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Evaluation of Relevance and Quality of Refresher Course in Educational Technology among the Fraternity of Agricultural and Allied Sciences: A Survey @AAREM, DHRM, CCS HAU, Hisar (India)

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Abstract
Education will play an important role in everyone's life. Education made the life disciplined in students and develops ethics among them to become an informed and civilized human being. In every education system, students, teachers and contents are playing very important role equally. If students are the main factor in education system then teachers are the backbone of the system that will shape the future of aspirant students. Before making the students aware and educated, teachers must be well versed in his concerned field of specialization. Teachers should be updating their knowledge by the means of various ways such as refresher courses, orientations, inductions, training programme and seminars, *etc*. The present study, reported the result of survey conducted among the fraternity of agricultural and allied sciences about the relevance and quality of the Refresher Course in Educational Technology conducted by the Academy of Agricultural Research & Education Management, Directorate of Human Resource Management, CCS HAU, Hisar (India). The participants in the said interdisciplinary refresher course come from agricultural sciences, veterinary sciences, extension management and library science. Some of the valuable feedback is given by the respondents about the program as well as rated their satisfaction regarding the said program.

Keywords: Refresher Course, Educational Technology, Heterogeneous, Evaluation, Relevance, Impact

Introduction
The knowledge dissemination and the skill orientation must be responsive to fast changing needs of the present global education scenario. The nature of teaching job has been changing constantly due to variety of reasons, such as changes in knowledge, environment, priorities, goals and strategies, profiles of teachers, technology, opportunities, challenges, level of students, *etc*. The focus of teaching should be on developing teaching competency through innovative methods so as to ensure qualitative improvement in higher agricultural education.

The education has its own importance whether it may be formal or informal. Currently, the scenario of education has totally been changed in each and every field/discipline due to wide impact of Information Communication Technology (ICT), teaching learning aids, involvement of new things, new achievements, employment, worldwide competition, *etc*. Therefore, the teachers, particularly in higher education are required to become up-date about the new changes in their concerned field of specialization so that they will be able to provide better education or deliver best contents to their students. In order to meet the challenges for keeping the teachers of higher education equipped and updated with latest knowledge and technology at par worldwide, the apex bodies (University Grants Commission- UGC) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research- ICAR) for higher

education in India promoted and conducted some special training courses such as Orientation Courses, Refresher Courses, Induction Courses and other similar type of training courses. Orientation courses are of general in nature and Refresher Courses are of subject based or Interdisciplinary in nature (Narender Kumar and Bhanu Partap, 2017).

Earlier, refresher courses, orientation courses or training programmes were not compulsory but later on it was made compulsory by the above discussed apex bodies of higher education in India for university and college teachers to join these training programs to get the promotion in their service carrier and enhance their understanding in concerned field of specialization.

Such type of training programmes must be conducted with a view to enhance the capabilities of teaching community and to equip the teachers with better technology, subject and teaching learning skills for effectively carrying out their responsibility as a change manager in the society.

Need of the Refresher Course

In this era of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), the latest technologies or applications are emerging with the academic activities day by day and the learners are also seeking advanced information or knowledge in easy way. Rapid growth in digital contents and their adoption in academic arena are also the challenge to the fraternity. It is quite obvious that skills of anyone fade with passage of time with many reasons. Therefore, to cope up with latest technologies and trends of academic arena, the need of training have to be realized (Narender Kumar and Bhanu Partap, 2017). The supreme bodies for higher education in India, *i.e.*, University Grants Commission (UGC) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) realized the current challenges in the academics, hence, implemented the different type of training courses for the fraternity for their up gradation of existing knowledge and skills. Refresher courses are the specialized training in which academic fraternity improve their knowledge and learn about latest developments that are related with their field of specialization. It will help the fraternity to deliver the contents effectively with confidence and keep themselves up dated with knowledge and skills in their concerned field of specialization.

CCS HAU, Hisar: A Profile

After the division of Punjab State, the first established university in Haryana State in 1970 is Haryana Agricultural University, which is one of the Asia's biggest agricultural universities. In 1991, it was renamed after India's seventh Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh. Thus, now it is known as Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar (India). Being a leader in agricultural research, it significantly contributed to Green and White Revolution in India in 1960s and 70s, respectively. In starting, it was a small campus of Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana. However, after the formation of Haryana in 1966, it became an independent university on 2nd February 1970 through a Presidential Ordinance, which later ratified as Haryana and Punjab Agricultural Universities Act 1970 passed by the parliament on 29th March 1970. The university covers an area of 8,645 Acres, out of which, 7,219 acres at main campus and 1,426 acres at sub-campuses (CCSHAU, 2018).

Profile of AAREM, DHRM, CCS HAU, Hisar

Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University (CCSHAU), Hisar (India) established the Academy of Agricultural Research and Education Management (AAREM) in its Silver Jubilee Year of 1994-95 under Agricultural Human Resource Development Project with financial support from the World Bank. AAREM is equipped with all the basic and ultra modern infrastructural facilities and teaching aids for institutionalized in-service trainings and offers tailor-made courses for university teachers, scientists, extension specialists, research managers, administrators, policy makers, agricultural officers, and other senior officers

working in the field of agriculture and allied sciences. In liaison with other cells/departments/outside agencies Area specific collaborative training programmes are conducted in emerging areas in the disciplines of agriculture and allied sciences including Library and Information Science on regular basis. The Academy also imparts training through various Sponsored Courses of Govt. of Haryana and State Agricultural Universities (SAUs). It also conducts ICAR sponsored winter and summer schools. To maintain and further improving in the standard of its training programmes, AAREM organizes group discussions, seminars, workshops, educational visits, brainstorming sessions, winter/summer schools and workshops on different aspects of agricultural education, research and extension. It also conducts sample surveys and research in areas pertaining to the productivity of teachers. Taking the responsibility of developing the capabilities of the human resource of the university AAREM imparts training to the non-teaching/para administrative staff too in the field of language, computers and other need-based areas (AAREM, 2018).

Objectives of the study
The following objectives for the present study have been intended to be achieved:

- To know the usefulness of Refresher Course in Educational Technology among the heterogeneous group of fraternity
- To know the quality of contents of Refresher Course in Educational Technology
- To know the satisfaction level of heterogeneous group of fraternity about the Refresher Course in Educational Technology
- To assess the views of heterogeneous group of fraternity whether the Refresher Course in Educational Technology helped them to enhance their skill and understanding of their subject and their job

Scope and limitation of the study
The present study is limited to finding the relevance and quality of Refresher Course in Educational Technology among the heterogeneous group of fraternity, which includes agricultural sciences, veterinary sciences and Library and Information Science. In this heterogeneous group of fraternity, participants are from teaching, research and extension activities.

Methodology
A survey based research study was adopted to find out the relevance and quality of the Refresher Course in Educational Technology conducted by Academy of Agricultural Research and Education Management (AAREM), Directorate of Human Resource Management (DHRM), Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University (CCS HAU), Hisar (India) from 21.07.2018 to 10.08.2018. In the present study, a structured questionnaire was used as main research tool for data collection and subsequently the tool was distributed among all the 22 participants and all the respondents given their response positively. The results of the present study are thus based purely on the responses made in the questionnaire returned by the respondents only.

Data analysis and interpretation
After conducting the survey, the collected data has been analyzed with simple percentage analysis for final result, which is given as under:

Table 1: Gender wise distribution of respondents

Gender	Respondents	Response (%)
Male	17	77.27
Female	05	22.73
Total	**22**	**100**

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents based on their gender and it was revealed that out of total 22 respondents, majority of the respondents (77.274%) were the male participants and 22.73% were the female participants in the said refresher course.

Table 2: Age wise distribution of respondents

Age group	Respondents	Response (%)
<30	01	4.55
31-35	01	4.55
36-40	04	18.18
41-45	08	36.36
46-50	07	31.81
>50	01	4.55
Total	**22**	**100**

The data given in Table 2 highlights the age of the respondents. It was found that out of total 22 respondents, majority of the respondents (36.36%) were the age of between 41-45 followed by 46-50 (31.81%) and 36-40 (18.18%). On the other hand, equal number of respondents (4.55%) were the age of <30, 31-35 and >50.

Table 3: Core area of profession

Core area	Respondents	Response (%)
Teaching	10	45.45
Research	07	31.82
Extension	05	22.73
Total	**22**	**100**

Table 3 shows the core area of profession of the respondents and revealed that out of 22 respondents, 45.45% were from the teaching followed by research (31.82%) and extension (22.73%). Respondents from teaching, research and extension are equally in their qualification, rank and remuneration.

Table 4: The objective of the program has been achieved

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	08	36.36
Satisfied	12	54.54
Partially satisfied	02	9.10
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

With regard to the question asked from the respondents about that whether the objective of the program (refresher course) has been achieved as the data shown in above Table 4, it was found that more than half of the respondents (54.54%) were satisfied with the question followed by fully satisfied (36.36%). A little number of respondents (9.10%) was partially satisfied with the question about the program.

Table 5: Your personal learning objectives for attending the program been achieved

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	04	18.18
Satisfied	16	72.72
Partially satisfied	02	9.10
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

The data given in Table 5 shows the results about the question asked from the respondents whether their personal learning objectives for attending the program have been achieved. It is found that majority of the respondents (72.72%) were satisfied, whereas, 18.18% respondents were shows their fully satisfaction towards the said question. Out of total 22 respondents, two were partially satisfied.

Table 6: Your understanding of the subject improved as a result of the program

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	05	22.73
Satisfied	16	72.72
Partially satisfied	01	4.55
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

Table 6 shows the statement given to the respondents during the survey to know about their understanding of the subject improved as a result of the program. It is revealed that majority of the respondents (72.72%) were shown their satisfaction, while 22.73 were fully satisfied that their understanding towards concerned subject was improved after joining of refresher course in education technology. On the other hand, a little bit of respondents (4.55%) were partially satisfied. The results of this statement shows that refresher course in educational technology was the beneficial for the respondents for enhancement of their knowledge.

Table 7: Your skill in the subject of the program improved or increased as a result of the program

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	04	18.18
Satisfied	14	63.64
Partially satisfied	04	18.18
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

The data pertaining to what extent, the skill of respondents in the subject of the program improved or increased as a result of the program (Refresher Course in Educational Technology) is given in Table 7. The analysis of data shows that 63.64% of the respondents were satisfied with the statement, whereas, equal number of respondents, *i.e.*, 18.18% were fully satisfied and partially satisfied that their skill in their concerned subject was improved due to attend the said course.

Table 8: The program helped to enhance understanding of your job as a whole

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	05	22.72
Satisfied	13	59.10
Partially satisfied	04	18.18
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

Table 8 highlight the responses towards the refresher course in educational technology, which helped the respondents to enhance the understanding of their job or current responsibility. The data given in above table shows that 59.10% respondents were satisfied with the statement, while 22.72% were shown their fully satisfaction. Some of the respondents (18.18%) were also responded that they were partially satisfied with the statement.

Table 9: You recommended others with similar needs to attend this program

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	08	36.36
Satisfied	13	59.10
Partially satisfied	01	4.55
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

The statement asked to the respondents, whether they recommended to the others with similar needs to attend this program or refresher course. The data given in Table 9 revealed that 59.10% respondents were satisfied with this statement and want to recommend to the others followed by 36.36% of the respondents who shows their fully satisfaction with the statement. A small number of respondents (4.55%) were partially satisfied with the statement.

Table 10: Material necessary to the program provided to you prior to the program

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	05	22.72
Satisfied	09	40.92
Partially satisfied	07	31.82
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	01	4.54
Total	**22**	**100**

The question was also asked to the respondents that whether the material necessary to the said program was provided to them by the academy or not. Table 10 depicts that about 40% of the respondents were satisfied with the material provided during the refresher course in educational technology followed by 31.82% respondents were partially satisfied, however, among the respondents, 22.72% were shown their fully satisfaction towards the statement.

Table 11: The program logically sequenced

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	06	27.27
Satisfied	13	59.10
Partially satisfied	03	13.63
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

The data given in the Table 11 shows the satisfaction level of respondents towards the question about whether the program was logically sequenced or not. It was observed that 59.10% of the respondents were satisfied with the logical sequence of the said program followed by 27.27% were fully satisfied. On the other hand, more than 13% of the respondents said that they were partially satisfied with the logical sequence of the program.

Table 12: Your views on visual aids used

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	11	50.00
Satisfied	10	45.46
Partially satisfied	01	4.54
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

Satisfaction level of respondents towards the visual aids used during the said program was given in above Table 12, which shows that half of the respondents (50%) were fully satisfied

with the visual aids, whereas, 45.46% respondents were said that they were satisfied with the visual aids, however, a very small number of respondents (4.54%) were also there who shown their partially satisfaction towards the statement.

Table 13: How do you rate the service (breaks, refreshments, *etc.*)?

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	13	59.10
Satisfied	08	36.36
Partially satisfied	01	4.54
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

Table 13 highlight the satisfaction level with regard to services provided by the academy (AAREM) during the program. It is revealed from the data given in above table that 59.10% of the respondents were fully satisfied with services provided to them during the program like breaks given between two lectures, refreshments, *etc.* A good number of respondents (36.36%) were also shown their satisfaction towards the services provided to them, however, a few respondents (4.54%) said that they were partially satisfied with the services provided.

Table 14: Your overall rating of this program

Satisfaction level	Respondents	Response (%)
Fully satisfied	09	40.90
Satisfied	13	59.10
Partially satisfied	00	00
Somewhat satisfied	00	00
Not satisfied	00	00
Total	**22**	**100**

The data given in Table 14 shows the overall rating of the refresher course in educational technology given by the respondents and it is observed that 59.10% of the respondents were satisfied with the program, whereas, 40.90% respondents were shown their fully satisfaction. This reveals that the said program was very good in terms of its course contents, sequence of contents, services, teaching learning aids, *etc.*

Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis and interpretation of data, some of the major findings may be drawn here as given below:

- Among the respondents, 45.45% were from the teaching followed by research (31.82%) and extension (22.73%).
- More than half of the respondents (54.54%) were satisfied with the question that whether the objective of the program (refresher course) has been achieved about the program.
- Majority of the respondents (72.72%) were satisfied with the question that whether their personal learning objectives for attending the program have been achieved.
- The understanding of the concerned subject was improved after joining of Refresher Course in Education Technology, the majority of the respondents (72.72%) were shown their satisfaction towards the statement.
- 63.64% of the respondents were satisfied with the statement that the skill in their concerned subject was improved or increased as a result of participating in the training program.
- Out of 22 respondents, 59.10% respondents were satisfied with the Refresher Course in Educational Technology, which helped them to enhance the understanding of their job or current responsibility.

- Whether the respondents recommended to the others with similar needs to attend this program, 59.10% respondents were satisfied with this and want to recommend to the others.
- About 40% of the respondents were satisfied with the material necessary to the Refresher Course in Educational Technology.
- Out of 22 respondents, 59.10% of the respondents were satisfied with the logical sequence of the said program.
- The half of the respondents was fully satisfied with the visual aids used during the said program.
- More than 59% of the respondents were fully satisfied with the services provided to them during the program like breaks given between two lectures, refreshments, *etc.*
- About 40% of the respondents were fully satisfied overall with the Refresher Course in Educational Technology.

Suggestions

During the survey, the respondents were also gave some valuable suggestions so that in future, the services and other facilities will be improved and the similar type of programs will get the positive response from the future respondents. Based on the suggestions or comments given in questionnaire by the respondents, it is suggested that the concerned academy will have to improve the audio-visual facilities, proper power backup, Internet services and air-conditioning in their premises so that respondents will get feel comfortable and will not facing any type of difficulties during the program.

Conclusion

In this era of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and rapid changing teaching and learning environment, it is necessary to organize such type of programs of certain duration of period so that teachers would be able to get themselves updated in their field of specialization and enhance their skills for better teaching as well as get the better satisfaction of students as well. Refresher Courses are the main backbone for the enhancement of skills of the teaching community. Contents of the Refresher Courses should be updated as well as at par with the demand of current academic and learning scenario worldwide. This study would also helpful for the respondents who are directly or indirectly involve in teaching, research and extension activities. Refresher Course in Educational Technology is relevant to the academic fraternity to know the latest developments in academic arena and refresh themselves accordingly.

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