M. Deepa Devi and Ch. Narendrajit Singh

College of Agriculture, Central Agricultural University Imphal-795004, Manipur (India)

*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

Keywords

Level of role performance; Agriculture Technology and Management Agency and Extension reform.

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The present study was carried out in the 4 Districts of Manipur to access the level of role performance as perceived by the agricultural extension personnel (Assistant technology manager) in the revitalized extension system in Manipur. A purposive sampling technique was followed and statistical methods such as frequency, percentage, standard deviation, Pearson product moment coefficient of correlation and multiple regression analysis were used for analysing the data. Data were collected through personal interview method during the period of January 2018 to march 2018. A total of 54 respondents were interviewed with the help of the structured schedule. A total of 12 independent variables were selected for the study which was categorized into three categories, namely 'Personal variables', 'Psychological variables' and 'Organizational variables'. The study implies that the level of role performance of the respondents had positive and significant correlation with training exposure, decision making ability, role awareness, role perception, and attitude towards ATMA, motivational climate, job satisfaction and achievement motivation. The value of coefficient of multiple determination (R^2) being 0.780 indicated that the positively correlated significant variables jointly could predict 78 per cent of the variation in level of role performance of the extension personnel.

Introduction

In country like India where Agro-climatic zones widely differ besides significant variation in socioeconomic status of farmers', uniform extension service is not the panacea for all the regions. It has been realized that the public sector extension system on its own is not capable enough to meet the ever increasing and multifaceted demands of the farming community due to several constraints or weaknesses in the system. It was realized

that public extension system will have to be placed in new decentralized institutional arrangements which are demand driven, farmer-accountable, bottom up and have farming system approach. To address the situation, the Government of India (GOI) and the World Bank pilot-tested a new, decentralized, market-driven extension model under the National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP). The Key institution in implementing this new approach was the Agricultural Technology Management Agency

(ATMA) which was responsible for facilitating and coordinating “farmer-led” extension activities within each district. The Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) calls for integrated approach wherein different stakeholders come closer to plan, organise, and execute the activities to take full advantage of the technologies demonstrated in the operational area. In the midst of this change, extension system is grappling with the question of how best to harness ‘extension reform’ to improve farming community. The effective implementation of ‘ATMA’ largely depends on how effectively the extension functionaries perceive their roles and perform those. There have been very few studies related to performance appraisal of the extension functionaries working under this changing scenario. Performance deals with the outcomes, results and accomplishments achieved by a person, group or organization”. The role performance in the study has been operationally defined as the accomplishment, execution, carrying out, working out of anything ordered or undertaken, the doing of any action or work to (*Oxford English Dictionary, 2001*). Hence, the present study was contemplated to measure the level of role performed as perceived by the agricultural extension personnel (Assistant Technology Manager) in the revitalized extension system in Manipur.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in Manipur, one of the states of North eastern India, lying between 23 50' North to 25 42' North latitudes and 92 58' east to 94 45' East to East longitudes. The state has an area of 22,327sq.km, which accounts for about 0.68% of the country's total geographical area. Manipur has a total population of 28, 55,794 (as per 2011 census) which account for about 0.023 percent of the country's total population. At the time of the study, there

were 16 Districts in Manipur State. Out of these, 4(four) Districts were purposively selected for the present study because it is in valley area of Manipur and Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) was also constituted in these Districts under Central Government fully funded by Central Government in all the Districts of Manipur State. A total of 54 ATM (Assistant Technology Manager) were selected and interviewed in the 4 selected Districts in the study. The primary data in the present study were collected directly from the respondents with the help of the structured schedule through personal interview method. The data analysis was done by using various statistical methods which were frequency, percentage, standard deviation, Pearson product moment coefficient of correlation and multiple regression analysis.

Results and Discussion

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It was found that majority of the respondents (61.11%) had medium level of role performance followed by 22.22 per cent respondents who had high level of role performance. The rest 16.67 per cent had low level of role performance.

The study revealed (Table-2) that the level of role performance of the respondents had positive and significant correlation with training exposure ($r=0.93^{**}$), decision making ability ($r=0.71^{**}$) role awareness ($r=0.91^{**}$), role perception ($r=0.93^{**}$), attitude towards ATMA ($r=0.92^{**}$), achievement motivation ($r=0.653^{**}$), motivational climate ($r=0.93^{**}$), job satisfaction ($r=0.92^{**}$) and achievement motivation($r=0.91^{**}$). It can be seen that variables like training exposure, role awareness, role perception, attitude towards ATMA, motivational climate, job satisfaction,

and achievement motivation had strong relationship with the role performance of the extension personnel, the variables decision making ability showed moderately strong relationship with the role performance of the extension personnel. The variables 'training exposure' showed significant relationship with the level of performance of extension personnel. The reason might be the fact that higher exposure to training developed better insight through increased information and participation with different sources of information. The people who had high degree of 'training exposure' were more likely to have social mobility, more expose to outside contact and had a tendency to change over to new ideas and culture rather than remaining conservative and tradition oriented. They might consider ATMA as an enterprise and therefore, might have better contacts with information generating sources as well as extension agencies to seek specific knowledge under extension reform (Awasthi *et al.*, 2001; Yadav *et al.*, 2010; Das *et al.*, 2010 and Maiti *et al.*, 2011).

Positive relationship with 'Attitude towards ATMA' suggests that most of the extension functionaries were more aware about the importance of ATMA which ultimately influenced high and whole hearted participation in performance. The positive relationship with 'Role awareness' and 'Role perception' suggest that they were more conscious about their role and their duties which ultimately influence the performance level. Increased awareness and perception of their role increases their involvement in their role which has reflected through the positive relationship with role performance. The variable 'Achievement motivation' showed significant relationship with the level of performance of extension personnel. This might be because of the fact that the respondents spontaneously expressed desire to do something well for its own sake which is ultimately reflected through their increased

level of performance (Reddy and Jayaramaiah, 1990; Manjunath and Shashidhra, 2011).

The organizational variables like 'Motivational climate' and 'Job satisfaction' were positively correlated with the level of role performance. The degree of happiness with one's job and working environment is related with the performance level. It suggests that the prevailing environment in the organization activates, energizes, and directs the employee towards the achievement of organizational and personal goals. Positive relationship was found between 'Job satisfaction' and 'Performance'. It might be because of the fact that with the fair amount of job satisfaction's component like job security, recognition and fair evaluation, human relation at work, future prospects, capacity and confidence to shoulder job responsibilities increases the performance level of the employee of an institution (Judge and Hulin, 1993; Judge *et al.*, 2001; Adeyemi, 2008; Moyes *et al.*, 2008 and Manjunath and Shashidhra 2011). And no relation is found between age, education qualification, service experience, and job anxiety with the level of role performance.

Table-3 reveals that all the 12 variables were taken for multiple regression analysis. Out of 12 variable 3 variables namely, role awareness, role perception and motivational climate contribute significantly to the prediction of the level of role performance. The three characteristics may be termed as good predictor of level of role performance of the pooled sample. It was observed that motivational climate assumed the most important characteristics ($b=0.312$) changing the level of role performance of the agricultural extension personnel followed by role perception ($b=0.191$) and role awareness with significant characteristics ($b=0.157$). The 12 characteristics jointly could explained ($R^2=0.780$) 78 per cent of variation in the level of role performance of the agricultural extension personnel.

Table.1 Distribution of respondents according to their level of role performance

N=54

Sl.No.	Level of Category	Score range	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	CV
1.	Low level of role performance	120 to149	9	16.67	165.45	16.23	9.81
2.	Medium level of role performance	150 to181	33	61.11			
3.	High level of role performance	182 to210	12	22.22			

Table.2 Relationship between the independent variables and with the role performance

Sl.No.	Independent variables	Correlation coefficient 'r' value
X ₁	Age	0.152
X ₂	Education qualification	-0.100
X ₃	Service experience	0.365
X ₄	Training exposure	0.927**
X ₅	Decision making ability	0.711**
X ₆	Role awareness	0.905**
X ₇	Role perception	0.925**
X ₈	Attitude towards ATMA	0.914**
X ₉	Motivational climate	0.930**
X ₁₀	Job satisfaction	0.922**
X ₁₁	Job anxiety	-0.080
X ₁₂	Achievement motivation	0.912**

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability

Table.3 Contributory effects of selected independent variables on the role performance

Sl.No.	Independent variables	b value	't' value
X ₁	Age	0.023	1.02
X ₂	Education qualification	-0.019	-0.78
X ₃	Service experience	0.012	0.40
X ₄	Training exposure	0.139	1.75
X ₅	Decision making ability	0.022	0.57
X ₆	Role awareness	0.157*	2.65
X ₇	Role perception	0.191*	3.28
X ₈	Attitude towards ATMA	0.108	1.46
X ₉	Motivational climate	0.312*	4.72
X ₁₀	Job satisfaction	0.054	0.84
X ₁₁	Job anxiety	-0.010	-0.39
X ₁₂	Achievement motivation	0.071	1.13

* Significant at 0.05 level of probability R² = 0.780 adjusted R² = 0.771
F = 48

The significant F-value at 0.05 level of probability (F=48) indicated the significant effectiveness of the 12 characteristics in determining the level of role performance of the agricultural extension personnel (assistant technology manager) when worked jointly.

Higher level of role performance is likely to impact positively on employees' and organization's well-being. A highly significant and positive correlation of independent variables with the level of role performance indicated that the extension personnel with higher training exposures, higher decision making ability, higher role awareness, higher role perception, highly favourable attitude towards ATMA, more favourable motivational climate and higher job satisfaction and higher achievement motivation were likely to influence the level of role performance to great extent. Where these attributes are at lower level in the extension personnel, suitable management strategies may be adopted to modify their behaviour for increased level of performance of their roles.

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