

Identified Constraints and Suggestions given by Beneficiary Respondents for Effective Implementation of Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI) Programme in Rajasthan

ABSTRACT: National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) has designed a one year diploma programme titled “Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers” (DAESI) for converting the input dealers as para-extension professional. This program was launched in the year 2003 on pilot basis on self- financing mode. State Institute of Agriculture Management (SIAM) is designated as state level implementing institute in Rajasthan. DAESI diploma holders and non DAESI input dealers in Jaipur and Kota district of Rajasthan were studied as respondents. A list of thirteen constraints were submitted before the beneficiary respondents and their responses were recorded. They might have faced problem in different fields like the course should be open for all input dealers, less number of field visit and classroom session are lengthy etc. They suggested that “DAESI programme should be compulsory for all input dealers”. After that majority of them suggested that “Contact numbers and email ids of the resource person should be provided to the DAESI dealers for future interaction and clarification of doubts” and “The DAESI programme should be continued”.

Key words: *Constraints, DAESI, Input dealers*

1. INTRODUCTION:

India accounts for only about 2.4% of the world's geographical area and 4% of its water resources, but has to support about 17% of the world's human population and 15% of the livestock (Anonymous, 2019-2020). Being the largest component of India's economy, agriculture is of utmost importance for the vast number of people. Agriculture sector employs 50% of the total workforce and share of agriculture and allied sectors (including agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishery sub sectors) in terms of percentage of Gross Domestic Product was 20.2% during 2020-21 at current prices. (MoA&FW, 2020-21). Several factors have played a role in the development of agriculture in the country but the agri-input dealers playing tremendous role in reaching the farmers by performing dual role of providing agri-inputs as well as technological back up to the farmers

informally. The agri input dealers are the major sources of supply of farm inputs to the farmers. These dealers mostly supply seeds, fertilizers and pesticides to the farmers. So, to transform agri input dealers into para-extension professionals and enable them to address the day to day problems and issues faced by the farmers at field level MANAGE designed this one year diploma named as Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The present study was conducted in agro-climatic zone IIIa (Semi Arid Eastern Plain) and V (Humid South Eastern Plain) of Rajasthan because these two zones have highest number of registered agri input dealers under DAESI programme among the all ten agro climatic zones. Out of these two agro-climatic zones, one district from each agro-climatic zone i.e. Jaipur from zone IIIa and Kota from zone V was purposely selected for present investigation based on highest number of registered agri input dealers under DAESI programme. From both the selected districts, total 160 beneficiaries (80 beneficiaries from each district separately) were selected. The data were collected through structured schedule; thereafter these data were analysed, tabulated and interpreted. The mean per cent score and ranks were used to interpret the data.

Mean percent score (MPS):

It was calculated by multiplying total obtained score of the respondents by 100 and divided by the maximum obtainable score.

$$\text{Mean percent score} = \frac{\text{Total score obtained}}{\text{Maximum obtainable score}} \times 100$$

Rank:

Ranks were accorded on the basis of the mean percent score obtained. This was used to find out the constraints severity and suggestions in order of priority.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

3.1 Constraints faced by beneficiary respondents during DAESI programme

A list of thirteen constraints were submitted before the beneficiary respondents and their responses were recorded. They might have faced problem in different fields like the course should be

open for all input dealers, less number of field visit and classroom session are lengthy etc. Data related to these constraints were given in table.1.

An insight look at data revealed constraint that highest number of beneficiaries felt with rank 1st (48.75 MPS) “The course should be open for all input dealers rather than restricting only for the dealers who have passed 10th standard examination”, followed by “Less number of field visits is organized to different institutions and agro industries” with rank 2nd (48.13 MPS) and “Classroom theory sessions are very lengthy” with 3rd rank (42.50 MPS). After that the constraints felt by respondents were “It is difficult for an input dealer to pay Rs. 10,000/- as course fee” rank 4th, “The duration for the diploma course of 48 weeks is very lengthy” rank 5th and “Classes on sundays and market holidays affect your business” rank 6th with 40.00, 38.13 and 35.00 MPS respectively.

Table 1 Constraints related to implementation of DAESI programme perceived by the beneficiary respondents

S. No.	Statements	Beneficiaries (n=160)	
		MPS	Rank
1.	It is difficult for an input dealer to pay Rs. 10,000/- as course fee.	40.00	IV
2.	The course should be open for all input dealers rather than restricting only for the dealers who have passed 10 th standard examination.	48.75	I
3.	Classes on Sundays and market holidays affect your business.	35.00	VI
4.	The duration for the diploma course of 48 weeks is very lengthy	38.13	V
5.	The course curriculum does not cover all necessary chapters required for input dealers	31.25	VIII
6.	Classroom theory sessions are very lengthy.	42.50	III
7.	Less number of skill oriented practical classes in DAESI programme are conducted.	30.63	IX
8.	Less number of field visits is organized to different institutions and agro industries.	48.13	II
9.	Resource persons who deliver lectures in classroom are not competent with their respective subjects.	06.25	XIII
10.	The resource persons don't use local language in classroom.	33.13	VII
11.	There is no mechanism of contacts with resource persons after the diploma programme.	30.63	X
12.	The distance is far away from home to training institute which create difficulty.	21.88	XI
13.	There is no accommodation facility in the training institute.	18.13	XII

MPS = Mean Percent Score

The constraints like “Resource persons who deliver lectures in classroom are not competent with their respective subjects”, “There is no accommodation facility in the training institute” and “The distance is far away from home to training institute which create difficulty” felt less by the beneficiaries with rank 13th, 12th, and 11th (06.25, 18.13 and 21.88 MPS) respectively. Though we got a number of constraints, but it is possible to get over of it if the Government and the specialists will involve more to make this programme a huge success with a more right kind of planning and execution and work on the suggestions which were given by the beneficiaries for effective implementation and to make this programme attractive to input dealers.

3.2 Suggestion given by beneficiary respondents to overcome the constraints and to improve the effectiveness of DAESI programme

The beneficiary respondents were provided twelve major suggestions to overcome the constraints. They were also asked, to give some more suggestion other than these twelve. The responses on suggestions are presented in table 2.

All the beneficiaries with 100.00 MPS were suggested that “DAESI programme should be compulsory for all input dealers”. After that majority of them suggested that “Contact numbers and email Ids of the resource person should be provided to the DAESI dealers for future interaction and clarification of doubts”, “The DAESI programme should be continued”, “The course curriculum should include latest agricultural technology including ICT tools and mobile applications” and “Some extra benefits should be provided by government to DAESI dealers for expanding business” with 99.37, 98.75, 97.50 and 95.00 MPS respectively.

They were also suggested that “Group discussion should be organised after completion of every chapter/component of the curriculum”, “To and fro transportation charges up to the training center should be provided to the input dealers during the diploma programme” and “Theory and practical sessions should be allotted equal time” with 94.38, 88.13 and 66.25 MPS, respectively. Besides above twelve, they were also asked to give some more suggestions other than these twelve suggestions and then 27 respondents (16.87%) out of 160 beneficiaries suggested that “They should provide updated printed material every year related to region specific package of practices of crops, pest and disease control chemicals etc. by the state implementing agency of DAESI programme (i.e. SAMITI) or state agriculture department”. Some of them also suggested to conduct the classes at field

level and more field visits for good exposure, more emphasis should be given on skill oriented sessions by displaying the specimens, models, charts etc. related to nutrient deficiency, insects damage, disease symptoms etc. Few of them suggested to conduct training as per the suitability of dealers, the duration of training should be restricted up to 15 to 30 days only, their input selling license should be timely renewed, the resource person should be invited from reputed pesticides industries, seed production & certification agencies and agriculture implements manufacturing industries etc. and the exposure visits of reputed pesticides industries, seed production & certification agencies and agriculture implements manufacturing industries etc. be conducted. A few of them also suggested to make loan process easy to DAESI dealers. So that they can easily expand their business.

Table 2 Suggestions for improving the effectiveness of DAESI programme given by the beneficiary respondents

S. No.	Statements	Beneficiaries (n=160)	
		MPS	Rank
1.	Diploma fee should be completely exempted.	49.38	XI
2.	Duration of DAESI programme should be minimized to 6 months.	46.88	XII
3.	DAESI programme should be compulsory for all input dealers.	100.00	I
4.	Theory and practical sessions should be allotted equal time.	66.25	VIII
5.	Number of field visits should be increased.	60.00	X
6.	The course curriculum should include latest agricultural technology including ICT tools and mobile applications.	97.50	IV
7.	Refresher training should be organised for diploma holder input dealers in one year interval.	66.25	IX
8.	The DAESI programme should be continued.	98.75	III
9.	Group discussion should be organised after completion of every chapter/component of the curriculum.	94.38	VI
10.	Some extra benefits should be provided by government to DAESI dealers for expanding business.	95.00	V
11.	To and fro transportation charges up to the training center should be provided to the input dealers during the diploma programme.	88.13	VII
12.	Contact numbers and email ids of the resource person should be provided to the DAESI dealers for future interaction and clarification of doubts.	99.37	II

MPS = Mean Percent Score

From the above findings it is suggested that there is a lot of scope to inculcate these suggestions to overcome the constraints felt by the respondents and to make the DAESI programme attractive for input dealers. So, they can provide better extension services to the farming community.

4. CONCLUSIONS:

Due to the shortage of manpower as well as funds of the public extension service, the only way out is providing and supplementing service through private extension system. Through DAESI programme much more could be achieved if we try to address the problems faced at implementation as well as post implementation part. DAESI programme is a very creative and innovative step to help the input dealers in getting and delivering the right knowledge and information regarding agri inputs to the farmers. Hence, this programme should be continued for the development of farmers as well as input dealers.

COMPETING INTERESTS DISCLAIMER:

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist. The products used for this research are commonly and predominantly use products in our area of research and country. There is absolutely no conflict of interest between the authors and producers of the products because we do not intend to use these products as an avenue for any litigation but for the advancement of knowledge. Also, the research was not funded by the producing company rather it was funded by personal efforts of the authors.

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