



Research Article

Utility perception about extension education courses by the undergraduates studies

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SUMMARY : The present study was conducted in all the constituents' colleges of agriculture under jurisdiction of Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth. Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, constitute 5 constituent Agricultural colleges, *i.e.* College of Agriculture Parbhani, College of Agriculture Latur, College of Agriculture Ambajogai, College of Agriculture Osmanabad and College of Agriculture Badnapur. Proportionate random samplings from each constituent college were selected. The respondent students who have completed VII semesters of their undergraduation study were selected randomly. Thus, a sample of 120 respondents was made. The study of utility perception was made in terms of socio-personal characteristics of respondents, utility of graduate level extension courses, relationship of independent variable with dependent variables and suggestions for improvement in the syllabus by the undergraduate students. The respondents were interviewed with the help of well structured interview schedule. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents had 'more useful' perceived utility about graduate level extension education courses.

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Extension was introduced as a subject in some Indian Agricultural Universities in the 1950s to train students for the positions of Agricultural Extension Officers in the community development programme. This required not only training in agricultural technology but also in extension method.

The courses were often taught by economists and agriculturists with one month training in extension. Historically, agricultural extension education courses have focused around traditional areas - extension methods, history of extension, adoption-diffusion, communication etc. Agricultural extension curriculum is heavily loaded with lectures. Course content in most agricultural programmes comprise of basic introductory concepts of sociology, economics, psychology and other disciplines. The extension function as to transfer of technology developed through agricultural research programmes to farmers. The extension curricula have changed somewhat, but

much less than the market requires. The specific objectives of the study were: to study the socio-personal characteristics of the undergraduate students of agriculture, to find out the utility of graduate level extension education courses to the undergraduate students and to delineate the relationship between socio-personal characteristics of the undergraduate students with perceived utility of graduate level extension education courses.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in all the constituents' colleges of agriculture under jurisdiction of Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth.

Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, constitute five constituent Agricultural colleges, *i.e.* College of Agriculture Parbhani, College of Agriculture Latur, College of Agriculture Ambajogai, College of Agriculture Osmanabad and College of Agriculture Badnapur. Proportionate random samplings from each constituent college were

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selected. The respondent students who have completed VII semesters of their undergraduation study were selected randomly. Thus, making a total sample of 120 respondents. The respondents were interviewed with the help of well structured interview schedule and analyzed by using suitable statistical techniques like, mean, frequency, percentage, standard deviation and correlation. Five extension education courses with theory and practical *i.e.* Fundamentals of rural sociology and educational psychology, Dimension of agricultural extension, extension methodologies for transfer of agricultural technology, Entrepreneurship development and communication skills and RAWE programme were considered for the detailed study. The topics and subtopics of each course with theory and practical were listed for easy understanding and recall for the respondents. The utility perception of each topic as perceived by the undergraduate student during VIIIth semester was studied. Each respondent was requested to evaluate the utility of each topic on three point's *viz.*, 'more useful', 'less useful' and 'not useful'. Finally the total number of frequencies for each topic was considered.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The observations of the present study as well as relevant analysis have been summarized under the following heads:

Socio-personal characteristics of the undergraduate students of agriculture:

Table 1 reveals that, there were 72.50 per cent boys and 27.50 per cent girls in the sample. More than the one-third *i.e.* 39.17 per cent of the respondent students belonged to higher caste, followed by 31.67 per cent belonging to lower caste and remaining 29.16 per cent in middle caste. Majority of the students belonged to rural background (76.67 %) and 23.33 per cent were from urban background. More than the three forth *i.e.* 79.17 per cent of the students parental occupation was agriculture followed by service (17.5 %), business (3.33 %). Majority (70 %) of the families of respondents had medium family educational status; while equal per cent *i.e.* 15 per cent respondents had high family educational status and low family educational status. 80.83 per cent of the respondents were from medium family income. More than half (58.34 %) of the respondent students secured 7.1 – 8.0 cumulative grade point (CGPA). 46.67 per cent of the respondent students wished to complete post graduation. Majority of the respondents (59.17 %) wished to secure administrative position in Government department followed by 27.50 per cent wished to secure administrative position in Department of Agriculture. Majority (83.33 %) of the respondent students had aspired to earn income more than Rs. 20,000/month. More than the half (56.67 %) of the respondent students had aspired to develop own family followed by 55.00 per cent respondent students had

Table 1 : Distribution of the respondents according to their socio-personal characteristics

Sr. No.	Category	Frequency	Per cent
Gender			
1.	Male	87	72.50
2.	Female	33	27.50
Caste			
1.	Lower (SC, ST, NT ,Others)	38	31.67
2.	Middle (OBC)	35	29.16
3.	Higher (Maratha)	47	39.17
Rural-urban background			
1.	Rural	92	76.67
2.	Urban	28	23.33
Parental occupation			
1.	Agriculture	95	79.17
2.	Service	21	17.5
3.	Business	4	3.33
4.	Others	0	0.0
Family education background			
1.	Low	18	15.00
2.	Medium	84	70.00
3.	High	18	15.00
Family income			
1.	Low (upto 22,710 Rs.)	8	6.67
2.	Medium (Rs. 22,711 to 4,19,999Rs.)	97	80.83
3.	High (above Rs. 4, 20,000 Rs.)	15	12.50
Academic performance			
1.	Below 7	13	10.83
2.	7.1 – 8.0	70	58.34
3.	8.1 – 9.0	37	30.83
4.	9.1 – 10	0	0
Aspirations			
Educational aspirations*			
1.	To complete doctoral studies	40	33.33
2.	To complete post graduation	56	46.67
3.	To complete undergraduate studies	35	29.17
4.	To complete short term course	18	15.00
5.	To complete degree courses other than agriculture	5	4.17
Job aspirations*			
1.	To secure administrative position in Government department	71	59.17
2.	To secure administrative position in Department of Agriculture	33	27.50
3.	To secure academic position in Agricultural University	15	12.50
4.	To secure job in private organization	31	25.83

Table 1 contd....

Contd.... Table 1

Economic aspirations*			
1.	To earn income more than Rs. 20,000/month	100	83.33
2.	To earn income between Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000/month	17	14.17
3.	To earn income of Rs. 5000 to Rs. 10,000/month	03	2.5
4.	To earn income of Rs. 5000/month	00	00
Social aspirations*			
1.	To develop own family	68	56.67
2.	To work for development of village	55	45.83
3.	To work for development of farmers	66	55.00
4.	To get social recognition	33	27.50
5.	To make efforts to remove traditionalism	46	38.33
Time spent for self study			
1.	1	3	2.50
2.	2	8	06.67
3.	3	23	19.17
4.	4	17	14.16
5.	5	16	13.30
Self confidence			
1.	Low	30	25.00
2.	Medium	78	65.00
3.	High	12	10.00
Participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities			
1.	0	12	10.00
2.	1	29	24.17
3.	2	37	30.83
4.	3	22	18.33
5.	4	11	9.17
6.	5 and above	9	7.5
Preparation for competitive exams			
1.	1	58	48.33
2.	2	29	24.17
3.	3	18	15.00
4.	4 and Above	15	12.50
	Total	120	100.00

*Multiple responses obtained

aspired to work for development of farmers. 13.30 per cent of the respondent students spent more than 5 hrs/day for self study. Majority (65.00 %) of the respondents showed medium level of self confidence. About 30.83 per cent of respondent students had participation in 2 extra and co-curricular activities followed by 24.17 per cent in 1 activity. Majority of the respondents (48.33 %) prepared for only one competitive exam.

Utility of graduate level extension education courses to the undergraduate students (Table 2):

Fundamentals of rural sociology and educational psychology (EXTN 111) Credit = 2 (0+2):

It was observed that majority (70.58 per cent) contents of this course had 'more useful' perceived utility to respondent students.

Dimensions of Agricultural Extension (EXTN 122) Credits = 2 (1+1):

In theory, majority (75.00 per cent) contents had 'more useful' perceived utility where as in practical of same course, 80.00 per cent contents had 'more useful' perceived utility to respondent students.

Table 2 : Distribution of contents of courses according to the respondents

Sr. No.	Perceived utility	Contents		Per cent	
EXTN 111					
1.	More useful	12		70.58	
2.	Less useful	4		23.54	
3.	Not useful	1		05.88	
	Total	17		100.00	
EXTN 122					
Sr. No.	Perceived utility	Theory		Practical	
		Content	%	Content	%
1.	More useful	9	75.00	4.00	80.00
2.	Less useful	2	16.67	0.50	10.00
3.	Not useful	1	8.33	0.50	10.00
	Total	12	100.0	5.00	100.0
EXTN 353					
Sr. No.	Perceived utility	Theory		Practical	
		Content	%	Contents	Per cent
1.	More useful	5.50	68.75	6.28	78.50
2.	Less useful	1.50	18.75	1.48	18.50
3.	Not useful	1.00	12.50	0.24	3.00
	Total	8.00	100.0	8.00	100.0
EXTN 364					
Sr. No.	Perceived utility	Theory		Practical	
		Content	%	Content	%
1.	More useful	4.50	75.00	6	66.67
2.	Less useful	1.00	16.67	2	22.22
3.	Not useful	0.50	8.33	1	11.11
	Total	6.00	100.0	9	100.0
EXTN 475					
Sr. No.	Perceived utility	Contents		Per cent	
1.	More useful	9.16		76.33	
2.	Less useful	1.36		11.33	
3.	Not useful	1.48		12.34	
	Total	12		100.00	

Extension methodologies for transfer of agricultural technology (EXTN 353) Credits = 2 (1+1):

It was observed that, in theory of this course, out of 8 contents, majority (68.75 per cent) contents had 'more useful' perceived utility to respondent students whereas in practical of same course, out of 8 contents, 78.50 per cent contents had 'more useful' perceived utility to respondent students.

Entrepreneurship development and communication skills (EXTN 364) Credits = 2 (1+1):

In this course theory as well as practical contents had 'more useful' perceived utility *i.e.* 75.00 per cent in theory and 66.67 per cent in practical of same course.

RAWE programme (EXTN 475):

Majority (76.33 per cent) of the contents had 'more useful' perceived utility to respondent students.

Relationship between socio-personal characteristics of the undergraduate students with perceived utility of graduate level extension education courses:

It is observed from the study (Table 3) that, the variables namely family education background, academic performance, self confidence, rural-urban background and aspiration were positively and significantly related with the perceived utility of graduate level extension education courses. However, the variables like gender, caste, parental occupation, family income, self study, participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities and preparation for competitive exams could not

Table 3 : Relationship between socio-personal characteristics of the undergraduate students with perceived utility of graduate level extension education courses

Sr. No.	Variables	Co-efficient correlation 'r' values
1.	Gender	-0.141 NS
2.	Caste	-0.056 NS
3.	Rural-urban background	0.240*
4.	Parental occupation	-0.172 NS
5.	Family education background	0.765**
6.	Family income	0.075 NS
7.	Academic performance	0.574**
8.	Aspiration	0.245*
9.	Self study	-0.179 NS
10.	Self confidence	0.738**
11.	Participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities	-0.018 NS
12.	Preparation for competitive exams	0.110 NS

* indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively

NS – Non significant

show any statistical significant relationship with perceived utility of graduate level extension education courses by the undergraduate students. Ingle *et al.* (1999) and Potare (2003) have also made some information related to the present study.

Conclusion:

It could be concluded that regarding utility of the course fundamentals of rural sociology and educational psychology, majority contents (70.58 %) had 'more useful' perceives utility to respondents, course on dimensions of agricultural extension, in theory 75.00 per cent and in practical 80.00 per cent contents were perceived as 'more useful'. As regards to the course on extension methodologies for transfer of agricultural technology, majority (68.75 %) theory contents while 78.58 per cent contents of practical were had 'more useful' perceived utility to respondents. It was found that the course on entrepreneurship development and communication skills, the majority contents in theory (75.00 %) as well as in practical (66.67 %) was found 'more useful'. The study revealed that, in the RAWE programme, majority contents (76.33 %) had more useful perceived utility to respondent students. Hence, majority of these students had 'more useful' perceived utility about extension education courses.

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