

RESEARCH NOTE

Need for Revamped Extension Approaches to Overcome the Constraints in Transfer of Technologies

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ABSTRACT

There is an urgent need to modify and evaluate the methodologies of agricultural extension and research. As the agricultural research holds the key to improve the productivity of resources, the extension approaches to disseminate the technologies also need to be revamped. There are several constraints that influence the whole extension system as Common basic technological, Organizational and Administrative and Social constraints. This study conducted in the Garhwal hills of Himalaya revealed that the important constraints considered by the functionaries of the KVK were 'Non availability of location specific and problem oriented technologies,' 'Lack of motivation among the farmers'. 'Paucity of budget' 'Lack of transport facility', and 'non-availability of inputs'. To overcome the constraints as perceived by the functionaries working in Krishi Vigyan Kendra, suggestions were invited and this includes increase in budget for training, timely availability of inputs, proper market facilities, working out proper cropping system and motivation of farm women to adopt new technological advancement. To overcome these constraints the intervention areas where an urgent need of looking forward for better extension or revamp the present extension system are: Decentralized extension services, self-reliant extension system, pluralistic extension, farmer's group approach, utilizing the new ICTs, interactive/participatory and client oriented extension.

Key words: Constraints; Decentralized Extension; Pluralistic Extension; Revamped extension approach;

The role of extension system is very important in promoting agricultural development and increasing food production. Several emerging challenges confront Indian farmers. These include limited land and water availability, which is further exacerbated by degradation of natural resources; climate changes; changes in demand and consumption patterns, moving toward high-value agriculture; increasing population pressure; and liberalization of trade (Lele et al. 2010).

Now the time has come when there is a need for closer interaction between public and private investment in the field of agriculture. Despite the variety of agricultural extension approaches that operate in parallel and sometimes duplicate one another, majority of farmers in India do not have access to any source of information. This severely limits their ability to increase their productivity and income and thereby reduce poverty (Claire J. Glendenning, 2010). As the agricultural research holds the key to improve the productivity of resources, the extension approaches to disseminate the technologies also need to be revamped. This is the time

when we need to find out the constraints, which are hindering the outcome of present extension approaches with the specific objective to identify the constraints faced by the extension personnel during the dissemination of technologies, and identify the possible approaches to overcome the constraints.

METHODOLOGY

A study was conducted to find out the constraints and their possible solutions perceived by the functionaries of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Ranichauri in Tehri Garhwal District of Uttarakhand. Data was gathered through an interview schedule. All functionaries of KVK were interviewed. The Rank Based Quotient (RBQ) of different constraints was calculated separately and accordingly priority ranking were given. The possible solutions to overcome the constraints were also asked and listed out.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Common basic constraints: Scattered and fragmented land holdings, non-availability of inputs, improper marketing facilities etc. are important constraints.

Technological constraints: Non availability of location specific and problem oriented technologies is an important constraint. Farmers lacking knowledge of modern technologies are some of the important technological constraints.

Organizational and administrative constraints: Sometime even after launching very effective developmental schemes for the rural poor, the benefits of the programmes do not reach to its ultimate clientele. The political – bureaucratic patronage or top-down administrative system continues to govern the rural/ agricultural development works with the result the rural people have been more a passive recipient of benefits, rather than active participants in the development process. Non-availability of trained staff, frequent transfers, lack of incentives and engagement in other official works are some important administrative constraints, which influences the extension system.

Social constraints: Sometimes the rural social milieu poses many barriers in effective dissemination of information. The orthodox behaviour of rural people, and limited number of farmers who want to adopt the new technologies (lack of motivation) hinders the extension programmes. Beside this, group rivalries jealousies, illiteracy and self-centered attitude of the farmers also affect the diffusion of innovation.

Table 1 also stated that very important constraints considered by the functionaries of the KVK was ‘Non availability of location specific and problem oriented technologies’. ‘Lack of motivation among the farmers’ was ranked as second important constraint. ‘Paucity of budget’ and ‘excess reporting’ were considered as the third important constraints. Scattered land holding’, ‘lack of transport facility’, ‘improper marketing facilities’ and ‘Non availability of the inputs’ were ranked as IV, V, VI and VII simultaneously. Difficult agro-climatic conditions’ and farmers lacking knowledge of modern technologies’, were ranked as VIII and IX as per the RBQ .Again ‘lack of orientation to the functionaries’, ‘frequent transfer ’and ‘lack of coordination with other development department’ and ‘Illiteracy and self-centered attitude of the farmers’ were ranked at same priority level i.e. X and XI simultaneously. Orthodox behaviour of rural people’, lack of incentives’ and Non-availability of trained staff were ranked at XII, XIII and XIV level as per the priority ranking.

The study area is high hill zone and area specific

Table 1: Constraints in effective implementation of the KVK programmes as perceived by the functionaries of KVK

Constraints	RBQ	Rank
<i>Common basic constraints</i>		
Lack of transport facility	76.38	V
Scattered and fragmented land holdings	76.48	IV
Difficult agro-climatic conditions	67.22	VIII
Non-availability of inputs	69.33	VII
Improper marketing facilities	71.22	VI
<i>Technological constraints</i>		
Non availability of location specific and problem oriented technologies	91.66	I
Farmers lacking knowledge of modern technologies	52.44	IX
<i>Organizational and Administrative constraints</i>		
Non-availability of trained staff	22.13	XIV
Lack of orientation to the functionaries	43.88	X
Frequent transfers	43.88	X
Lack of incentives	37.25	XIII
Paucity of budget	80.55	III
Excessive reporting/ engagement in other official works	80.55	III
Lack of co-ordination with other development departments	42.88	XI
<i>Social constraints</i>		
The orthodox behaviour of rural people	37.58	XII
Lack of motivation among the farmers	83.33	II
Illiteracy and self-centered attitude of the farmers	42.88	XI

technologies are either not available or not within the reach of farmers. Farmers are sometime not knowing the location specific technologies which hinders the outcome. This leads to lack of motivation among farmers towards agriculture. Paucity of budget limits the extension activities, especially in organization of training programme for farmers and extension workers. The functionaries are sometime overburdened with excess of reporting which indirectly become a constraint for actual field work.

Possible revamped approaches for better extension system: The approaches to overcome these constraints for better extension such are-

Decentralized extension services: KVKs need to be strengthened as center of excellence for dissemination of technical knowhow. Distance education for farmers and small agro-entrepreneurs need to be explored and

strengthened through television, radio, interactive audio and video systems, besides print and programmed learning materials which would be the distinguishing feature of extension teaching and learning process should be developed to enhance quality learning and teaching process.

Self-reliant extension system: Today there is a need of outsourcing extension, cost recovery for extension services and contracting out extension. Privatization of extension can be a better way for which the farmer should pay for extension advises.

Pluralistic extension: The key issue of creating a pluralistic service is a need to find an appropriate 'mix' of public and private funding and delivery mechanisms for extension, which will achieve differing agricultural goals and serve diverse target populations (*Anandajaya sekeram et al, 2008*).

Farmer-group approach: Group is an informal, voluntary and self-governing association of small farmer. These farmer groups help ultimately to bring additional development resources and services like bankers, financiers, private organizations, govt. organizations etc.

Utilizing the new ICTs : The village e-knowledge center can serve as a place where rural population can be made aware about the new schemes, programmes and policies.

Interactive extension: Better extension for this tools such as PRA (Participatory rural appraisal) and RRA (Rapid Rural Appraisal) can be utilized at planning level so that actual need could be identified prior to planning.

Client oriented extension: Client-focused approaches such as gender sensitive extension, urban agriculture are some important concerns. Thus the extension approach should be according to the clientele's need.

CONCLUSION

Constraints as perceived by the extension functionaries need to be removed to fasten the speed of technology transfer rate in rural areas. Farmers need up to date information on their source, quality and cost of agricultural inputs. They require information which is relevant to strategic that can ultimately enhance their quality of livelihood with the winds of global liberalization and also global marketing, there is a major shift from farm production driven agriculture to market driven farming. To strengthen the rural farming community, and also to reap the fruits of globalization, Agricultural extension must play an important role by providing them the best extension services. Extension approach needs to be restructured to make technology dissemination responsive to the needs of farmers. Extension should have a multidimensional approach which leads to rural employment generation and income intensification by connecting the farming community with market directly. The role of extension personnel need to be redefined. They need to be trained as a coordinator, facilitator, motivator and regulator.

Paper received on : September 26, 2013

Accepted on : October 20, 2013

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