Pragmatic Perspectives of Agricultural Development Programmes in Present Scenario

ATTITUDE AND TECHNOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE INPUT DEALERS REGARDING AGRO SERVICES

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ABSTRACT
Agro-input dealers play a major role in ensuring that farmers access some of the important agricultural inputs required to improve agricultural productivity in their respective farms. Agro input dealers provide technical advice regarding farming techniques, the correct use of inputs and in some cases additional services such as output purchasing, equipment rental and soil testing to the farmers. The input dealers are not always aware about the recent technologies like new varieties, insecticides, fungicides, weedicides and machineries. Ex-post facto research design was used for the study. Banaskantha district of Gujarat state was purposively selected. Five talukas viz., Deesa, Tharad, Deodar, Kankrej and Palanpur were purposively selected for the present study having more number of input dealers. From the selected talukas, one-fourth input dealers were proportionately selected for study, accordingly 58, 29, 22, 21 and 20 input dealers were selected from Deesa, Tharad, Deodar, Kankrej and Palanpur taluka, respectively. Thus, total 150 input dealers were finalized for the present study. The data were collected by personal contact method with the help of structured interview schedule and collected data were coded, classified, tabulated and analyzed in light of objectives and in order to make the findings realistic for drawing meaningful interpretation. The statistical tools such as frequency, per cent, mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient were used for the study. Three fourth (74.67 per cent) input dealers had moderately favourable attitude toward agro services. Nearly three-fifth (60.67 per cent) of input dealers had medium level of knowledge regarding agro services followed by 20.00 per cent and 19.33 per cent who had high level and low level of knowledge, respectively. For practice wise knowledge of input dealers, all the input dealers (100.00 per cent) had knowledge about care and management in using pesticides with higher mean score.

Keywords: attitude, technological knowledge, agro services, input dealers

INTRODUCTION
Input dealers are expected to serve as providers of basic extension services to farmers, creating an invaluable source of knowledge and advice to farmers. Agro-input dealers are sellers of agricultural inputs that include seeds, fertilizer, crop protection chemicals, farm equipment and machines, veterinary products and animal feeds at right time and right place with affordable price and quality. Agro-input dealers play a major role in ensuring that farmers access some of the important agricultural inputs required to improve agricultural productivity in their respective farms. Agro input dealers provide technical advice regarding farming techniques, the correct use of inputs and in some cases additional services such as output purchasing, equipment rental and soil testing to the farmers.

OBJECTIVES

(1) To know the attitude of the input dealers towards agro services

(2) To assess the technological knowledge of the input dealers regarding agro services

METHODOLOGY
Ex-post facto research design was used for the study. Banaskantha district of Gujarat state was purposively selected. Five talukas viz., Deesa, Tharad, Deodar, Kankrej and Palanpur were purposively selected for the present study having more number of input dealers. From the selected talukas, one-fourth input dealers were proportionately selected for study, accordingly 58, 29, 22, 21 and 20 input dealers were selected from Deesa, Tharad, Deodar, Kankrej and Palanpur taluka, respectively. Thus, total 150 input dealers were finalized for the present study. To measure the attitude of the input dealers regarding agro services teacher made test was developed. Total 50 non-ambiguous and non-factual statements of attitude of the input dealers regarding agro services were collected by the referring related literature. All the statements were given to a panel
The data in Table 1 showed that nearly three-fourth (74.67 per cent) of the input dealers had moderately favorable attitude towards the agro services followed by 14.67 per cent and 10.66 per cent of input dealers who had less favorable and highly favorable attitude, respectively.

It can be concluded that majority (74.67 per cent) of input dealers had moderately favorable attitude towards agro services. This might be due to the reason that majority of the respondents were educated which played a major role in building up favorable attitude among input dealers towards agro services. The findings are in the line with the findings reported by Chanpaneri (2012), Chaudhary (2012) and Magarvadiya (2013).

Technological knowledge of the input dealers regarding agro services

Adequate knowledge is required with input dealers for better agro services and betterment of their business. Scores of technological knowledge of input dealers were calculated and with the help of mean and standard deviation the respondents were categorized as presented in Table 2.

The data presented in Table 2 revealed that more than three-fifth (60.67 per cent) of input dealers had medium level of knowledge regarding agro services followed by 20.00 per cent and 19.33 per cent of input dealers who had high level and low level of knowledge, respectively.

On the basis of the above results, it can be concluded that a large majority (80.67 per cent) of input dealers were found with medium to high level of knowledge regarding agro services. The probable reason for above findings might be due to majority of input dealers were educated up to high school and graduate/post graduate level and had medium level of utilization of information sources.

The knowledge of input dealers regarding different agro input services was calculated with the help of mean score index which is presented in Table 3.
The data presented in Table 3 revealed that all the input dealers (100.00 per cent) had knowledge about care and management in using pesticides which ranked first. Further, the obtained mean score index of knowledge regarding seed treatment (88.36 per cent), plant protection equipment and micro irrigation (84.62 per cent), insect, diseases and weed management (80.30 per cent) and seed (77.18 per cent) ranked second, third, fourth and fifth, respectively. Moreover the obtained mean score index of knowledge of other agro services viz., fertilizers (64.20 per cent), herbicides (45.93 per cent), store grain insecticides (41.33 per cent), rodenticides (35.55 per cent), insecticides group (35.29 per cent) and fungicides group (22.48 per cent) ranked sixth to eleventh, respectively.

The findings are in the line with the findings reported by Magarvadiya (2013), Godse et al. (2014) and Prajapati et al. (2015).

CONCLUSION

(1) It can be concluded th at majority (74.67 per cent) of input dealers had moderately favorable attitude towards agro services.

(2) It can be concluded that a large majority (80.67 per cent) of input dealers were found with medium to high level of knowledge regarding agro services.

(3) It can be concluded that the knowledge regarding agro input services viz., care and management in using pesticides, seed treatment, plant protection equipment and micro irrigation, insect, diseases and weed management and seed was observed higher in comparison of remaining agro services viz., fertilizers, herbicides, store grain insecticides, rodenticides, insecticides group and fungicides group.

REFERENCES


