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Original Research

Impact of Skill Development Trainings on Poultry Production

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Abstract

Trainings can contribute towards generating employment opportunity for unemployed rural youth and thus play a role in improving socio-economic conditions and alleviating poverty. The present study elucidates the impact of training on poultry production to 40 individuals in terms of knowledge gain and entrepreneurship development. Majority of these trainees belong to less than 30 years of age and were educated up to high secondary level. All the trainees were subjected to a pre- and post-training assessment through a set of 30 multiple choice questions. Results revealed that there was significant improvement in knowledge gain as evident from pre- and post-training score. Further after six months of last training it was observed that 80% of trainees had either started a new or strengthened their existing poultry units. Thus, it may be concluded that skill development trainings on poultry farming not only improved the knowledge and skills of youths but also strengthened poultry production.

Keywords: Adoption, Impact, Knowledge, Poultry, Training

Introduction

Capacity building programmes are generally conducted with the objective that the participants after being trained will translate the acquired knowledge and skill into action for betterment. Trainings can contribute towards generating employment opportunity for educated unemployed rural youth and thus play a role in alleviating poverty. Therefore, trainings have been widely accepted as a strategy with high returns on investment. The ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship, Govt. of India has also launched a Skill India programme to improve the socio-economic conditions of youth by making them more productive and addressing unemployment and underemployment. In Himachal Pradesh, the environmental conditions especially in plains and low hill areas are relatively more congenial for rearing birds and the production of maize which constitutes major component of poultry feed is steadily rising which makes poultry farming an attractive enterprise. But to harness this potential the technical knowledge base of rural youth, men and women regarding poultry production need to be strengthened.

In this context, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kangra under Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI), skill development programme organized 2 trainings of 240 contact hours each on job role Small Poultry Farmer for rural youth, men and women during the year 2017-19. The present study elucidates the impact of these trainings on knowledge gain and entrepreneurship development.

Materials and Methods

Selection of Participants

Applications were invited from interested candidates for undergoing 240 contact hours training on job role small poultry farmer either directly or through state department of animal husbandry. The applicants were screened through telephonic interview and only individuals who were genuinely interested in rearing poultry were selected for training. Two trainings were conducted at KVK, Kangra, Himachal Pradesh in which forty individuals were imparted training in two batches of twenty each as per ASCI guidelines.

Collection of Data

The 240-contact hour's capacity building programme comprised of technical lectures and discussions on various aspects of poultry production, working in poultry units, exposure visits to poultry farms and feed units etc. A questionnaire was formulated for collection of data and before the start and after completion of the training course, a pre- and post-evaluation was performed to assess the knowledge of the trainees besides drawing the general information like background of participants, landholding etc. The questionnaire comprised of a set of thirty multiple choice questions divided into five major heads viz.:

1. Poultry breeds, housing and management,
2. Feed ingredients and feed preparation,
3. Biosecurity, sanitation and hygiene in poultry units,
4. Vaccination, disease diagnosis and medication,
5. Harvesting, storage and marketing of produce.

The gain in knowledge was calculated from the difference of mean scores/percentage obtained in pre- and post-knowledge test of the trainees related to different topics i.e. (Mean post evaluation score – mean pre-evaluation score) = Gain in knowledge.

Results and Discussion

Socio-economic Profile

Gender

The participants differed in their socio-economic status based on education, landholding and annual income etc. (Table 1). The results revealed that 97.5 per cent of the participants were male and only 2.5 percent were female.

Singh *et al.* (2013) has also observed that for vocational trainings on broiler chicken production in Hanuman nagar district of Rajasthan, 100.0% participants were male and reported it to be an arena of males only. Poultry rearing besides producing eggs is also associated with production of meat which involves slaughter, defeathering and evisceration of birds which in patriarchal society was considered a psychologically tough job and was thus associated with males.

Table 1: Socio-economic profile of trainees undergone skill development training on job role small poultry farmer (n=40)

Attributes	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	39	97.5
	Female	1	2.5
Age	Upto 30 year	24	60
	30-50 years	14	35
	> 50 years	2	5
Education	Under matric	0	0
	Matric	4	10
	+2/Diploma	21	52.5
	Graduate	12	30
	Post graduate	3	7.5
Land holding	Landless	0	0
	Marginal < 1 ha	28	70
	Small 1-2 ha	8	20
	Medium 2-4 ha	3	7.5
	Large >4 ha	1	2.5
Poultry holding	Nil	23	57.5
	Upto 25 birds	11	27.5
	26-200 birds	4	10
	More than 200 birds	2	5
Annual Income	Low upto 1 Lakh	12	30
	Medium 1-5 Lakh	23	57.5
	High more than 5 L	5	12.5
Poultry holding prior to training	Yes	17	42.5
	No	23	57.5

Age

Majority of participants (55%) were less than 30 years of age which reflect that young individuals are willing to start and join enterprises which are relatively new or less common in area. The younger individuals also have higher tendency of risk taking which may further support higher number of participants in younger age group. In close agreement to present observation, Shelly *et al.* (2019) has also observed that majority of the participants undergoing training on poultry farming were young. 40% belong to 30-50 years of age group and 5% were more than 50 years of age.

Education

Majority of participants (52.5%) were educated to the level of high secondary (+2/)/diploma and 30% were graduates which reflects the high literacy level in district/state. No under matric individual was enrolled for the training as the minimum educational qualification prescribed by ASCI was matric.

Land Holding

In close harmony to land holding profile of farmers in state as well as district majority (70%) of the participants belong to marginal and 20% belong to small farmers category. While 7.5% belong to medium and 2.5% to large category and none was landless.

Annual Income

30% participants belong to low-income group i.e., less than 01 lakh per annum, 57.5% belong to middle income group (1-5 Lakhs) and 12.5% has an annual income of more than 5 Lakhs. The annual average household income in Himachal Pradesh was Rs 1,58,462 so these figures indicate that the individuals across all income groups look towards skill training in poultry production as a tool to augment their income.

Poultry Holding

In case of poultry holding, 57.5% participants were not rearing any bird before undergoing training while 27.5% were rearing few birds (upto 25) in backyard and 10% were rearing upto 200 birds. Most of these birds belong to local or improved varieties supplied by NGO/Govt development agencies working in the area. Another 5% participants were rearing more than 200 birds at a time. As per livestock census (2012) only around 5% households in the state were rearing poultry birds but among the participants 42.5% were rearing poultry this indicate that the persons who were already engaged in poultry production and wanted to further strengthen their enterprise has opted for these trainings.

Reasons of Participation

Majority of the participants (60%) indicated that they wanted to undergo training to improve their technical skills and knowledge so that they can rear chicken on commercial scale and thus adopt poultry farming as an avenue for self-employment. Another 25% revealed that they intend to augment their family nutrition and income by increasing the productivity and number of birds in their backyard poultry units. Further 12.5% participants indicated that the main reason for undergoing skill council training was that the certificate they will get will help them in securing loan from banking institutions. Only 5% participants wanted to only improve their knowledge about poultry production. Similar results were also reported by Kavitha *et al.* (2019). It was evident that majority of respondents joined the training course to adopt poultry production as an enterprise. Another 5% participants informed that by undergoing this training they will become eligible for skill development allowance. As there was no provision of any allowance for undergoing training under Agriculture Skill Council of India so it was a complete misinformation and was corrected at the outset.

Table 2: Reasons of participation in training programme on poultry production (n=40)

S. No.	Reason	Frequency	Percentage	Ranking
1	To adopt poultry production as an enterprise/self-employment	21	57.5	I
2	To augment family nutrition and income	10	25	II
3	It will help to obtain loan from Banks for strengthening poultry unit	5	12.5	III
4	To gain knowledge about poultry production	2	5	IV
5	It will help to get income support from Govt. under Skill Council India scheme	2	5	V

Knowledge Score

Pre-training knowledge score ranged from 28.3% in case of vaccination, disease diagnosis and control to 40% in case of feed ingredients and feed preparation. While post training score ranged from 68.3% in case of vaccination, disease diagnosis and control to 80% in case of harvesting, storage and marketing of produce. The overall pre-training score was 35.7% which increased to 74.0% in post-training evaluation. Pre training knowledge score was unsatisfactory for all the aspects of training programme. However, the knowledge score after training revealed marked improvement which ranged from 33.3% improvement observed for feed ingredients and feed preparation to

43.3% in harvesting and marketing of produce. Similar findings of improvement in knowledge has been reported by Singh *et al.* (2013) for broiler poultry production suggesting that long term capacity building programmes effectively increased the knowledge of youths, farmers and farm women. A significant improvement in knowledge score of the trainees has also been reported by Kshandakar *et al.* (2018). Training improves the level of knowledge and skills of the farmer regarding identification of improved poultry birds, feed ingredients, diseases management and poultry waste management.

Table 3: Gain in knowledge after training with respect to different components (n=40)

S. No.	Parameter	Pre-training Mean score (%)	Post-training Mean score (%)	Gain in Knowledge (%)
1	Breeds, housing and management	2.1 (35)	4.3 (71.7)	**2.2 (36.7)**
2	Feed ingredients and feed preparation	2.4 (40)	4.4 (73.3)	**2.0 (33.3)**
3	Biosecurity, Sanitation and Hygiene	2.3 (38.3)	4.6 (76.7)	**2.3 (38.4)**
4	Vaccination, Disease diagnosis and control	1.7 (28.3)	4.1 (68.3)	**2.4 (40)**
5	Harvesting, storage and Marketing of produce	2.2 (36.7)	4.8 (80.0)	**2.6 (43.3)**
6	Overall 30	10.7 (35.7)	22.2 (74.0)	**38.3**

After completion of training all the participants, except two trainees whose attendance fell below 70%, were also assessed by external subject experts deputed by ASCI. The 38 trainees who underwent assessment, passed in all aspects of assessment viz practical, on-line test and personnel interview reflecting that these capacity building programmes effectively improved their knowledge and skill.

Table 4: Assessment of trainees by Agricultural skill council of India

S. No.	Year	No. of participants	Participants undergone assessment	Pass percentage
1	2017-18	20	18	100
2	2018-19	20	20	100

Adoption and Feedback

Among all the participants, 17 were already rearing chicken before the start of training. But about six months after the completion of last batch, the number of poultry rearers increased from 17 to 32. The rise may be attributed to training because, besides knowing the opportunities and benefits of rearing poultry, they got firsthand knowledge about different schemes being run by various development agencies to promote poultry production and how to avail the benefit of these schemes. After the training the number of farmers rearing more than 200 birds increased from 02 to 07 and the number of participants rearing upto 200 birds increased from 05 to 14. Parveen *et al.* (2013) has also observed that after undergoing training, besides production parameters of birds the flock size of women farmers also increases. Thakur *et al.* (2016) has also reported that capacity building was an effective tool to augment poultry production. The participants, especially those who tried to get loan for strengthening or starting new poultry units gave the feedback that the banking institutions show little interest in extending loan for poultry farming. A similar observation was also reported by Singh *et al.* (2013) that the banks/ financers do not take keen interest in financing the poultry farming in Rajasthan.

Table 5: Poultry holding pre- and post-training on job role small poultry farmer

Number of birds	Pre-training	Post-training
Nil	23	8
Upto 25 birds	11	11
26-200 birds	4	14
More than 200 birds	2	7

Conclusion

The study demonstrated that the skill development programmes on poultry production by Agriculture Skill Council of India not only improved the knowledge of participants but also helped to start new or strengthen existing poultry enterprise.

Conflict of Interests

There is no conflict of interest.

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