

CONSTRAINTS FACED BY THE DAESI INPUT DEALERS OF DISADVANTAGED DISTRICTS OF M.P.

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Received-02.02.2022, Revised-15.02.2022, Accepted-26.02.2022

Abstract: The agro advisory sector is going through major change in last few decades. Public extension service is often blamed for not being able to disseminate technical agricultural knowledge on time and handle the diverse demands of the farming community as per their need. As a result, due to fragmented and competitive nature of advisory services, private sector extension providers have entered into the market. Agri input dealers are those extension providers. The National Institute of Agriculture Extension Management (MANAGE) had developed a one-year diploma course titled 'Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI)', which imparts relevant and location-specific agricultural formal education to equip these input dealers with sufficient knowledge. Keeping these things in view the study was conducted to obtain constraints and suggestions from DAESI input dealers of Balaghat and Mandla districts of M.P. High fees structure and lacking of appreciation in terms of awards were the major constraints and less fees structure with more use of local language in study material were the major suggestions given by the DAESI input dealers.

Keywords: Public extension service, Farming community, Agriculture extension management

INTRODUCTION

In India, the share of agriculture in GDP has declined at a very fast rate in the recent years except during the pandemic. The share of agriculture in GDP increased to 19.9 per cent in 2020-21 from 17.8 per cent in 2019-20. Otherwise the last time the contribution of the agriculture sector in GDP was at 20 per cent was in 2003-04. (Economic Survey of India 2020-21) The reason for declining can be accounted to growing share of other sectors, lack of technology, irrigation, energy facilities etc in the rural areas that have led to falling growth in agricultural sector. Among these unavailability of getting timely and need based technology is the prime one.

A competent extension system capable of disseminating timely and need based farm technology among farming communities is essential in order to achieve sustained growth in agriculture. The system of transfer of technology from research to the farmers through proper stakeholders played an important role in modernizing agriculture.

Agri-input dealers are one of those important stakeholder. In India, there are about 2.82 lakh practicing agri-input dealers, who are the prime source for communicating the farm information to the farming community. Most of these input dealers do not have formal agricultural education. In this context, the National Institute of Agriculture Extension Management (MANAGE) had designed a one-year diploma course titled 'Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI)', which imparts relevant and location-specific agricultural education to equip these input

dealers with sufficient knowledge to transform them into para-extension professionals so as to enable them to address the day-to-day problems being faced by the farmers at field level.

Hence, the present study was carried out in two disadvantaged districts of M.P with the following objectives:

1. To know the constraints faced by the DAESI input dealers.
2. To obtain the suggestions from the DAESI input dealers for the improvement of the program.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in two disadvantaged districts, Balaghat with semi tribal population and Mandla with tribal population of Madhya Pradesh. Balaghat had three nodal training. i) Farmers training center, ii)-COA, Balaghat and iii)-KVK, Badgaon and Mandala has only one training center at KVK, Mandla. All these institutes were selected for the study. These 4 centers consisting total of 160 input dealers (40 in each center) from the batch 2019-20 under DAESI programme. Out of which, 25 trainees from each center were selected randomly. Thus making a total sample size of 100.

Constraints faced by the DAESI input dealers

The data pertaining on Table.1 reveals various constraints expressed by the respondents. Cent per cent (100%) respondents expressed High fees structure of Rs. 20,000/- for admission of input Dealers as the major constraints followed by lacking of appreciation in terms of awards and rewards for good performance (82%) and resource persons are not using local language (77%). About 75% of

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respondents indicated that field and agro-industrial visits are less in number followed by mismanagement in conducting previously scheduled class on time (51%) and Study material provided containing very vast and irrelevant information with respect to curriculum (49%). About (42%) of the respondents revealed that no mechanism of contact with resource persons after class was the next

constraint faced by them followed by no remedial class for those input dealers who were from subjects other than biology (36%). About (18%) of respondents expressed that batch size of 40 was large and only (8%) of respondents felt that quality of lunch and sanitation in class room was poor. The present finding gets support from research reported by Mamata (2018).

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to constraints faced by them during DAESI Programme (n=100)

S. No	Constraints	Percentage	Rank
1	Lacking of appreciation in terms of awards and rewards for good performance	82%	II
2	Resource persons are not using local language	77%	III
3	High fees structure of Rs. 20,000/- for admission of Input Dealers	100%	I
4	Less number of field class and agro industrial visits	75%	IV
5	Study material provided containing very vast and irrelevant information with respect to curriculum	49%	VI
6	Batch size of 40 is large	18%	IX
7	No remedial class for those input dealers who were from subjects other than biology	36%	VIII
8	Mismanagement in conducting previously scheduled class on time	51%	V
9	Poor quality of lunch and sanitation in class room	8%	X
10	No mechanism of contact with resource persons after class	42%	VII

Suggestions for the improvement in DAESI programme

The data pertaining on Table 2 reveals various suggestions expressed by the respondents for the improvement of DAESI such as study material should be provided in local language (95%) followed by less fees (89%). About (81%) indicated there should be provision of awards and rewards for the motivation followed by Study material should be updated according to area (79%) and equal focus on theory and practical class (77%). About (72%) of respondents expressed next suggestion as directory

consisting of email and contact number of resource person should be made available to dealers followed by more number of field classes and agro industrial visits (68%) and separate extra remedial class for those who are from streams other than biology (46%). About (21%) of respondents feel that curriculum should be updated with modern ICT tools and mobile apps and only (17%) of respondents expressed there should be arrangement of special doubt interaction class. The finding was in agreement with Mamatha (2018).

Table 2. Suggestions for the improvement of DAESI programme(n=100)

S. No	Suggestions	Percentage	Rank
1	Fees should be reduced	89%	II
2	More number of field classes and agro industrial visits	68%	VII
3	Study material should be provided in local language	95%	I

4	Study material should be updated according to area	79%	IV
5	Provision of awards and rewards for the motivation	81%	III
6	Separate extra remedial class who are from streams other than biology	46%	VIII
7	Equal focus on theory and practical class	77%	V
8	Directory consisting of email and contact number of resource person should be made available to dealers	72%	VI
9	Arrangement of special doubt interaction class	17%	X
10	Curriculum should be updated with modern ICT tools and mobile apps	21%	IX

CONCLUSION

On the basis of above findings, it can be concluded that high fees structure and lacking of awards and rewards were the major problems and suggestions in terms of less fees, use of local language in study material clearly indicates that these changes should be applied in DAESI programme as next implementation for better impact.

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