Measuring the Perceived Attributes of Simple but Worth Chaff Cutter Technology Adopted by Dairy Entrepreneurs

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Paper Received on November 25, 2016, Accepted on January 12, 2017 and Published Online on January 28, 2017

ABSTRACT

The acute shortage of feeds and fodder is one of the major obstacles to dairy development in India. This study was conducted in Marathwada region of Maharashtra state by personally interviewing 120 dairy farmers. Perceived attributes of the technology in the study were relative advantage, compatibility, complexity and practicability or demonstrability. Here in relative advantage, the technology was perceived as more expensive, giving wider benefit, exorbitant in net profitability, consistency in profit and time saving. In spite of its dependency factor, technology was perceived as feasible, acceptable, and recognizable as compare to past experience of feeding unchaffed fodder because it helps to maintain animal health by proper utilization of fodder and environmental welfare by avoiding wastage of fodder. Though technology was perceived as more complex, its rate of adoption is still more because of factors like labour saving, abundant in resource complexity, adoptable in application complexity and easier in cognitive complexity. It is practicable as chaffing of fodder and its effect on production can be easily observed and trials can be taken. Hence being a proven technology, chaffing needs to be popularised, especially in those areas where it is not yet practised. Government intervention is needed in the form of incentives to promote the manufacturing of chaff cutters and subsidizes their distribution to farmers.

Keywords: Chaffing, Feed utilization, Fodder, Perceived attributes;

Fodder production is the foundation of a livestock production system and proper feeding is imperative for achieving high and sustained productivity which is depend on the cropping pattern, climate, socioeconomic conditions, type of livestock and feeding pattern. India is facing a net deficit of 35.6 per cent of green fodder, 26 per cent of dry-crop residues and half of the total losses in livestock productivity are contributed to by the inadequacy in supply of feed and fodder. (NABCONS, 2011). The livestock population is expected to grow at the rate of 0.55 per cent in the coming years, and the population is likely to be around 781 million by 2050. Due to improper fodder utilization and the lack of scientific feeding, productivity of our animals is 20-60 per cent lower than the global average, though India is among the leading producers of milk.

To meet current level of livestock production and their annual population growth, strategies are needed to include measures that improve availability of quality fodder as well as for designing suitable models for effective and proper utilization of fodder in livestock diets. General trend in rural area is to offer fodder without chopping where as in case of sorghum and maize they cut it by sickles into large pieces (50 cm length). In this kind of prevalent practice, wastage of the fodder is very high. In order to reduce the wastage of feed resources, the chaffing of fodder should be promoted. This can be achieved through selection of chaff cutter technology which is a key to cater to the challenges of fodder scarcity.

There is very less awareness among the farmers about usage and benefits of simple but worth chaff cutter technology. Chaff cutter is an agricultural mechanical device which cuts the thick stemmed and un-chewable material into small pieces which becomes edible and palatable to the animals. It reduces selective feeding, increases the intake of animals, improves the digestibility
and conserves energy that they have to use in mastication (Chander, 2011). As wastage is reduced, surplus fodder available can be fed to more number of livestock.

When fodder cultivation was promoted and chaff cutters were introduced in Mahboobnagar district of Andhra Pradesh, fodder wastage was reduced by up to 30 per cent. It appears that use of chaff cutters and chaffing has positive associations with green fodder cultivation (Misra et al., 2007). This helps in easing the fodder scarcities during lean season and brings about an even distribution of available fodder throughout the year.

Hence the present study was carried by considering the cost of production, physiological need of animal, acceptance level of technology, role of feeding chaffed fodder and expectation of rural dairy farmer etc. The objective of this research was to explore the important attributes of chaff cutter technology on basis of dairy entrepreneur’s perception and to identify whether there is requirement for improvement in features of the existing product or there is a need to develop a new product.

**METHODOLOGY**

The present study was conducted in Beed, Latur and Parbhani district of Maharashtra by selecting two villages from four talukas of each district. A list of dairy entrepreneurs who were using chaff cutter technology since last three years and having minimum five dairy animals was prepared and from each selected village, 05 respondents were selected purposively. Therefore total size for this study was 120 dairy farmers. An interview schedule based on the objectives of the study was prepared for data collection during 2015. The data collected was coded, classified and analysed. In order to make the finding meaningful, statistical methods frequency and percentage were used for interpretation and drawing references and for making simple comparisons.

Perceived attributes i.e. relative advantage, compatibility, complexity and practicability were measured by scale developed by Nithya Shree and Siddaramaiah (1996). In each attribute, there were five statements, thus maximum obtainable score by an individual respondent was 25, whereas minimum could be 5. By using frequency and percentage, distribution of respondents made according to perceived attributes.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

*Relative Advantage* - It is the degree to which use of innovation (chaff cutter technology) was perceived by the respondent as better and superior over traditional feeding practice in terms of profitability, saving of time and multiple use potentiality. Table 1 reveals that the respondents expressed technology as more expensive in initial cost (65.00%), exorbitant in net profitability (72.50%), regular in consistency of profit (59.17%), more time saving (60.84%) and had more wider benefits in multiple use potential (72.50%). Above finding are in line with Chavan (2007) and Moran (2005). Though technology perceived as more expensive, farmers are still using it because expectations of dairy farmers like more profit with minimum production cost and time saving might have fulfilled by it.

*Compatibility:* It is the degree to which an innovation (chaff cutter technology) is perceived as consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters. Table 2 reveals that in situational compatibility, cultural compatibility, physical compatibility, social compatibility, relational compatibility respondents expressed technology as feasible (58.34 per cent), more acceptable (68.33 per cent), more compatible with needs (44.16 per cent), recognizable (55.83 per cent) and dependent (81.67 per cent) respectively. These finding are similar with findings of McDowell, (1994). The Probable reason might be that technology needs regular electricity supply, servicing and maintenance. It is feasible, acceptable, and recognizable as compare to past experience of feeding unchaffed fodder as it helps to maintain animal health, environmental welfare by avoiding wastage of fodder.

*Complexity:* It is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters. Operationally it is defined as the degree to which the chaff cutter technology was perceived as difficult for understanding and use by the respondents. Table 3 clearly shows that respondents perceived technology as complex in complex cognitive (57.50%), adoptable in application complexity (55.84%), scare in resource complexity (44.17%), irreversible in reversibility (90.00%) and more labour saving in labour efficiency (63.33%). These findings are similar with Chander (2011). Complexity is necessary part of technological advancement, the increased complexity of the technology over traditional systems, increases the reliance on manufacturer maintenance services and
Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to relative advantage of chaff cutter technology (N=120)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>More expensive</th>
<th>Expensive</th>
<th>Can’t say</th>
<th>Cheap</th>
<th>More cheap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial cost</td>
<td>78 (65.00%)</td>
<td>28 (23.34%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>14 (11.66%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net profitability</td>
<td>Very merge</td>
<td>Merge</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Exorbitant</td>
<td>Very exorbitant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency of profit</td>
<td>More irregular</td>
<td>Irregular</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>More regular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving of time</td>
<td>More time consuming</td>
<td>Time consuming</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Time saving</td>
<td>More time saving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple use potential</td>
<td>No benefit</td>
<td>Single benefit</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Multiple benefit</td>
<td>More wider benefit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to compatibility of chaff cutter technology (N=120)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>More unfeasible</th>
<th>Unfeasible</th>
<th>Can’t say</th>
<th>Feasible</th>
<th>More feasible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situational compatibility</td>
<td>0 (0 %)</td>
<td>9 (07.50 %)</td>
<td>7 (5.83 %)</td>
<td>64 (53.33 %)</td>
<td>40 (33.33 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural compatibility</td>
<td>More non-acceptable</td>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>More non-acceptable</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical compatibility</td>
<td>More incompatible</td>
<td>Compatible</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Compatible</td>
<td>More compatible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social compatibility</td>
<td>More non-recognizable</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Recognizable</td>
<td>More non-recognizable</td>
<td>Recognizable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational compatibility</td>
<td>More dependent</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>More independent</td>
<td>independent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to complexity of chaff cutter technology (N=120)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>More complex</th>
<th>Complex</th>
<th>Can’t say</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>More easy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Complexity</td>
<td>5 (4.17 %)</td>
<td>69 (57.50 %)</td>
<td>7 (5.84 %)</td>
<td>26 (21.66 %)</td>
<td>13 (10.83 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Complexity</td>
<td>More unadoptable</td>
<td>Unadoptable</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Adoptable</td>
<td>More adoptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource complexity</td>
<td>More scare</td>
<td>Scare</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Abundant</td>
<td>More abundant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reversibility</td>
<td>More irreversible</td>
<td>Irreversible</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Reversible</td>
<td>More reversible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour efficiency</td>
<td>More labour consuming</td>
<td>Labour consuming</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Labour consuming</td>
<td>saving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to practicability of chaff cutter technology (N=120)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>More uncommunicable</th>
<th>Uncommunicable</th>
<th>Can’t say</th>
<th>Communicable</th>
<th>More communicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicability/observability</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>5 (4.16 %)</td>
<td>7 (5.84 %)</td>
<td>79 (65.83 %)</td>
<td>29 (24.17 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility</td>
<td>More invisible</td>
<td>Invisible</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Visible</td>
<td>More visible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrability</td>
<td>More non-demonstrable</td>
<td>Non demonstrable</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Demonstrable</td>
<td>More demonstrable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trialability</td>
<td>More non triable</td>
<td>Non triable</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Triable</td>
<td>More triable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point of origin</td>
<td>More reliable</td>
<td>Unreliable</td>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>Reliable</td>
<td>More reliable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
possibly increasing operating costs. This technology is
more adoptable because it is simple to maintain and
repair by local technicians and production factor i.e.
man, money and material, labour can be used efficiently.

Practicability: It is the degree to which an innovation
may be tried on a limited basis, while communicability
is the degree to which the results of innovation may be
diffused to others. Table 3 points out that majority of
respondents expressed technology as communicable or
observable (65.83%), more visible (57.50%), more
demonstrable (56.67%), more triable (60.84%) and
reliable (66.68 per cent). These findings are similar with
Reason could be that dairy farmer can be easily exposed
to the advantages of the technology as they can see
other farmers practicing technology successfully.

CONCLUSION

Thus, it can be concluded from the study that chaff
cutter technology was perceived as relatively more
advantageous though it was expensive. Regarding
compatibility, it is feasible, acceptable, and recognizable
as compare to past experience of feeding unchaffed
fodder. In spite of complexity factor, it is more adoptable
and labour saving. It can be adopted easily after taking
trials and observing its effect on production. To increase
rate adoption; technology should be commercially
diffused by assessing perceived attributes and production
factor (man, money and material, labour).

The technology needs to be refined further,
technically and made simpler for the farmer so that larger
farmers may come forward and adopt this technology.
Government intervention is needed in the form of
incentives to promote the manufacturing of chaff cutters
and subsidizes their distribution to farmers. It appears
that extension efforts to highlight the importance of chaff
cutting have not been made in the Marathwada region
of Maharashtra. Hence it is recommended to
concentrate on the factors that enhance aspects of each
one of the attributes. Besides giving all the financial,
technical and infrastructure facilities, it is also very much
important to motivate the farmers to become a
successful dairy entrepreneur.

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