

**Role expectations of Agricultural extension professionals – A study in Odisha**

**ABSTRACT**

The role expectations of the Agricultural extension professionals are the determinant factors in developing competencies to perform their job successfully. The data was collected personally from 182 Agricultural extension professionals working in the department of Agriculture and Horticulture, Govt. of Odisha to assess their role expectations. Full support of the beneficiaries and stakeholders, computer and storage facility, documentation, prior arrangement of inputs and materials, regular monitoring and supervision, continuous guidance and expertise, training facilities as well as sufficient funds for demonstration were the pertinent role expectations of the extension professionals for their better job performance. The attributes such as education, experience, training and background of the Agricultural extension professionals had significantly influenced their job performance. The authorities of the state department of Agriculture have to provide facilities as per these expectations utilizing pertinent identified attributes enabling the Agricultural extension professionals to provide better job performance in technology transfer and adoption by the farmers for their sustainable livelihoods.

**Key words:** Role expectation, extension professionals, job expectations and performance

**Introduction**

Transfer of technology as well as development of capability and potential have been identified as two factors in ensuring effectiveness of any extension service (Benet, 1993). The effectiveness of extension services is also highly dependent on the ability of extension professionals to transfer technological information properly (Miller and Cox, 2006). The extension professionals should therefore have both technical and human development competencies particularly socio-cultural, programme planning and implementation as well as evaluation along with appropriate use of extension teaching methods (Raad et. al. 1994). The competencies of extension professional should be in accordance with the task areas in which they are assigned to operate in order to perform successfully (Androulidakis and Sindos, 2003). Therefore, the present study has been designed to assess the role expectations of the Agricultural extension professionals in order to provide facilities in performing their job efficiently.

**Materials and Method**

The study was conducted in Odisha during 2018. The extension professionals working in the department of Agriculture and Horticulture were chosen as the respondents for the study. A questionnaire was developed on the basis of pilot study which were mailed to 325 extension professionals out of which only 182 extension professionals from the department of Agriculture and Horticulture responded by sending the filled-in questionnaire. Administrative management, planning, implementation, capacity building, fund availability, marketing, report and return were selected as the variables to assess their role expectations. The responses received on the scale point of most essential, essential, undecided and not essential were analyzed with the score value

44 of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Statistical tools such as mean score, rank order and path  
 45 analysis were employed to reveal the results.

46 **Results & Discussion**

47 Favorable organizational climate enables the extension professionals to perform  
 48 their job successfully. Computer facilities help in collecting recent technological  
 49 information to update their knowledge along with documentation of activities and timely  
 50 submission of reports. They perform better, if satisfied with the job assigned.  
 51 Motivational climate in the organization develops interest to do better work. Well-  
 52 furnished office, efficient supporting hand, adequate office contingencies and web portal  
 53 facilities have enhanced their work efficiency. Therefore, the respondents had prioritized  
 54 for computer facilities followed by job satisfaction, motivational climate, well-furnished  
 55 office, and efficient supporting hands as observed from Table-1 which are very much  
 56 essential for better job performance.

57 **Table-1: Job expectations on administrative management**

Sl. No.	Expectation	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Motivational climate	3.604	III
2.	Well-furnished office	3.533	IV
3.	Good work environment	3.099	VII
4.	Computer facilities	3.728	I
5.	Efficient supporting hand	3.528	V
6.	Job satisfaction	3.621	II
7.	Adequate contingency for stationaries	3.489	VI
8.	Web portal facilities	3.484	VII

58 (Maximum obtainable score – 4)

59 Proper planning is the essential requirement for better job performance.  
 60 Technological adoption depends on easy marketing of the produce with remunerative  
 61 price, prior arrangement of inputs and materials required. Continuous guidance of the  
 62 supervising officers, need based approach, strong coordination with related departments  
 63 for resource mobilization and proper planning as per the interest of the farmers enabled  
 64 the extension professionals for effective implementation of the programme. Therefore, the  
 65 respondents had opined all these expectations in planning (Table-2) for their better job  
 66 performance.

67 **Table-2: Job expectations in planning**

Sl. No.	Expectation	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Continuous guidance from authorities	3.577	III
2.	Need based approach to achieve the goal	3.539	IV
3.	Planning from farmer's perspective	3.506	VI
4.	Prior arrangement of inputs and materials	3.588	II
5.	Strong co-ordination with related departments	3.511	V
6.	Involving related stakeholders	3.363	VII

7.	Consideration for marketing of the produce	3.599	I
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68 (Maximum obtainable score – 4)

69 Proper implementation of the planned programme helps in achieving the  
70 objectives and improvement of the farming community. Full support of the beneficiaries  
71 and stakeholders, adequate mobility facilities, regular monitoring and supervision to solve  
72 the field problems, well arrangement of inputs and materials, proper documentation of  
73 implemented activities and skill competency of farmers in post-harvest management were  
74 the expectations of the respondents for better job performance in programme  
75 implementation as observed from the Table-3.

76 **Table-3: Job expectation on programme implementation**

Sl. No.	Expectation	Mean Score	Rank
1.	No interference in selection of beneficiaries	3.440	VIII
2.	Full support of beneficiaries and stakeholders	3.755	I
3.	Well arrangement of inputs and materials	3.566	IV
4.	Regular monitoring and supervision	3.582	III
5.	Flexibility in implementation on situation demand	3.407	IX
6.	Incentives on use of implements and machineries	3.462	VII
7.	Skill competency of farmers in post-harvest management	3.555	V
8.	Proper documentation of implemented activities	3.550	VI
9.	Adequate mobility facilities	3.599	II

77 (Maximum obtainable score – 4)

78 The innovation system emphasizes the need to nurture the demand for knowledge  
79 and technologies to the farmers and other stakeholders associated with farm activities.  
80 Agricultural extension professionals therefore need latest technological developments for  
81 their capacity building to fulfill the demands of the farmers. Adequate training facilities at  
82 village level, required training for competency development of the Agricultural extension  
83 professionals, all facilities at the training institutions for better learning environment,  
84 regular exposure to abreast with latest developments, well arrangement of good experts  
85 and professional to impart training effectively were the priority expectations for capacity  
86 building of the extension professions towards better job performance (Table-4).

87 **Table-4: Job expectations on capacity building**

Sl. No.	Expectation	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Regular exposure to technological developments	3.500	IV
2.	Continuous flow of information and literatures	3.478	V
3.	Adequate training for competency developments	3.550	II
4.	All facilities at institution training center	3.544	III
5.	Adequate training facilities at village level	3.555	I
6.	Supply of reference materials to trainees	3.407	VI

7.	Well arrangement of experts and professionals	3.544	III
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88

(Maximum obtainable score – 4)

89 Fund availability is another important consideration for farmer's training,  
 90 demonstrations, farm publications, critical input supply and other need based educational  
 91 approaches. The Agricultural extension professionals expect sufficient funds for  
 92 demonstrations, technological exposure, supply of inputs and materials (Table-5) for  
 93 better job performance as these are the essential requirements in effective transfer and  
 94 adoption of technologies by the farming community.

95 **Table-5: Job expectations on fund availability**

Sl. No.	Expectation	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Competency in accounting	3.451	VII
2.	Adequate funds for training	3.495	IV
3.	Sufficient funds for demonstrations	3.555	I
4.	Adequate funds for field days	3.462	VI
5.	Adequate funds for exposure visits	3.500	III
6.	Sufficient funds for inputs and materials	3.511	II
7.	Competency in record maintenance	3.489	V
8.	Additional funds for contingent measures	3.297	VIII

96

(Maximum obtainable score – 4)

97 Easy disposal of the produce with remunerative price always motivate farmers to  
 98 adopt new technologies with recommended practices for better production, productivity  
 99 and income. Both extension professionals and farmers should have competency on market  
 100 information and disposal of the produce at appropriate time for better price. The extension  
 101 officials had expected (Table-6) storage facility and government support for remunerative  
 102 price as the priority areas towards effective marketing of the produce by the farmers.

103 **Table-6: Job expectations on marketing of the produce**

Sl. No.	Expectation	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Storage facility	3.676	I
2.	Preservation and value addition	3.390	IV
3.	Liasoning with traders and businessmen	3.385	V
4.	Developing co-operative system	3.324	VI
5.	Creating marketing avenue	3.489	III
6.	Govt. support for remunerative price	3.544	II

104

(Maximum obtainable score – 4)

105 Proper documentation is another mandatory activity of the extension  
 106 professionals. Therefore, they need competency in record maintenance, documentation  
 107 and timely reporting along with publication of success stories for the reference of others.

108 The extension professionals have also expected facilities for proper documentation of  
 109 progress and timely submission of reports as priority concerns (Table–7) for their better  
 110 job performance.

111 **Table–7: Job expectations on reports and return**

Sl. No.	Expectation	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Proper documentation of progress	3.588	I
2.	Timely submission of reports	3.500	II
3.	Competency in documentation and reporting	3.352	VI
4.	Guidance and expertise in reporting	3.417	IV
5.	Feedback from authorities on reports	3.374	V
6.	Competency on publication of successful activities	3.418	III

112 (Maximum obtainable score – 4)

113 Path analysis was done to decompose the influence of socio-economic attributes  
 114 of the extension professionals through direct, indirect and residual effect. Analysis of data  
 115 reflected in Table-8 revealed that experience of the extension professionals had the  
 116 highest indirect effect being associated with all the four other attributes. The findings  
 117 therefore inferred that the variable experience channelized through qualification, training,  
 118 age and background of the extension professionals could exhibit significant influence for  
 119 better job performance.

120 **Table–8: Path analysis of socio-economic attributes for better job performance**

Sl. No.	Attribute	Total effect	Total direct effect	Total indirect effect	Substantial effect		
					I	II	III
1.	Age	-0.229	0.381	-0.610	-0.172 $x_1$	0.149 $x_3$	0.111 $x_2$
2.	Qualification	0.048	0.077	-0.029	0.162 $x_3$	0.093 $x_5$	-0.078 $x_4$
3.	Experience	-0.383	-0.724	0.341	-0.234 $x_2$	0.175 $x_1$	0.133 $x_1$
4.	Background	0.075	0.060	0.015	0.084 $x_4$	0.069 $x_2$	-0.024 $x_3$
5.	Training	-0.011	0.001	-0.012	-0.143 $x_3$	-0.105 $x_4$	-0.098 $x_1$

121 Residual effect: 0.028

122 Highest indirect effect: Experience

123 **Conclusion**

124 Competency development of extension professionals is crucial in making the  
 125 extension system more efficient and effective. The extension officials require facilities as  
 126 per their expectation for effective transfer of technology. The study revealed that full  
 127 support of the beneficiaries and stakeholders, computer facility, storage facility, job  
 128 satisfaction, motivational climate, mobility facility, documentation, prior arrangement of  
 129 inputs and materials, regular monitoring and supervision, continuous guidance and  
 130 expertise, training facility and sufficient funds for demonstrations were some of the  
 131 pertinent expectations of the extension professionals for better job performance. The

132 attributes like education, experience, training, age and background of the extension  
133 professionals significantly influence for their better job performance. Since, job  
134 performance is essential for effective transfer of technologies towards improvement of the  
135 farming community, the authorities of the state department of Agriculture and  
136 Horticulture have to provide facilities on these expectations enabling the extension  
137 professionals to perform their job effectively and efficiently.

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