

Cultivating Solutions: Farmer-Driven Constraints and Suggestions for Kisan Call Centre Advisories

Abstract

The timely availability of relevant information along with effective communication have been critical factors for boosting agricultural productivity. Despite an enormous amount of information, identifying its relevance, application, and delivery methods to people in need has been a considerable difficulty. Farmers require a wide range of information throughout the agricultural process, including enhanced cultivation procedures, weather forecasts, hybrid seeds, cultivation inputs, pest and disease management storage facilities, and produce pricing. The Kisan Call Center is projected to narrow down the information divide between trained agriculturists and farmers. The present study was undertaken, to contribute to the reorganization and integration of essential modifications, aiming to extend outreach to underserved populations. This will enhance the efficient distribution of information, ultimately making the Kisan Call Center (KCC) more effective for users by ensuring the delivery of timely and pertinent information.

Introduction

Disseminating new technology and upgraded agricultural knowledge to all farmers is of the utmost importance for optimum utilisation of technology. This, in turn, helps to rapid development, improves farmer livelihoods, and promotes agricultural sector progression, all of which have a favourable influence on the nation's GDP.

The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, established the Kisan Call Centre (KCC) across the country on January 21, 2004 to satisfy the requirements of agricultural communities. The KCC is an invaluable resource for farmers, providing information on innovations, crop protection, and other kinds of knowledge. This offers professional advice on specific issues, information on government health programmes, contact information for health care providers, HIV counselling services, and legal assistance in 22 local languages.

Farmers from every corner of the country can contact the KCC by dialling the toll-free number 1551 or 1800-180-1551. The KCC operators reply quickly to farmers' inquiries, and if

immediate assistance is not feasible, the call is routed to agricultural professionals. The KCC agrees to provide a viable solution within 48 hours at most.

While information and communication technology (ICT) has altered communication processes, there are still problems, such as inadequate internet availability in farmers' fields and a lack of understanding about internet usage. The KCC stands out as one of the most successful ICT solutions for connecting farmers with critical information.

Methodology

Ex-post facto design of research has been utilised, which is a systematic empirical investigation in which researchers have no direct impact on that influence variables because its manifestation has already occurred. (Kerlinger,1966). The data was collected well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule. Personal interview method was utilised by investigator himself, either at their home or at community place or at their field. Every possible care was taken to maintain congenial atmosphere to get unbiased response from respondents. The questions from interview schedule were asked one by one and their responses were recorded accordingly in the interview schedule by investigator himself. Total 150 respondents were selected randomly from 10 villages of two blocks i.e. Milkipur and Haringtonganj in Ayodhya district.

Result and Discussion

1. Constraints As Perceived By the Respondents in Using the Services of Kisan Call Center

The data presented in Table and Fig. 1 reveals that first rank is given to the sometimes call diverted to other state (57.33 MPS) followed by Kisan Call Center is not providing the information regarding the Seed, pesticide etc. of private agencies (55.33 MPS), Phone line of Kisan Call Center mostly found busy (52.66 MPS), Some of the information's provided by KCC are not relevant to agriculture (50.67 MPS), Credibility of information is very low provided by KCC (50.65 MPS), There is no feedback facility in KCC(50.12 MPS), Sometimes Agricultural information is not given in regional language (50.01 MPS), KCC only gives general information (49.33 MPS), Experts do not have answer of our questions with complete satisfaction (48.66 MPS), Sometime KCC agents not understand our question (41.33 MPS), Farmers don't know working hours of KCC (40.67 MPS), Instead of answering to the point more irrelevant question asked by KCC Agent (38.00 MPS), Weak /no network area problem to use the services of KCC (36.00 MPS), Most of the time operator

of Kisan Call Center put farmers call on hold (35.33 MPS), Level-2 has been experiencing frequent disconnection (34.00 MPS), KCC agent is not using conferencing for direct connection with level-II or Inexpert(32.00 MPS), Kisan Call Center gives out-dated information (28.25 MPS), Expert of Kisan Call Center are not explaining information clearly (28.01 MPS) and were ranked second, fourth, fifth, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen and eighteen respectively.

The findings are partially similar to the findings reported by Michael (2003) and Singh et al. (2008).

Table-1: Constraints as perceived by the respondents in using the services of Kisan Call Center

n=150

S. No.	Constraints	MPS	Rank
1.	Kisan Call Center gives out-dated information.	28.25	XVII
2.	Kisan Call Center is not providing the information regarding the Seed, pesticide etc. of private agencies.	55.33	II
3.	Expert of Kisan Call Center are not explaining in formation clearly.	28.01	XVIII
4.	Phoneline of Kisan Call Center mostly found busy.	52.66	III
5.	There is no feedback facility in KCC.	50.12	VI
6.	KCC agent is not using conferencing for direct connection with level-II or III expert.	32.00	XVI
7.	Sometimes call diverted to other state.	57.33	I
8.	Experts do not have answer of our questions with complete satisfaction.	48.66	IX
9.	Most of the time operator of Kisan Call Center put farmers call on hold.	35.33	XIV
10.	Sometimes Agricultural information is not given in regional language.	50.01	VII
11.	Weak/no network are problem to use the services of KCC.	36.00	XIII
12.	Level-2 has been experiencing frequent disconnection.	34.00	XV

13.	Instead of answering to the point more irrelevant questions asked by KCC Agent.	38.00	XII
14.	Farmers don't know working hours of KCC.	40.67	XI
15.	Some of the information's provided by KCC are not relevant to agriculture.	50.67	IV
16.	Sometime KCC agents not understand our question.	41.33	X
17.	Credibility of information is very low provided by KCC.	50.65	V
18.	KCC only gives general information.	49.33	VIII

MPS- Mean Percent Score

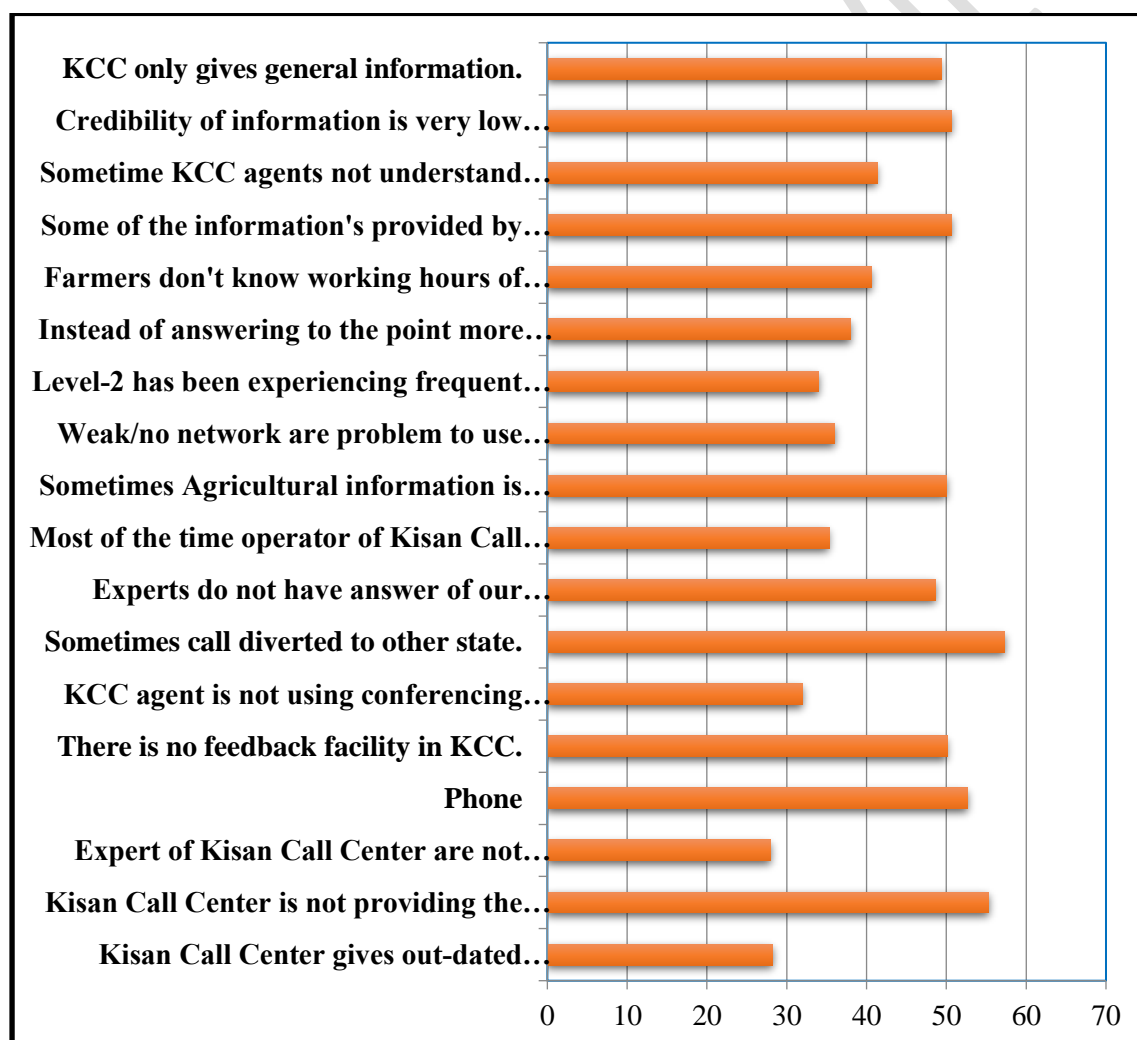


Fig. 1: Constraints As Perceived By the Respondents in Using the Services of Kisan Call Center

2. The Suggestion to Overcome the Constraints As Perceived By the Respondents

in Use of Services of Kisan Call Center

An attempt was also made to ascertain suggestions to overcome various constraints perceived by respondents in using the services of Kisan Call Centre. The respondents were requested to offer their valuable suggestions against difficulties faced by them in using the services of Kisan Call Centre. The suggestions given by respondents were collected, summarized and presented in Table - 2 depicted diagrammatically in Fig. 2.

Table-2: the suggestion to overcome the constraints as perceived by the respondents in use of services of Kisan Call Center

Sr. No.	Suggestions	MPS	Rank
1.	The use of technical words should be replaced with the local words by Call Center Agent.	81.33	II
2.	KCC agent should use conferencing system to solve the critical queries.	48.00	VII I
3.	There should be feedback cell in KCC regarding the services provided by KCC.	53.33	VI
4.	Irrelevant questions discussions must be avoided during call.	85.33	I
5.	The KCC should also provide the information regarding trusted/approved private agencies working in the field of agriculture.	52.66	VII
6.	There should be public telephone booth kiosk in rural areas for making call to KCC.	73.33	IV
7.	The network area should be extended to the rural as well as remote area.	74.66	III
8.	The activities/benefits of KCC should be based in farming community reach advertisement in private mass media also.	45.35	IX

9.	The number of Call Center Agent should be quite enough so that the problem of telephone on hold to the farmers can be resolved.	45.31	X
10.	The information provided by KCC must be well up to date.	70.66	V

MPS-Mean Percent Score

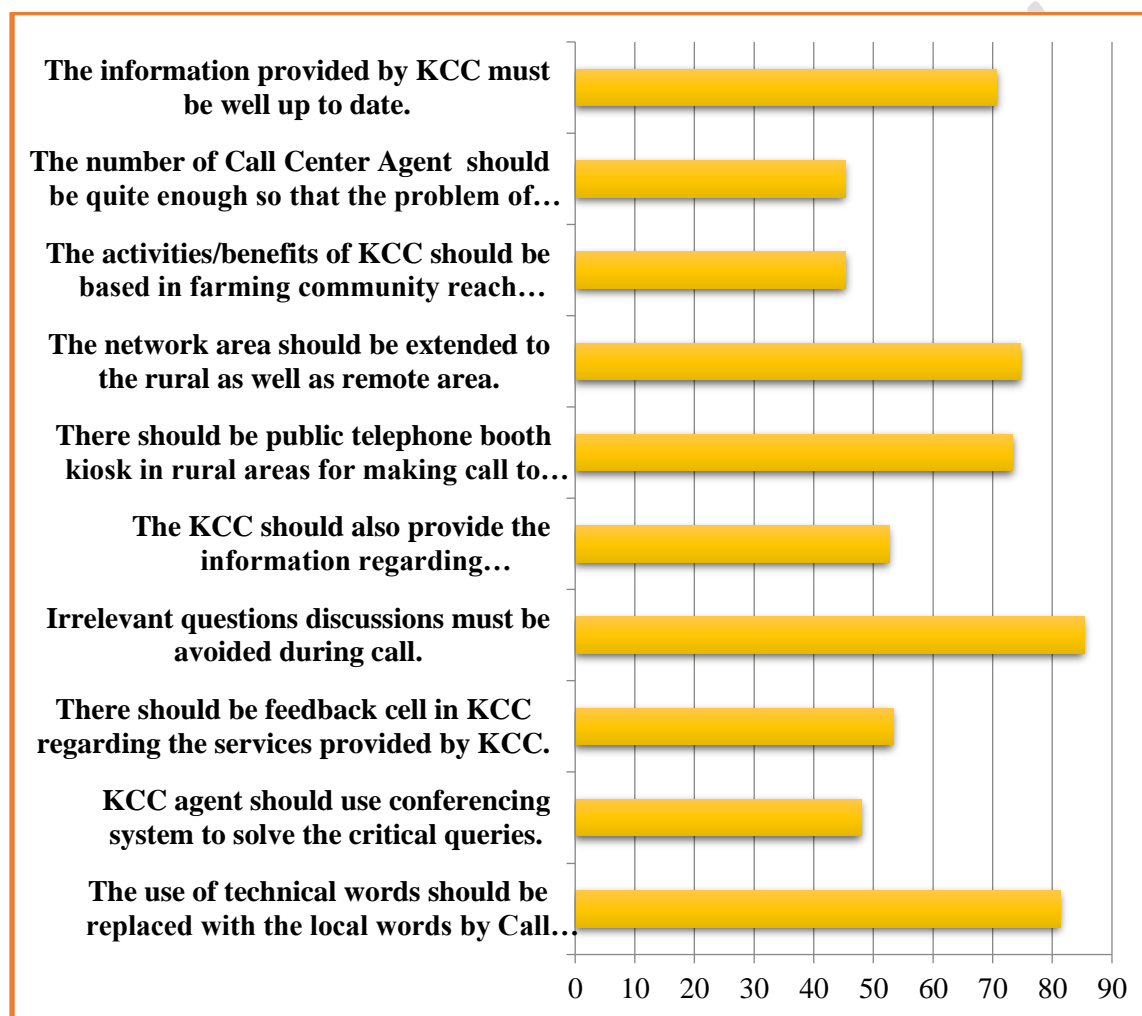


Fig. 2: Suggestion from the respondents to overcome constraints as perceived by the respondents in use of services of Kisan Call Center

The data presented in Table and Fig. 2 reveals that first rank is given to the irrelevant questions /discussions must be avoided during call (85.33 MPS) followed by the use of technical words should be replaced with the local words by Call Center Agent (81.33 MPS), the network area should be extended to the rural as well as remote area (74.66 MPS), there should be public telephone booth/kiosk in rural areas for making call to KCC (73.33 MPS),

The information provided by KCC must be well up to date (70.66 MPS), There should be feedback cell in KCC regarding the services provided by KCC (53.33 MPS), The KCC should also provide the information regarding trusted/ approved private agencies working in the field of agriculture (52.66 MPS), KCC agent should use conferencing system to solve the critical queries (48.00 MPS), The activities / benefits of KCC should be based in farming community reach advertisement in private mass media also (45.35 MPS), The number of Call Center Agent should be quite enough so that the problem of telephone on hold to the farmers can be resolved (45.31 MPS) and were ranked second, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth.

The findings are partially similar to the findings reported Bhosle et al (2008).

Conclusion

As Information Technology progresses, it is essential to harness KCC as a significant initiative in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to enhance accessibility for farmers nationwide.

Finding of the study reveals that major constraints perceived by respondent is “Call is being diverted to other state” which is having 57.33 Mean Percent Score as KCC provides information in local language, it shall be difficult for a respondent of one state to understand language of another state due to huge diversity in our nation. It was found in the study that “Irrelevant questions /discussions must be avoided during call” as the most felt suggestion which is having 85.33 Mean Percent Score for the increase in efficiency of KCC. Hence, the provision of formal conversation must be inculcated at the KCC advisory service centre and technical efficiency should be enhanced to bring positive attitude in the farmers towards KCC advisories in the years to come.

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