



ISSN (E): 2277- 7695
ISSN (P): 2349-8242
NAAS Rating: 5.03
TPI 2019; 8(12): 468-472
© 2019 TPI
www.thepharmajournal.com
Received: 26-10-2019
Accepted: 29-11-2019

Darsana S
Ph. D Student, Department of
Agricultural Extension, UAS,
GKVK, Bengaluru, Karnataka,
India

SV Suresha
Professor and Coordinator,
Bakery Training Unit, UAS,
Hebbal, Bengaluru, Karnataka,
India

Constraints and suggestions to re-orient the existing development programmes for the welfare of farmers in Kerala

Darsana S and SV Suresha

Abstract

The agricultural scenario in Kerala is somewhat unique and distinct from many other states in India in terms of land utilization pattern and the cropping pattern. The state which had been highly acclaimed for its high social and economic indicators, witnessed a significant decline in agricultural production in the last few decades. The constraints that are experienced and expressed by the farmers and suggestions to re-orient the existing programmes will be of immense help for policy makers to plan the future programmes most effectively in achieving the welfare of the farmers. The present research paper was focused to elucidate constraints and suggestions of beneficiaries on development programmes implemented by the State of Kerala for the welfare of the farming community. The study was conducted during 2017-18 in the state of Kerala, India. Palakkad district of the state was purposively identified. Thirty each in seven combinations formed a total of 210 respondents. All the respondents availed the benefits of one or more development programmes. Garrett's ranking technique was used to rank the factors of constraints. Beneficiaries of development programmes ranked the six factors of constraints viz., financial constraints (61.86), input constraints (58.23) and management constraints (54.55), one to six, respectively. Farmers considered the financial constraints as the most important in the development of programmes. It's quite obvious that finance plays a major role in making farming profitable and hence, the financial institutions need to be strengthened and made farmers friendly and also to make the procedure borrowers friendly for advancing loans.

Keywords: constraints, suggestions, beneficiaries, developmental programmes

Introduction

Indian farmers face multitude of problems as fragmented land holdings, middle men exploitation, gamble of monsoon, cycle of indebtedness, climate change, agrarian distress and lethargic government policies. In spite of these challenges, society demand farmers to assure food and nutrition of 1.32 billion people. Given the importance to the agriculture sector, the Government of India has focused on offering schemes and incentives to various stakeholders. Agricultural development programmes provide financial and technical assistance to farmers by means of increasing investment, improving farm practices, rural farm infrastructure, delivery of credit, technology and other supporting inputs.

The agricultural scenario in Kerala is somewhat unique and distinct from many other states in India in terms of land utilization pattern and the cropping pattern. Agriculture in state is mostly performed by small farmers and practices homestead or mixed farming. The state which had been highly acclaimed for its high social and economic indicators, witnessed a significant decline in agricultural production in the last few decades. Kerala state planning board accounted that the share of agriculture and allied sectors in total Gross State Value Added (GSVA) of the State has declined from 13.70 per cent in 2012-13 to 10.50 per cent in 2016-17 (Anonymous, 2018) [3]. The situation assessment survey of agricultural households conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation in rural India showed, Kerala as having only 23.70 per cent of agricultural households, which is the least in India, while at the national level it was 53.80 per cent in the year 2013 (Anonymous, 2014) [2]. Even though, improved educational opportunities and overseas migration prospects adversely affected the agriculture, the agrarian distress that originated towards the late-1990s had also a major impact on the people to shift priorities. The resultant structural transformation had its foremost implication in the form of dependence of the state for food on the neighbour producing centres.

It's the call for the state to arrest the situation and must bring agriculture back on agenda. Government efforts should not only foster the production and productivity, but also should

Corresponding Author:
Darsana S
Ph. D Student, Department of
Agricultural Extension, UAS,
GKVK, Bengaluru, Karnataka,
India

retain a competitive and enthusiastic community in farming for future generation too. Keeping all these in view, the present research paper was focused on to elucidate the constraints and suggestions to re-orient the existing development programmes for the welfare of farmers

Scope

The constraints that are experienced and expressed by the farmers and suggestions to re-orient the existing programmes will be of immense help for policy makers to plan the future programmes most effectively in achieving the welfare of the farmers. These findings will be useful in formulating appropriate strategies for implementing innovative programmes for improved welfare of the farming community. This study would help the policy makers, Government and Non-Governmental Organisations involved in development and research activities to bring out necessary changes in welfare of farming community through various developmental programmes.

Methodology

The present research paper was focused to elucidate constraints and suggestions of beneficiaries on development programmes implemented by the State of Kerala for the welfare of the farming community. The study was conducted during 2017-18 in the state of Kerala, India. Palakkad district of the state was purposively identified as the locale, as the district is agriculturally active in the state and ranks first in the total cropped area and total food crops area. The simulated research design with randomisation was used as the research design. It focused on to evaluate the beneficiary responses to the constraints and suggestions on development programmes.

Sample and sampling procedure

Selection of blocks

Palakkad district comprises thirteen blocks. Among that Chittur and Kuzhalmannam blocks were selected based on the ratio of cultivator population to total population.

Selection of respondents

As most of the farmers in Kerala used to grow rice, coconut and vegetables in combinations, selection of a large number of respondents specifically from mono-cropping of the selected crops would be the challenging factor for the study. Thus the respondent selection considered farmers with the single crop, two crops and three crops combinations with rice, coconut and vegetables.

For the present study respondents under seven combinations were identified viz., rice farming, coconut farming, vegetable farming, rice-coconut combination, rice-vegetables combination, coconut-vegetables combination and rice-coconut-vegetables combinations. Simple random sampling was used for respondent selection. Thirty each in seven combinations formed a total of 210 respondents. All the respondents availed the benefits of one or more development programmes. Thus the 210 respondents could be renamed as beneficiaries of development programmes. The beneficiary in the study was operationally defined as those who avail the financial and technical benefits of the selected development programmes for rice, vegetable and coconut farming.

Data processing and analysis

The collected data was entered into the MS-Excel master sheets. The data was scored, compiled, tabulated and

subjected to appropriate statistical tools to draw meaningful results and logical conclusion. Both parametric and non-parametric statistical tools were used for analysis. Statistical tools included mean, frequency, percentage, standard deviation and Garrett ranking method. The statistical analysis was done with the help of computer software, specifically MS-Excel Spread Sheet and SPSS version 20. Constraint in the study was operationalized as the factors that restrict the beneficiaries to achieve the objectives of development programmes at its fullest potential. Pilot survey was carried out to list the problems covering financial constraints, input constraints, management constraints, social constraints, technical constraints and social constraints. The factors were thoroughly analysed and edited after discussion with experts in department of agriculture. This was included in the interview schedule for data collection. Garrett's ranking technique was used to rank the factors of constraints. This technique provides the facility to ascertain numerical scores to constraints. This would be an advantage to arrange the constraints based on respondents priority. Ranks were converted to per cent using Garrett's formula.

$$\text{Percent position} = \frac{100 (R_{ij} - 0.50)}{N_j}$$

Where, R is the rank given for ith item by jth individual and N is the number of items ranked by jth individual. The percent position of each rank was converted into scores referring to table given by Garrett and Woodworth (1969) [5]. For each factor of constraint, the scores of individuals were added together and divided by the total number of the respondents. Thus, the mean scores for all the factors were ranked by arranging in descending order, rank were assigned and most important factor of constraint were identified. Different problems under the each factor were recorded and statements were prepared and included in the interview schedule based on preliminary survey, literature reviews and expert discussions. Beneficiaries considering the particular statement as a constraint were given the score of one.

Suggestions are the ideas put forward by the beneficiaries to overcome the constraints and to improve the development programmes for higher levels of welfare. The Suggestions were asked to beneficiaries in open-ended questionnaire. The beneficiaries were asked to give the most important two to three suggestions for each factors of constraints to improve the existing development programmes. All the suggestions were pooled and discussed based on frequency analysis.

Results and Discussion

Constraints encountered by beneficiaries from existing development programmes

The result of constraint analysis has been reported in the tabular form (Table 1). Factors were ranked with respect to its mean score. (Table 2 and Fig.1)

It is clear from the Table that beneficiaries considered financial constraints as the important among the six perceived factors. The factor received the first rank with mean score of 61.86. It was followed by input constraints (58.23), management constraints (54.55), personal constraints (47.98), technical constraints (44.00) and the last rank was assigned to social constraints (39.26).

Specific constraints under each factor with its frequency and percentage were also tabulated (Table 3). Under financial constraints, majority (84.76 %) of beneficiaries expressed the

difficulties due to untimely fund allocation. Problem was found to be more among farmers cultivating rice in the study area. Rice procurement price from Civil Supply Corporation found to delay for a period of three to six months. Similarly Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council of Kerala (VFPCCK)

also delayed the fund for vegetable farmers. Nearly one-third (31.90 %) agreed on the use of financial assistance for other non-farm purposes. Lack of monitoring of fund usage by the officials might be the reason for the misuse.

Table 1: Constraints faced by farmer beneficiaries of development programmes- Factor ranking (n=210)

Factor	Rank	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Total	Total Score	Mean Score
	Scale value	77	63	54	46	37	23			
Technical constraint	F	24	20	14	44	62	46	210	9240	44.00
	Fx	1848	1260	756	2024	2294	1058			
Social constraint	F	14	10	10	47	62	67	210	8245	39.26
	Fx	1078	630	540	2162	2294	1541			
Management constraint	F	50	44	23	51	20	22	210	11456	54.55
	Fx	3850	2772	1242	2346	740	506			
Personnel constraint	F	22	30	52	42	20	44	210	10076	47.98
	Fx	1694	1890	2808	1932	740	1012			
Input constraint	F	32	88	50	17	15	8	210	12229	58.23
	Fx	2464	5544	2700	782	555	184			
Financial constraint	F	78	44	40	30	12	10	210	12992	61.86
	Fx	6006	2772	2160	1380	444	230			
	Sum F	210	210	210	210	210	210			

Table 2: Final ranking of the factors of constraints (n=210)

Sl. No	Constraint	Mean Score	Rank
1	Financial constraints	61.86	I
2	Input constraints	58.23	II
3	Management constraints	54.55	III
4	Personal constraints	47.98	IV
5	Technical constraints	44.00	V
6	Social constraints	39.26	VI

Table 3: Constraints encountered by beneficiaries under each factors (n=210)

Sl. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Financial constraints		
a.	Limited fund allocation to gramapanchayath	91	43.33
b.	No financial support to meet personal necessities of farmer other than the farm	155	73.81
c.	Delay in fund allocation	178	84.76
d.	Inadequacy in subsidy component	137	65.23
e.	Difficult to collect and keep all the bills to get the subsidy	131	62.38
f.	Misuse of money for non-farming purposes	67	31.90
2.	Input constraints		
a.	Quantity of inputs are limited as per programme norms	167	79.52
b.	No timely supply of inputs	105	50.00
c.	All farming inputs are not covered	101	48.09
d.	Poor quality of inputs are provided	78	37.14
3.	Management constraints		
a.	Limited number of beneficiaries are selected for each programme	112	53.33
b.	Financial support under most of the programme are based on land area, so farmer with land may not cultivate but avail the programme benefit	145	69.04
c.	Development programmes are not informed to all farmers	78	37.14
d.	Too many programmes by too many development agencies	161	79.67
e.	Inadequate number of extension persons in the development agency	145	69.04
f.	No proper field visits are conducted by extension persons	141	67.14
	Some programmes are retained only for small period	121	57.61
4.	Personal constraint		
a.	Lack of interest towards programmes	38	18.09
b.	Need to spend time and money to get the benefits	113	53.80
c.	Lack of resources to practice the innovative technologies	110	50.00
d.	Lack of skill to practice the new technologies	95	45.23
e.	Due to health issues and other personal problems, difficult to take part in programmes actively	60	28.57
5.	Technical constraint		
a.	Lack of technical guidance	40	19.04
b.	Poor knowhow of staff on farming practices and schemes	78	37.14
6.	Social constraint		
a.	Political interference in beneficiary selection	91	43.33
b.	More benefits are provided to more active participants	98	46.66

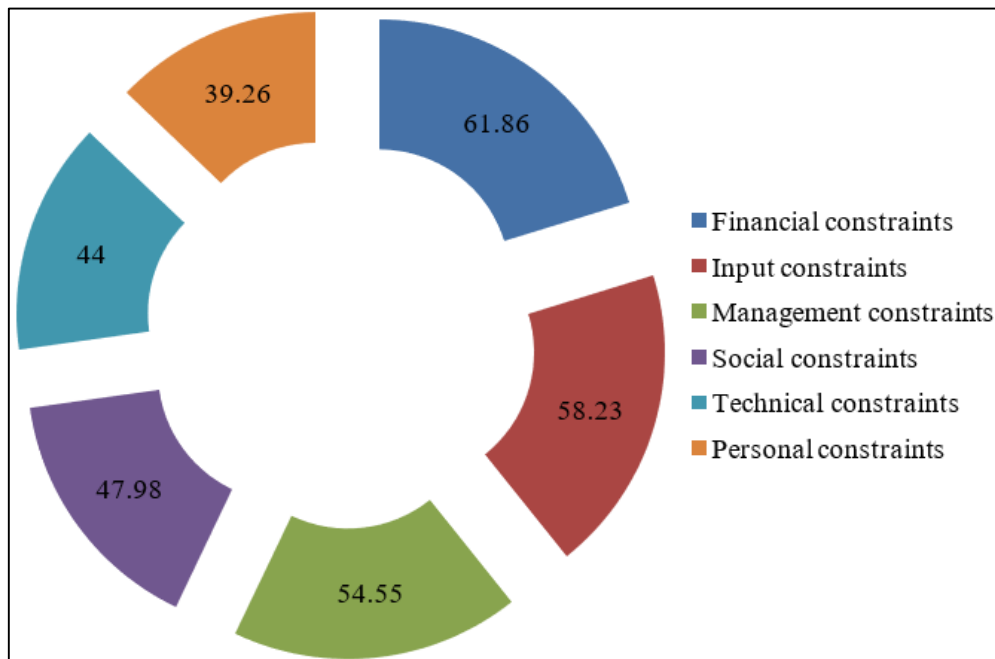


Fig 1: Mean score of different factors of constraints encountered by the beneficiaries

About 79.52 per cent of the respondents expressed the limited quantity supplied as per programme norms and half (50.00 %) pointed the untimely input supply as the major constraints under input factor. Respondents shared the difficulties caused due to untimely seed supply for rice which impacted on late sowing and yield reduction during the first crop season. Coconut and vegetable growers emphasized the lack of schemes for labourer availability, irrigation facilities and high tech farming practices.

The factor management constraint assessed that more than three- fourth (79.67 %) were facing the difficulty with large number of programmes conducted by different development agencies. Farmers were not having the clear picture on all the programmes conducted by the different agencies. Due to the shortage of extension staffs (69.04 %) in the development agencies, beneficiaries got limited field visits and monitoring of new practices. More than two-third (69.04 %) beneficiaries explained that, as financial support was given based on the land area, many of the farmers received the benefits but they were not keeping the land under cultivation. This would be an after effect of inadequate extension functionaries which further led improper field assessments before selecting the beneficiary.

Personal constraints were ranked fourth by the beneficiaries. More than half (53.80 %) of the respondents conceived development programme as time and money needed activity. This could be checked with the higher mean score (3.50) of the negative perception statement 'availing a programme benefit is a time consuming activity'. Half (50.00 %) of them experienced poor resource availability to practice innovative technologies. About 45.23 per cent expressed on poor skills to practice new technologies. Effective participation in programmes was challenging due to health issues and other personal problems for nearly one-third (28.57 %) of the respondents.

In the factor technical constraints 37.14 per cent expressed on poor knowhow of staff on farming practices and recent schemes and 19.04 per cent expressed on poor technical guidance from the staff. Mostly farmers observed the poor knowhow for newly recruited staff due to improper job

trainings.

The factor, social constraints was ranked as last by the beneficiaries. Nearly half (46.66 %) of the beneficiaries expressed that benefits were concentrated for more active participants and 43.33 per cent found political interference in beneficiary selection. Almost all the rice programmes were conducted under the groups called *padasekhara samithi*. Farmers experienced the political interventions and concentration of scheme benefits at the hands of secretary and president of in these groups in some cases. Similarly beneficiaries of vegetables schemes under local administration also expressed dishonesty of officials in incentive distributions.

Constraints of individual development programmes were analysed by different authors. The similar research findings were reported by Kumar (2004)^[6], Sayooj (2012)^[8], Smitha and Anilkumar and Aparna and Allan (2017)^[14].

Suggestions expressed by beneficiaries to reorient the development programmes

Suggestions are the ideas put forward by the beneficiaries to overcome the constraints and thus to improve the development programmes for higher levels of welfare. Farmers were asked to express their suggestions on each factor of constraints. Open ended questionnaire was used for data collections. All the beneficiaries didn't give suggestions for all the constraint factors. Higher frequency of suggestions was recorded for input constraints. About 81.42 per cent of respondents gave one or more suggestions to overcome management constraint (Table 4). Least frequency of suggestions was noted in social constraints (46.66 %). Further, frequency analysis was carried out for the suggestions under each factor of constraints (Table 5). Percentage of each suggestion was calculated considering the frequency of particular suggestion to the total number of respondents replied for that factor. The results are discussed in the following sessions.

Beneficiaries gave four major suggestions to overcome the financial constraints. Among these 'increase the quantum of fund allocation for rice, coconut and vegetable farming' found

to be most important (89.51 %). In case of input constraints, beneficiaries' major suggestion was to ensure the availability of all inputs at cooperative societies (75.75 %).

Table 4: Frequency of suggestions given by the respondents (n=210)

Sl. No.	Suggestion	Frequency	Percentage
1	Suggestions to overcome financial constraints	124	59.04
2	Suggestions to overcome input constraints	147	70.00
3	Suggestions to overcome management constraints	171	81.42
4	Suggestions to overcome personal constraints	98	46.67
5	Suggestions to overcome technical constraints	120	57.14
6	Suggestions to overcome social constraints	95	46.66

Table 5: Suggestions given by respondents to overcome the perceived constraints (n=210)

Sl. No.	Suggestion	Frequency	Percentage
1	Suggestions to overcome financial constraints		
a.	Increase the quantum of fund allocation for rice, coconut and vegetable farming	111	89.51
b.	Field survey by extension person to ensure adequate use of monetary support	84	67.74
c.	Preplanning of programmes for the next year	68	54.83
d.	Implementation of social welfare programmes specifically to farmers	58	46.77
2	Suggestions to overcome input constraints		
a.	Inputs are to be available at cooperative societies throughout the year	111	75.75
b.	Production based subsidies for farming inputs	106	71.96
c.	Labour banks to be established at panchayath levels	84	57.57
d.	Inputs on credit basis- payment after the harvest and sale of produce	71	48.48
3	Suggestions to overcome management constraints		
a.	Linking of crop based programmes of different development agencies	157	91.81
b.	Additional support to farm household without non- farm income sources	113	65.90
d.	Recruitment of more extension staffs in development agencies	78	45.54
4	Suggestions to overcome personal constraints	89	91.02
a.	Specific programme to cover health insurance of the farmer		
b.	Group farming approaches to overcome resource constraints	75	76.92
c.	Involvement of farmers in developing the programmes	69	70.51
5	Suggestions to overcome technical constraints		
a.	Periodic training to extension staff	70	58.18
b.	Trainings at the place convenient to the farmers	52	43.63
6	Suggestions to overcome social constraints		
a	Committee with farmer members at Panchayath level for beneficiary selection	95	100.00

'Link the programmes of different development agencies and form single set of programmes on crop basis' (91.81 %) was the major suggestion given by maximum number of responded beneficiaries for management constraint. Need of specific programmes to cover health insurance of the farmer (91.02 %) was suggested to overcome personal constraint. Periodic training to extension staff (58.18 %) was suggested for technical constraint. All the respondents suggested for the formation of committee on crop basis at Panchayath level by including authority and farmers for the selection of programme beneficiaries. All the suggestions to improve the development programme could re-orient the financial, farm, physical, social, human and natural resource dimensions of welfare.

Suggestions given by individual farmers on constraints of development programmes were reported by different authors. The similar research findings were stated by Kumar (2004) [6], Anonymous (2008) [1], Sayooj (2012) [8] and Meena and Singh (2013) [7].

Conclusion

Farmers considered the financial constraints as the most important in the development of programmes. It's quite obvious that finance plays a major role in making farming profitable and hence, the financial institutions need to be strengthened and made farmers friendly and also to make the procedure borrowers friendly for advancing loans. It would able to cover farm and household needs of the farmers. The convergence of various line departments and their activities to be linked together to develop programmes as crop packages and single window delivery of services would be effective for ease of doing farming.

Reference

1. Anonymous. Improving the economic condition of farmers, Working paper id: 1475, Govt. Karnataka, 2008.
2. Anonymous. State of Indian farmer: a report. Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi, 2014.
3. Anonymous. Economic review 2017. State planning board, Govt. Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 2018.
4. Aparna KV, Allan T. Constraints faced by farmers in adoption of organic plant protection practices. J. Ext. Edu., 2017; 29(1):5823-5826.
5. Garrett HE, Woodworth RS. Statistics in psychology and education. Vakils, Feffer and Simons Pvt. Ltd. Mumabi, 1969.
6. Kumar KS. Adoption of recommended package of practices by the coconut farmers of Mahe region in union territory of Pondicherry, M.Sc. Thesis, (Unpub.), Acharya N.G. Ranga Agric. Univ., Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, 2004.
7. Meena Singh. Perceived constraints and suggestions for effective functioning of Krishi Vigyan Kendras. Agriculture Update. 2013; 8(3):332-335.
8. Sayooj V. Performance analysis of Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council Keralam (VFPC). M.Sc. Thesis, (Unpub.), Kerala Agric. Univ., Thrissur, 2012
9. Smitha KP, Anilkumar A. Constraints Perceived by the Stakeholders in Planning and Implementing Development Projects: Environmental Concerns in Rice Farming. Ind. Res. J. Extn. Edu. 2017; 17(4):12-19.