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Effectiveness of Sheep and Goat Training Programme in terms of Knowledge Gain among Livestock Farmers of Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

The study was undertaken to assess the formative and summative evaluation of training programme organized by the Department of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Extension Education of Veterinary College Hebbal, Bengaluru using pre and post evaluation design. Training programmes were conducted on sheep and goat rearing to farmers came across the Karnataka state. The knowledge tests were administered to four batches constituting total of 150 trainees, before and after the training. Study showed that overall mean knowledge score at pre and post exposure stages were 4.70 and 22.51 with difference of knowledge gain showing 17.81 (59.36%). The descending order of knowledge gain among various aspect was fodder production (70.36%), health care management (61.33%), housing management (60.60%), feeding practices (51.60%), breeds and breeding management (59.26%), general care and management (53.06%). Difference observed between the knowledge mean scores of farmers in pre and post exposure stages was found to be statistically significant. In this regard training played the crucial role and hereby it is recommended that strengthening of extension professionals and training system has to be done for taking up more training programme to make the farmers knowledge rich, which in turn leads to adoption of scientific rearing practices.

Key words: *Knowledge Gain, Karnataka, Perception, Sheep and Goat training.*

INTRODUCTION

Though agriculture is known as the backbone of Indian economy because of its high share in employment and livelihood creation, it's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has declined from 34.72 per cent in 1980-1981 to 15.00 per cent in 2013- 2014 (BAHFS, 2015). Nearly two thirds of farm families in India are associated with one or the other form of livestock. In this context, livestock sector is gaining more importance in liberalized economy as a crucial role player in rural economy and livelihood.

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The Gross Value Added (GVA) from livestock sector at constant prices (2011-12) was about 3593 billion during 2013-14 which is about 26.1 per cent of the Gross Value Added from total agricultural and allied sector and 3.9 per cent of the total GDP (BAHFS, 2015).

Sheep or Goat is considered as 'ATM for farmers', whenever they require money, they can sell the stock and furnish their needs. Sheep/goat rearing is a source of livelihood in the drought-prone rural areas of India. Training is an integral and crucial input for the human resources development in any aspect of animal husbandry activity for bringing out desirable changes in human behaviour[1]. Training acts as a platform for acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies in the respective field and the fact is that capacity building among farmers through training is more valuable than the provision of financial support directly. Senthilkumar *et al*.[2] concluded that training had positive impact to the farmers' knowledge level, perception and performance. Department of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Extension Education of Veterinary College, Bengaluru conducted sheep and goat training programme exclusively for interested farmers with the aim to make them competent in performing sheep and goat rearing activities. Considering these views, study conducted to know the impact of training programme on farmer's knowledge.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Pre and post evaluation design was adopted to study the trainee's knowledge gain about sheep and goat rearing before and after attending the training programme which was conducted by the Department of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Extension Education of Veterinary College Hebbal, Bengaluru. Trainees of four batches were involved in the study of total 150 trainees. An interview schedule was prepared which consists of statements to test the knowledge and then the data was collected before and after training. Scores were given to each statement and mean score was calculated at both the stages. The difference between the scores at pre and post training yields the change in knowledge level. Data was analyzed using frequency, percentage and t test.

RESULTS

The effectiveness of training among the trainees was found good. Table 1 clearly depicted mean knowledge gain pertaining to various aspects of sheep and goat rearing practices. Highest knowledge gain was found in fodder production (70.36%) aspect as various fodders were demonstrated in fodder museum along with instruction. Further, mean knowledge gain regarding health care management (61.33%), housing management (60.60%), feeding practices (51.60%), breeds & breeding management (59.26%), general care & management (53.06%) were observed in decreasing order among the trainees. It was evident that there was a highly significant difference in their knowledge level, before and after the conduct of training programme. The findings were in agreement with Senthilkumar *et al*.[2], where farmers had gained knowledge in housing (73.0%), breed awareness (73.5%), vaccination (72.5%), fodder production (70.0%**)** because of training on goat rearing conducted in KVK of Nammakal district of TamilNadu.

A glance (Table 2) on distribution of farmers according to their knowledge level at pre and post training programme clearly indicated that more number of trainees shifted over to high level knowledge category from low knowledge level. At pre-training stage, more trainees (88%) were under low knowledge level category followed by medium level (10.66%) and very few (1.34%) under high knowledge level group but the sequence got reversed after the training programme where, majority (74.66%) of trainees under high knowledge category followed by medium level (24%) and low knowledge level (1.34%) category.

Table 1: Farmers' Knowledge scores at pre and post training programme

Sl. No	Parameters	Mean knowledge score		Mean knowledge gain score	Percent of knowledge gain
		Before exposure	After Exposure		
1.	Housing management	5.22 ± 0.638	23.40 ± 1.221**	18.18	60.60
2.	Breeds & Breeding management	6.34 ± 0.723	24.12 ± 1.412**	17.78	59.26
3.	Feeding practices	3.54 ± 0.521	19.02 ± 0.875**	15.48	51.60
4.	Fodder production	6.20 ± 0.714	27.31 ± 1.590**	21.11	70.36
5.	General care & management	2.88 ± 0.367	18.80 ± 0.810**	15.92	53.06
6.	Health care management	4.05± 0.589	22.45 ± 1.021**	18.4	61.33
7.	Overall	4.70 ± 0.471	22.51 ± 0.721	17.81	59.36
** highly Significant at P<0.001					

Table 2: Distribution of farmers according to their knowledge level at pre and post training

Sl. No	Category	Number of trainees	
		Pre- training	Post- training
1.	Low level of knowledge (1-10)	132 (88.00%)	2 (1.34%)
2.	Medium level of knowledge (11-20)	16 (10.66%)	36 (24%)
3.	High level of knowledge (21-30)	2 (1.34%)	112 (74.66%)
Figures in the parenthesis are the frequency and percentage.			

DISCUSSION

More number of trainees falling under high knowledge level after training revealed that training had positive impact on knowledge gain among the farmers. Higher knowledge of the trained farmers might be due to the relevance of the subject matter covered, the discussion made with experts and with other experienced trainees and might be due to the training atmosphere in which farmers were exposed to information with different teaching methods like lectures, group discussion, demonstration, skill teaching etc using suitable teaching aids like power point presentation, posters and printing materials etc. The farmers' attitude and interest towards learning also might be contributed to higher knowledge gain.

The findings were in consonance with Rajesh *et. al.*[1], where they found highly significant difference (P<0.01) in the knowledge level of the respondents before and after animal husbandry training among farmers interest groups (FIGs) in the state of Tamil Nadu. Noor and Dola[3] concluded that training had positive impact to the farmers perception and performance.

Results showed that the training program had a tremendous impact in terms of knowledge gain on scientific practices of sheep and goat rearing. The recent trend in livestock sector growth suggests that in order to meet the emerging demand for livestock meat and its products, both in domestic and global markets, there is a need to reorient the production system by imparting scientific rearing practices and also to motivate more farmers to get into the sheep and goat rearing activities. In this regard training played the crucial role and hereby it is recommended that strengthening of extension professionals and training system has to be done for taking up more training programme to make the farmers knowledge rich, which in turn leads to adoption of scientific rearing practices.

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