constraint analysis of RBK services at farmers level and VAA level in AnnamayyaDistrict of Andhra Pradesh

ABSTRACT

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for most of the population in India.But, the farmers encounter numerous issues while buying inputs, selling their products and determining market prices etc. There are limited testing facilities for agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers and pesticides in the state. All these lead to supply of low-quality inputs to farmers leading to huge losses. Availability of extension functionaries to farmers is very less.in 2020, the Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP) established Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) (Farmer Assurance Centres) in all the panchayat villages.RBKs are termed as one-stop shops that provide solutions to farmers from seed to sale.RBKs are termed as one-stop shops that provide solutions to farmers from seed to sale. Thus, the present study was conducted to study the constraint analysis of RBK services at farmers level and VAA level in Annamayya of Andhra Pradesh. A total of 60 farmers and 60 VAAs were purposively selected for the study. Ex-post-facto research design was followed. Data were collected with the help of interview schedule and the collected data were analyzed with the help of statistical measures like frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation.The results of the study revealed thatmajor constraints faced by the VAAs were Daily Updating of Digital APPs consuming more time (86.66%)followed by Lack of need based training to VAAs (81.66%) and the major constraints faced by the famers towards RBK services were Non availability of fertilizers on time (85.00 %) followed by Non-availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers (75.00%)

Keywords: *RBKs, constraints, VAAs, farmers*

Introduction

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for most of the population in India. Pre and post green revolution extension systems in India had played a commendable role in the dissemination of transfer of technologies (Anuhya et.al 2022). On the other hand, farmers encounter numerous issues while buying inputs, selling their products and determining market prices etc. There are limited testing facilities for agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers and pesticides in the state. All these lead to supply of low-quality inputs to farmers leading to huge losses (Anuhya et.al 2022). Availability of extension functionaries to farmers is very less. The present extension worker to farmer ratio is 1:1162. Andhra Pradesh is being an agrarian state. Government of Andhra Pradesh focusing more for the welfare of the farming community by providing hassle free services at village level (Reddy, 2020). As a result of that in 2020, the Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP) established Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) (Farmer Assurance Centres) in all the panchayat villages (10,778, covering 70 lakh farmers) of the state to address all the problems, except that of credit, of farmers at one place. RBKs are termed as

one-stop shops that provide solutions to farmers from seed to sale. The services of RBKs include soil testing and advisories, seed certification and supply, quality input supplies (chemical as well as organic) at fair prices; crop and climate advisories, e-crop registration, promotion of modern technologies and crop practices, supply of farm machinery, livestock and fishery services, and procurement of produce at the minimum support price (MSP). Most of the RBKs operate from their own buildings, though some of them also operate from village panchayat buildings.RBKs have found a place in the list of best practices compiled by the NITI Aayog in 2023.

These RBKs are monitored jointly by theDepartment of Agriculture, Horticulture, APSeeds, Sericulture, Fisheries, and Animalhusbandry. The newly formed RBKs have digital kiosks and apps to assist the farmers inbuying the Agri inputs like seeds, fertilizers,pesticides, livestock feeds, and veterinarymedicine and the staff will deliver the productat an accurate time for the market price. Thesuccess of RBKs depends upon the knowledgeof farmers on services provided through RBKs and the attitude of farmers toward thefunctioning of RBKs. In this context, it isnecessary to study the constraints faced by the farmers and Village Agriculture Assistants in delivering the services.

Methodology

Ex post-facto research design was used for the study. Ex-post facto research is a systematic empirical enquiry in which the scientists do not have control of influencing independent variables, because manifestation has already occurred. The Andhra Pradesh state was chosen as the locale of the study, since the researcher belongs to the state and was familiar with the local language and culture. The study was conducted in Annamayya district of Andhra Pradesh. A sample of 60 farmers and 60 Village Agriculture Assistants (VAA) were selected by following simple random sampling. A schedule was developed to measure the constraints. Appropriate statistical analysis was done with the help of various statistical measures like frequency, percentage.

Results and Discussion

The results regarding to constraints faced by the Village agriculture assistants in delivering the services were analysed and were presented in the Table 1

Table 1: Constraints faced by the VAAs

S.No	Constraints	Frequency	Percent	Rank
1.	Daily Updating of Digital APPs consuming more time	52	86.66	I
2.	Too much official work in addition to field work	38	63.33	IV
3.	Lack of need based training to VAAs	49	81.66	II
4.	Less number of diagnostic field visits	30	50.00	VI
5.	Less number of RBK staff	28	46.66	VII
6.	Lack of Educational or Work related tours	31	51.66	V
7.	Inability to maintain sufficient fertilizers, pesticides and other stocks as required by farmers	42	70.00	III
8.	Lack of awareness on recent and high yielding varieties	19	31.66	IX
9.	VAAs other than agri background are unable to diagnose the problem and provide suggestions to the farmers.	13	21.66	XI
10.	No clear instructions from the higher authorities leads to conflict in the work	24	40.00	VIII
11.	Lack of knowledgeand skillon online marketing/marketinginformation, weather information	15	25.00	X

It is evident from Table 1 that major constraints expressed by the VAAS were Daily Updating of Digital APPs consuming more time (86.66%, Rank I), Lack of need based training to VAAs (81.66%, Rank II), Inability to maintain sufficient fertilizers, pesticides and other stocks as required by farmers (70.00%, Rank III), Too much official work in addition to field work(63.33%, Rank IV), Lack of Educational or Work related tours (51.66%, Rank V)

Table 2:Suggestions given by VAAs

The responses on the suggestions as given by farmers for effective utilization of services rendered by RBK were furnished in Table 2

S.No	Suggestions	Frequency	Percent	Rank
1	Conduct exposure visits or study tours	39	65.00	III
2	More capacity building programmes should be conducted	43	71.66	II
3	Joint Diagnostic field visit of RBK staff with Scientists	29	48.33	V
4	Rewards / incentives should be provided	34	56.66	IV
5	Reducing work load	49	81.66	I

The major suggestions given by the VAAs were Reducing work load **(81.66%),** More capacity building programmes should be conducted(71.66%), Conduct exposure visits or study tours (65.00%), Rewards / incentives should be provided (56.66%), Joint Diagnostic field visit of RBK staff with Scientists(48.33%)

Table 3: Constraints faced by the farmers

S.No	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1.	Non availability of fertilizer on time	51	85.00	I
2	Non availability of organic inputs and IPM Kits	40	66.66	III
3	Lack of infrastructure facilities at RBK premises i.e., warehouses and cold storages	34	56.66	V
4	Non-functioning of Digital Kiosk for ordering Agri Inputs	22	36.66	VIII
5	Non-availability of veterinary services	32	53.33	VI
6	Dearth of timely sourcing of quality inputs and services	37	61.66	IV
7	Non-availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers	45	75.00	II
8	Weather forecasting and market information not available at RBK	27	45.00	VII
9	Delay in receiving the payment for the marketed Produce	17	28.33	IX

It is evident from Table 3 that major constraints expressed by the farmers were Non availability of fertilizer on time(85.00%, Rank I), Non-availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers (75.00%, Rank II), Non availability of organic inputs and IPM Kits (66.66%, Rank III), Dearth of timely sourcing of quality inputs and services (61.66%, Rank IV), Lack of infrastructure facilities at RBK premises i.e., warehouses and cold storages (56.66%, Rank V)

Table 4: **Suggestions given by farmers**

S.No	Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1	Timely supply of fertilizers	49	81.66	I
2	Provision of sufficient quantities of IPM kits to the farmers	39	65.00	III
3	Availability of veterinary services	26	43.33	V
4	On time disbursement of payment for the marketed produce	20	33.33	VI
5	Availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers	44	73.33	II

6	Weather forecasting and market information made available at RBK	17	28.33	VII
7	Storage facilities should be provided	34	56.66	IV

The major suggestions given by the farmers were Timely supply of fertilizers (81.66%), Availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers (73.33%), Provision of sufficient quantities of IPM kits to the farmers (65.00%), Storage facilities should be provided (56.66%), Availability of veterinary services (43.33%)

Conclusion:

Themajor constraints expressed by the VAAs and farmers wereDaily Updating of Digital APPs consuming more time, lack of need based trainingsand non availability of fertilizers and improved varieties of seed. Hence there is a need to reduce the workload of the VAAs so that they can perform their duties effectively. There is a need to provide fertilizers in time to the farmers.

References:

Anuhya, P., Kisku, U., Khare, N. K and Ramakrishna, M. 2022. A study on awareness, constraints and suggestions about Rythu Bharosa Kendra (RBK) services by the beneficiary farmers in Ananthapuram district of Andhra Pradesh. *Multilogic in Science*. Vol 12(43): 74-76.

Government of Andhra Pradesh. 2020. G.O No 37, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation-Establishment of RBKs in the state order issued. Retrieved from https://goir.ap.gov.in/

Rao, P. Venkata, S. Neelaveni, G., Chittibabu and Pradeepkumar, P.B. 2024. Perception and Utilization of Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) Services by the Farmers in Srikakulam District in Andhra Pradesh, India. *Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology*. 42 (5):187-191.

Reddy, D. A. 2020. RBKs Of Andhra Pradesh–One Stop Solution for The Needs of Farming Community. *VIGYAN VARTA*. 48(51): 22

Reddy, I., Venkatasubbaiah, P. Narasimha,R. Siva Prasad,P.N and Raja sekhar, N. 2023. Training Need Assessment and Knowledge of Village Agricultural Assistants of NTR District of Andhra Pradesh. *Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology.* 41 (8):242-50.

Saifuddin, Md., Ramadevy,M., Rao,M. S and Suseela, K. 2023. Effectiveness of Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) Services As Perceived by Farmers in the East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh, India. *Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology.* 41 (4):34-41