

Training Needs of MPEOs in Guntur District

G Sivanarayana and O Sarada

Principal Agricultural Information Officer, ANGRAU, Lam, Guntur, A. P.

ABSTRACT

The study on MPEOs training needs indicated that majority of the respondents were in <35 years age, with agriculture diploma education, belonged to backward class with 3 years Jobexperience, annual income <1.5 lakh, agricultural university scientists, AO/ADA as a sources of information and with rural background. It is evident that sixty four per cent of the respondents attended 10-20 trainings of 2-3 days duration at sub-divisional level and preferred training venue at mandal headquarters and preferred training before crop season with 1-2 days training programmes, twice in a year training interval. Regarding perceived training needs, about 65.52 per cent had medium level of training needs followed by low (17.24%) and high (17.24%) levels of training needs respectively. Majority of the respondents faced the constraint of absence of need based trainings (62.1%) and Lack of knowledge (48.28%). Suggestions of the respondents for better utilization of their services revealed that conduct exposure visits (65.52%), followed by Job security and regularize the jobs (55.17%), Provide new tabs with internet facility (48.28%) and Provide more technical skills including ICT skills (44.83%).

Keywords: *Constraints, Profile, Suggestions, Training exposure and Training needs.*

Andhra Pradesh introduced new Extension System as a substitute for preceding Adarsha Rythus system during 2014. In Guntur district 6354 MPEOs were recruited to extend the overall net cultivated area of 63.54 lakh ha. The objective of recruiting MPEOs was, to address the urgent needs of the farmers by suggesting measures for overcoming the problems faced by them and finally leading to increase production and productivity. The job chart of the MPEOs is to assist Agricultural officer in execution of different departmental plans.

The Department of Finance have permitted this department to contract the services of 6354 Multi-Purpose Extension Officers with a consolidated pay of Rs.8,000/- per month. These officers should assist extension personnel in communicating needy

information to different farmers with regard to different departmental plans and latest research results and in collecting soil samples and providing results of Soil health cards. They have to equip the record of 1000 ha with regard to farmer details, farming situation and resources availability. Conducting assessment during floods, drought and pest outbreaks. Keeping in view of this the present study was conducted with the following specific objectives.

1. To study the personal, socio-economic characteristics of the respondents.
2. To identify training needs and training preferences of MPEOs in Guntur district.
3. To elicit the constraints faced by MPEOs and suggestions for efficient utilization of their services.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh purposively with ex-post facto research design duly following the proportionate random sampling. The study is based on the primary data, collected for the year 2018-19 and was taken up in four agricultural divisions viz., Krosuru, Bapatla, Ponnur and Mangalagiri. A mailed questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. A total of 58 filled mailed questionnaires received from four agricultural divisions. The obtained data were analysed with the help of various statistical measures such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used and analysed and presented in tables to make the findings meaningful and easily understandable. The findings were suitably interpreted and necessary conclusions and interference were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the MPEOs

Greater number of the respondents were in <35 years age group with diploma in agriculture education, belonged to backward class with 3 years of experience in job, annual income <1.5 lakh, agricultural university scientists, AO/ADA as a sources of information, with rural background and had no membership in any organization. These findings were in line with the results of Nguyen Cong Thanh and Baldeo Singh (2007) and Meena and Bangarva (2006). It is evident that 63.79 per cent of the respondents attended 10-20 trainings of 2-3 days duration at sub-divisional level. This may be because regular trainings were organized by the Department of Agriculture along with Farm Science Centre and Research Stations to update the understanding of the respondents from time to time.

Preferences of the respondents towards organization of training programmes

To make the trainings effective and successful a need was felt to analyse the preferences of respondents with respect to training venue, suitable time to conduct training programme, training interval and duration. From Table 2 it is evident that greater number of the MPEOs preferred training venue at mandal headquarters (74.14%), preferred training before crop season (37.93%) and during crop season (39.66%), twice in a year training interval (89.66%) and with duration of 1 day (69.00%). Trainings were preferred at mandal head quarters because of their ease to participate. They realized the importance of organizing trainings before and during crop season as they can practically learn the pests, diseases and nutritional disorders and their management.

Perception of training needs

An overview of findings from Table 3 indicated that greater number of the MPEOs (65.52%) had medium training needs followed by low (17.24%) and high (17.24%) training needs respectively.

Perceived training needs of MPEOs

On the basis of the results regarding perceived training needs of MPEOs (Table 4) concluded that majority of the MPEOs perceived training need of Integrated Pest Management (72.41%) followed by Integrated Disease Management (65.52%), Spraying techniques (62.1%), ICT (55.17%), ZBNF (55.17%), Soil health & fertility management (50%), Vermicomposting (41.38%), Diagnostic & characteristic symptoms and damage caused by insects (41.38%), INM (39.66%), Farming machinery and implements (31%), Different pests &

Table 1. Personal and Socio Economic profile of the respondents**N= 58**

S. No	Independent variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Young age (< 35 years)	54	93.10
		Middle age(36-54 years)	4	6.90
		Old age (> 55 years)	0	0.00
2	Education	Diploma in Agriculture	42	72.41
		B.Sc., (Ag.)	2	3.45
		BZC	12	20.69
		Other degree	2	3.45
3	Caste	SC	18	31.03
		ST	5	8.62
		BC	27	46.55
		OC	8	13.79
4	Job experience	1 year	4	6.90
		2 year	16	27.59
		3 years	35	60.34
		4 years	3	5.17
5	Annual Income	Upto 1,50,000	55	94.80
		>1,50,000	3	5.20
6	Source information	AEO	8	13.79
		AO	16	27.59
		ADA	12	20.69
		Agril.Uni v.Scientist	18	31.03
		ICAR scientist	4	6.89
7	Family background	Urban	2	3.45
		Semi urban	2	3.45
		Rural	54	93.10
8	Social participation	No membership	55	94.83
		Membership in	3	5.17
		organisation		
9	Training exposure	No of trainings attended		
		Below 10	12	20.69
		10 to 20	37	63.79
		More than 20	9	15.52
		Duration of trainings		
		1 day	1	1.72
		2 days	35	60.34
		3 days	22	37.93
		Trainings organised by		
		Sub divisional level	51	87.93
		RARS/KVK	5	8.62
District level	2	3.45		
10	Mass exposure	Television	12	20.69
		Radio	4	6.90
		Newspapers	15	25.86
		Magazines	14	24.14
		Internet	13	22.41

Table 2. Preferences of the respondents towards organization of trainings N= 58

S. No.	Independent variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	preference of training venue	KVK	8	13.79
		FTC	3	5.17
		Mandal head quarters	43	74.14
		RARS	4	6.90
2	preference of training time	Before crop season	22	37.93
		During crop season	23	39.66
		After crop season	13	22.41
3	preference of training interval	Twice in a year	52	89.66
		Once in a year	6	10.34
4	preference of training duration	1 day	40	69.00
		2 days	17	29.30
		3 days	1	1.70
5	perveived training needs	Low	10	17.24
		Medium	38	65.52
		High	10	17.24

Table 3. Training needs perception of MPEOs

N= 58

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Training needs perception	Low	10	17.24
	Medium	38	65.52
	High	10	17.24

pesticides identification (31%), Trade name, chemical name and properties of pesticides (27.59%), Bio-fertilizers (27.59%), fertilizer application based on soil test (27.59%), Seed certification (24.14%), Calculation of fertilizer dose (24.14%), Fodder crops (20.69%), Govt. Laws and regulations (20.69%), Crop Production (20.69%), High yielding varieties in major crops (20.69%), New molecules of pesticides (12.79%), Fertilizer application methods(12.79%), Stored grain pest control (12.79%) and Fertigation (12.79%). These results were in agreement with the findings of Patil and Kokate (2011), Joeny Prasad (2001), Krishna Priya and Sivanarayana (2013) and Said Rafiq Hanif and Gokul Khanderao waman (2015). MPEOs training needs clearly indicating that

they have recognized the importance of Integrated Management of Nutrients, Pests and Diseases as they were the key factors for minimizing the cost of cultivation along with increased productivity. Further the skills needed to diagnose pests, diseases and nutrient deficiency symptoms also specified the significance of field diagnosis.

Constraints expressed by the MPEOs in Guntur district

Results from Table 5 regarding constraints faced by the respondents expressed that greater number of the MPEOs faced the constraints of Absence of need based trainings (62.1%), Lack of knowledge (48.28%), e-crop booking and disregard

Table 4. MPEOs training needs in Guntur district**N= 58**

Sl. No.	Training need	Frequency	Percentage
1	Integrated Pest Management	42	72.41
2	Integrated Disease Management	38	65.52
3	Integrated Nutrient Management	23	39.66
4	Crop Production	12	20.69
5	Soil health & fertility management	29	50.00
6	Zero budget natural farming	32	55.17
7	High yielding varieties in major crops	12	20.69
8	New molecules of pesticides	8	13.79
9	Bio-fertilizers	16	27.59
10	Identification of different pests & pesticides	18	31.00
11	Diagnostic & characteristic symptoms and caused by insect pests	24	41.38
12	Trade name, chemical name and properties of pesticides	16	27.59
13	Spraying techniques	36	62.10
14	Information and communication technology	32	55.17
15	Govt. Laws and regulations	12	20.69
16	Seed certification	14	24.14
17	Fertilizer application methods	8	13.79
18	Calculation of fertilizer dose	14	24.14
19	Stored grain pest control	8	13.79
20	Soil test based fertilizer application	16	27.59
21	Vermi-composting	24	41.38
22	Fertigation	8	13.79
23	Farm machinery and implements	18	31.00
24	Fodder crops	12	20.69

Table 5. Constraints expressed by the MPEOs in Guntur district**N= 58**

S. No.	Constraints faced by MPEOs	Frequency	percentage
1	Lack of knowledge	28	48.28
2	Lack of need based trainings	36	62.10
3	e-crop booking and non-cooperation of farmers and VRO must accompany	26	44.83
4	Lack of guidance	24	41.38
5	Lack of speaking skills and time management	16	27.59
6	Less time more work and work stress	18	31.00
7	Not giving sufficient time to complete work given	12	20.69
8	Same work but salary different for MPEOs & AEOs	14	24.14
9	Tabs not working properly, no TA, DA and conveyance problem	16	27.59

Table 6. Suggestions for betterment of MPEOs services.**N= 58**

S. No.	Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
1	Conduct exposure visits	38	65.52
2	Need advanced training and knowledge on as and allied subjects	24	41.38
3	Timely completion of meetings for better work	12	20.69
4	Job security and regularize the jobs	32	55.17
5	Provide conveyance or TA, DA	24	41.38
6	Provide equal rights to AEOs & MPEOs	26	44.83
7	Conduct less number of meetings	12	20.69
8	Low salary and no increment	24	41.38
9	Need support from revenue department	22	37.93
10	Timely supply of inputs	14	24.14
11	Provide new tabs with internet facility	28	48.28
12	Provide more technical skills including ICT skills	26	44.83
13	Utilize MPEOs only for extension field	16	27.59

of farmers and VRO must accompany (44.83%), Lack of guidance (41.38%), Less time more work and work stress (31%), Lack of speaking skills and time management (27.59%), Tabs not working properly, no TA, DA and conveyance problem (27.59%), Same work but salary different for MPEOs & AEOs (24.14%) and Not giving sufficient time to complete work given (20.69%). These results clearly prominence the importance of training need evaluation to make the trainings more effective. Further over load of work was the factor hindering them to disseminate need based information to farming community from time to time. These findings were in line with the results of Sarada (2019) and Kishore Kumar *et. al.*, (2020).

Suggestions for efficient utilization of MPEOs services in Guntur district

Findings from the Table 6 explained that conduct exposure visits (65.52%), Job security and regularize the jobs (55.17%), Provide new tabs with internet facility (48.28%), Provide more technical skills including ICT skills (44.83%), Provide equal rights to AEOs & MPEOs (44.83%), Provide

conveyance or TA, DA (41.38%) will improve the service of the MPEOs, Low salary and no increment (41.38%), Need advanced training and knowledge on agriculture and other subjects (41.38%), Need support from revenue department (37.93%), Utilize MPEOs only for extension field (27.59%), Supply of inputs timely (24.14%), Timely completion of meetings for better work (20.69%) and Conduct less number of meetings (20.69%). Exposure visits to various research stations, KVKs and providing them with required ICT tools may definitely update their knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS

The overall findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents were in <35 years age, with agriculture diploma, belonged to backward class with 3 years of experience in job, annual income <1.5 lakh, agricultural university scientists, AO/ADA as a sources of information and with rural background. It is evident that majority of the respondents attended 10-20 trainings of 2-3 days duration at sub-divisional level and preferred training venue at mandal

headquarters and preferred training before crop season with 1-2 days training of twice in a year training interval. Regarding perceived training needs, results indicated that greater number of the respondents (65.52%) had medium needs of training followed by low (17.24%) and high (17.24%) training needs respectively. These results helps in the preparation of training modules for extension functionaries for the identified training areas and helps to the planners for proposing training programmes by Extension institutions in Guntur district.

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Received on 03.01.2021 and revised on 13.03.2021