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Job satisfaction of extension and advisory service providers of Meghalaya

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Abstract

This study investigates the job satisfaction of Extension and Advisory Service Providers (EASPs) in Meghalaya, India, focusing on three critical dimensions: satisfaction with pay, promotion, benefits, and rewards; satisfaction with supervisors, co-workers, and clientele; and satisfaction with operating conditions and the nature of work. Conducted across the Garo, Jaintia, and Khasi regions, the research involved 56 EASPs from various extension service organizations, including the Department of Agriculture, Department of Horticulture, Agricultural Technology Management Agency, and Krishi Vigyan Kendra. An *ex post facto* research design was employed, utilizing a structured interview schedule to gather data on job satisfaction. Descriptive statistics and the Friedman test were used to analyze the data. The results indicate that 37.50 per cent of EASPs reported medium job satisfaction, 32.14% reported low satisfaction, and 30.36% reported high satisfaction. Dimension-wise analysis revealed that satisfaction with supervisors, co-workers, and clientele was the highest (mean index score = 69.08), reflecting favorable perceptions of interpersonal relationships and support. In contrast, satisfaction with pay, promotion, benefits, and rewards was the lowest (mean index score = 60.30), highlighting concerns over incentives, allowances, pay, and promotion and career progression. Satisfaction with operating conditions and the nature of work scored an intermediate value (mean index score = 63.06), indicating mixed feelings about work resources and job roles. The Friedman test confirmed significant differences in job satisfaction across these dimensions, with the highest satisfaction related to interpersonal aspects and the lowest related to incentives, allowances, pay, and promotion. Addressing these issues, improving resource availability, and increasing clerical support are critical to enhancing overall job satisfaction. Such improvements would likely boost the effectiveness of EASPs and contribute to better agricultural outcomes in Meghalaya by facilitating timely and efficient service delivery.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, extension and advisory service providers, workload, extension agents

Introduction

The agricultural sector holds a pivotal role in India's economic growth and regional development (Guntukula, 2017) [1]. Central to this sector's success is Extension and Advisory Service (EAS) providers who dedicate themselves to enhancing agricultural practices by advising farmers, implementing various programs, and promoting best practices (Sitepu *et al.*, 2022) [2]. These EAS providers play a crucial role in bridging the gap between research innovations and practical applications in the field. Agricultural extension services have been vital since the early stages of India's first Green Revolution, playing a key role in translating scientific research into practical, actionable knowledge for farmers (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2008) [3]. These services involve disseminating timely and accurate

information to farmers, enabling them to make informed decisions and implement best practices. This process not only enhances agricultural productivity but also supports the overall development of the sector (Nedumaran and Ravi, 2019; Mohammadi, 2006) [4, 5]. Despite substantial investments in agricultural training, research, and policy development, there has been limited attention to the work environments of the personnel responsible for extension services. These extension agents are essential for the successful implementation of agricultural programs, facilitating the adoption of new technologies and practices among farmers (Mulinge and Mueller, 1998) [6].

Job satisfaction, defined as the degree of contentment and motivation employees feel towards their roles, directly impacts work quality, commitment, and productivity (Davis

and Newtron, 1997; Luthans, 1998; Bavendam, 2000; Robbins, 2005) ^[7, 8, 9, 10]. Job satisfaction is intrinsically linked to motivation and performance, though it is distinct in focusing on the emotional response to one's job. Enhancing job satisfaction is a key goal of job design strategies, which include methods like job rotation, enlargement, and enrichment. Additionally, factors such as management style, organizational culture, and employee empowerment also play crucial roles in influencing job satisfaction (Yadav and Dhillon, 2013) ^[11]. A satisfied workforce is better equipped to perform effectively, which in turn contributes to the overall success of the organization. Such a satisfied workforce is more likely to be engaged and productive, making job satisfaction a critical element in achieving organizational success. In the context of agricultural extension and advisory services, this satisfaction is particularly significant given the challenging and multifaceted nature of the work involved. For EAS providers, understanding and improving job satisfaction is not just about enhancing individual performance but also about supporting sustainable agricultural development. Job satisfaction influences various aspects of work behaviour and organizational effectiveness, making it a vital area of focus for administrators and policymakers alike (Wright *et al.*, 2007; Sarnaik *et al.*, 2020) ^[12, 13]. The effectiveness of the extension programs, as noted by Tladi (2004) ^[14], depends significantly on the satisfaction and dedication of these agents. Therefore, understanding their job satisfaction is essential as it influences their performance, engagement, and overall effectiveness in their roles (Barden, 2018) ^[15]. Considering the importance of job satisfaction, an attempt was made to study the job satisfaction of Extension and Advisory Service Providers in Meghalaya.

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted across three distinct regions of Meghalaya: Garo, Jaintia, and Khasi. To ensure comprehensive coverage, one district was selected from each region: Ri Bhoi from the Khasi region, West Jaintia Hills from the Jaintia region, and West Garo Hills from the Garo region. *Ex post facto* research design was employed for the study. The study aimed to encompass all extension and advisory service providers in the selected districts. All willing respondents involved in Extension and Advisory Services (EAS) from the following four selected Extension Service Organizations were included through complete enumeration: Department of Agriculture, Department of Horticulture, Agricultural Technology Management Agency, and Krishi Vigyan Kendra. The total number of extension personnel in these districts was 56. Specifically, the sample comprised 15 EASPs from the Department of Agriculture, 14 from the Department of Horticulture, 13 from the Agricultural Technology Management Agency, and 14 from Krishi Vigyan Kendra. Data collection was carried out using a pretested structured interview schedule. The research employed an *ex post facto* design to evaluate job satisfaction. For measuring job satisfaction, a scale developed by Anshida Beevi *et al.* (2020) ^[16] was utilized, which includes 21 statements organized into three dimensions: (1) Satisfaction with Pay, Promotion, Benefits, and Rewards; (2) Satisfaction with Supervisor, Co-workers, and Clientele; and (3) Satisfaction with Operating

Conditions and Nature of Work. Respondents rated their agreement with each statement on a 5-point continuum ranging from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree'. For positive statements, scores were assigned as follows: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1. For negative statements, the scoring was reversed. The job satisfaction scores for each statement were aggregated to calculate the overall satisfaction scores for EAS providers. Data analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis involved descriptive statistics, including mean scores, to understand the overall job satisfaction levels. The Friedman test was employed to assess differences in job satisfaction across the various dimensions, followed by post hoc tests to identify specific areas of significance. Job satisfaction levels were classified into three categories: low, medium, and high. This classification was based on the mean and standard deviation.

Results and Discussion

1. Overall Job satisfaction of Extension and Advisory Service Providers

Table 1 presents the data on the overall job satisfaction of EAS Providers. The data revealed that nearly two fifth of the EAS providers (37.50%) belonged to medium Job satisfaction category, and remaining 32.14 per cent and 30.36 percent of them belonged to low and high job satisfaction categories. The findings were quite analogous to that of Meena and Singh (2009) ^[17]; Patel and Dhodia (2015) ^[18], Krishna *et al.* (2024) ^[19].

Table 1: Distribution of EAS providers according to the Job Satisfaction

(n=56)			
Sl. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	18	32.14
2.	Medium	21	37.50
3.	High	17	30.36

2. Dimension wise Job Satisfaction of Extension and Advisory Service Providers of Meghalaya

Table 2 presents the data on the dimension wise job satisfaction of EAS Providers. Based on the dimension-wise job satisfaction scores for Extension and Advisory Service Providers (EASPs) in Meghalaya, several insights emerge. Satisfaction with Supervisor, Co-workers, and Clientele recorded the highest mean index score of 69.08, reflecting a generally favorable perception in this dimension. Respondents particularly valued the cooperative nature of their co-workers and the support they receive from clients, which contributed to this higher score. In contrast, Satisfaction with Pay, Promotion, Benefits, and Rewards had the lowest mean index score of 60.30, indicating moderate dissatisfaction in this area. Issues such as inadequate benefits and uncertain promotion prospects were highlighted, impacting overall satisfaction. The Satisfaction with Operating Conditions and Nature of Work dimension scored 63.06, falling between the other two dimensions. While respondents expressed pride in their role's community impact, they were dissatisfied with work delays due to resource shortages and clerical tasks, which contributed to this intermediate score. Overall, while EASPs are generally

content with their working relationships and the impact of their work, there are significant concerns regarding incentives, allowances, pay, and promotion and resource availability.

Table 2: Distribution of dimension wise Job Satisfaction of Extension and Advisory Service Providers of Meghalaya

(n=56)

Sl. No.	Dimension	Mean Index
1.	Satisfaction with Pay, Promotion, Benefits, and Rewards	60.30
2.	Satisfaction with Supervisor, Co-workers, and Clienteles	69.08
3.	Satisfaction with Operating Conditions and Nature of Work	63.06

3. Item wise analysis of Job Satisfaction of Extension and Advisory Service Providers of Meghalaya

Table 3 presents the data on the item wise job satisfaction of EAS Providers. In the dimension of Job satisfaction related to pay, promotion, and benefits reflects a range of opinions. Satisfaction with salary is divided, with 14.29 per cent of respondents strongly agreeing they are satisfied, while the same percentage (14.29%) strongly disagree, resulting in a neutral average score (3.0). Promotion opportunities are perceived negatively, with only 14.29 per cent strongly agreeing that the chances are favorable, while 19.64 per cent disagree, leading to a low average score of 2.48. Satisfaction with benefits is also low, with 19.64 per cent strongly agreeing that benefits are adequate, and 17.86 per cent disagreeing, giving an average score of 2.39. On the other hand, 51.79 per cent are satisfied with their position compared to similar roles elsewhere, reflected in a higher average score of 3.7. Overall, while there is some contentment with current roles, there are significant concerns about incentives, allowances, pay, and promotion prospects

Satisfaction with supervisors and co-workers shows positive. A substantial 57.14 per cent strongly agree that their supervisors allow them to express their views, and 25 per cent strongly agree that supervisors provide helpful guidance, resulting in high average scores of 3.88 and 3.95, respectively. Additionally, 41.07 per cent strongly agree that co-workers are cooperative, contributing to a high average score of 4.36. Concerns about client acceptance are relatively low: 51.79 per cent disagree and 10.71 per cent strongly disagree with the negative statement that clients do not view them as professional experts, which indicates that most respondents feel accepted as professionals. The most pressing issue is the shortage of clerical assistance, with 57.14 per cent strongly agreeing that the number of clerical staff is insufficient, resulting in a very low average score of 1.64.

Satisfaction with work conditions and job nature shows a mix of positive and negative feedback. Opportunities for professional development are highly valued, with 64.29 per cent agreeing that the job allows participation in professional events, and 51.79 per cent agreeing that the job

offers further learning opportunities, leading to high average scores of 4.0 and 3.89, respectively. However, there are notable concerns about resources and workload. A significant 28.57 per cent strongly agree that work is delayed due to a lack of resources, resulting in a low average score of 2.13. Additionally, 30.36 per cent strongly agree that excessive clerical work affects their duties, contributing to a mean score of 2.21. There is also dissatisfaction with training, with 37.50 per cent agreeing that the training is inadequate, resulting in an average score of 2.95. Despite the positive aspects of professional development opportunities, operational issues have a considerable impact on overall job satisfaction.

4. Comparison of different dimensions of job satisfaction among EASPs

Table 4 presents the results of a Friedman test comparing job satisfaction dimensions among Extension and Advisory Service Providers. The test revealed significant differences in satisfaction across three dimensions: satisfaction with pay, promotion, benefits, and rewards (mean rank = 1.77), satisfaction with supervisors, co-workers, and clienteles (mean rank = 2.34), and satisfaction with operating conditions and nature of work (mean rank = 1.89). The observed chi-square value was 10.83, significantly exceeding the critical value of 5.99 (p = 0.004), indicating that job satisfaction varies notably among these dimensions. Based on these ranks, dimensions are grouped into two categories: Group A includes "Satisfaction with Supervisor, Co-workers, and Clienteles," which has the highest mean rank, while Group B comprises "Satisfaction with Pay, Promotion, Benefits, and Rewards" and "Satisfaction with Operating Conditions and Nature of Work," which have similar mean ranks. This grouping highlights significant variations in job satisfaction across the different dimensions. These findings align with the studies by Banmeke and Ajayi (2005) [20] and Anshida Beevi (2021) [21], which reported that while extension personnel were generally satisfied with their relationships with colleagues, they were dissatisfied with their working conditions and salaries.

Table 4: Comparison of different dimensions of job satisfaction among Extension and Advisory Service Providers Based on Mean Ranks of Friedman Test

(n=56)

Dimensions	Mean Ranks	Groups
Satisfaction with Pay, Promotion, Benefits, and Rewards	1.77	B
Satisfaction with Supervisor, Co-workers, and Clienteles	2.34	A
Satisfaction with Operating Conditions and Nature of Work	1.89	B
Chi-square (observed)	10.83***	
Chi-squate (critical)	5.99	
df	2	
p	0.004	

Mean ranks with same letter indicated not significantly different

Table 3: Distribution of item wise analysis of Job Satisfaction of Extension and Advisory Service Providers of Meghalaya (n=56)

Sl. No.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean Score
A. Satisfaction with Pay, Promotion, Benefits Rewards							
1	I am satisfied with my present salary	8 (14.29)	18 (32.14)	4 (7.14)	18 (32.14)	8 (14.29)	3.00
2	*The chances for promotion in my job is not convincing	8 (14.29)	24 (42.86)	13 (23.21)	11 (19.64)	0 (0.00)	2.48
3	There is a fair rule to judge the chances of being promoted	9 (16.07)	25 (44.64)	9 (16.07)	9 (16.07)	4 (7.14)	3.46
4	*I think the benefits which I receive are not as good as other organizations offer	11 (19.64)	22 (39.29)	13 (23.21)	10 (17.86)	0 (0.00)	2.39
5	I am satisfied with my present position, when I compare it to similar positions elsewhere	12 (21.43)	29 (51.79)	5 (8.93)	6 (10.71)	4 (7.14)	3.70
6	*I am not satisfied with the amount of time and energy devoted to my present position and the recognition I receive from it	7 (12.50)	12 (21.43)	23 (41.07)	11 (19.64)	3 (5.36)	2.84
7	I am satisfied with the rewards given for good performance in my job	5 (8.93)	19 (33.93)	20 (35.71)	8 (14.29)	4 (7.14)	3.23
B. Satisfaction with Supervisor, Co-workers, Clienteles							
8	I like my supervisor since he allow me to express my views in decision-making	11 (19.64)	32 (57.14)	8 (14.29)	5 (8.93)	0 (0.00)	3.88
9	I am satisfied with the help and guidance from my supervisor	14 (25.00)	30 (53.57)	7 (12.50)	5 (8.93)	0 (0.00)	3.95
10	*I don't think the clientele I serve accept me as a professional expert	0 (0.00)	7 (12.50)	14 (25.00)	29 (51.79)	6 (10.71)	3.61
11	I like my co-workers since they are co-operative	23 (41.07)	31 (55.36)	1 (1.79)	1 (1.79)	0 (0.00)	4.36
12	*I think am not able to provide the services according to the farmers' needs	6 (10.71)	14 (25.00)	17 (30.36)	13 (23.21)	6 (10.71)	2.98
13	I am satisfied with the support I receive from the farmers/villagers for performing my job better	4 (7.14)	38 (67.86)	12 (21.43)	1 (1.79)	1 (1.79)	3.77
14	*I feel the number of clerical assistants available to facilitate my job are dissatisfying	32 (57.14)	15 (26.79)	6 (10.71)	3 (5.36)	0 (0.00)	1.64
C. Satisfaction with the Operating conditions, Nature of work							
15	I like my job as it provide me the opportunity to particpate in professional get together	12 (21.43)	36 (64.29)	4 (7.14)	4 (7.14)	0 (0.00)	4.00
16	*My work is delayed due to lack of availability of resources in time	16 (28.57)	28 (50.00)	4 (7.14)	5 (8.93)	3 (5.36)	2.13
17	I* feel my duty is affected by too much clerical/paper work	17 (30.36)	23 (41.07)	5 (8.93)	9 (16.07)	2 (3.57)	2.21
18	I enjoy freedom for writing and publishing articles	4 (7.14)	16 (28.57)	19 (33.93)	8 (14.29)	9 (16.07)	2.96
19	*I am not satisfied with the training given to me for up scaling my knowledge and skill	2 (3.57)	21 (37.50)	14 (25.00)	16 (28.57)	3 (5.36)	2.95
20	I like my job since it provide me an opportunity for further learning	17 (30.36)	29 (51.79)	3 (5.36)	1 (1.79)	6 (10.71)	3.89
21	I am proud of my job as it provide me an opportunity to serve the farming community	28 (50)	16 (28.57)	2 (3.57)	0 (0.00)	10 (17.86)	3.93

(*indicates negative statement, figures in parenthesis denote percentage)

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive assessment of job satisfaction among Extension and Advisory Service Providers (EASPs) in Meghalaya, offering valuable insights into their work experiences. The analysis revealed that approximately 37.50 per cent of EASPs reported medium job satisfaction, 32.14 per cent experienced low satisfaction, and 30.36 per cent were highly satisfied. Dimension-wise results indicate that satisfaction with supervisors, co-workers, and clienteles was the highest, suggesting positive interpersonal dynamics and effective support systems. However, satisfaction with pay, promotion, benefits, and rewards was notably lower, highlighting significant concerns about incentives, allowances, and career advancement. Moderate satisfaction with operating

conditions and the nature of work reflects challenges such as resource shortages, vacant positions, and procedural inefficiencies. The Friedman test confirmed significant variations across these dimensions, emphasizing that addressing issues related to incentives, allowances, and operational resources is crucial. By focusing on these areas, overall job satisfaction and the effectiveness of EASPs could be enhanced, leading to improved agricultural development outcomes.

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