

ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING NEEDS AND TRAINING STRATEGY FOR PARA-VETERINARIANS

A.Suresh Naik, M.Srinivasa Reddy*, D.Thammiraju¹, G.V.Bhaskar Reddy²
and Alok Bharti³

Department of Veterinary & A.H.Extension,
College of Veterinary Science, Korutla, Karimnagar (District), Telangana State 505326.

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ABSTRACT

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Training needs in Animal Husbandry skills were assessed and training strategy for para-veterinarians was developed by ex-post-facto research design method in Nalgonda district of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh (presently in Telangana state). The most preferred training need was skill in diagnosis of different diseases of animals followed by skill on the new technologies in Animal Husbandry evolved by research institutions, skill in Artificial Insemination (AI), skill in pregnancy diagnosis, skill in identification and treatment of reproductive problems, skill in preparation of ointments, lotions and stock solutions required for the institution. A strategy was framed which highlights that training programmes should be based on expressed needs and immediate requirements of para-veterinarians.

Key words: Training needs, Training strategies, Para-veterinarians, Veterinary Assistant Surgeons, Animal Husbandry skills

INTRODUCTION

Animal Husbandry plays a significant role in improving the socio-economic status of a sizeable section of the weaker and tribal population. It safeguards the crop failures in the event of natural calamities and in most cases livestock farming is the source of cash income as well as endurance of family purchasing power. If Animal Husbandry technologies developed for farmers are not transferred in appropriate manner and adopted accordingly, all the efforts by the researchers who developed new technologies would have been in vain. The success of Animal Husbandry programmes largely depends on scientific management of livestock based on latest improvements in technology and its quick

dissemination in an effective way for adoption by the farming community.

To maintain organisational effectiveness in such situations, the skill of the personnel working in the department has to be continuously updated. Through training, the persons must keep abreast of the latest developments in the field otherwise, it will retrograde his potential and capabilities (Kumar, 1993). The purpose of training is to upgrade the quality of human resources in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the job of the individual. Several research studies brought out that training was considered as one of the important factors which influences the job effectiveness of the para-veterinarians. To give systematic training as already indicated, one

¹National Academy of Agriculture Research Management, Hyderabad-500 030.

²College of Veterinary Science, Proddatur-516 360.

³Krishi Vignan Kendra, Bikram Ganj, Rohtas, Bihar-801222

* Corresponding Author: e-mail: srimallampati@yahoo.com

should identify the actual training needs of Para-veterinarians. This is of paramount importance in order to plan strategies for effective organization of the training programmes to identify the training needs of Para-veterinarians. There are practically no studies that have been conducted earlier in the state of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh, hence there is a need for an attempt in this direction and the present study was designed to assess the training needs of Para-veterinarians of Nalgonda district of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh (presently Telangana state) with the following objectives: to assess the skill training needs of Para-veterinarians in Animal Husbandry skills as perceived by themselves and their superior officers and to elicit the suggestions from respondents and suggest a suitable training strategy based on the identified training needs

MATERIALS AND METHODOS

Following ex-post-facto research design, the erstwhile state of Andhra Pradesh was purposively selected. All four revenue divisions of Nalgonda district were selected purposively in view of the majority of the Para-veterinarians and Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VASs) working in the district who underwent training in different areas of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry and Extension Education topics. Thus a total sample of 105 respondents comprising of 75 Para-veterinarians and 30 VASs were selected based on proportionate random sampling method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Training needs of Para-veterinarians in Animal Husbandry skills as perceived by themselves

The results on training needs in Animal Husbandry skills with their mean scores and ranks as perceived by Para-veterinarians are presented in Table 1 in descending rank order. The most preferred training need was skill in diagnosis of different diseases of animals which has the highest mean score of 2.96 followed by skill

on the new technologies in Animal Husbandry evolved by research institutions, skill in artificial insemination, skill in pregnancy diagnosis, skill in identification and treatment of reproductive problems, skill in preparation of ointments, lotions and stock solutions required for the institution, skill in conducting preventive vaccination both in outbreak and disease free areas, skill in collection and preservation of specimens, samples etc.,

The ninth rank was given to skill in assistance to VAS during post mortem examination followed by skill in prevention and control of ecto and endo parasites in livestock species, extension teaching methods, castration of scrub bulls, sheep and goat, maintaining the technical and non technical registers, management of livestock affected during natural calamities, administration of dewormers in different livestock species, conducting census work and household survey procedures, performing first aid procedures and communication skills respectively. The least preferred training need was skill in organising the cattle shows, fertility camps and calf rallies which has a mean score of 1.50.

During the course of investigation most of the Para-veterinarians felt that in their training programmes no skill teaching was imparted to them. The first preferred need was on skills in diagnosis of different diseases of animals that in view of the severe economic losses of livestock due to diseases of importance to farming community and also to Animal Husbandry sector. The skills needed to identify the different diseases in initial stages were considered as the most important need. These results are in accordance with (Sasidhar *et al.*, 2002) in Veterinary Assistant Surgeons.

Training needs of Para-veterinarians in Animal Husbandry skills as perceived by their superior officers

From the Table 2, it could be concluded that diagnosis of different diseases of animals was given as first preference by the superior officers

followed by skill in artificial insemination, skill on the new technologies in Animal Husbandry evolved by research institutions, skill in pregnancy diagnosis and identification and treatment of reproductive problems respectively. The sixth rank was given to skill in preparation of ointments, lotions and stock solutions required for the institution. Next preferred item was skill in conducting preventive vaccination both in out breaks and disease free areas, skill in assistance to VAS during post mortem examination, skill in collection and preservation of specimens, samples, etc., respectively.

Skill in the prevention and control of ecto and endo parasites in livestock species, skill in castration of scrub bulls, sheep and goat, extension teaching methods, skill in administration of dewormers in different livestock species, skill in maintaining the technical and non technical registers, skill in management of livestock affected during natural calamities were ranked from 10 to 15.

Sixteenth rank was given to skill in conducting census work and house hold survey procedures followed by skill on first aid procedures and communication skills respectively. The last rank was given to the skill in organizing the cattle shows, fertility camps, calf rallies which indicated order of preference of the superior officers. The mean scores for all the 19 items ranged from 2.97 to 1.51. It is clear from the results that training needs of Para-veterinarians in Animal Husbandry skills as perceived by their superior officers, during the investigation most of the Para-veterinarians felt that skills in diagnosis of different diseases of animals is of paramount importance because diagnosis is critical for starting any therapy. These results are in accordance with the findings of Kumar (1993) and Reddy (2001).

Suggestions given by Para-veterinarians in satisfying their training needs

Table 3 revealed that the suggestions made by Para-veterinarians to satisfy the training needs.

A large number of Para-veterinarians (96.00%) suggested that training should be given on new or emerging livestock diseases and their preventive measures and also impart skills in using them followed by other suggestions which are given on the order of per centage of respondents. About 92.00 per cent of the respondents opined that special training should be given on latest trends in therapeutic use of drugs followed by 81.33 per cent of Para-veterinarians mentioned that training programme should be intimated well in advance, where as 78.67 per cent of them indicated that sufficient accommodation at training centers should be provided and

77.33 per cent of Para-veterinarians felt that skill and practical oriented training should be given in actual field situations. Nearly 66.67 per cent of Para-veterinarians suggested giving specialized training on new technologies evolved by research stations and gynaecological techniques. It was also suggested by 61.33 per cent of Para-veterinarians that sufficient advance for (TA) and Dearness Allowance (DA) should be released before the training itself followed by 56.00 per cent of respondents pointed out that number of animals sacrificed for conducting practicals were not sufficient for exposure by all the participants. About 53.33 per cent of Para-veterinarians suggested using audio-visual aids in all training programmes. Nearly half of the respondents (50.67%) felt that training material and relevant literature must be supplied at the time of training while visit to important research stations to know about ongoing research activities was the opinion of 48.00 per cent of the Para-veterinarians.

Suggestions given by superior officers in satisfying the training needs of their Para-veterinarians

Table 4 indicated that majority of the superior officers (93.33%) have suggested that special training should be imparted to Para-veterinarians in new or emerging livestock

diseases and their preventive measures and also impart skills in using them, while 80.00 per cent of the respondents indicated that trainees should be taken to research stations for better exposure of the recent research activities. Organization of special trainers training programmes was also suggested by 70.00 per cent of the respondents. Majority of the superior officers (66.66%) recognized the importance of artist post in each training center for preparation and use of audio

visuals. Another valid suggestion made by 63.33 per cent of the superior officers that special and sufficient budget must be provided for TA and DA to the participants. 53.33 per cent of superior officers opined that qualification for trainers must be M.V.Sc. with at least 5 years of experience. The findings are in line with the results of Sasidhar *et al.*, (2001), Reddy (2002), Sastry and Raju, (2008).

Strategy for giving training to the Para-veterinarians based on the suggestions and identified training needs

Based on the identified needs and suggestions, a strategy was framed which highlights that training programmes should be based on expressed needs and immediate requirements of Para-veterinarians. Course content and curriculum of training should be developed with more emphasis on latest trends in animal breeding, feeding, reproductive management and technique of artificial insemination. Para-veterinarians should be taken on study tours to various livestock research stations and other institutes engaged in Veterinary and Animal Husbandry research. Such tours should be conducted for 3-5 days in a calendar year. One day skill training programmes should be organized on preparation of ointments, lotions and stock solutions required for the institution by concerned Veterinary Assistant Surgeons to cover entire

Para-veterinarians of the state. Special training should be given on collection and preservation procedures of samples and specimens,

first aid procedures at divisional level with periodical intervals and special programmes should be organized on maintenance of technical and non technical registers, census work, house hold survey procedures at divisional level to cover all the Para-veterinarians of the state with in a specific period. Training should be imparted at district level to cater to the needs of the Para-veterinarians of the district and another at divisional level based on the local needs of the trainees. A state level training policy should be formulated so that

each Para-veterinarian gets an opportunity to undergo need based training at regular intervals. Physical facilities at training institutes can be strengthened and sufficient budget provision can be made for TA/DA of the trainees well in advance. Pre and post evaluation of training programme can be obtained from all the trainees so as to plan the future programmes more effectively.

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Table 1: Training needs in Animal Husbandry skills as perceived by Para-veterinarians with mean scores and ranks

S.No.	Skill training need item	Mean score	Rank
1	Skill in diagnosis of different diseases of animals	2.96	I
2	Skill on the new technologies in Animal Husbandry evolved by research institutions	2.95	II
3	Skill in artificial insemination	2.85	III
4	Skill in pregnancy diagnosis	2.81	IV
5	Skill in identification and treatment of reproductive problems	2.72	V
6	Skill in preparation of ointments, lotions and stock solutions required for the institution	2.64	VI
7	Skill in conducting preventive vaccination both in out break and disease free areas	2.53	VII
8	Skill in collection and preservation of specimens, samples etc.	2.47	VIII
9	Skill in assistance to VAS during postmortem examination	2.31	IX
10	Skill in prevention and control of ecto and endo parasites in livestock species	2.21	X
11	Extension teaching methods	2.15	XI
12	Skill in castration of scrub bulls, sheep and goat	2.06	XII
13	Skill in maintaining the technical and non technical registers	2.00	XIII
14	Skill in management of livestock affected during natural calamities	1.97	XIV
15	Skill in administration of dewormers in different livestock species	1.81	XV
16	Skill in conducting census work and house hold survey procedures	1.72	XVI
17	Skill on first aid procedures	1.61	XVII
18	Communication skills	1.54	XVIII
19	Skill in organising the cattle shows, fertility camps and calf rallies	1.50	XIX

Table 2: Training needs of Para-veterinarians in Animal Husbandry skills as perceived by their superior officers with mean scores and ranks

S.No.	Skill training need item	Mean score	Rank
1	Skill in diagnosis of different diseases of animals	2.97	I
2	Skill in artificial insemination	2.95	II
3	Skill on the new technologies in Animal Husbandry evolved by research institutions	2.84	III
4	Skill in pregnancy diagnosis	2.81	IV
5	Skill in identification and treatment of reproductive problems	2.72	V
6	Skill in preparation of ointments, lotions and stock solutions required for the institution	2.66	VI
7	Skill in conducting preventive vaccination both in out break and disease free areas	2.54	VII
8	Skill in assistance to VAS during postmortem examination	2.49	VIII
9	Skill in collection and preservation of specimens, samples etc.	2.31	IX
10	Skill in prevention and control of ecto and endo parasites in livestock species	2.21	X
11	Skill in castration of scrub bulls, sheep and goat	2.14	XI
12	Extension teaching methods	2.06	XII
13	Skill in administration of dewormers in different livestock species	1.99	XIII
14	Skill in maintaining the technical and non technical registers	1.95	XIV
15	Skill in management of livestock affected during natural calamities	1.80	XV
16	Skill in conducting census work and house hold survey procedures	1.70	XVI
17	Skill on first aid procedures	1.62	XVII
18	Communication skills	1.53	XVIII
19	Skill in organising the cattle shows, fertility camps and calf rallies	1.51	XIX

Table 3: Suggestions given by Para-veterinarians in satisfying their training needs

S.No.	Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
1	Training should be given on new or emerging livestock diseases and their preventive measures and also impart skills in using them	72	96.00
2	Special training should be given on latest trends in therapeutic use of drugs	69	92.00
3	Training programme should be intimated well in advance	61	81.33
4	Sufficient accommodation at training centers should be provided.	59	78.67
5	Skill and practical oriented training should be given in actual field situations	58	77.33
6	Specialised training should be given on new technologies evolved by research stations and gynaecological techniques	50	66.67
7	Sufficient advance for TA and DA should be released before the training it self	46	61.33
8	More number of animals must be sacrificed for conducting practicals	42	56.00
9	Audio-visual aids must be used in all training programmes	40	53.33
10	Training material and relevant literature must be supplied at the time of training	38	50.67
11	Visit to important research stations to know about ongoing research activities.	36	48.00

Table 4: Suggestions given by superior officers in satisfying the training needs of their Para-veterinarians

S.No.	Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
1	Special training should be imparted to Paraveterinarians in new or emerging livestock diseases and their preventive measures and also impart skills in using them.	28	93.33
2	Trainees should be taken to research stations for better exposure with the recent research activities	24	80.00
3	Special trainers training programmes should be organized	21	70.00
4	Artist post must be sanctioned in each training center to prepare and use of audio visuals	20	66.67
5	Special and sufficient budget provision should be made for TA and DA to the participants	19	63.33
6	Qualification for trainers must be M.V.Sc. with at least 5 years of experience.	16	53.33