

Extension and Advisory Services by Milk Producer Organizations in Andhra Pradesh -Satisfaction of Member Producers

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ABSTRACT

Milk producer organisations (MPOs) are empowering milk producers with appropriate technical knowledge and skills. But, the intangible services such as knowledge provision through extension and advisory services (EAS) have been less valued by cooperatives and also by the dairy farmers. In this context, a study was carried out to know the status of extension and advisory services provided by MPOs in terms of satisfaction of milk producers in Andhra Pradesh. Ex-post-facto research design was followed to study 180 milk producers who were selected from the three renowned milk producer organisations existing in Andhra Pradesh. The study revealed that majority of respondents were middle aged, illiterate, male, belong to open category and were members of co-operatives since years. Most of the milk producers were satisfied and partly satisfied with extension services, whereas milk producers in majority satisfied with advisory services from MPOs. However, it was found that MPOs were not making use of electronic and digital technologies for EAS. It is recommended that MPOs can make use of ICT tools such as television, mobile telephony for rendering timely extension advisory services to the member producers towards sustainable production.

Key words: Extension and advisory services, Level of satisfaction of milk producers, MPOs, Milk producers.

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INTRODUCTION

The Indian dairy industry is on the threshold of many changes that would totally transform the dairy sector and co-operatives have been recognized as effective institutions to improve the milk production potential (Popker and Raju, 2014). Milk producer organisations (MPOs) are playing an important role in empowering member producers with appropriate technical knowledge and skills through various services like breeding, health care, production & management, fodder production and marketing services. But, intangible services such as knowledge provision through extension and advisory services have been less valued by both co-operatives as well as by the dairy farmers, whose importance yet to be realized by all the stakeholders involved in dairy production. Extension of knowledge, technology and services through extension workers to the grass-root level is paramount importance for the growth of livestock sector (Singh *et al.* 2014) and is the key to the success of dairy development. Moreover, special extension and advisory efforts are also needed to reach and communicate semi-literate, illiterate and disorganized rural masses effectively. Use of pictures, photos and videos can promote better understanding among farmers and use of social media like WhatsApp offers multiple ways of livestock information dissemination to farmers and has potential to offer real time solutions to livestock problems and supports mobile learning

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among the farmers (Devesh and Chander, 2017). Extension and advisory services are the information services that are needed by farmers which develop technical, organizational and management skills in order to improve their livelihoods and well-being. This study was carried out to identify the level of satisfaction of member producers about extension and advisory services provided by MPOs which are in existence in Andhra Pradesh for decades.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The three Milk Producers Organisations existing in Visakhapatnam, Krishna and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh were selected due to their landmarks in milk procurement, milk processing, product making and marketing record. From each district, three mandals were selected namely Anakapalle, Kotapadu and Chodavaram of Visakhapatnam district; Gannavaram, Agiripalli and Unguturu of Krishna district; Karlapalem, Kakumanu and Bapatla of Guntur district by consulting the officials of milk producer organisations considering the operating area of the cooperatives under MPOs, highest number of milk producers, milch animal population and milk production. From each mandal 20 milk producers *i.e.*, 60 from each milk producer

organisation were selected through stratified random sampling method to form the total sample size of 180 milk producers for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Member Producers including Ownership

The average age of milk producers was found to be 47 years and majority (72.78%) were male. Nearly half (49.44%) of the milk producers were from Open Category, whereas, more than one-third (34.44%) of milk producers *i.e.*, majority were illiterates. Dairy farming was the main occupation for 45.56% of milk producers and nearly two third (65% & 66%) of the

Table 1: Personal characteristics of member producers(n=180)

Factor	Characteristics	No.	%
Age	Middle (Between 34-60 years)	117	65.00
Gender	Male	131	72.78
Caste	Open Category	89	49.44
	Backward Caste	70	38.89
	Scheduled Caste	19	10.56
	Schedule Tribe	02	01.11
Education	Illiterate	62	34.44
	Primary school	28	15.56
	Uptomiddle school	22	12.22
	Uptohigh school	34	18.89
	Intermediate	16	08.89
	Graduate and above	18	10.00
Occupation	Dairy farming	82	45.56
	Agriculture	67	37.22
	Agriculture labour	08	04.44
	Others	23	12.78
Experience in dairy farming (Years)	Low (<16)	34	18.89
	Medium (16-36)	117	65.00
Experience as member producer (Years)	Low (<9)	32	17.78
	Medium (9-27)	120	66.67
Social participation	Low (<1.1)	61	33.89
	Medium (1.1-2.5)	88	48.89
P Personal localite sources	Friends/ Relatives/ Progressive farmers	131	72.78
	Village dairy cooperative paid-secretary	151	83.89
Personal cosmopolite sources	Veterinary Assistant Surgeon/ Extension Officer	178	98.89
	MPO officials/ MPO Secretary	130	72.22
Impersonal cosmopolite sources	Farm magazines	40	22.22
	Radio	127	70.56
	Television	138	76.67
	Mobile telephony	103	57.22

Farm characteristics in terms of ownership of the farmers

milk producers had medium experience in dairy farming and were members of milk producer since years (Table 1).

Nearly half (48.89%) of the milk producers had medium level of social participation, whereas, cooperative paid-secretary (83.89%), Veterinary Assistant Surgeon/extension officer (98.89%), television (76.67%) were the major personal localite, personal cosmopolite and impersonal cosmopolite sources being utilised by member producers for dairy activities related information. Veterinary Hospital was one of the important information sources for obtaining information on zoonotic diseases as mentioned by Ahuja *et al.*, (2021) in their study on information seeking behaviour of dairy farmers about prevention of zoonotic diseases.

Ownership of Agriculture and Livestock Implements

Ownership of the milk producers was represented as land and livestock holdings, agriculture and livestock farm implement and annual income from dairying (Table 2).

Land and Livestock Holdings

More than three-fourth (78.89% & 81.67%) of milk producers had low level of land holding with medium dairy animal holdings. Very few milk producers possessed milking machines (4.44%), chaff cutters (5%), bullock carts (6.11%) and tractors (1.67%). Its appreciable that more than three-fourth (78.89%) possessed TV followed by mobile phones

(72.22%) and few possessed radio (14.44%) which are the communication media.

Extension Services of MPOs

Milk producers were satisfied with extension services in the form of farm demonstrations (81.11%), hands-on training (79.44%), field visits (73.34%), group discussions (70.56%) and regular training programmes (56.11%) an indication of effective rendering of extension services in gaining knowledge on the aspects of dairy farming. With the services of MPOs through exhibitions (43.33%), campaigns (28.89%) and farm literatures (35.00%), the milk producers were partly satisfied as these activities were mostly held at district level and access to these services to most of the milk producers is not always possible (Table 3).

About two-thirds (61.11%) of the milk producers were not satisfied with the services like field tour to successful farms as the MPOs might be concentrating mostly on progressive milk producers. Rathod *et al.* (2012) also mentioned that only 37.33% of milk producers were satisfied with extension services delivery by Gokul union. MPOs need to make use of extension service delivery methods which include information communication technology like film/video show, TV/radio programme, mobile telephony/SMS services and can install information kiosk at every possible milk collection centre or at union level. Use of pictures, photos and

Table 2: Farm characteristics in terms of ownership of the farmers (n=180)

Character	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Landholding	Low (< 2.6 acres)	142	78.89
	Medium (2.6-5 acres)	29	16.11
	High (> 5 acres)	09	5.00
Dairy animal holding	Small (<2 dairy animals)	15	08.33
	Medium (2 to 8 dairy animals)	147	81.67
	Large (> 8 dairy animals)	18	10.00
Agriculture and livestock implement	Bullock cart	11	6.11
	Chaff cutter	09	5.00
	Milk cans	180	100
	Milking machine	08	4.44
	Teat dippers	00	000
	Tractor	03	1.67
Communication and mass media	Radio	26	14.44
	Television	142	78.89
	DVD	40	22.22
	Mobile phone	130	72.22
	Computer	03	01.67
	Mobile phone	130	72.22
Income from dairying (Rs.)	Low (<34,168)	10	05.56
	Medium (34,168- 2,02,100)	149	82.78
	High (>2,02,100)	21	11.67



Table 3: Satisfaction of milk producers about extension services by MPOs (n=180)

Extension services	Level of Satisfaction					
	Satisfied		Partly satisfied		Not satisfied	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Farm demonstrations	146	81.11	20	11.11	14	07.78
Field visits	132	73.34	33	18.33	15	08.33
Field tour to successful farms	32	17.78	38	21.11	110	61.11
Group discussions	127	70.56	50	27.78	03	01.66
Exhibition	28	15.56	78	43.33	74	41.11
Campaigns	43	23.89	52	28.89	85	47.22
Hands-on trainings	143	79.44	27	15.00	10	05.56
Regular training programmes	101	56.11	54	30.00	25	13.89
Farm literatures	71	39.44	63	35.00	46	25.56

Table 4: Satisfaction of milk producers about advisory services by MPOs

Advisory services	Level of Satisfaction (n=180)					
	Satisfied		Partly Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
To adopt recommended breeding practices	156	86.67	14	7.78	10	5.55
Balanced feeding	170	94.44	08	4.45	02	1.11
Care and management of new born	165	91.67	10	5.56	05	2.77
Advise farmers to keep animals in loose housing	158	87.78	15	8.33	07	3.89
Maintenance of 60 days dry period	161	89.44	13	7.22	06	3.34
Providing feeding tips during drought	145	80.56	25	13.89	10	5.55
Providing feeding tips to enhance milk fat percentage	159	88.34	15	8.33	06	3.33
Clean milk production (CMP) practices	168	93.33	07	3.89	05	2.78
Correct milking method	173	96.11	05	2.78	02	1.11
First aid practices	132	73.33	34	18.89	14	7.78
Importance of collection of samples for disease diagnosis	110	61.11	45	25.00	25	13.89
Shed and farm hygiene	121	67.22	56	31.11	03	1.67
Mixed cropping system	103	57.22	60	33.33	17	9.45
To grow high yielding fodder crops	111	61.67	50	27.78	19	10.55
About fodder seeds	124	68.89	40	22.22	16	8.89

videos can promote better understanding among farmers (Devesh and Chander 2017). *Kisan melas* can be conducted to motivate milk producers on large scale. Social media tools such as WhatsApp can serve as a potent internet learning medium as there are various ways (content, photographs, pictures, sound, sound visuals and the web joins) through which farming community can learn and share information adequately (Andres and Woodard, 2013).

Advisory Services by MPOs

More than 80% of milk producers were satisfied with advisory services on correct milking method, balanced feeding,

clean milk production practices, care and management of new born, maintenance of 60 days dry period, feeding tips to enhance milk fat percentage (Table 4). All the milk producers were satisfied with the advisory services provided by the milk producer organisations which are resulting in empowerment of milk producers through better knowledge. The regularity in the advisory services might also lead to satisfaction among milk producers. Chander and Sulaiman (2014) reported that 16% of the member producers could access extension and advisory services and mentioned that 32% were dissatisfied with the extension and advisory service delivery and majority (66%) were partially satisfied.

CONCLUSION

It can be inferred from the present study that the member producers of the milk producer organisations in the study area were satisfied with extension services such as farm demonstrations, hands-on training, field visits, group discussions and regular training programmes. While extension services like exhibitions and campaigns by MPOs make milk producers partly satisfied. All the advisory services provided by the milk producer organisations satisfied the milk producers. Milk producer organisations can make use of ICT tools like mobile telephony and related social media in reaching the farmers for regular alerts in seasonal dairy farm activities and preventive health care measures towards sustainable and profitable dairy production.

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