



Research Article

Performance of result demonstration on impact of facilitation in training

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SUMMARY : To make the training programme effective trainers must facilitate the training process instead of acting as an expert. Many trainers do not realise the importance of facilitation. Therefore, a qualitative research through result demonstration was organised to show the impact of facilitation of training which is generally not done in extension education. For that demonstration 21 teachers from different State Agricultural Universities were selected. All the selected teachers were also a trainer in their respective job. One afternoon session of a 21 days duration training programme was selected for that purpose. The training module was prepared in consultation with the co-trainer on the basis of course content of the training. In the training programme affect of facilitation was observed by the trainees and all the trainees accepted that facilitation has a great role to play in case of training.

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Training plays an important role in developing human resources. In training trainers' role is very important. But simply conducting the training is not sufficient for successfulness of building capacity of trainees. To make the training effective, trainers must facilitate the training programme. Therefore, the trainers must act as facilitators rather than subject matter experts. The word 'facilitator' comes from the Latin word 'facilitas' which means easiness. This meaning then is to do with making it easier, to help (Bee and Bee, 1998). The term facilitation is broadly used to describe any activity which makes easy the tasks of others. Greenway's (n.d) ideas on facilitation is about making learning easy. For him it can be done by enhancing learners' experiences - by raising their awareness levels during experiences and making it easy for them to communicate their experiences during reviews, developing learners' own reviewing abilities improving learners' understanding of their own learning processes. Since all the trainees are adults it is very much essential to conduct the training in

a congenial atmosphere considering the principles of adult learning. According to Heron (1999) facilitator is a person who has the role of empowering participants to learn in an experiential group. Here experiential group is one in which learning takes place through an active and aware involvement of the whole person. Training and trainer's quality have acquired a significant importance. But the value of training as well as trainer is yet to be fully acknowledged in the agricultural development. In reality trainers are selected based on their subject matter knowledge, seniority in services etc rather than their quality and skill as a trainer (Barman, 2008). Training can not necessarily lead to change unless due care is taken to bring desirable change (Kumar and Hansara, 1999). Success of training will depend on interaction between trainers and trainees, the approach adopted to break the resistance to learn, creation of learning environment conducive for learning etc. The subject matter knowledge alone will not help a trainer to do all those important and essential activities of a training programme. Therefore, trainers must act as facilitators to

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conduct the training for capacity building of extension personnel. The trainers must facilitate the training process instead of teaching the trainees. But in most of the cases trainers do not realize the importance of facilitation. So in this present study a unique way was selected to show the impact of facilitation on training. Here result demonstration was conducted to show the affect of the facilitation in training. Generally this type of study is rarely conducted particularly in facilitation in India.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The result demonstration was conducted in the year 2008 at G.B.Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand. One training session of a 21 days duration training programme was selected to show the impact of facilitation in training. The researcher discussed the matter with a trainer who was invited to conduct a session in that training programme. It was a national level training where participants were coming from different State Agricultural Universities. The trainer was invited for a two and half hour duration session in afternoon. The afternoon session was purposively selected because trainees generally feel tiredness. So maintaining concentration of trainees is a difficult task for the trainers as well as trainees. The researcher and the trainer jointly designed a training module for the session. The topic was also not related to their own subject. The researcher acted as co facilitator for the session. Three post graduate students helped them to record the proceedings. The training module prepared is given below.

Training module prepared:

Title: Communication skills for working with small farmers

Performance Objectives:

- At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- Explain the importance of facilitation
 - Link the facilitation to their job.

Participants: 21 SAUs teachers (Discipline- Plant pathology)

Date: 12th Jan, 08

Duration: 2 hr. 30 min. .

Facilitator: Two

Observer: Three (Table A)

The training was designed to orient the participants on importance of communication skills for working with small farmers. The session was conducted by two facilitators. One facilitator started the session by asking an open question to the participants- Is communication skill is necessary for plant pathologist? The participants replied spontaneously- "Yes". Then he put the next question- "Why". Most of the participants contributed their views on this question too. Later the facilitator summarised the key points of importance of communication to plant pathologist based on their inputs.

After the module, the participants were requested to listen a song- "*Dharti ka shan*". After listening the song, second trainer asked the participants, "What are your feelings". "Nice", "Pleasant", "Excellent", "Fantastic" were some of the replied. Then the trainer requested to listen a riddle and read out the riddle loudly. Participants were asked not to write down anything while solving the following riddle.

The riddle: "You are a bus driver. At first the bus is empty but at the next stop eight people get on. At the second stop one gets off and six get on. At the third stop nobody gets off or on. At the fourth stop five get on and eight get off. At the fifth stop nine get off and three get on. What is the name of the bus driver?" (Answer: Respective participant's name)

Table A : Session plan

Sr. No.	Time	Duration (min)	Activity	Method	AV aids
1.	2.30 PM	5	Importance of communication	Brain storming	
2.	2.35 PM	5	Listening song		Multimedia
3.	2.40 PM	5	Energizer by riddle application	Individual task	
5.	2.45 PM	5	Reflection on energizer- importance of listening on communication	Open questioning and input	
6.	2.50 PM	25	Small group tasks	Case analysis	Chart, marker
7.	3.30 PM	15	Tea		
8.	3.45 PM	15	Presentation to GS		Chart
9.	4.00 PM	15	Observer's reports on group behaviour and communication pattern	Discussion	Video clippings on the small group task
10.	4.15 PM	15	Processing of Gr. task	Discussion	
11.	4.30 PM	10	Application of learning	Discussion	
12.	4.40 PM	15	Summary, conclusion and evaluation	Discussion	
13.	5.00 PM		End of the session		

(Source: Braakman and Edward, 2002)

All the participants except one answered, "impossible". The lone participant answered correctly. After that the facilitator reflected on the exercise by asking the following questions:

- Why did most people not know the answer?
- How does this relate to listening as communication skill?

After that the second trainer gave participants a small group task. For that purpose participants were divided into three groups. Each group was received three different tasks as given below:

Task for group 1:

Four trainers were involved in an off campus training. In between the training session of another senior trainer said, "Let me explained the things. Actually he is trying to say that...". It was happening so many times. If you are also a co trainer how will you prevent such things in future?

Task for group 2:

A reputed teacher was invited to deliver a talk on Group Dynamics for village level extension functionaries in SAMETL. It was easy for him since he had already taught the topic to PG students. He selected those prepared OHT and slides for the training also. He concluded the lecture in one and half hour and then invited questions from the trainees. No body has asked any question. So he offered thank to trainees and concluded his session. Why there was no response?

Task for group 3 :

Twenty five experienced marginal farmers have come for training on diagnosis and control of diseases of vegetables. How will you conduct the session so that farmers acquire requisite knowledge and skills?

Time allotted for the task was 25 minutes. The group activities were observed by observers and facilitators.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The observations of the task are given below:

Observation of Gr. 1:

When the task was read out by a participant, another participant(X) commented, 'Oh! In extension it is called gatekeeper. I know how to manage gatekeeper. No problem. Carry on.' The reader read it completely. Then participant 'X' started to tell how a gatekeeper from trainees creates the problem. But other participants mentioned that the problem was not from trainees but from trainers itself. But 'X' was adamant that it was trainees. The group consumed a considerable amount of time to convince him but no body had

read the task again. In that moment the facilitator facilitate the group and explained the task by read it again. Then only 'X' was convinced and the group proceeded to next steps. During the discussion it was observed that mainly three participants contributed their ideas to solve the problem, out of which two tried to dominate the discussion. Another two participants did not contribute but interrupted the discussion by raising irrelevant topics. Two participants were busy in gossiping. One participant gave example from his own life while providing his ideas. Another participant was almost remain silent in the discussion but contributed two important ideas. The lady participant was busy with writing the inputs. Here, too, the ideas were mainly given by three participants and never try to make consensus.

Observation from of Gr.2:

After getting the task, a participant read it out. Then one participant (Mr. Y) started to contribute. Up to mid of discussion he tried to contribute but no body responded to him. Then he became silent and writing in his notebook about others contribution. Though Mr. Z was interested in giving inputs including some quality contribution from starting to the end but no response was received from the group. Mr.A though time to time contributed but tried to dominate the discussion .He suppressed others to express their views. Mr. B had not contributed anything. He only wrote the inputs and tried to felt his presence by mentioning grammatical mistake of others. Dr. C was a positive speaker in group and led the group for discussion. He encouraged others to participate. If discussion deviated he tried to bring on the track. Dr. D was not much interested on group discussion and contributed by saying 'yes' or 'no' to others' contributions.

Observation of Gr. 3:

In this group the participants considered the facilitator as an expert and wanted solution from him. Instead of providing the solution the facilitator requested that they are more experience than him and can solve the problem easily. Then they started to discuss the problem. Here too, one participant dominated the discussion with loud voice. Others also did not mind to him. Some participants tried to contribute ideas but he did not allow accepting those ideas. The group did not listen the task properly and prepared a strategy instead of a training session. One participant felt himself as an expert and always provided the solution by using jargons. The outcome was not based on consensus.

The outcomes of the group were presented in general session. During presentation two participants were involved. After the presentation video clippings of the session was shown to the participants. The first trainer also facilitated the session for processing, and generalising the experience. Finally the participants drew conclusion about the importance and

applicability of communication skills for working with small farmers.

Implications of facilitation in training:

In the training session the trainers gave due attention to the process. Special care had been taken since the session was conducted at the afternoon session. The training was started with some questions related with the participant's experience. It helped to make spontaneous participation and most of the trainees contributed from their own experience. There after song was played to make the session calm and relaxed. After that the riddle was presented and reflection was made on the exercise. It helped the trainees to realise how much listening is important for them. In the small group task also participants were involved. Their activities were recorded by both video and audio mode. Video recording was shown to them to reflect their behaviour in group situation and how they were communicated with each others. It helped them to get ideas about their communication behaviour and identified strong as well as weak points for improvement. In the entire session no body had slept or no side conversation had taken place. No lecture method was used in the session. The session was designed on experiential learning cycle. When the session was evaluated verbally, all the participants expressed their full satisfaction. Followings are some of the comments they had given:

“All training should be like this”

“The session is equivalent to 21 days” (The overall training was 21 days duration)

“No it's 42 days”

“Don't know how the time is passing”

“No lecture but so much information”

The participants even after the training session discussed the topic with the trainers.

Conclusion:

From the above qualitative experiment on result demonstration both the trainer and trainees realised that facilitation has a great role to play in case of training. The trainees of that particular session were also a trainer in their real life situation. For any training they should facilitate the

training session instead of providing knowledge. After involving in the demonstration programme they realised that in knowledge on training topics like principles of adult learning, group dynamics and facilitation skills like observation, active listening, questioning, feedback, analysing, encouraging, decision making, respecting, problem solving, conflict management, focus, time management, acceptance, flexibility, summarising, paraphrasing, probing, evaluating and attending skills etc are very much essential to make the training effective. This result demonstration also adds a point to the body of knowledge of extension discipline that is in case of extension methodologies also we can conduct demonstration programme which is still a controversial issue in many forum.

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