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Job satisfaction of agriculture extension professionals working under state agriculture department of Maharashtra

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Abstract

This study was conducted to assess the competency of agriculture extension professionals working under state department of agriculture in Maharashtra state (India). While assessing the competencies, some personal characteristics of agriculture extension professionals have also studied. 'Job satisfaction' is one of the most important variables which govern the positive or negative degree of emotional status of an employee towards his enactment. Blissful personnel are more productive at their work and more committed towards the organization's goal. Sense of satisfaction obtained from the job, augment the work performance of extension professional and make them to contribute their best toward responsibility. This study was conducted in the 10 districts which come under the jurisdictions of Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri. These districts were Nashik, Nandurbar, Dhule, Jalgaon, Pune, Ahmednagar, Solapur, Kolhapur, Satara and Sangli. The data regarding the job satisfaction was collected from more than 300 agriculture extension professionals with the help of presented interview schedule through personal meeting. The data was analyzed using standard statistical tools and the conclusion was drawn as - more than two-third (69.00%) of the extension professional experienced 'medium' level of job satisfaction while working under state agriculture department, followed by 'low' level of job satisfaction (16.33%) and remained (14.67%) of them had 'high' level of job satisfaction. From the above figures it could be inferred that, more than 85.00 per cent of the extension professional had medium to low level of satisfaction towards their job. Satisfied officers are more likely to care about the quality of their work and the outcomes and vice versa.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, state department of agriculture Maharashtra state, agriculture extension professionals

Introduction

Professionalism in farmers of Maharashtra is a collective efforts of farmers and extension professionals towards economical sufficiency who enlightening the path towards wealth. Maharashtra covers diversified geographical area and furnish the hunger of 10 per cent of Indian population. More than half of the countryside people in the state are reliant on farming and linked activities sector as their occupation (*Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2024-25*). Means, state having great scope in both; availing the larger area under cultivation and engaging the potential human resource to adore the agriculture as business. Though it so, only 55 per cent of geographical area of state is under cultivation and it shares near about 12.10 per cent share in the Gross State Value. Maharashtra is fortunate to have all seasons on moderate formats hence known for its rough shiny summer, having green cover formed during monsoon and pleasure temperate form of winters. This availability of geo-climatic variables makes Maharashtra one of the prosperous states in the field of agriculture production. The basic agenda behind agriculture research and development largely remains mute unless extension system

professionals contributes their capabilities at full extend. In order to increase the performance of this agricultural extension and advisory system, it has to get upgraded and enhanced time to time through various efforts. Onset of 21st century various reformation programmes were implemented with key aspects including - Convergence and Integration of various agricultural schemes and programmes, Farmer-Centric approaches, Sustainability of extension networks and real-time information diffusion. Whole Agriculture department is organized in such a fashion that a single mechanism is working for transfer of technology to facilitate the farmer for adoption of advanced technology and sustainable use of available resources. Agriculture officers working as extension professionals under state agriculture department are the vital technical asset of the department and plays very crucial role in overall economic up-liftment and social up-gradation of rural farmers through all possible means. In order to perform their role effectively in the transfer of technology, they should take good efforts from their part too. To provide the integrated service effectively, these extension professionals need to acquire some competencies in extension as well as in technical

subject matters. This research has explored to ascertain the level of competencies in order to find out the ways and means to improve the capabilities, acquired skills, execution in role, amplify them and maintain them at high level. Before claiming the credit to assess the competencies of agriculture extension professionals (Agriculture Officers) it becomes very crucial to understand and examine the administrative circumstances in which they are executing their responsibilities. Every organization has its own set of working domains and without analyzing the impact of these variables, it is not justify the way we explore the level of competencies of extension professional.

'Job satisfaction' is one of the most important variable which govern the positive or negative degree of emotional status of an employee towards his enactment. In broader sense we can say that job satisfaction is a feeling of fulfillment or enjoyment that a person derives from their job. The study of job satisfaction not only refers to the extent of satisfaction which an individual derives from his job but how this satisfaction makes his further performance

better. It is in regards with the extent to which the extension professionals felt satisfied with the nature of their work in state agriculture department. Job satisfaction significantly impacts extension professionals, influencing their performance, productivity and overall well-being.

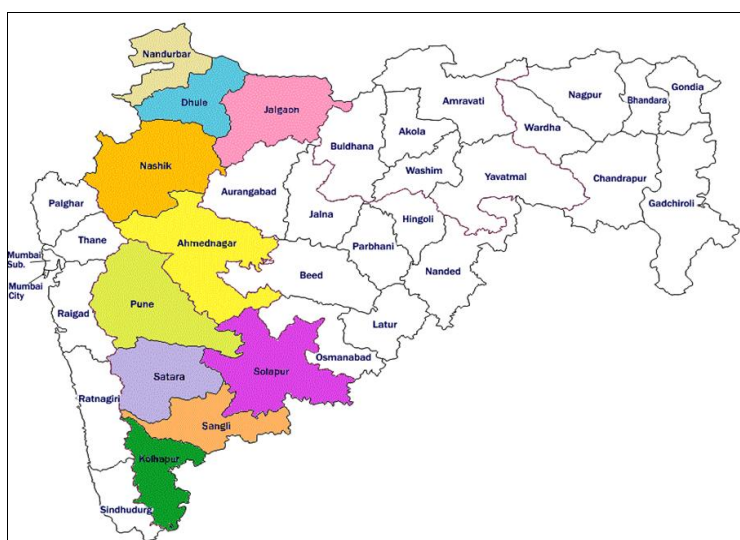
Objective

To know the level of Job Satisfaction of Agriculture Extension Professionals working under State Agriculture Department of Maharashtra.

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted in the 10 districts which come under the jurisdictions of Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri. These districts were Nashik, Nandurbar, Dhule, Jalgaon, Pune, Ahmednagar, Solapur, Kolhapur, Satara and Sangli.

Area of Study



Selection of Respondents

Total 300 respondents (Agriculture extension professionals from Gazetted officer cadre holding the position as - District Superintendent Agriculture Officer, Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer, Taluka Agriculture Officer and Circle Agriculture Officer) were selected from 10 districts of Western Maharashtra region. In order to justify sample size from each district, 'proportionate stratified random sampling' method has been used to select respondents. District wise selection of the respondents is mentioned in table 1.

Table 1: District wise selection of the respondents

Sr. No.	District	Available Sample	Respondents Selected
1	Nandurbar	28	26
2	Dhule	22	19
3	Nashik	62	36
4	Jalgaon	57	31
5	Ahilyanagar	68	35
6	Pune	64	34
7	Solapur	57	32
8	Kolhapur	45	24
9	Satara	53	32
10	Sangali	42	31
	Total	498	300

Variables and Its Measurement

'Job Satisfaction' is an employee's contentment and fulfillment with their job, encompassing feelings about the work itself, the work environment and relationships with colleagues and superiors. It is a combination of cognitive (thoughts), affective (feelings) and behavioral (actions) components that influence an employee's overall attitude toward their role. This satisfaction is driven by both intrinsic factors, like the nature of the tasks, and extrinsic factors, such as pay, benefits, and the work environment. Job satisfaction significantly impacts extension professionals, influencing their performance, productivity and overall well-being. This variable was measured with the help of scale developed by Kaur and Singh (1997) with slight modifications.

Computation of Job Satisfaction

The job satisfaction scale used in this study consisted of total 11 statements. The job satisfaction was measured on five point response continuum viz. 'extremely satisfied', 'satisfied', 'slightly satisfied', 'slightly dissatisfied' and 'extremely dissatisfied' and scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 were given, respectively for all the statements. The total job satisfaction score for each respondent was obtained by

summing the score of all 11 statements. Maximum score one could obtain was 55 and minimum 11. Finally a composite score was obtained by summing the score for each item category. Later the respondents were categorized into three groups as 'low', 'medium' and 'high' levels of job satisfaction by using Mean $\pm$ S.D. formula.

Results and Discussion

Table 2 displays the levels of job satisfaction agriculture extension professional experienced while working under state agriculture department.

Table 2: Distribution of Agriculture Extension Professionals according to their Job Satisfaction

Sr. No.	Level of Job Satisfaction	Score	Respondents (N = 300)	
			Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	Up to 27	49	16.33
2.	Medium	28 to 40	207	69.00
3.	High	Above 40	44	14.67
		Total	300	100.00
	Mean = 33.83		S.D. = 6.53	

Table No. 2 reveals that, more than two-third (69.00%) of the extension professional experienced 'medium' level of job satisfaction while working under state agriculture department, followed by 'low' level of job satisfaction (16.33%) and remained few (14.67%) of them had 'high' level of job satisfaction. Job profile of extension professional is a combo of social compassion and professional accountability. From the above table it could be inferred that, more than 85.00 per cent of the extension professional had medium to low level of satisfaction towards their job. This is due to, poor infrastructure facilities, limited access to resources, slow promotion, fewer probabilities for occupational advancement, hierarchical discrimination, burden of additional non-technical work from other departments, fatigue to handle number of subject with inadequate man power, lack of recognition and vote of appreciation.

The findings are in agreement with the conclusions drawn from studies conducted by Thorat (2008)^[5], Kusumlatha (2018)^[4] and K. Manobharathi *et al.* (2020)^[3].

Conclusion

The major aim of this study was to assess the competencies of agriculture extension professionals working under state agriculture department. Along with this some other parameters and variables were also studied not only to find the level of competency but also to highlight the impacting factors on competency. Generally some personal characters of agriculture extension professionals are found to be most prominent in determining the quality of work executed by them and hence further furnish their competencies. In this study, job satisfaction initiated to be the most correlating variable with competencies of agriculture extension professionals. Job satisfaction affects competency by increasing employee productivity, motivation and engagement. From this study, it was concluded that; more than two-third of the extension professional experienced medium level of job satisfaction and very few were working with high level of job satisfaction. This scenario leads to lower performance and disengagement of agriculture

extension professionals while working in the state agriculture department. After studying the pattern of correlation between job satisfaction and competency, it shows the cyclic model, where; job satisfaction mediates competencies and more competent agriculture extension professional can lead toward more satisfaction. Hence, department of agriculture and policy designers have to think about the issues hammering the job satisfaction of employee in order to improve their work ethics and morale.

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