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RESTRICTIONS FACED BY THE INPUT DEALERS IN DISSEMINATING ACCURATE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORIES AND AGRO INPUT SERVICES TO THE FARMING COMMUNITY OF HARDA DISTRICT (M.P.), INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The agricultural inputs are the backbone for better crop production and protection now a day due highly vulnerable weather conditions occurrence of multiple diseases and insect pests' infestation being seen in the crop production system continuously. The people deals with the selling of the agricultural inputs for different crops are called input dealers they may also considered as the para extension workers in the district. They have very influential role in agric production system as input service providers and information sources for the farming community. Input dealers may provide various types of agri-based information, other extension services; financial services/credit based input supply etc. to the farmers of their touch. It also has been confirmed by many other studies that the input-dealers play a prominent role in the dissemination of a new technology based on agri-input like insecticide, pesticide and micro and macro fertilizers. Agro-input dealers are sellers of agricultural inputs that may include wide range like different crop's improved seeds, different kinds of fertilizer, crop protection based chemicals, improved farm equipments and other machineries, veterinary medicines and animal feeds at different rural connected places. The response of 240 input dealers was received from the three selected blocks of district Harda, MP during 2019-2022 for this study. The important restriction as dependent variable directly responsible for better input dealing venture were found the need of technical training for input dealers (89.16 per cent) was perceived by input dealers as their main constraint and ranked first followed by financial recovery from farmers, lack of agricultural technical knowledge, irregular supply of input in critical need of time, lack of loan facilities to extend business profile further, non availability of quality seeds of major crops, lack of government department support in different legal formalities, inadequate support received from government extension personnel, credit based input dealing, unpredictable attitude of farmers and insufficient own storage facilities during the study. The most important feedback or suggestions given by input dealers to surmount the restrictions or impediments were admitted as exposer field visits for better agricultural technical knowledge should be arranged by government department with agri-experts/ extension scientists was perceived by input dealers (84.17 per cent) and was ranked as first followed by training should be given to the license holder input dealers by the government agri-experts/ extension scientists regularly, farmer should purchase the inputs in cash mode or early recovery of credit based sale should be maintained/time bound or assured, training need based diploma course are to be offered to input dealers for knowledge improvement and technological temperament and better agro-input services by input dealers etc. So that the agricultural development can be catered through farmers and input dealers with maintaining their emotional, financial, social bond in each other.

Key words : Agro-input dealers, Training & exposer visit, Crop production, Quality input, Technical information.

Introduction

Profitable agricultural production system is the need of present time to boost rural economy and livelihood

upliftment in India. The major responsible reasons for the poor agricultural growth and income generation may be as fragmentation of agricultural land holdings is

increasing day by day, increasing the cost of production, loss of fertility status of soils due limited or no use of organic inputs, poor trade, transport and marketing value chain for agricultural produced and weak storage facilities, much fluctuations in produce price in the country.

The high level of crop production and protection cannot be achieved without using different quality input in the agricultural crop cultivation system. Farmers are now a day requires very safe crop cultivation and free from any augmented crop loss risks so that they could improve their income status and their lifestyle, financial strength and educational upliftment of their children, which is not possible without using quality inputs in production process. That is why they generally get depend upon the input dealers, who are the private services providers available nearby easily. These input dealers in present time play an important role in several aspects of agricultural development at town to very interior village level covering to normal farmers to tribal settings of farmers. The input dealers either private, NGOs or several other service providing groups has a very strong input marketing networks among farming community and they are the base for farmer's decision making process. The majority of the farmers in India is still doing their agricultural activities and crop protection measurement with the help of these input dealers. The government institutions like ICAR, SAUs, line departments, KVKs, etc. are the mail extension professional for creating huge awareness among farming community for better production, plant protection, marketing, value chain development and other input information. But the whole farming community cannot be touched by these professionals at a time in formal way.

Although, the government extension personnel are also helping the farmers at different levels through personally and by using social media platforms like Whatsapp, facebook, instagram, vistaar platform, twitter, mobile messages and so on, but they have other many official responsibility and very big jurisdiction often compel the farmers to consult with private input dealers because they are situated nearby and so easily approachable. The agri- input dealers provides crucial platform to farmers for different seeds, useful pesticides and information on fertilizers as noticed by Etyang (2013). Sheikh *et al.* (2016) also observed that more than three fourth of his respondent cotton growers received extension services from private sources or seed companies. Sindhu and Bhullar (2005) has reported that farmers' information sharing with input dealers, fellow and progressive farmers was better than any other information sources in whole Punjab state. Agri-input dealers are the second most

important source of farm information after progressive farmers in rural areas (Shekara and Durga, 2007; Adhiguru *et al.*, 2009). Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI), launched by GOI at MANAGE, for providing latest technical knowledge in various sub-sectors of agriculture to the input dealers all over the country (Gulati *et al.*, 2018). The majority of the input-dealers face problem of delay in payment from farmers told by Sharma (2017). Hence, keeping the insight of the situation in mind this study was conducted on to know the restrictions faced by the input dealers in disseminating accurate agricultural advisories and input services to the farming community of Harda district of Madhya Pradesh.

Materials and Methods

The response of 240 input dealers was received from the three selected blocks of district Harda, M.P. during 2019-2022 purposively selected for the present study. The selection of 80 input dealers was done from each block as Harda, Timrani and Khirkiya block, respectively. The data for this study was collected by personal contact method with the help of structured interview schedule by utilizing the ex-post facto research design for the study. The open-end questions were also asked to the input dealers and considered for their needful suggestions in this way the collected data were classified, tabulated and analyzed as per objective of this study for drawing meaningful interpretation of the received responses. The statistical tools such as frequency, correlation coefficient, percentage and rank were entertained for rationality of data under study.

Results and Discussion

This study was completed to know the major problem or restrictions perceived during their running business work. Many of them were happy and few were not happy with these business deals because of several reasons as their social backgrounds, financial strength and other legal activities. But it was observed that their role in the farming community cannot be ignored. These input service providers were very much tolerating to farmers behavior and adding their very strong contribution for better crop protection/ production in the district through their noble input services since very past year continuously. The socioeconomic standards of the input dealers were also studied to see their potentials and level of participation and responsible factors for successful input ventures in the district.

This may be indicated from the calculated values of correlation coefficient observed in the Table 1 that the education received by input dealers ($r = 0.464^*$), caste

Table 1 : Analyzing the possible correlation among socio-economic and personal variables with Input dealing venture in Harda district of Madhya Pradesh.

N = 240

| S. no. | The Important Independent variables | Correlation co-efficient ('r' value) |
|--------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Age of input dealers | -0.193* |
| 2 | Education received by input dealers | 0.464* |
| 3 | Main occupation as agro-input dealing | 0.546** |
| 4 | Caste of respondents/ input dealers | 0.328* |
| 5 | Size of land asset possessed of input dealers | 0.641** |
| 6 | Input dealer's annual regular income | 0.837** |
| 7 | Available marketing amenities/opportunities | 0.702** |
| 8 | Available own storage facilities | 0.342** |
| 9 | Strength of regular customers/farmers | 0.471* |

* Values significant at 5 % level of probability, ** Values significant at 1%.

of respondents/ input dealers ($r = 0.328^*$) and Strength of regular customers/farmers ($r = 0.471^*$) were found positive towards adoption of input dealing venture as source of income at 5 % of probability level was observed. The three important factors were seems important for the adoption of this as business as main occupation by input dealers. It may again infer that education level of input dealers increased the comprehension and thoughtfulness, which trait helps them positively to perceive business ethics and better dealing skills with new customers of farmers in short time. Continuously, the main occupation as agro-input dealing ($r = 0.546^{**}$), possessed size of land asset of input dealers ($r = 0.641^{**}$), Input dealer's annual regular income ($r = 0.837^{**}$), available marketing amenities/opportunities ($r = 0.702^{**}$) and available own storage facilities ($r = 0.342^{**}$) were again found positively and significantly interrelated to the acceptance of input dealing business or venture by input dealers at the 1% level of possibility. It may indicate that the possessed size of available land asset of input dealers also may be a critical feature which may also affect the taking up of this venture as source of income by input dealers. The other important independent variable of study as available marketing amenities/opportunities in the locality was also realized the decisive cause for this business because the assured marketing of inputs due to strong network among farming community by input dealers and high productive area where the multiple cropping system with high cropping intensity region. The observed finding of this segment may be justified with

conclusions as earlier perceived by Choudhary and Mishra (2001), Joseph and Padaria (2007), Ram (2010) and Kumar *et al.* (2019) in case of crop technology adoption. The important independent variable age of input dealers was found negatively correlated to this venture with value ($r = -0.193^*$), it means the age does not has more role in success of this business but experience of input dealers was matters. The above processed data discloses regarding age factor of the interviewed input dealers was not found related to the adoption of this input dealing business in Harda district.

The restriction word is herby used for unexpected circumstances or constraints or the situation which may affects the business performance of any input dealers unknowingly. These situations are very much responsible for successful venture establishment and providing better services

to the farming community by input dealers in all part of the district. The perception regarding important twelve restrictions/dependent variable faced by the input dealers in Harda are being presented as for understanding the plight.

The data has been presented regarding important restriction as dependent variable directly responsible for better input dealing venture in Table 2 clearly indicated that the need of technical training for input dealers (89.16 per cent) was perceived by input dealers as their main constraint and ranked first followed by financial recovery from farmers (88.75 per cent) ranked second, lack of agricultural technical knowledge (87.08 per cent) ranked third, irregular supply of input in critical need of time (86.25 per cent) ranked fourth, lack of loan facilities to extend business profile further (85.00 per cent) ranked fifth, non availability of quality seeds of major crops (82.50 per cent) ranked sixth, lack of government department support in different legal formalities (80.83 per cent) ranked seventh, inadequate support received from government extension personnel (80.41 per cent) ranked eighth, credit based input dealing (77.91 per cent) ranked tenth, unpredictable attitude of farmers (77.08 per cent) ranked eleventh and insufficient own storage facilities (76.67 per cent) rank placed at twelfth position.

Thus, further it can be experimentally predicted that the important constraints or restrictions faced by input dealers in providing smooth agro-input services to the farmers were inadequate training or need of technical

Table 2 : Allocation of the input dealers according to major restriction faced by the input dealers in providing agro-input services to the farmers in Harda district.

N = 240

| S. no. | Major restrictions faced by input dealers | Frequency | Per cent | Rank |
|--------|--|-----------|----------|------|
| 1 | Lack of agricultural technical knowledge | 209 | 87.08 | III |
| 2 | Need of technical training for input dealers | 214 | 89.16 | I |
| 3 | Financial recovery from farmers | 213 | 88.75 | II |
| 4 | Credit based input dealing | 187 | 77.91 | X |
| 5 | Irregular supply of input in critical need of time | 207 | 86.25 | IV |
| 6 | Lack of loan facilities to extend business profile further | 204 | 85.00 | V |
| 7 | Non availability of quality seeds of major crops | 198 | 82.50 | VI |
| 8 | Inadequate support received from government extension personnel | 193 | 80.41 | VIII |
| 9 | Diversification in agriculture | 188 | 78.33 | IX |
| 10 | Lack of government department support in different legal formalities | 194 | 80.83 | VII |
| 11 | Unpredictable attitude of farmers | 185 | 77.08 | XI |
| 12 | Insufficient own storage facilities | 184 | 76.67 | XII |

Table 3 : Allocation of the input dealers according their work feedback to overcome from the restrictions or hurdles faced by then to successful input dealing venture in Harda district.

(N = 240)

| S. no. | Feedback/Suggestion received from input dealers | Frequency | Per cent | Rank |
|--------|--|-----------|----------|------|
| 1 | Exposer field visits for better agricultural technical knowledge should be arranged by government department with agri-experts/ extension scientists | 202 | 84.17 | I |
| 2 | Training should be given to the license holder input dealers by the government agri-experts/ extension scientists regularly | 199 | 82.91 | II |
| 3 | Easy loan facility should be available for input dealers to expand their venture with less paper work | 182 | 75.83 | VII |
| 4 | Supply of quality seed or other agri-inputs should be assured by government agencies and intuitions/authorized companies | 185 | 77.08 | VI |
| 5 | Farmer should purchase the inputs in cash mode or early recovery of credit based sale should be maintained/time bound or assured | 195 | 81.25 | III |
| 6 | Government should facilitate input dealers for construction of their own storage on subsidy basis or availability government storage at lower rent basis | 189 | 78.75 | V |
| 7 | Training need based diploma course are to be offered to input dealers for knowledge improvement and technological temperament and better agro-input services by input dealers | 191 | 79.58 | IV |
| 8 | Farmers should have positive attitude towards input dealers and their professional services | 177 | 73.75 | IX |
| 9 | Positive support from government department officials to regulate the input venture and legal advisories/ formalities to start new venture or continue existing venture at time to time interval is expected continuously. | 180 | 75.00 | VIII |

training for the input dealers, financial recovery of credit based sold inputs, pesticides, fertilizers to the beneficiary farmers was matter of concern for input dealers followed by lack of agricultural technical knowledge, irregular supply of input in critical need of time, lack of loan facilities to extend business profile further, non availability of quality

seeds of major crops, lack of government department support in different legal formalities etc. were the points of taken care for improving the status and successful running of this venture in Harda district. The findings are in the line with the findings reported by Chapaneri (2012), Salukhe (2009) and Patel *et al.* (2019).

The processed data given in the Table 3 is for explaining that the most important feedback or suggestions given by input dealers to surmount the restrictions or impediments in the manner form most important priorities covering in total nine feedback based variables for better performance of the input dealers and successful venture among farming community as exposé field visits for better agricultural technical knowledge should be arranged by government department with agri-experts/ extension scientists was perceived by input dealers (84.17 per cent) and was ranked as first followed by training should be given to the license holder input dealers by the government agri-experts/ extension scientists regularly (82.91 per cent) was ranked second, farmer should purchase the inputs in cash mode or early recovery of credit based sale should be maintained/time bound or assured (81.25 per cent) was ranked third, training need based diploma course are to be offered to input dealers for knowledge improvement and technological temperament and better agro-input services by input dealers (79.58 per cent) was ranked fourth, government should facilitate input dealers for construction of their own storage on subsidy basis or availability government storage at lower rent basis (78.75 per cent) was ranked fifth, supply of quality seed or other agri-inputs should be assured by government agencies and intuitions/authorized companies (77.08 per cent) was ranked sixth, easy loan facility should be available for input dealers to expand their venture with less paper work (75.83 per cent) was ranked seventh, positive support from government department officials to regulate the input venture and legal advisories/ formalities to start new venture or continue existing venture at time to time interval is expected continuously (75.00 per cent) was ranked eighth and farmers should have positive attitude towards input dealers and their professional services (73.75 per cent) was ranked as ninth, respectively. The study inferences were positively supported by the earlier reports presented by Patel *et al.* (2019); Kumar and Kumar (2021), Chaudhari and Chauhan (2016) and Salukhe (2009).

Thus, it can be inferred that the important suggestive feedback given by input dealers to overcome the restrictions faced by license holder input dealers should be taken care of for good quality agro-input services among farming community and better crop harvest and assured income of farmers and input dealers with maintaining business values and smooth relationship among government functionaries, farmers and input dealers and other involved stakeholders in this system for agricultural development & profitability.

Conclusion

Indian economy is the basis for overall development of Indian population basically who are the dependent on agriculture and allied ventures in India. Farming community and their crop production, crop diversification efforts are playing very crucial role if supplying food and nutritional security to the Indian residents. The agricultural profitability and prosperity is depends upon the better yield of the crops which is possible through enough continuous supply of quality agro inputs to the farming community. The agro input dealers has very strong and wide network with farmers for their marketing chain against input supply and technical instant support system at primary level. Therefore, the above discussed restrictions or constraints faced by input dealers in the running venture must be taken care and possible solution should be provided them for their impediments by the farmer's level or government policy/government functionaries level and other stakeholders level or vice versa. So that the agricultural development can be catered through farmers and input dealers with maintaining their emotional, financial, social bond in each other.

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