

A Case Study on the Refresher Course of Gramasevaks.

by
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Introduction : Refresher Training aims (i) to fill up the gaps resulting from the incomplete training given earlier (ii) to equip the village level workers with latest knowledge in various fields and the skill of technical know-how and (iii) to solve their field problems by discussing and arriving at solutions.

For every programme, evaluation is essential to find out whether the refresher training programme has been effective in the field and whether it has supplied the needs of the trainees. This also helps to locate bottle-necks, handicaps and problems in the training programme so that suitable solutions could be found to enable to progress in the right way.

Objectives of the study: The study of the evaluation reports of the village level workers of the Refresher courses was undertaken with specific objectives, (a) to analyse and find out the adequacy of subject matter for the immediate job requirements and (b) to find out the effectiveness of the different teaching methods adopted with reference to various factors such as, duration, composition of the trainees etc.

Materials and methods: Methods of study: Refresher training for the village level workers was first introduced at Rural Extension Training Centre, S. V. Nagaram, from 1962. During the year 1962-63, five courses were conducted and 131 Gramasevaks were trained.

Evaluation reports of the first five batches of trainees trained during 1962-63 were studied in an informal way. The bio-data records and the log-book were also studied in addition.

Findings: Syllabus: The syllabus for refresher course is generally formed in consultation with the village level workers soon after their arrival. It is essential to study its effectiveness in various fields. This can be achieved through slip test or questioning. The opinions of the trainees on the syllabus are furnished in this table.

TABLE 1: *Opinions of Trainees.*

Opinions	BATCH					Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	
Exhaustive	—	4	2	—	—	6
Adequate	19	17	20	24	22	102
Just adequate	4	2	2	3	3	14
Inadequate	4	3	—	—	—	7

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The subject matter taught was divided under three heads and the reaction of the village level workers are listed below :

A. The subjects which were of great interest considering their role in the field are given in Table 2

TABLE 2. *Subjects of interests*

Subject	BATCH					Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	
Extension	5	12	2	4	1	24
Horticulture	7	11	1	—	—	19
Crop cultivation	5	3	2	—	—	10
Plant protection	6	23	9	—	5	43
Co-operation	5	4	3	1	1	14
Public Health	8	1	—	3	—	13
Panchayat	—	10	1	5	16	32
V. I. Khadi	—	—	—	6	—	7
Animal Husbandry	—	—	—	6	4	10
Social Education	—	—	—	1	1	2

Plant Protection, Panchayat and Extension seem to be the most interesting subjects. Social Education, V. I. Khadi and Animal Husbandry were the least interesting to the trainees considering their role in the field.

The subject-matters which gave new knowledge are Panchayat, Plant Protection and Extension (vide Table 3).

TABLE 3. *Subject matters which gave new knowledge*

Subject	BATCH					Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	
Extension	7	7	3	6	1	24
Horticulture	5	1	—	—	—	6
Plant Protection	6	1	9	11	4	31
Co-operation	7	4	1	—	—	12
Animal Husbandry	2	—	—	1	1	4
V. I. Khadi	2	—	—	—	—	2
Panchayat	—	10	—	14	10	34
Public Health	—	—	—	—	—	—
Social Education	1	—	—	—	—	1

Effectiveness of teaching: The approach to cover the syllabus is as important as the syllabus itself. In order to achieve this, different methods of teaching were followed.

A. *Effectiveness of the institutional teaching:* Table 4 shows the break up of periods for the different batches :

TABLE 4. *Break of periods*

Method adopted	BATCH				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Group Discussion	144	142	133	130	148
Library	48	40	39	50	41
Class Instructions	76	66	47	40	35

The reaction of the trainees for the different methods used is furnished in Table 5.

TABLE 5. *Reaction of Trainees*

Method Used	Impressed	Not impressed
Group Discussion	76	—
Talks and Rival class	8	1
Audio Visual Aids	—	—
Class Lecture	13	29
Library	—	—

The trainees preferred discussion classes compared to the theory classes.

B. *Effectiveness of demonstration and practicals:* Thirteen trainees were impressed most with the demonstrations where as only two were not impressed with the same.

C. *Effectiveness of the study tours and village visits conducted:* Study tour as a method of teaching has impressed most of the trainees and only six were not impressed. Many of them suggested (i) that study tours should not be restricted within the district or a few districts, (ii) that advance planning is necessary for the effective conduct of the study tour and (iii) that number of days allotted for the study tour should be increased.

Time factor and effectiveness of training: Too short a period of training and too long a period of training has got its own influence on the effectiveness of training. Seventy nine percent of village level workers

expressed that the present duration of training of two months is adequate while the remaining 21 percent suggested a duration of four to six weeks only.

Frequency of the referesher training: Periodically, referesher training is essential to keep the village level workers abreast with the new techniques and developments. It is essential to find out how often the village level workers in the field are to be called for such a type of training. Sixty four percent of the trainees felt that the training should be arranged once in 3 years and 26% wanted the training to be arranged once in five years.

Other factors affecting the effectiveness of teaching: The age, qualification, service and the type of preservice training have a lot of influence on the trainees. Sixty percent of the trainees were satisfied with the present composition of trainees.

Physical facilities: One hundred and fifteen village level workers (89%) were not satisfied with the type of hostel accomodation provided to them.

Summary and Conclusion: (i) Seventyseven percent of the village level workers are satisfied with the present method of formulation of syllabus. As the instructors add to the syllabus what they consider also important and the general deficiencies noted in the field by the District Officials, the syllabus is found to be adequate for the work. (ii) The village level workers are interested in learning more in the subjects like Plant protection, Panchayat, Horticulture and Extension. So due weightage should be given while allotting periods for these subject matters. (iii) Khadi and Village Industries seem to be least useful in their field of work. (iv) The village level workers obtained new knowledge in their fields of Panchayat, Plant protection and Extension through Referesher Training. (v) Group discussion method of teaching appears to be the most effective. (vi) The demonstration method of teaching or the practicals conducted have not impressed the trainees. (vii) Trainees are not impressed with Audio-Visual Aids used by the instructors. (viii) Class room lectures are not liked by the trainees. (ix) Study Tour as a part of training programme needs several changes like inclusion of places of educational value, advance planning and provision of transport facilities. (x) Two months duration of training is adequate and this may be given once in three years. (xi) A heterogenous group of trainees is better than a homogenous group. (xii) There is a general dissatisfaction over the poor hostel facilities provided to them during training. (xiii) The past experience has shown that (a) the trainees who join late remain deficient in the subject matter taught till the completion of the course. They are also not in a position to bring the records required for the training or in a position to come prepared with their field

problems for the training. (b) The trainees do not get their pay and allowance in time. (c) The trainees generally show an indifferent attitude towards the training programme as they feel the training as a period of rest from field work.

The following suggestions are made: (1) The intimation about the training programme should be sent well in advance to the village level workers. Those who join late should be severely dealt with. (2) Transport facilities for the village level workers for the village visits and study tours may be provided. (3) The District Officials are in a better position to convince the village level workers about the execution of certain schemes and programmes. Unfortunately they show least interest for the special lecture, when invited. A sort of incentive may be given to attract the attention of the able and efficient of the District Officials for delivering the special lectures and (4) Proper planning and conduct of demonstration and practicals is essential. It is better to make the trainees to participate in the demonstration than by the instructors.