

International Journal of Agriculture Extension and Social Development

Volume 8; Issue 1; January 2025; Page No. 179-181

Received: 10-11-2024
Accepted: 16-12-2024

Indexed Journal
Peer Reviewed Journal

Constraints faced by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) officials in providing pluralistic extension service to the farmers in cooch Behar district of West Bengal

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26180723.2025.v8.i1c.1527>

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Abstract

The Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) is the knowledge and training disseminating centre situated at the district level to provide service to the farmers. KVK converge with other public, private organisations to provide pluralistic service to the farmer. The present study explores the different constraints faced by the KVK officials in providing pluralistic extension service. The study was conducted by taking the all the staffs of Cooch Behar KVK. The study revealed that officials faced more administrative constraint than the other constraints.

Keywords: KVK, Constraint, Cooch Behar, Pluralistic extension service

Introduction

Pluralistic extension is characterized by the combination of multiple public, private and mixed extension system and approaches to meet the different services, funding streams and sources of information in the agricultural system. Pluralistic extension includes extension services delivered by NGOs, Farmers Producer Organizations, Consultancies and Companies as well as involvement of public extension system (Sajesh, *et al.*, 2018, Rivera and Qamar, 2003) ^[1, 2]. The main aim of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) is to assess the location specific technology modules in agriculture and allied enterprises, through technology assessment, refinement and demonstrations. KVKs have been working with the public, private and voluntary sector for improving the agricultural economy of the district and transferring the information to the famers. KVKs are satisfying the definition of pluralistic extension service. The lack of promotion channel for the staff of KVK, many posts of the subordinate staff lying vacant, intermittent flow of the funds from organization to KVK head for carrying out mandated activities, pressure from the local politicians to fetch more benefits from KVK schemes to their own jurisdiction, funds for the extension activities and FLDs were not released in time by the council, frequent transfers of the staff from KVK to other department were the major constraints faced by the programme coordinators in managing the KVK (Chauhan and Chauhan, 2012) ^[3]. The major constraints faced by the Subject Matter Specialists of selected districts of Northern India were lack of location specific

technologies, too much reporting work, price fluctuations in crops other than paddy and wheat, untimely supply of various inputs or budget, lack of freedom to disagree with decisions taken by superiors and coterminous nature of the job respectively (Kumar and Kaur, 2015) ^[4].

Materials and Methods

The study was undertaken by taking the KVK officials of Cooch Behar district of Cooch Behar district. The activities of KVK is extended to four blocks at present. The constraints were taken for the research purpose were administrative, management, technological, Infrastructure and policy, Financial and political constraints. Constraints were measured as perceived by the officials in the organization. Different constraint situations were exposed with a 3-point scale for response as: extreme (3), moderate (2) and low (1) respectively (Panda and Pal, 2020) ^[6]. The mean score of the constraints was considered as the value of constraint and ranking was done.

Results and Discussion

Table-1 displayed the frequency distribution of officials perceived different levels of constraints (somewhat, moderate, extreme) and ranking of different constraints faced by the KVK officials during service to the farmers. The table showed different types of constraints faced by the officials like administrative, management, technological, Infrastructure & policy, Financial and political constraints.

Table 1: Constraints faced by KVK officials (expressed in percentage)

Sl. No.	Constraints	Somewhat (1)	Moderate (2)	Extreme (3)	Mean Score	RANK
Administrative constraints						
1.	Inadequate staffing pattern to provide pluralistic services to the farmers	0	40.00	60.00	2.60	II
2.	Staff vacancy within sanctioned posts	20.00	40.00	40.00	2.20	IV
3.	Other line departments are reluctant to support practicing pluralistic services	20.00	40.00	40.00	2.20	V
4.	Posts of supporting staff are less	0	0	100.00	3.00	I
5.	Too much report writing	0	40.00	60.00	2.60	III
6.	Lack of opportunities for updating knowledge	40.00	20.00	20.00	1.80	VI
Management Constraint						
1.	Lack of incentives for excellent work	0	0	100.00	3.00	I
2.	Lack of encouragement from superiors	40.00	40.00	20.00	1.80	II
3.	Lack of cooperation from subordinates, office staff and colleagues	40.00	60.00	0	1.60	IV
4.	Discrimination in rewards	20.00	80.00	0	1.80	III
5.	Difficulty in practicing Bottom-up planning with farming community	60.00	20.00	20.00	1.60	V
Technological constraint						
1.	Lack of location specific technologies	40.00	60.00	0	1.60	II
2.	Lack of response from the farmers to adopt technologies	20.00	80.00	0	1.80	I
3.	Lack of training facility to know about new complex technology	80.00	20.00	0	1.20	III
Infrastructure and Policy Constraint						
1.	Lack of infrastructural support below district level	20.00	40.00	40.00	2.20	I
2.	Inadequate policy support for convergence with other service departments (Govt./NGO/Pvt.)	40.00	60.00	0	1.60	III
3.	Shortage of transport facility	20.00	40.00	40.00	2.20	II
Financial and Political constraint						
1.	Pressure from the local politician to fetch more benefits from KVK schemes to their own jurisdiction	100.00	0	0	1.00	II
2.	Inadequacy of funds	0	100.00	0	2.00	I

Administrative Constraint

The analysed result shows that majority of the staffs of KVK reported that posts of supporting staffs are less having highest mean score 3.00 followed by inadequate staffing pattern to provide pluralistic services to the farmers, too much report writing, other line departments are reluctant to support practicing pluralistic services, staff vacancy within sanctioned posts and Lack of opportunities for updating knowledge having mean score 2.60, 2.60, 2.20, 2.20 and 1.80 respectively. The supporting staffs are less in the KVK as compared to the organisation. KVK is the only central level organisation in a district to conduct research and to implement the ICAR programmes with the collaboration with other state departments. So, there is a requirement of more supporting staff and a good staffing pattern which improves the effective work delivery to the farmers. Due to the heavy work load from the government to conduct the programmes and sending report to the government was a major problem. It was also seen that the state departments are not so cooperative to work with KVKs. (Ramannanavar and Nagnur, 2019) [5].

Management Constraint

From the table it was revealed that the management constraints were having more or less similar with each other except lack of incentives for excellent work. Majority of the officials gives first rank to the lack of incentives for excellent work having mean score 3.00. The other constraints perceived were lack of encouragement from superior and discrimination in reward having mean score 1.80. The last two constraints perceived by the officials gives 4th and 5th rank were lack of cooperation from subordinates, office staff and colleagues and difficulty in

practicing Bottom-up planning with farming community. In KVK, there was very less or no incentive for the excellent work. The KVK get award for the excellent work but the officials not get any payment or award for their hard work. So, the government should give some incentive to increase the level of confidence of officials and motivate them to do more hard work.

Technological Constraint

The result shows the ranking of technological constraints faced by the KVK officials. From the table it shows that the officials given first rank to the lack of response from the farmers to adopt the technologies having mean value 1.80 followed by lack of specific technologies (1.60) and lack of training facility to know about new complex technology (1.20) severally. As majority of the farmers are small and medium land holding, so their response to adopt any new technology is very difficult. The technologies recommended by the government is also not location specific which is also big problem for the officials. The officials also do not get enough training to know the complex technologies. So, there should be a good technology specialist who can give training to the farmers about the new technologies.

Infrastructure and Policy Constraint

The table reflected that the officials gives first rank to lack of infrastructural support below district level followed by shortage of transport facility and inadequate policy support for convergence with other service departments (Govt./NGO/Pvt.) respectively. KVK is the only organisations which have no other sub offices below the district level. The KVK staffs directly go to the farmers for any lunch of programme or to solve the problem. The KVK

having only one vehicle for transport which was a big problem for the staffs to cover all the areas of the district. To solve all these constraints infrastructure of KVK should be improved at block and Panchayat level by the convergence with public and private organisations. The policy structure of KVK should include a greater number of farmer producer organisation, NGOs and farmers club to work at the grassroot level.

Financial and Political Constraint

From the table it was revealed that majority of the officials gives first rank to inadequacy of funds was a major constraint followed by pressure from the local politician to fetch more benefits from KVK schemes to their own jurisdiction. The fund was released by the government was not so sufficient to cover the district.

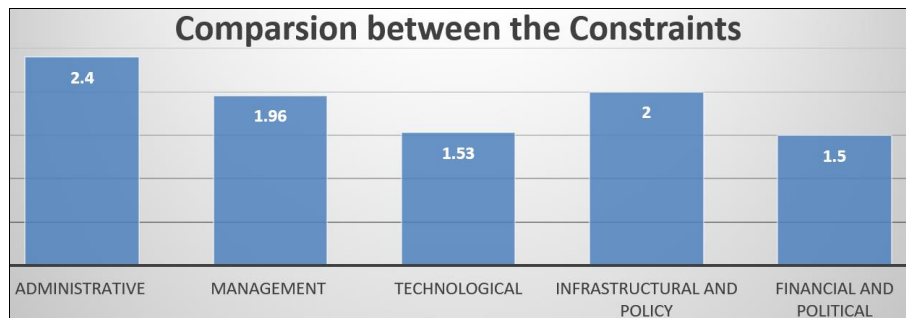


Fig 1: Comparison between different domains of constraints faced by KVK officials

From the figure it showed that administrative constraint was the major constraint followed by infrastructural and policy, management constraint. The other two constraints perceived by the officials were equal.

J Curr Microbiol Appl Sci. 2020;9(11):430-434.

Conclusion

The study revealed that administrative was the major constraints followed by infrastructural and policy, management constraint. From the study it is concluded that supporting staffs are less and inadequate staffs in the organisation affect in providing service to the farmers. It is recommended that the vacancy posts should fill up in time and also provide more support in convergence with other organisation.

Acknowledgement

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude the officials of KVK for sharing their valuable time for giving their support during my research work.

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