

Effectiveness of Training Programme on Mushroom Cultivation

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Abstract

Effectiveness is one of the key parameters to assess success of any programs. However, the effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation was not well addressed. The purposes of this study were to investigate the effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation and to explore the relationships of each of the selected characteristics of the trained mushroom farmers with their effectiveness of training programme. Data were collected from the trained mushroom farmers of selected eight villages of three upazilas of Comilla district of Bangladesh during 01 to 16 March, 2016. The sample size of the study was 103 trained mushroom farmers and drawn from a population of 801 using proportionate random sampling technique. It was revealed that training programme on mushroom cultivation was found medium effective among highest proportion (39.8%) of the trained mushroom farmers, while among 32% and 28.2% of them found low and high effective respectively. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (r) was computed to explore the relationships between the effectiveness of mushroom training programme and selected characteristics of the trained farmers.

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The correlation analysis indicated that age, cosmopolitaness and extension media contact of the trained mushroom farmers had significant positive relationships with their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation.

Fatalism and problems faced of the trained farmers had significant negative relationships with their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation. Education, family size, annual family income, peer group influence, organizational participation, innovativeness had no significant relationships with their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation. It was found that training programme on mushroom cultivation was effective to the trained farmers from medium to very high level. So, proper follow up actions need to be continued for the sustainability of mushroom production by the trained farmers.

Key words: Effectiveness, training programme, mushroom & trained farmers.

INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh is an agrarian and one of the most densely populated country in the world. Nearly all the arable area of the country has been brought under the plough and further agricultural expansion is almost impossible. On the other hand, the unemployed population in our country is 2.2 million out of which 0.8 million is female (Kader, 2006). The fruits and vegetables produced by the country can fulfill 65-70% of the national demand. A significant portion of fruits and vegetables are lost after harvest, as a result the available fruits and vegetables fulfill only 50% of our requirement (Muzammel et al., 2005). In this situation, mushroom cultivation can be a new hope for Bangladesh. Because they grow in large quantities in a short time and provide more protein per unit area than any other crops (Gupta, 1986). Mushroom is an edible vegetable which is delicious, nutritious and having medicinal value cultivated scientifically from seeds produced in the laboratory in a neat and clean environment (Siddiqui, 2002). The technology of artificial culture of mushroom is somewhat recent innovation and incorporation of this non-conventional crop in existing agricultural system can help in improving the social as well as economic status of the small farmers.

Mushroom culture does not compete with other crops, can be grown vertically in homestead with the active participation of family members. The agricultural and other wastes can be used as substrates. Considering its nutritional, medicinal and economic importance, the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) through its National Mushroom Development and Extension Center (NMDEC) worked a lot to change the view of producers and consumers of mushroom. They consistently took several initiatives and launched various programs with a view to building awareness of the growers. One of the main activities of the NMDEC is to train farmers and small entrepreneurs on mushroom cultivation.

Mushroom research and extension activities were being carried by the DAE initially through its Mushroom Center Development Project. Later on, these activities are being implemented phase by phase, mainly on project basis. Mushroom expansion got accelerated through the “Mushroom Center Development Project-Phase II” during 2006 to 2009. Presently, mushroom project is performing its activities all over the country through NMDEC, Savar and its 16 sub-centers throughout the country. Kamal (2012) found that a vast majority of the trained farmers in Faridpur district had low to medium adoption (88.66%) and knowledge (83.50%) on mushroom cultivation. Basar (2006) found that training exposure had significant negative relationship with problem confrontation in mushroom cultivation by the farmers of Savar upazila. But there has been no systematic effort to assess effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation so far. This is why the researcher took the research on “Effectiveness of Training Programme on Mushroom Cultivation”. In the light of above discussions and the background information, the present study has been undertaken to answer the following research questions:

- i. How much training programme on mushroom cultivation was effective in technology transfer?
- ii. Which socio-economic characteristics of the trained farmers made training programme on mushroom cultivation effective?

METHODOLOGY

The locale of the study was Chandina upazila, Comilla Sadar upazila and Burichang upazila of Comilla district. The study area was about 100 k.m. south-east from central Dhaka and well communicated. Eight villages from these three upazilas were purposively selected. Most of the farmers of these villages undertook training on mushroom cultivation from Mushroom Development and Extension Sub-center, Comilla. The total number of the trained mushroom farmers (801) in the study area was considered as the population of the study. According to Yamane's (1967) formula, the sample size was determined as 103. Sample farmers were selected from the population through proportionate random sampling technique. Data were collected through face-to-face interview by using structured interview schedule from the selected respondents of the study area during 01-16 March 2016. The methodology followed for measuring the dependent and independent variables are described below:

Measurement of independent variables

The characteristics of the farmers such as age, education, family size, annual family income, peer group influence, cosmopolitanism, extension media contact, organizational participation, innovativeness, fatalism and problems faced in mushroom cultivation were the independent variables of the study. Age of a farmer was measured in terms of actual years from his birth to the time of interview. The education of a farmer was measured in terms of formal years of schooling. Family size was calculated by computing the total number of members of the respondents' family who jointly lived and ate together. Annual family income referred to the total earnings in taka of all family members of a respondent from agriculture (crop, livestock and fisheries), business, employment and other sources. Four point scale was used to compute the peer group influence on ten statements about their peers. Cosmopolitanism of a farmer was measured by computing a cosmopolitanism score on the basis of his frequency of visits to 6 different places outside to his own social system. Extension media contact was measured on the basis of a respondents' extent of exposure to 12 selected information sources related to agricultural extension. Organizational participation was computed for each respondent on the basis of his/her membership with seven different types of organizations. Innovativeness of the farmers was measured on the basis of their adoption of 9 new technologies related to agriculture and others considering earliness in the use of a technology by a farmer. Fatalism of a farmer was measured by using Likert-type scale which contained 10 statements out of

which 5 statements were positive and 5 statements were negative. The Researcher used a 5-point scale for measuring problem faced by the farmers considering 10 problems in mushroom cultivation.

Measurement of dependent variable

Effectiveness means how well the programme solved the problems. In other words, effectiveness is the extent to which a programme achieves its intended objectives. Effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation was the dependent variable of this study. The objectives of the training programme were to increase knowledge, attitude and adoption extent of the farmers regarding mushroom cultivation. These knowledge, attitude and adoption dimensions were used for measurement of effectiveness of training programme. Effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation was measured by combining and averaging knowledge, attitude and adoption scores of the farmers by using the following formula (Afroz, 2014) and expressed as percentage:

$$ES = \frac{1}{3} \times \left(\frac{O_K}{P_K} + \frac{O_{At}}{P_{At}} + \frac{O_{Ad}}{P_{Ad}} \right) \times 100$$

Here, ES= Effectiveness score, O_K = Observed knowledge score, P_K = Possible knowledge score,

O_{At} = Observed attitude score, P_{At} = Possible attitude score, O_{Ad} = Observed adoption score and

P_{Ad} = Possible adoption score

Thus, the values of ES could range from 0.00% to 100%, where 0% indicates not at all effective and 100% indicates very high effective. Each of the dimensions was measured by applying appropriate scale. Mushroom cultivation knowledge of a respondent was measured by asking him/her 14 questions related to different aspects of mushroom cultivation. Attitude was measured by using Likert-type scale which contained 10 statements out of which 5 statements were positive and 5 statements were negative. Scores were assigned to these five alternate responses as 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0 respectively for each positive statement. In case of negative statements, the reverse scores were assigned. The adoption of mushroom cultivation score was calculated by multiplication of spawn sub-score and experience sub-score. Spawn sub-score was determined on the basis of the number of spawn packets having used by

respondent during last cultivation period and experience sub-score was measured on the basis of years of mushroom cultivation by the respondent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Selected Characteristics of the Farmers

In this section, the findings on the farmers' selected characteristics have been discussed and a summary profile of these characteristics is presented in Table 1. Table 1 indicates that an overwhelming majority (92.20%) of the respondents belonged to young to middle aged categories where considerable proportion of the trained mushroom farmers had secondary education (62.10%) and medium sized households (68.93%). The highest proportion (64.10%) of the trained farmers had low annual income whereas only 5.80% of them had high annual income. An overwhelming majority of the respondents had high peer group influence (86.41%), low to medium cosmopolite (80.58%), low to medium extension contact (79.61%), low organizational participation (87.40%). More than two-thirds (78.60%) of the respondents had medium to high innovativeness while only 21.40% of them had low innovativeness. Majority (67.90%) of the respondents in the study area were medium fatalist while three fifths (60.2%) of the farmers faced medium to high problems in the study area.

Table 1. The characteristics profile of the respondents

Characteristics	Measuring Unit	Category	Number (n=103)	percent	Range		Mean	S. D.
					Possible	observed		
Age	Year	Young aged (up to 35 years)	75	72.80	-	19-60	33.44	9.54
		Young aged (up to 35 years)	20	19.40				
		Old aged (above 50 years)	8	7.80				
Education	Years of schooling	Can sign only (0.5)	5	4.90	-	0.5-16	7.35	2.98
		Primary education (1-5)	22	21.30				
		Secondary education (6-10)	64	62.10				
		Above secondary (above 10)	12	11.70				
Family size	No of	Small family (up to 4	28	27.19	-	3-11	5.23	1.3

	members	members)						8
		Medium family (5 to 7 members)	71	68.93				
		Large family (above 7 members)	4	3.88				
Annual family income	Thousand Taka	Low income (up to 60)	64	64.10	-	24-696	73.16	93.25
		Medium income (61 to 120)	31	30.10				
		High income (above 120)	8	5.80				
Peer group influence	Score	Medium influence (≤ 30)	14	13.59	0-40	25-38	32.53	1.89
		High influence (>30)	89	86.41				
Cosmopolitaness	Score	Low cosmopolite ($< \text{Mean} - 0.5 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. < 6.1)	41	39.80	0-24	3-24	7.30	2.40
		Medium cosmopolite ($\text{Mean} \pm 0.5 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. 6.1 to 8.5)	42	40.78				
		High cosmopolite (> 8.5)	20	19.42				
Extension media contact	Score	Low contact (< 18)	29	28.16	0-48	10-41	19.95	4.46
		Medium contact ($> 18-22$)	53	51.45				
		High contact (> 22)	21	20.39				
Organizational participation	Score	Low participation (Up to 7)	90	87.40	-	0-22	4.48	4.09
		Medium participation ($> 7-14$)	6	5.80				
		High participation (> 14)	7	6.80				
Innovativeness	Score	Low innovative ($\text{Mean} - 1 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. < 14.64)	22	21.40	0-36	6-32	20.09	5.45
		Medium innovative ($\text{Mean} \pm 1 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. 14.64 to 16.21)	75	72.80				
		High innovative ($\text{Mean} - 1 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. > 25.59)	6	5.80				
Fatalism	Score	Low fatalist ($\text{Mean} - 0.5 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. < 11.97)	18	17.50	10-50	10-44	14.09	4.24
		Medium fatalist ($\text{Mean} \pm 0.5 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. 11.97 to 16.21)	70	67.90				
		High fatalist ($\text{Mean} - 0.5 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. > 16.21)	15	14.60				
Problems faced in mushroom cultivation	Score	Low ($\text{Mean} - 0.5 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. < 16.09)	41	39.80	0-40	12-34	19.28	6.38
		Medium ($\text{Mean} \pm 0.5 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. 16.09 to 22.47)	42	40.80				
		High ($> \text{Mean} - 0.5 \text{ Sd}$, i.e. > 22.47)	20	19.40				

Effectiveness of Training Programme on Mushroom Cultivation

For measurement of effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation, three dimensions were considered viz. (a) knowledge on mushroom cultivation, (b) attitude of the farmers towards mushroom cultivation, and (c) adoption of mushroom cultivation. The findings are discussed into four sub-sections as follows:

a) Trained farmers' knowledge on mushroom cultivation

To increase knowledge of the farmers is one of the major objectives of the training programme. The observed knowledge score of the trained mushroom farmers ranged from 18 to 28 against a possible range of 0-28, with an average of 24.27 and standard deviation of 1.67. On the basis of their knowledge scores, the respondents were classified into two categories as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of the respondents according to their knowledge on mushroom cultivation

Categories	Respondents		Mean	Standard deviation
	Number	Percent		
Medium (18-22)	10	9.70	24.27	1.67
High (>22-28)	93	90.30		
Total	103	100.00		

The findings seem that the highest proportion (90.30%) of the trained mushroom farmers had high knowledge on mushroom cultivation while only 9.70% of the farmers had medium knowledge. The findings lead to the conclusion that training programme on mushroom cultivation was highly effective in respect of increasing knowledge of the farmers.

b) Attitude of the farmers towards mushroom cultivation

To form favorable attitude of the farmers towards mushroom cultivation is the second objective of the training programme. The observed attitude scores of the respondents ranged from 35 to 47 against a possible range of 12 to 48, with a mean of 42.75 and standard deviation of 2.21. On the basis of attitude scores, the respondents were classified into two categories as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of the respondents according to their attitude towards mushroom cultivation

Categories	Respondents		Mean	Standard deviation
	Number	Percent		
High favorable attitude (35-41)	24	23.30	24.27	1.67
Very high favorable attitude (>41)	79	76.70		
Total	103	100.00		

The findings reveal that highest proportion (76.70%) of the respondents had very high favorable attitude towards mushroom cultivation, while only 23.30% of them had high favorable attitude. The formation of highly positive attitude towards mushroom cultivation might be due to their knowledge on mushroom cultivation through training programme. Other reasons might be low investment, quick return and high benefit from mushroom cultivation.

c) Adoption of mushroom cultivation

The third objective of the training programme is to increase adoption of mushroom cultivation by the trained farmers. The observed adoption of mushroom cultivation scores of the trained farmers ranged from 3 to 16 against the possible range from 0-16. The average score was 10.15 with a standard deviation of 4.04. Based on the scores of adoption of mushroom cultivation, the farmers were classified into three categories as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of the respondents according to their adoption of mushroom cultivation

Categories	Respondents		Mean	Standard deviation
	Number	Percent		
Low adoption (<Mean – 1 Sd, i.e. <6.11)	30	29.10	10.15	4.04
Medium adoption (Mean ± 1 Sd, i.e. 6.11 to 14.19)	50	48.60		
High adoption (Mean – 1 Sd, i.e. >14.19)	23	22.30		
Total	103	100.00		

Findings shown in Table 4 reveal that the highest proportion (48.60%) of the respondents had medium adoption of mushroom cultivation, while 29.10% had low adoption and the rest 22.30 % had high adoption of mushroom cultivation. Table 4 also revealed that more than

three fourth (77.7%) of the farmers had low to medium adoption of mushroom cultivation. This could be due to the fact that most of the trained mushroom cultivators were younger in age. They were ready to accept risk, but most of them had low income. So, they started their business with minimum number of spawn packets. Besides, unavailability of spawn packets, lack of marketing facilities, and low demand in local market might be reasons for comparatively low adoption of mushroom cultivation by the trained farmers.

d) Effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation

Effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation was the main thrust of this research. Effectiveness of the training programme was determined as the average of knowledge, attitude and adoption scores of the trained farmers. The observed effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation scores of the respondents ranged from 63.10 to 96.23% against the possible ranged from 0 to 100%, with an average of 79.75 and standard deviation of 8.70. On the basis of their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation scores, the respondents were classified into three categories as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Distribution of the respondents according to their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation

Categories	Respondents		Mean	Standard deviation
	Number	Percent		
Medium effective (63.10 -75.00)	33	32.00	79.75	8.70
High effective (>75.00-85.00)	41	39.80		
Very high effective (>85.00)	29	28.20		
Total	103	100.00		

Data presented in Table 5 indicate that training programme on mushroom cultivation was found high effective among 39.80% of the trained farmers, while among 32.00% and 28.20% of them found medium and very high effective, respectively. Islam (1998) and Meagy (2001) also found similar findings in their studies. The findings also reveal that training programme on mushroom cultivation was found high to very high effective among more than two third (68.00%) of the trained farmers. This happened mostly due to increased knowledge and attitude development towards mushroom cultivation by the trained farmers through training programme although rate of adoption was not comprehensive and satisfactory. To increase adoption rate, proper follow up, availability of spawn packets, marketing facilities, credit

facilities etc. should be ensured by the concerned extension providers that will make training programme more effective in the study area.

Relationship between Trained Farmers' Characteristics and their Effectiveness of Training Programme on Mushroom Cultivation

An attempt was made to find out the relationships between the selected characteristics of the respondents with their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation. Co-efficient of correlation results in Table 6 revealed that out of 11 selected characteristics of the respondents only 5 namely age, cosmopolitaness, extension media contact, fatalism and problems faced in mushroom cultivation had significant relationships. Among them fatalism and problems faced in mushroom cultivation had significant negative relationships.

Table 6. Co-efficient of correlation between selected characteristics of the trained farmers and their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation

Dependent variable	Independent variables	Correlation co-efficient values (r)
Effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation	Age	0.228*
	Education	-0.164 ^{NS}
	Family size	0.069 ^{NS}
	Annual family income	0.191 ^{NS}
	Peer group influence	0.102 ^{NS}
	Cosmopolitaness	0.338**
	Extension media contact	0.254**
	Organizational participation	0.021 ^{NS}
	Innovativeness	0.002 ^{NS}
	Fatalism	-0.272**
	Problem faced by the trained farmer	-0.254**

^{NS} Not Significant, * Significant at 0.05 level, ** Significant at 0.01 level

Age and effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation: The findings shown in Table 6 indicates that there was positive significant relationship between age of the farmers and their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation, reflecting that degree of effectiveness of training programme among the farmers found to be more effective with increase in their age. With the increase in the age of the farmers, their responsibility to their family is increased, they become more practical, they try to apply whatever they were taught from training programme in their profession to maximize their advantages, meet their

immediate needs, which might have played roles to have more effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation among elderly farmers than young aged farmers.

Cosmopolitanism and effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation: The data in Table 6 reveals that there was positive significant relationship between cosmopolitanism of the farmers and their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation. The result reflects that effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation was observed better among those farmers who had higher level of cosmopolitanism. Higher level of cosmopolitanism enables farmers to form positive attitude, gather knowledge and prompt them to adopt new practices.

Extension media contact and effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation: Based on the findings in Table 6, it was concluded that the effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation was observed more effective among those farmers who had higher contact with extension media. Media exposure pertains to ones contact with multifarious bodies of knowledge and information. The farmers having more exposure with communication sources have better knowledge about different aspects of mushroom cultivation. This exposure is also helpful in the formation of favorable attitude of the farmers towards mushroom cultivation as well as adoption of mushroom cultivation. Roy (2013) found the similar relationship between extension media contact and effectiveness of FFS for soil and crop management.

Fatalism and effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation: Negative value of coefficient of correlation specified in Table 6 indicates that degree of effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation was found to be high among those farmers who had less fatalism. The farmers who are fewer fatalists do not depend only on their fate. They work hard and take necessary measures to apply knowledge, attitude, and skills obtained from training programme on mushroom cultivation.

Problems and effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation: The data in Table 6 reveals that there was significant negative relationship between problems faced by the trained farmers and their effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation. In other words, the farmer who faced comparatively higher problem had less effectiveness of

training programme on mushroom cultivation. The problems like unavailability of spawn packets in time, high price of spawn, low demand of mushroom in the local market, and middle man problem hindered trained farmers in the adoption of mushroom cultivation. These might be the reasons which exerted negative effectiveness of training programme on mushroom cultivation among those farmers who faced comparatively higher problems in mushroom cultivation.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that training programme on mushroom cultivation was found high to very high effective among more than two thirds (68.00%) of the trained farmers compared to among 32.00% of them found medium effective. This was due to increased knowledge and attitude development towards mushroom cultivation by the trained farmers through training programme though adoption rate was not comprehensive and satisfactory. These facts lead to the conclusion that arrangements like proper follow up, availability of spawn packets, facilitating marketing facilities should be ensured by the NMDEC in order to increase adoption of mushroom cultivation as well as make training programme more effective in the study area. To increase Comopoliteness among the trainee NMDEC should include model mushroom farmers field visit, field trip in their training curriculum. Farm and home visit, results and method demonstrations and TV programs on mushroom cultivation should be taken by the concerned authorities to maximize individual, group and mass contact. On the other hand, NMDEC should include case study, success story, and result demonstration presentations in their training program for reducing fatalism of the trainees and to reduce problems like unavailability of spawn packets in time, high price of spawn packets, low spawn germination rate etc. should be solved timely.

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