Challenges in Accessing Agricultural Technology Information Centre's Services: Identifying Key Constraints in Kanpur District

Keywords: Administrative, ATIC, Constraints, Evaluation, Infrastructure.

ABSTRACT

Aim: The current study aims to find out various constraints faced by the respondents in availing the services provided by ATIC and to suggest suitable measures to overcome the constraints.

Study Design: The study was carried out by descriptive type of survey method.

Place and Duration of Study: The present investigation was undertaken in Agricultural Technology Information Centre in Kanpur region of Uttar Pradesh, between June 2023 and July 2024.

Methodology: For the study, a sample of 300 ATIC beneficiaries was collected who visited the centre for various reasons.

Results: The infrastructure issue of "Insufficient facilities for farmers" was reported as being significant. Additionally, the extension problem of "Limited availability of free literature for farmers" and the administrative problem of "Delayed evaluation of training provided" were also identified as being of considerable concern.

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural Technology Information Centres (ATICs) play a pivotal role in the dissemination of agricultural innovations, knowledge, and technologies to farmers. Established under various national agricultural projects, ATICs aim to bridge the gap between research institutions and rural farming communities, enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability. These centres provide critical support through advisory services, training programs, and access to the latest technological advancements. Despite their significant contributions, ATICs face numerous constraints that hinder their effectiveness and accessibility. These constraints often include inadequate infrastructure, limited resources, and insufficient outreach capabilities. Farmers may encounter barriers such as lack of awareness, inadequate training, and difficulties in accessing timely and relevant information. Socioeconomic factors such as income disparities, educational limitations, and regional disparities

further exacerbate these challenges, impacting the overall efficiency of ATICs. Addressing these constraints is essential for improving the performance of ATICs and ensuring that they can fulfill their mandate effectively. By identifying and analyzing the key obstacles faced by both the centres and their users, targeted strategies can be developed to enhance service delivery and better support the agricultural community. This study aims to explore the various constraints experienced by Agricultural Technology Information Centres, focusing on their impact on service accessibility and effectiveness. Through a detailed analysis, the study seeks to offer insights and recommendations for overcoming these challenges, thereby improving the overall impact of ATICs on agricultural development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objectives of the study, a descriptive survey method was employed. Among the 44 Agricultural Technology Information Centres (ATICs) under the National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP), one centre was selected for the study: the ATIC at Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology in Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. The survey encompassed 300 randomly selected farmers who visited this ATIC. The analysis focused on several key variables, including age, gender, caste, education, family type, annual income, and the roles and opinions of respondents. Data collection was conducted through personal interviews, and the data were analyzed using percentage distributions, mean scores, weighted means, correlation coefficients, and regression analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Infrastructure Constraints faced by respondents in availing the services provided by ATIC.

n=300

S. No.	Constraints	Mean Value	Rank
1.	Lack of infrastructure facilities for farmers.	2.673	**I**
2.	Most of the time phone line is engaged due to a smaller number of telephones.	2.560	**II**
3.	Most of the time electricity facilities are not found.	2.023	**V**
4.	No drinking water and water use for toilet purpose.	2.123	**IV**
5.	No well-maintained cafeteria.	2.450	**III**

The result shown in the Table 1 gives the brief information regarding the infrastructure constraints faced by respondents in availing the services provided by ATIC.

According to the table, majority of respondents felt that there was lack of infrastructure facilities for farmers due to which they found that it hinders their ability to make informed decisions and optimize their farming practices. The constraint was observed as the most crucial one with the mean score of 2.673.

Majority of respondents expressed that most of the time phone line is engaged due to a smaller number of telephones. Therefore, this was also reported as one of the major constraints and ranked second with the mean score of 2.560.

The third major constraint, as expressed by the respondents was that there was no well-maintained cafeteria. As the respondents come from different villages which are far from the centre they wanted to have a well-developed cafeteria for proper fooding. The mean score was computed as 2.450 stating the fact that there is a need of well-developed cafeteria.

Other major constraints, in rank order include, 'No drinking water and water use for toilet purpose' and 'Most of the time electricity facilities are not found' with the mean score 2.123 and 2.023 respectively.

Table 2: Extension Constraints faced by respondents in availing the services provided by ATIC.

n=300

S. No.	Constraints	Mean Value	Rank
1.	Lack of free of cost literature provided to farmers.	2.553	**I**
2.	Transportation facilities are not provided to the farmers by ATIC for attaining training.	2.333	**II**
3.	Contact time between scientists and farmers is not always matched.	1.943	**V**
4.	Lack of awareness programs regarding innovations.	2.160	**IV**
5.	Lack of audio – visual aids in training programs.	2.283	**III**

The result shown in the Table 2 gives the brief information regarding the extension constraints faced by respondents in availing the services provided by ATIC.

According to the table, majority of respondents felt that there was Lack of free of cost literature provided to farmers. It is a big constraint for them as without free literature, they have to rely on outdated or traditional methods missing out on advancement which can lead to increase in their efficacy. The constraint was observed as the most crucial one with the mean score of 2.553.

Majority of respondents expressed that Transportation facilities are not provided to the farmers by ATIC for attaining training due to which many farmers are not able to attend the trainings, seminars, workshops etc on time as they lack in having proper transportation facilities. Therefore, this was also reported as one of the major constraints and ranked second with the mean score of 2.333.

The third major constraint, as expressed by the respondents was that there was lack of audio – visual aids in training programs. The reason for this constraint was that the absence of audio-visual aids led to stagnation in their development. The mean score for the constraint was computed as 2.283.

Other major constraints, in rank order include, 'Lack of awareness programs regarding innovations' and 'Contact time between scientists and farmers is not always matched' with the mean score 2.160 and 1.943 respectively.

These findings were similar to the findings of *Swati U. J. (2019).*

Table 3: Administrative Constraints faced by respondents in availing the services provided by ATIC.

n=300

S. No.	Constraints	Mean Value	Rank
1.	Lack of timely evaluation of training provided.	2.443	**I**
2.	Lack of scientist's visit.	2.010	**V**
3.	Farmers opinions are not listened properly by ATIC scientists.	2.140	**IV**
4.	Less number of trainings organized.	2.170	**II**
5.	Lack of coordination in officials.	2.167	**III**

The result shown in the Table 3 gives the brief information regarding the administrative constraints faced by respondents in availing the services provided by ATIC.

As per the table, majority of respondents felt that there was Lack of timely evaluation of training provided because without timely evaluation, it is challenging to assess the impact and effectiveness of training sessions. The constraint was observed as the most crucial one with the mean score of 2.443.

Majority of respondents expressed that there was less number of trainings organized as according to them lesser number of training means lesser number of opportunities to them. Therefore, this was also reported as one of the major constraints and ranked second with the mean score of 2.170.

The third major constraint, as expressed by the respondents was that there was Lack of coordination in officials as it may lead to fragmented delivery of service to farmers. The mean score for the constraint was computed as 2.167.

Other major constraints, in rank order include, 'Farmers opinions are not listened properly by ATIC scientists' and 'Lack of scientist's visit' with the mean score 2.140 and 2.010 respectively.

Suggestions

1. Adequate budget should be provided timely.
2. A full-time staff is required to run ATIC effectively.
3. 24 × 7, telephone facilities must be provided to resolve queries of the farmers.
4. There should be a presence of properly running mobile app for availing basic information at the earliest by the farmers.
5. There should be provision of 'ATIC DAY' on which farmers are called to the ATIC.
6. There should be a provision for annual prizes to motivate the farmer for visiting ATIC and use technology provided.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the research states that majority of respondents felt that there was lack of infrastructure facilities for farmers which was their main infrastructure constraint whereas lack of free of cost literature provided to farmers was a major extension constraint for them. Lack of timely evaluation of training provided to them was a major administrative constraint for the respondents. Findings also stated that respondents wanted that an adequate budget should be provided timely to them and a full-time staff for running the ATIC effectively in their suggestions. They also suggested that the top-level officials should take part in motivating both farmers and scientists.

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