

Original Research Article

<https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2018.702.138>

Problems Perceived by Livestock Farmers in Utilization of Livestock Extension Services of Animal Husbandry Department in Jammu District of Jammu & Kashmir, India

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the problems of livestock farmers in accessing the livestock extension services of Animal Husbandry department of Jammu district of J & K state. The data was collected from 12 randomly selected villages in 4 blocks of Jammu district. 10 livestock farmers from each village and five Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VASs) from each block selected making a total of 120 livestock farmers and 20 Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VASs) i.e., field level functionaries of department of Animal Husbandry, Jammu. Socio-personal and socio economic profile of the respondents reveals that majority of the livestock farmers were old aged (59.17 %), illiterate (35.83 %) belongs to nuclear family (70%) and land holding less than 5 acres (60%). Major 'serious' problems faced by the livestock farmers were 'Non-availability of round the clock extension advisory services by State Department of Animal Husbandry'. Problems faced by VASs in performing extension activities were Lack of sufficient infrastructure facilities for conducting extension activities', 'negligible budget allotment for carrying out regular extension activities' etc. The study concludes that role of extension delivery system of Animal Husbandry Department, Jammu of J& K state needs improvement and could be changed, modified and boosted up by effective policy making.

Keywords

Problems, SDAH, Livestock extension services, Livestock farmers, VASs

Article Info

Accepted:

10 January 2018

Available Online:

10 February 2018

Introduction

Livestock plays an important role in Indian economy. About 20.5 million people depend upon livestock for their livelihood. Livestock contributed 16% to the income of small farm households as against an average of 14% for all rural households. Livestock provides livelihood to two-third of rural community. It also provides employment to about 8.8 % of the population in India (Annual Report 2014-

15). India has vast livestock resources. Livestock sector contributes 4.11% GDP and 25.6% of total Agriculture GDP (Annual Report 2014-15). Jammu is predominantly agriculture-based province. More than 70% of the total population of this province depends on agriculture directly or indirectly. Moreover major portion of this land is plain. These plain lands are suitable for livestock, dairy and poultry farming. Unfortunately, the production of livestock in Jammu is low as compared to

other provinces of India due to poor management and poor breed selection and lack of extension delivery system (Baba *et al.*, 2011). This could be attributed to illiteracy and lack of knowledge of the people regarding livestock. Livestock is an essential part of the socio-economic structure of rural India as it provides draught power, manure and energy. Livestock production can be improved by better extension services, proper management and effective disease control programme (Moaeen-u-Din and Babar, 2006). It is utmost necessary to increase the livestock production by using modern technologies in order to meet its growing demand, rapid increase in population and to earn foreign exchange. Demand driven extension approach for services is bound to strengthen functional relationship between different extension agencies and they will jointly work on a common platform for providing the demanded services (Qamar, 2004). The activities relating to livestock extension are sporadic and spread over time and space and do not meet the requirement of a vast majority of farmers (Lehmann *et al.*, 1994). Farmer needs information to change their level of awareness, attitude and ultimately the practice, in order to improve the existing situation. The present production level of livestock is quite low and inadequate allocation of both development and non-development funds to this sector by the government and scarcity of suitably trained man power are some of its major constraints (Ullah, 1998). The livestock extension delivery by dairy cooperatives in developing countries is getting attention during the past decade since they are very helpful in overcoming access barriers to assets, information, services, and the markets for small-holders (Rathod *et al.*, 2011; Nishi *et al.*, 2011)

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Jammu district of J& K state. Jammu district was divided into

four clusters having two blocks each (as Jammu district comprises of eight blocks). From each cluster one block was selected at random, so a total of four blocks were selected for the study. A comprehensive list of villages of the selected blocks was prepared. Twelve villages (three villages from each block) were selected randomly from four selected blocks. 10 livestock farmers from each village and five Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VASs) from each blocks selected making a total of 120 livestock farmers and 20 Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VASs). Primary data were collected with the help of semi- structured interview schedule while secondary data were obtained from the department website and occasional reports of the department. Problems perceived by the livestock farmers in accessing the livestock services from the SDAH were classified into field, technical, infrastructural and institutional levels. Respondents' responses were categorized into 'serious' and 'not so serious' and ranking of the problems were done.

Results and Discussion

Socio-personal- economic profile of the respondents

On analysis of Table 1, it was found that majority of the livestock farmers were old aged (59.17 %), illiterate (35.83 %) having nuclear family (70%) and land holding less than 5 acres (60%).

Problems of the livestock farmers in utilization of livestock extension services of SDAH

On perusal of Table 2, it was found that among the "field level problems" faced by livestock keepers 'Non-availability of round the clock extension services by the SDAH' was found to be the most 'serious' problems and it was ranked first by majority (83.33 %) of respondents followed by 'Lack of time with

veterinarians to provide extension related information and services' (57.50%), 'Veterinary dispensaries are at far off distances from the villages' (50.00 %), and 'Lack of information about insurance facilities for the animals'(31.67%) were the other problems.

Similar findings were reported by many other researchers such as Venkatadri (2002) reported that 'Veterinary functionaries are expected to perform twenty-five multifarious activities in which extension is one' and Ravi Kumar (2005) too observed that 'The State Departments of Animal Husbandry (SDAH) - the major stakeholders for the livestock development in India is mostly dominated by animal health concerns with negligible attention to production related advice to farmers and their spending on livestock extension activities is only around 1-3 % of their total budget.

About 76.67 percent of respondents were of the view that 'Impolite behavior of veterinary staff towards livestock farmers' was not the serious problem.

Similarly, on perusal of Table 3, it was found that among the "technical problems" faced by livestock keepers 'In adequate extension related materials i.e input availability (material to be distributed free of cost) for conducting extension education programmes in rural areas' was found to be the most 'serious' problems and it was ranked first by the greater majority (99.17%) respondents followed by 'Lack of skills on part of veterinarians in providing the extension activities/services' (70.83%), 'Inadequate veterinary staff and larger area to be covered'(70.00 %). Similar opinions were conveyed by Chander *et al.*, (2010) and mentioned in his review paper on livestock technology transfer service in India that the livestock sector is still considered as subsidiary to crop sector (where, lots of free

inputs used to be distributed) and the extension format and methodology developed for crop production are considered to take care of the livestock extension needs. It was also observed from the Table 3 that livestock farmers perceived about the field functionaries (mainly the VASs) were not providing information on newly developed livestock production technologies because of inefficiency or lack of training of the veterinarians in providing the extension services and information.

The results are in conformity with that of (Ravikumar, 2005) who reported that insufficient supply of extension content to the hospitals, lack of facilities for doing extension camps in villages, inadequate distribution of leaflet to the farmers, non-availability of fodder seeds at the veterinary hospitals, inadequate budget allotment for the provision of extension services, non-availability of round the clock services as the major problems perceived by livestock farmers in utilization of veterinary services.

Rajput (2006) also identified the problems like insufficient supply of extension content to the hospitals and poor accessibility of timely veterinary services as the major perceived problems of livestock farmers. Hence, the government authorities should make earnest efforts to solve these constraints so as to make livestock extension delivery effective.

Also, it is evident from Table 4, that among the "infrastructural problems" faced by livestock keepers 'Lack of sufficient infrastructure facilities for conducting extension activities' was found to be the most 'serious' problems and it was ranked first by the greater majority (99.17%) respondents followed by 'Lack of facilities for doing extension camps in villages' (86.67 %), 'Lack of transport facilities for conducting extension in the villages' (85.00 %).

Table.1 Socio-personal- economic profile of the livestock farmers (n=120)

S. No.	Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age	Young (<35 yrs)	05	4.17
		Middle (35-50 yrs)	44	36.66
		Old (>50 yrs)	71	59.17
2.	Education	Illiterate	43	35.83
		Primary	07	5.83
		Middle class	21	17.50
		High school	33	27.50
		Above high school	16	13.33
3.	Type of family	Nuclear	84	70
		Joint	36	30
4.	Land holding	Landless	34	28.33
		Marginal (<2.5)	66	55.00
		Small (2.5-5)	17	14.17
		Medium (5-10)	03	2.50
		Large (>10)	-	-

Table.2 Field level problems of the livestock farmers in utilization of livestock extension delivery of SDAH

S. No.	Field level problems	Serious		Not so serious		Rank
		%	F	%	F	
1	Non-availability of round the clock extension services at SDAH	83.33	(100)	16.67	(20)	I
2	Veterinary dispensaries are at far off distances from the villages	50.00	(60)	50.00	(60)	III
3	Lack of information about insurance facilities for the animals	31.67	(38)	68.33	(82)	IV
4	Impolite behavior of veterinary staff towards livestock farmers	23.33	(28)	76.67	(92)	V
5	Lack of time with veterinarians to provide extension related information and services	57.50	(69)	42.50	(51)	II

Table.3 Technical problems of the livestock farmers in utilization of livestock extension delivery of SDAH

S. No.	Technical problems	Serious		Not so serious		Rank
		%	F	%	F	
1	In adequate extension related materials i.e input availability (material to be distributed free of cost) for conducting extension education programmes in rural areas	99.17	(119)	0.83	(01)	I
2	Inadequate veterinary staff and larger area to be covered	70.00	(84)	30.00	(36)	III
3	Lack of skills on part of veterinarians in providing the extension activities/services	70.83	(85)	29.17	(35)	II
4	Lack of providing information on newly developed livestock production technologies	25.00	(30)	75.00	(90)	V
5	Inefficiency of the veterinarians in providing the extension services	15.00	(18)	85	(102)	VI
6	Non-availability of extension staff for providing exclusively extension information	67.50	(81)	32.50	(39)	

Table.4 Infrastructural problems of the livestock farmers in utilization of livestock extension delivery of SDAH

S. No.	Infrastructural problems	Serious		Not so serious		Rank
		%	F	%	F	
1	Lack of sufficient infrastructure facilities for conducting extension activities	99.17	(119)	0.83	(01)	I
2	Lack of facilities for doing extension camps in villages	86.67	(104)	13.33	(16)	II
3	Non-availability of techniques for technology transfer at the veterinary hospitals	71.67	(86)	28.33	(34)	IV
4	Lack of transport facilities for conducting extension programs in the villages	85.00	(102)	15.00	(18)	III

Table.5 Institutional problems of the livestock farmers in utilization of livestock extension delivery of SDAH

S. No.	Institutional problems	Serious		Not so serious		Rank
		%	F	%	F	
1	Inadequate/ negligible budget allotment for carrying out regular of extension activities	100.00	(120)	-		I
2	Lack of accountability among veterinarians for providing the extension activities/services	80.00	(96)	20.00	(24)	II
3	Fee charged by the veterinary staff for free extension services	17.50	(21)	82.50	(99)	IV
4	Irregularity of veterinary staff in conducting the extension programmes.	31.67	(38)	68.33	(82)	III

Table.6 Distribution of VASs according to the problems faced (field level) in performing extension activities

(n=20)

S. No.	Particulars	Yes		No	
		%	F	%	F
1.	Farmers do not co operate	-	-	100.00	(20)
2.	Guidance of supervisors is not sufficient	25	(05)	75.00	(15)
3.	Paper or table work assignment other than A.I and treatment	80	(16)	20.00	(04)
4.	No help available at the village level i,e from sarpanch, progressive faemers etc	30	(06)	70.00	(14)
5.	Coordination with other agencies is inadequate	65	(13)	35.00	(07)
6.	Targets not realistic	80	(16)	20.00	(04)
7.	Mobility is inadequate	90	(18)	10.00	(02)
8.	I am not adequately trained	-	-	100.00	(20)
9.	Extension work not appreciated/recognized	35	(07)	65.00	(13)

Figure in parenthesis indicate number of VASs

Table.7 Distribution of VASs according to the problems faced (official level) while performing extension activities

S. No	Reasons	Yes		No	
		%	F	%	F
1	Heavy work load	80	(16)	20	(4)
2	Shortage of trained manpower like LAs (Livestock Assistants) for extension activities	90	(18)	10	(2)
3	Shortage of extension activities related context	80	(16)	20	(4)
4	Shortage of budgets for extension activities	80	(16)	20	(4)

Figure in parenthesis indicate number of VASs

Based on the findings of Table 5, it was found that among the “institutional problems” faced by livestock keepers ‘Inadequate/ negligible budget allotment for carrying out regular extension activities’ was found to be the most ‘serious’ problems and it was ranked first by 100 per cent of respondents followed by ‘Lack of accountability among veterinarians for providing the extension activities/services’ (80.00%), ‘Irregularity of veterinary staff in conducting the extension programmes’ (31.67 %) were other problems. Similar observation was reported by Joshi (2017) and she commented that only one centrally sponsored scheme on “Livestock extension and delivery services” with a budgetary outlay of Rs.15.00 crore was proposed by Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (DAHDF) during the 11th plan period and to cater the diverse needs of livestock farmers, an efficient livestock extension education system is required.

Problems experienced by Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VASs) in performing extension activities

The VASs were enquired regarding the “field level problems” they were experiencing in performing extension activities and the results were tabulated (Table 6). The top most

problems the VASs felt while executing the extension activities was ‘inadequate mobility’ (90%), ‘various assignments other than A.I and treatment’ (80%) and ‘targets not realistic’ (80%). The other problems felt by VASs include ‘inadequate coordination with other agencies’ (65%) and extension work not appreciated (35%). These findings were in agreement with the findings of Budak and Yurdakul (2004). Extension agents need to be very mobile to touch as many clientele as possible (Adeokun and Akinyemi, 2003).

The VASs were also enquired regarding the “official level problems” they were experiencing in performing extension activities and the result was tabulated in Table 7. The top most problem VASs felt while executing the extension activities include ‘shortage of man power’ (90%) followed by ‘shortage of extension activities related content’ (80%), ‘heavy work load’ (80%) and ‘shortage of budgets for extension activities’ (80%).

The study entitled “Problems Perceived by Livestock Farmers in Utilization of Livestock Extension Services of Animal Husbandry Department” was undertaken in Jammu District of Jammu & Kashmir state. It was found that lack of infrastructure, inadequate

budget allocation and poor message delivery system towards extension education were the characteristics of state department of Animal Husbandry, Jammu. The SDAH, Jammu were primarily catering to animal health and breeding needs, whereas, there was no clear cut mandate specifically towards extension education activities for livestock development. The grassroot level extension functionaries considered the extension activities as low profile and thankless job. Major 'serious' problems faced by the livestock farmers were 'Non-availability of round the clock extension advisory services by State Department of Animal Husbandry'. Problems faced by VASs in performing extension activities were lack of sufficient infrastructure facilities for conducting extension activities', 'negligible budget allotment for carrying out regular extension activities' etc. The study concludes that role of extension delivery system of Animal Husbandry Department, Jammu of J & K state needs improvement and could be changed, modified and boosted up by effective policy making.

Acknowledgment

This study was conducted in Jammu district of Jammu and Kashmir state. Authors are thankful to the all the livestock farmers who participated in the survey and had given precious time and relevant information for this study. Authors are also thankful to officers of State Department of Animal Husbandry, Jammu and Veterinary Assistant Surgeons posted in different blocks of Jammu district for giving time and support from their busy schedule in carrying out this research.

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How to cite this article:

Avinash Neeraj and Pranav Kumar. 2018. Problems Perceived by Livestock Farmers in Utilization of Livestock Extension Services of Animal Husbandry Department in Jammu District of Jammu & Kashmir. *Int.J.Curr.Microbiol.App.Sci.* 7(02): 1106-1113.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2018.702.138>