



Organizational environment of subject matter specialists working in Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)

Bimal. P. Bashir, N. Narmatha*, K.M. Sakthivel, V. Uma, M. Jothilakshmi and D. Thirunavukkarasu

Department of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Extension,
Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal-637 002, Tamil Nadu, India.

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ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out in Tamil Nadu and Kerala during 2014. Three Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) each, functioning under state university and NGOs from each state were selected. A total of 65 subject matter specialists from selected KVKs constituted the sample. The working environment of subject matter specialists was assessed through people's participation, team work, job satisfaction, work load and job stress. In people's participation more than 60.00 per cent of the respondents were satisfied in the effort in implementation of extension programmes by the farmers, interest of farmers in extension work, acceptance of technology and local response by the farmers. In team work component majority of the respondents were satisfied with confidence in delegated authority, appreciative attitude of colleagues, mutual desire to give and take and procedural design to work together. Majority were satisfied with professional social prestige followed by salary, job authority, leave facility and facilities in job satisfaction aspect. Responsible for helping others, work area (office) is too crowded, working conditions being not as good as the working conditions of others, job being too easy were not a source of stress. Respondents expressed that the work load was optimum at office and field respectively. Highly significant positive relationship was noticed between satisfaction with people's participation and team work; team work and job satisfaction; job stress and work load.

Key words: Job Satisfaction, Job stress, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Subject Matter Specialists, Team work, Working environment, Work load.

INTRODUCTION

The organisation's responsibility is to provide a congenial climate and satisfying environment, in which people can gain overall satisfaction in their quality of work life and help organisation to attain its objectives. Job characteristics, management practices, employee characteristics and broader environmental factors are the key variables that influence employees' motivation in an organisation (Devadass 2011). If an employee has a positive perception of quality of work life in the organisation, he or she will strive to further improve the working conditions and increasing productivity. Jain and Kaur (2014) opined that the working environment is described as the environment in which people are working. It incorporates the physical scenery, fundamentals of the job itself (e.g. workload, task, complexity) extensive business features and even extra business background. Work has an economic aspect, mechanical aspect as well as psychological aspect. Working environment involves all the aspects which act and react on the body and mind of an employee. Effective working environment encourages the employee to do their job that ultimately influences the growth of an organisation. This is more so, and very much applicable, to an organisation like

'Farm Science Centre' popularly known as Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK).

KVK is an organizational framework that caters the needs of farmers in that district. Main activities of KVK are to impart and update the knowledge and skills in modern technologies pertaining to agriculture and allied sectors. KVKs are being managed by both government and non-governmental organisations. KVK system positions itself clearly between the research and farmer, thus acting both as a feedback and feedforward mechanism. KVK have to serve as repository of scientific knowledge that is useful to the entire district (Sajeev and Venketasubramanian 2010).

The technical expertise of subject matter specialists in KVKs are vital to meet the organizational objectives and emerging expectations. Keeping this in view, the present study was undertaken with an objective to assess the working environment of the subject matter specialists of KVKs in terms of people's participation, team work, satisfaction with job, work load and job stress.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in KVKs of Tamil Nadu and Kerala under zone VIII during the year 2014. In Tamil

*Corresponding author's e-mail: narmadaext@gmail.com.

Nadu, there are 30 KVKs and Kerala is having 14 KVKs. Out of the total 30 KVKs in Tamil Nadu, 19 are hosted by State Universities / Deemed Universities and 11 are hosted by non-governmental organisations (NGO), whereas out of 14 KVKs in Kerala, 11 are hosted by State Universities / ICAR institutes and three are hosted by non-governmental organisations. All the KVKs in Tamil Nadu and Kerala which were established on or before 2004 constituted the sample frame. From the sample frame, three state university KVKs and three non-governmental organisations KVKs from each state were selected using disproportionate stratified sampling method for the study. All the subject matter specialists in the selected KVKs, totally 65 subject matter specialists constituted the sample for the study. The working environment of subject matter specialists were assessed through people's participation, team work, job satisfaction, work load and job stress. The data were collected using well structured and pre tested interview schedule.

The scale developed by Hanumanaikar *et al.* (2011) was used to measure people's participation, team work and job satisfaction on a three point continuum not satisfied', 'some extent satisfied' and 'satisfied'. The job stress was measured by using the scale developed by Matteson and Ivancevich (1982) and used by Sundaraswamy (1987) on a three point continuum, namely 'always a source of stress', 'sometimes a source of stress' and 'not a source of stress'. Work load perception includes field work, office work, writing work etc. Based on the degree of work load as perceived by the respondents themselves the scoring procedure adopted by Katteppa (1984) was followed. The respondents were asked to indicate their degree of work load

on a three point continuum, namely 'light', 'optimum' and 'heavy'. Based on the scores obtained, the respondents were categorized into three categories viz. high, medium and low following equal class interval method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Degree of satisfaction in people's participation was studied and it is evident from Table 1 that more than 60.00 per cent of the respondents were satisfied in the effort in implementation of extension programmes by the farmers, interest of farmers in extension work, acceptance of technology and local response by the farmers. The respondents were somewhat satisfied with the financial and other help from farmers (60.00 per cent) and voluntary participation of farmers (47.69 per cent). Most of the SMS were satisfied and some extent satisfied with people's participation which reflects that the SMS are having better support from clients and able to discharge their duties satisfactorily. This positively points out, that the subject matter specialists of KVKs have better working environment as far as people's participation is concerned.

Majority of the respondents were satisfied with confidence in delegated authority (75.38 per cent), appreciative attitude of colleagues (66.15 per cent), mutual desire to give and take (63.08 per cent) and procedural design to work together (56.92 per cent) (Table 2).

Most of the SMS were satisfied with team work indicates that they have a team spirit, we feeling and they interact openly, honestly and spontaneously. This helps them to improve their appreciative attitude and to fulfill the mandate of KVK (Jyothi, 2006). European foundation (2007) also reported that the work performance of the team is higher

Table 1: Satisfaction in people's participation of subject matter specialists

n=65						
Category	Satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Not satisfied	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Effort in implementation of extension programme	47	72.31	18	27.69	0	0.00
Interest in extension work	43	66.15	22	33.85	0	0.00
Acceptance of technology	42	64.62	22	33.85	1	1.54
Local response	42	64.62	22	33.85	1	1.54
Voluntary participation	29	44.62	31	47.69	5	7.69
Financial and other help	18	27.69	39	60.00	8	12.31

Table 2: Satisfaction with team work by subject matter specialists

n=65						
Category	Satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Not satisfied	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Confidence in delegated authority	49	75.38	15	23.08	1	1.54
Mutual desire to give and take	41	63.08	24	36.92	0	0.00
Appreciative attitude of colleagues	43	66.15	18	27.69	4	6.15
Procedural design to work together	37	56.92	27	41.54	1	1.54
Proper incentive for team work	26	40.00	27	41.54	12	18.46

than individual performance when the work requires a broader scope of knowledge, judgement and opinion. The teamwork also promotes significant productivity growth in the spheres that require creative solving of different tasks, a high degree of adaptability and operational management. It also creates an environment that facilitates knowledge and information exchange and so-called knowledge sharing. Ralea (2011) opined that team work can enable higher level of success to individuals in an organisation and also stressed the need of good leadership to enhance good team work.

The mutual desire to give and take along with confidence in delegated authority helps to accomplish the given task and responsibility in time. This clearly indicates that most of the subject matter specialists in the KVKs were content with mutual support and help in teamwork to accomplish their tasks and responsibilities. The positive and significant characteristics of the team work helps the subject matter specialists to organise the training programmes more purposeful and result oriented.

Job satisfaction of the subject matter specialists was measured and perusal of Table 3 shows that more than 50.00 per cent number of the respondents expressed their satisfaction in all aspects except promotion; incentives and rewards; and service rules. It was found that majority (84.62 per cent) of the respondents were satisfied with professional social prestige followed by 67.69 per cent with salary, 63.08 per cent with job authority, 61.54 per cent with leave facility, 58.46 per cent with facilities provided by KVK. This highlights the good work environment in KVK as well as professional satisfaction among the subject matter specialists.

The table also indicates that 44.62 per cent and 38.46 per cent of the respondents were not satisfied with the promotion as well as incentive and rewards respectively. Ralea (2011) also revealed that job satisfaction is of great significance in the functioning of any organisation. Job satisfaction certainly affects the productivity in the long run, measures need to be taken for suitable rewards and better

promotion opportunities and would ultimately help the SMS to discharge their duties with highest job satisfaction (Meena and Singh, 2003). Hence, the assessment of satisfaction of subject matter specialists in the KVKs will therefore, indicate the type of improvement needed in the KVKs.

Job stress was measured as the degree to which the subject matter specialists felt psychological and physical pressure in their job. This was studied through various sub components and depicted in Table 4. The subject matter specialists felt that most of the subcomponents *viz.* responsible for helping others (83.07 per cent), work area (office) is too crowded (80.00 per cent), job is boring (76.92 per cent), working conditions being not as good as the working conditions of others (75.39 per cent), job being too easy (75.38 per cent), job is too difficult (73.85 per cent), not sure of what expected from the subject matter specialists (73.84 per cent), being responsible for people (69.23 per cent), receiving conflicting requests from two or more people (67.69 per cent), work conditions of job are below satisfactory (63.07 per cent), job activities are unclear (61.54 per cent), do not having the authority to do the job well (61.54 per cent), not have time to take an occasional break from the job (56.91 per cent) and job has become too routine (55.38 per cent) were not a source of stress. Respondents were satisfied with the sub components of satisfaction with the job such as satisfied with professional social prestige, job authority, salary, facilities provided by KVK, leave facilities might have been the reason for not feeling the stress in the job.

Almost an equal per cent of the respondents felt working on unnecessary job activities, for keeping up with the job, taking work to home and there is no enough time in the day to do the job were sometimes a source of stress as well not a source of stress. Further, 53.85 per cent of the respondents considered responsible for too many jobs as not a source of stress, but it was also considered some times as a source of stress by 43.07 per cent of the respondents. The

Table 3: Job Satisfaction of subject matter specialists

Category	n=65					
	Satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Not satisfied	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Professional social prestige	55	84.62	9	13.85	1	1.54
Promotion	21	32.31	15	23.08	29	44.62
Salary	44	67.69	19	29.23	2	3.08
Incentives and rewards	26	40.00	14	21.54	25	38.46
Facilities provided by KVK	38	58.46	21	32.31	6	9.23
Job authority	41	63.08	19	29.23	5	7.69
Service security	35	53.85	20	30.77	10	15.38
Work distribution	33	50.77	28	43.08	4	6.15
Service rules	32	49.23	25	38.46	8	12.31
Allowance like PF, Pension etc	35	53.85	16	24.62	14	21.54
Leave facility	40	61.54	16	24.62	9	13.85

Table 4: Perception of job stress by subject matter specialists

Sub components	n=65					
	Always a source of stress		Sometimes a source of stress		Not a source of stress	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Working on unnecessary job activities	1	1.54	31	47.70	33	50.76
Job activities are unclear	2	3.08	23	35.38	40	61.54
For keeping up with the job, taking work to home	4	6.15	30	46.15	31	47.70
Job is boring	1	1.54	14	21.54	50	76.92
Being responsible for people	2	3.08	18	27.69	45	69.23
Work area (office) is too crowded	4	6.15	9	13.85	52	80.00
Do not having the authority to do the job well	5	7.69	20	30.77	40	61.54
Job is too difficult	4	6.15	13	20.00	48	73.85
Job has become too routine	3	4.62	26	40.00	36	55.38
There is not enough time in the day to do the job	2	3.08	30	46.15	33	50.77
Work conditions of job are below satisfactory	1	1.54	23	35.39	41	63.07
Receiving conflicting requests from two or more people	0	0.0	21	32.31	44	67.69
Not sure of what expected from the SMS	3	4.62	14	21.54	48	73.84
Responsible for too many jobs	2	3.08	28	43.07	35	53.85
Job being too easy	2	3.08	14	21.54	49	75.38
Responsible for helping others	2	3.08	9	13.85	54	83.07
Not have time to take an occasional break from the job	3	4.62	25	38.47	37	56.91
Working conditions being not as good as the working conditions of others	5	7.69	11	16.92	49	75.39

subject matter specialists informed that they are doing clerical work apart from technical work; there is not enough time in the day to do the job. Hence the subject matter specialists are forced to take the clerical work to home and this might be the reason for the respondents feeling sometimes stress in their job. Thus appropriate organizational strategies have to be worked out to reduce the stress in their job.

It could be depicted from Table 5 that 69.23 per cent and 66.15 per cent of the respondents expressed that the work load was optimum at office and field respectively. Almost an equal per cent of the respondents considered their field work (30.77 per cent) and office work (29.23 per cent) as heavy. The perception of workload by the respondents was optimum to heavy due to vacant posts and multiple tasks assigned by the superior.

Interrelationship between factors of working environment of subject matter specialists

The correlation coefficient was worked out between the factors of working environment. Table 6 reveals that

Table 5: Perception of work load by subject matter specialists

Sub components	n=65					
	Heavy		Optimum		Light	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Field work	20	30.77	43	66.15	2	3.08
Office work	19	29.23	45	69.23	1	1.54

highly significant positive relationship was noticed between satisfaction with people's participation and team work; team work and job satisfaction; job stress and work load. Significant positive relationship was noticed between satisfaction with people's participation and job satisfaction. Satisfaction of subject matter specialists in local response, acceptance of technology by the people, involvement of people in implementation of extension programme, confidence in delegated authority, desire to give and take, appreciative attitude of colleagues and procedural design to work together might be the reason for highly positive

Table 6: Interrelationship between factors of working environment

Factors of working environment	n=65				
	Satisfaction with people's participation	Team Work	Satisfaction with job	Job stress	Work load
Satisfaction with people's participation	1				
Team Work	0.37089**	1			
Satisfaction with job	0.2895*	0.5928**	1		
Job stress	-0.1358*	-0.35164**	-0.4173**	1	
Work load	-0.0827	-0.08896	-0.1758*	0.3347**	1

** - significant at $p < 0.01$ per cent, * - significant at $p < 0.05$

relationship between satisfaction with people's participation and team work. The result is an indicative of good working environment and support by clients or farmers. This is also supported by Hayes (2005), working in a team empowers people and helps them to develop autonomy, which is a source of profound job satisfaction and reduces stress. The subject matter specialists felt that the work load was optimum and job is not a stress and this might be the reason for highly significant positive relation between work load and job stress.

Job stress is negatively correlated with team work and job satisfaction ($p < 0.01$) and satisfaction with people's participation ($p < 0.05$). Work load is negatively correlated with job satisfaction ($p < 0.05$).

Working nature of subject matter specialists of KVK is demanding since the subject matter specialists has to respond to the changing needs of farmers of different

economic background, market situation with establishing good interpersonal relationship. Despite the demanding nature of job, a strong negative relationship between job satisfaction and job stress indicates that highly conducive environment prevails in the KVKs for the subject matter specialists.

It can be concluded from the study that the subject matter specialists of KVKs were satisfied with the people's participation, team work and satisfaction with the job. Around 70.00 per cent of the subject matter specialists perceived the work load as optimum. Nearly half of the respondents expressed that the job is not a stress. Thus a regular assessment of the subject matter specialists has to be carried out to improve the work performance of the individuals and also to increase the production performance of the organisation.

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