COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF KISAN CALL CENTRE IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

ABSTRACT

The farmer may come across a number of information sources but they pursue only few of them depending upon the availability and the ease of use. Countering the importance and facts in view the present study entitled, "**Comprehensive Analysis of Kisan Call Centre in Tiruchirappalli District of Tamil Nadu**" was undertaken in Trichy district. 90 farmers from Manachanallur block were selected using simple random sampling method. Majority of the respondents were middle aged and illiterate, most of them were marginal farmers with farming as sole occupation, had an annual income up to one lakh rupees. Majority of the respondents had moderate to strongly favorable attitude towards the use of Kisan Call Center and had medium knowledge about Kisan Call Center. Major constraints as perceived by respondents were, KCC is not providing the information regarding the seed, pesticide etc. of private agencies followed by SMS send by KCC not display in some of the mobile handsets there is no feedback facility in KCC. The suggestion that KCC agent should use conferencing system to solve the critical queries followed by the use of technical words should be replaced by local language by Call Center Agent.

Key words: Information sources, Kisan Call Centre, Knowledge, Local language

INTRODUCTION

India is basically an agricultural country and agriculture sector accounts for about 17.32% of the GDP and employs 49% of the total workforce. Agriculture is fundamental for sustenance of an economy as is food for human beings. It contributes significantly to export earnings and is an important source of raw materials for almost all the industries. Access to technology is one of the most important enablers for farmers to improve productivity sustainably (Das et al., 2023). Innovative mechanisms for technology transfer are required to bring relevant tools, knowledge and knowhow to farmers.The policy framework for agricultural extension (Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, 2000) highlights the opportunity for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to improve the quality and accelerate the transfer and exchange of information to farmers, and ICT is consequently given a high priority, particularly as a tool for improving the marketing aspects of farm enterprises. Indian telecommunication revolution that too wireless connectivity made it possible to reach to unreachable located and remote location through help line Services.

During the present decade, India has seen an exponential growth in the telecom particularly in wireless. With quality information at rural people fingertips, and appropriate m services available in local languages, rural people can make improved decisions, specific to each individual. Still expanding their vast reach and simplicity of use at affordable cost, mobile devices are now in a position to extend public services to rural people at corner of the country. As a result, the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India has launched Kisan Call Centers (KCC) on 21st January 2004with a view to leverage the extensive telecom infrastructure in the country to deliver extension services to the farming communitywith some special features including

- Information to farmers in local language
- Country wide common tollfree number 1800-180-1551
- From 6 am to 10 pm, round the year
- Call-conferencing facility with experts
- Toll-free, including all mobile networks

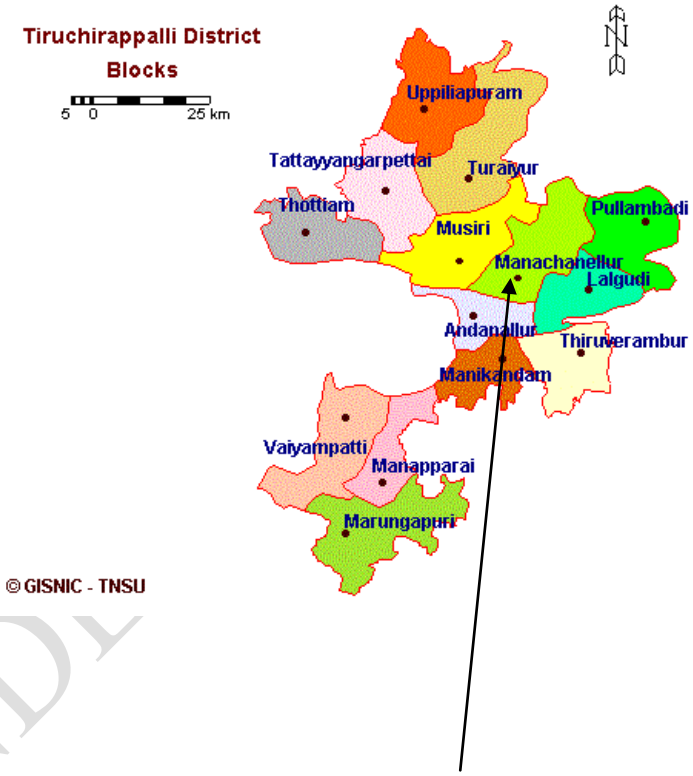
The purpose of these call centres is to respond to issues raised by farmers, instantly, in the local language. There are call centres for every state which are expected to handle traffic from any part of the country. Queries related to agriculture and allied sectors are being addressed through these call centres.The concept of Kisan Call Centers (KCCs) was a logical outcome of the commitment by the Government of India to leverage the ICT for overcoming the constraints of distance and time in providing new generation extension services to the farmers(Kavitha. S., and Anandaraja. N., 2017). The mission of KCCs is "To harness the state of art knowledge in the field of agriculture and allied areas and deliver the same to farmers through state of art technologies available for the dissemination of such knowledge to solve everyday grass-roots problems in farmer's own language and context."

The farmer may come across a number information sources but they pursue only few of them depending upon the availability and the ease of use.Countering the importance and facts in view the present study will cover the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Call Center and their attitude towards itsuse and also generate useful information on various constraints as perceived by the respondent in using Kisan Call Center and solutions suggested by the respondents. The study will also ascertain the relationship of knowledge and attitude of farmers with their socio-personal characteristics.

METHODOLOGY

Ex-post-facto research design was used in the present investigation. The present study was conducted in Manachanallur block of Tiruchirappalli district.The Manachanallur block consists of 36 villages where Alagiyamanavalam, Poonampalayam, Samayapuram, Manachanallur, Thiruvarangapatti, Ulunthukudi, Gopurapatti,Irungalur and Konali were randomly selected for the study purpose. In selected villages 90 farmers were chosen randomly. The data was collected using well- structured interview schedule and the collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.

Figure 1. Map showing the selected block for the study



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Profile of the respondents

According to table 1, 47.00 per cent of respondents were found in middle age group, majority (37.00%) were illiterate, 57.00 per cent were from large family, 40.00 per cent of the respondents had marginal land holdings, 40.00 per cent had farming as sole occupation.The findings are similar to the findings reported by Dubey et al., (2012). Half of the respondents earning annual income up to 1,00,000/- and nearly fifty per cent of the respondents were member in one organization mainly in co operative societies. The findings are similar to the findings reported by Ajotikar*et al*. (2010).

Table 1. Profile of the respondents **(n=90)**

S.No.	Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
1.	Age	Young (up to 30 years)	09	10.00
		Middle (31-50 years)	42	47.00
		Old (more than 50 years)	39	43.00
2.	Education	Illiterate	33	37.00
		Primary (1^{st}-7^{th})	27	30.00
		Secondary (8^{th} to 10^{th})	15	17.00
		Higher secondary (11^{th} to 12^{th})	12	13.00
		Graduate and above	3	3.00
3.	Family size	Small (up to 4 members)	42	43.00
		Large (above 4 members)	48	57.00
4.	Land Holding	Marginal (up to 1.00 ha)	36	40.00
		Small (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	30	33.00
		Medium (2.01 to 3.00 ha)	15	17.00

		Large (More than 3.00 ha)	9	10.00
5.	Occupation	Farming only	36	40.00
		Farming + Service	15	17.00
		Farming + Business	9	10.00
		Farming + Service + Business	30	33.00
6.	Annual Income	up to Rs. 1,00,000/-	45	50.00
		Rs. 1,00,001 to 2,00,000/-	36	37.00
		Above Rs. 2,00,000/-	9	13.00
7.	Social participation	No membership	21	23.00
		Membership in one organization	36	40.00
		Membership in more than one organization	33	37.00

2. Attitude of respondents towards the use of KCC

Table 2 shows that 47.00 per cent of the respondents were having moderate attitude towards the use of Kisan Call Center and was followed by 27.00 per cent had favorable attitude,10 per cent having strongly favorable attitude and 10.00 per cent of respondents having unfavorable and only 7.00 per cent having Strongly unfavorable attitude, respectively. Further, it concluded that majority of respondents (84.00 per cent) had moderate to strongly favorable attitude towards the use of Kisan Call Center.The findings are similar to the findings reported by Sharma *et al.*(2012), Verma *et al.* (2012), Arora and Rathore (2013).

Table 2. Attitude of respondents towards the use of KCC (n=90)

S.No.	Level of Attitude	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Strongly unfavorable	6	6.00
2.	Unfavorable	9	10.00
3.	Moderate	42	47.00
4.	Favorable	24	27.00
5.	Strongly Favorable	9	10.00
	Total	**90**	**100**

3. Knowledge level of respondents about KCC

Table 3 depicts that majority of the respondents (53.00%) had medium level of knowledge about the Kisan Call Center, while 27.00 and 20.00 per cent of respondents had high and low level of knowledge, respectively. Thus, it can be concluded that majority (80.00%) of the respondents had medium to high level knowledge about the Kisan Call Center. The probable reason might be due to fact that majority of the respondents gaining knowledge regarding farming practices using Kisan call center. The findings are similar to the findings reported by Tiwari and Upadhyay (2022),Rudroju and Angadi (2013).

Table 3. Knowledge level of respondents about KCC (n=90)

S.No.	Level of Knowledge	Frequency	Percent
1.	Low	18	20.00
2.	Medium	51	53.00
3.	High	21	27.00
	Total	**90**	**100**

4. Relationship between the profile of the respondents with their knowledge and attitude towards the use of KCC

Tabel 4 shows that out of 9 independent variables, occupation and extension agency contact were found to be positively significant at 1% level and the variables education and land holding were significant at 5% level with attitude of the respondents towards use of KCC whereas age shows negatively significant correlation with the attitude of respondents towards use of Kisan Call Center.The findings are partially similar to the finding reported by Sharnagat (2008), Goswami (2012), Lal (2012) and Sharma *et al.* (2012).

Table 4. Relationship between the profile of the respondents with their knowledge and attitude towards the use of KCC

S. No.	Independent Variables	Correlation Coefficient for Attitude (r value)	Correlation Coefficient for Knowledge (r value)
1.	Age (X_1)	-0.1631*	-0.3169*
2.	Education (X_2)	0.1698*	0.401**
3.	Family size (X_3)	-0.2696^{NS}	-0.2317^{NS}
4.	Occupation (X_4)	0.373**	-0.2667^{NS}
5.	Annual income (X_5)	0.027^{NS}	0.0913*
6.	Land Holding (X_6)	0.1108*	0.0464^{NS}
7.	Extension agency contact (X_7)	0.1849**	0.2358**
8.	Source of information (X_8)	-0.0289^{NS}	0.136*
9.	Social participation (X_9)	0.0487*	0.04^{NS}

**** Significant at 1% level, * Significant at 5% level, NS – Not significant**

Table 4 also shows that out of 9 independent variables, education and extension agency contact were found to be positively significant at 1% level and annual income and source of information were significant at 5% level with knowledge of the respondents towards use of KCC and only age had negatively significant correlation with the knowledge of respondents towards use of Kisan Call Center. The findings are partially similar to the findings reported by Dighe and Rajput (2010), Pillegowda*et al.* (2010).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings revealed that a majority of the surveyed farmers had a favorable attitude towards KCC and possessed a moderate to high level of knowledge about it. The study also established correlations between various socio-personal characteristics of the farmers and their attitudes and knowledge related to KCC. Notably, the occupation and extension agency contact positively influenced attitudes, while education and extension agency contact positively influenced knowledge. However, age had a negative correlation with attitudes, and age negatively correlated with knowledge. The study highlights the potential for KCC as a valuable resource for farmers, along with suggestions for improving its effectiveness, such as providing information in the local language and enhancing the use of technical terminology.

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