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Effectiveness of advisory services provided by agri-input dealers to the farmers of West Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh

Sai Dinesh Kalisetty, Dr. Sarbani Das and Adrija Borah

Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of advisory services provided by Agri-input dealers to farmers which was conducted in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. Samplings were taken up from 4 Villages of 2 Mandals based on intensity of activities by Agri-input dealers. 120 Villagers were selected from 4 villages by Dis-proportionate Random Sampling. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed with the use of suitable and appropriate statistical tools and techniques. This study depicts the Agri-input dealers had high and positive impact on use of Agricultural and market information whereas moderate level of impact has been observed on economic, social and psychological impact.

Keywords: India's economy, agriculture, economic, social and psychological impact, farmers produce

Introduction

Agriculture is of paramount importance to India's economy. In modern agriculture extension advisory services are very important from crop production to marketing of farmers produce, although at present by Government agencies, NGO's and private consultants but there is still gap in the communication of farm advisory to fill this gap Agri-input dealers are the best option but majority of them lack formal education so to mitigate this constraint National institute of Agricultural extension management (Manage) introduced Daesi course one year diploma course.

At present Indian Agriculture shifting from subsistence to commercial farming, India has majority of working force compared to other countries and nowadays many educated youths are choosing Agriculture as their career option in this situation budding Agricultural professionals and Indian farmers need training for using new technologies farm information along with Agro-advisory services as majority of the Agricultural operations are conducted in rural areas and most of them had only education up to certain level which is not sufficient for modern day

Agriculture, in this situation an effective Agro- advisory is of paramount importance. Increased attention on extension is expressed through the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS). Agricultural extension and advisory services facilitate the transfer of knowledge, information, improved technologies and practices to farmers, farmer organizations and value chain and market actors. There is Research evidence which has shown positive effects of extension access on farmer knowledge, adoption, productivity, and economic returns for farmers. Return on investment in agricultural advisory services is estimated at 58% (Alston *et al.*, 2000) ^[1]. Evaluation of specific extension programs such as Farmer Field Schools (FFSs), has shown positive impacts on the environment and health.

(Praneet vatakul and Waibel, 2006) ^[12] This has primarily been government-led. However, despite its relatively long history and widespread adoption, significant challenges in providing extension services still exist including; insufficient funds for supporting public extension, limited involvement of rural farmers and populations in extension processes, and lack of research and appropriate extension methods. This limits coverage of extension services, particularly across rural regions, and adapting technological packages to community-specific contexts (IFPRI–World Bank, 2010) ^[21]. An adequate number of innovative practices has been developed to fill this gap in extension and advisory service delivery. Approaches that have been used include village-based intermediaries, farmer-to-this paper presents results of effectiveness of advisory services by Agri-input dealers to farmers under DAESI Program

in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh DAESI Program is a 'one year diploma course in Agricultural extension services for Agri-input dealers' which was introduced by National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (Manage) in 2003 due to success of this program ministry of Agriculture and farmer's welfare, Government of India decided to implement this program in all states of the country this program will be implemented by Manage through State Agricultural management and training institutes (SAMETI's).

Materials and Methods

Sampling plan: Present study was conducted in the state of Andhra Pradesh was selected purposively and West Godavari district was selected purposively out of 13 districts. Two mandals have been selected purposively moreover 4 villages have been selected purposively with the consultation of Agri-input dealers and farmers from each village 30 respondents were selected. Total 120 respondents were taken for this study through personal interview method at the door step of the farmers with the help of pre- tested structured interview schedule.

Effectiveness of Advisory services provided by Agri-input dealers to farmers among sampled farmers: In the present study effectiveness was measured in terms of A) Impact of use on Agricultural information B) Impact of use on Market information C) Economic impact D) Social impact E) Psychological impact, a list of statements pertaining to impact of Agricultural information, Market information, economic impact, social impact, psychological impact were prepared with the help of review of literature, pilot study and consultation with experts. Farmers were requested to put their response on a five-point continuum viz., Strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree with the score of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 on pre-listed statements. All the identified statements were used for final index development for all the studied districts. The entire sampled households were categorized (using cumulative square root frequency method) into five different levels of impact of effectiveness of advisory services on the basis of obtained impact level score by the respective households.

Results and Discussions

In present study effectiveness was measured in terms of A) Impact of on use of Agricultural information B) Impact of use on Market information C) Economic impact D) Social impact E) Psychological impact and the impact was measured before and after contact with Agri-input dealers.

A) Impact of use on Agricultural information

Agricultural information is one of the most important requisites for successful cultivation of crop as Agri- input dealer are the primary source farm and Agricultural information to farmers and rural society.

Table No 1. Distribution of respondents according to Impact on use of Agricultural information before and after contact with input dealers.

Table 1a: Before

Sr. No.	Before	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	26	21.66
2.	Medium	93	77.5
3.	High	1	0.83
	Total	120	100

Table 1b: After

Sr. No.	After	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	16	13.33
2.	Medium	91	75.83
3.	High	13	10.83
	Total	120	100

When we compare before and after results there was increase in respondents who had higher level of Agricultural information from 0.83% to 10.83% and there was decrease in medium level of Agricultural information from 77.5% to 75.83% and respondents with level of Agricultural information reduced from 21.66% to 13.33% thus, we can conclude that Agri input dealers had great and positive impact in the aspect of Agricultural information.

B) Impact of use on Market information

Marketing is one of the important Agricultural functions which reaps decent profits to farmers, but in our country, farmers do not have adequate market information but this gap in market information can be filled with the intervention of Agri-input dealers as they are primary source of farm information in rural areas.

Table No 2 Distribution of respondents according to Impact on use of market information before and after contact with input dealers.

Table 2a: Before

Sr. No.	Before	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	53	44.16
2.	Medium	42	35
3.	High	25	20.83
	Total	120	100

Table 2b: After

Sr. No.	After	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	26	21.66
2.	Medium	67	55.83
3.	High	27	22.5
	Total	120	100

When we compare the before and after results of these aspects depicts us that respondent with higher level of market information increased from 20.83% to 22.5% and respondents with medium level of market information 35% to 55.83% due to increase in market information levels respondents with low level of market information reduced from 44.16% to 21.66%.

C) Economic impact

Economic gains of farmers are subjected to many factors such as cost of cultivation, efficient input management but advisory services from Agri-input dealers can prevent losses for farmers.

Table No 3. Distribution of respondents according to Economic impact before and after contact with input dealers.

Table 3a: Before

Sr. No.	Before	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	69	57.5
2.	Medium	36	30
3.	High	15	12.5
	Total	120	100

Table 3b: After

Sr. No.	After	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	26	21.66
2.	Medium	77	64.16
3.	High	17	14.16
	Total	120	100

By examining and verifying both before and after results there has been increase in respondents with high level of impact from (12.5 to 14.16%) and there is rapid increase in respondents with medium level of impact from (30 to 64.16%) and there is significant decrease in respondents of low level of economic impact from (57.5% to 21.66%) thus we can conclude Agri-input dealers have partial impact on farmers in economical aspect.

D) Social impact

Human being is a social animal, Interaction of farmers with their fellow farmers, extension agents and they should visit Agricultural exhibitions, method demonstrations etc. which helps farmers to increase their knowledge levels, in some cases Agri-input dealers help farmers in socialization as they are primary source of information in rural areas.

Table No 4. Distribution of respondents according to social impact before and after contact with input dealers.

Table 4a: Before

Sr. No.	Before	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	20	16.66
2.	Medium	85	70.83
3.	High	15	12.5
	Total	120	100

Table 4b: After

Sr. No.	After	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	19	15.83
2.	Medium	83	69.16
3.	High	18	15
	Total	120	100

By comparison of before and after results we are able to see respondents with higher level of social impact has increased from (12.5% to 15%) whereas respondents with medium level of social impact from (70.83% to 69.16%) and it has also been observed that respondents with low social impact has been reduced from (16.66% to 15.83%) so we can conclude that Agri-input dealers were able to moderately influence farmers in social aspect which is positive sign in transforming Agri-input dealers into para extension personnel.

E) Psychological impact

Condition of Indian Agriculture is dependent on various factors such as climate, soil etc. so sometimes there may be crop failure, crop prices in these situations farmers should be psychologically strong in some instances Agri-input dealers.

Table No 5: Distribution of respondents according to psychological impact before and after contact with input dealers.

Table 5b: After

Sr. No.	Before	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	18	15
2.	Medium	86	71.66
3.	High	16	13.33
	Total	120	100

Table 5a: Before

Sr. No.	After	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	18	15
2.	Medium	81	67.5
3.	High	21	17.5
	Total	120	100

When we compare before and after results percentage of respondents in low level of psychological impact remained constant whereas there was decrease in respondents of medium level of psychological impact has been declined from (71.66% to 67.5%) and increase in number of respondents in high level of psychological impact from (13.33% to 17.5%) so we can conclude that Agri input dealers were succeed in influencing Farmers moderately.

Conclusion

Agriculture is of paramount importance to India’s economy. In modern agriculture extension advisory services are very important from crop production to marketing of farmers produce, although at present by Government agencies, NGO’s and private consultants but there is still gap in the communication of farm advisory to fill this gap Agri-input dealers are the best option but majority of them lack formal education so to mitigate this constraint National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (Manage) introduced DAESI course one year diploma course.

We can observe from before and after results there was increase in respondents who had higher level of Agricultural information from 0.83% to 10.83% and there was decrease in medium level of Agricultural information from 77.5% to 75.83% and respondents with low level of Agricultural information reduced from 21.66% to 13.33% thus, we can observe from the before and after results of the market information depicts us that respondent with higher level of market information increased from 20.83% to 22.5% and respondents with medium level of market information 35% to 55.83% due to increase in market information levels respondents with low level of market information reduced from 44.16% to 21.66%

By examining both before and after results there has been increase in respondents with high level of impact from (12.5 to 14.16%) and there is rapid increase in respondents with medium level of impact from (30 to 64.16%) and there is significant decrease in respondents of low level of economic impact from (57.5% to 21.66%) thus we can conclude Agri-input dealers have partial impact on farmers in economical aspect.

By observing before and after results we are able to see respondents with higher level of social impact has increased from (12.5% to 15%) whereas respondents with medium level of social impact from (70.83% to 69.16%) and it has also been observed that respondents with low social impact has been reduced from(16.66% to 15.83%) so we the study expresses that Agri-input dealers were able to moderately influence farmers in social aspect which is a positive sign that Agri-input dealers were efficiently working to disseminate farm information and to provide advisory services but still there is gap.

By observing before and after results percentage of respondents in low level of psychological impact remained constant whereas there was decrease in respondents of medium level of psychological impact has been declined from (71.66% to 67.5%) and increase in number of respondents in

high level of psychological impact from (13.33% to 17.5%) so the study depicts that Agri-input dealers moderately influenced farmers.

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