

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

# Factors influencing implementation of paddy promotion programmes under different levels of planning

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**SUMMARY :** This paper reports on a study conducted in Thrissur district of Kerala State to identify the factors influencing implementation of paddy promotion programmes that could lead to an improved success and sustainability rate for the interventions. Three leading paddy producing blocks from Thrissur district viz., Pazhayanur, Puzhakkal and Anthikkad and from them leading paddy producing Grama Panchayats namely, Chelakkara, Arimpur and Adat, respectively were selected by adopting multi-stage sampling method. Thirty extension personnel were randomly interviewed using pre-tested questionnaire. Factor index was used and the analysis identified resource perspectives and scheme features as the most influencing factors that could determine the success of the implemented schemes though in varying degree as in case of schemes under decentralized planning and Centrally sponsored and State schemes. Also, the individual factor indices thus generated for factors influencing Centrally and State sponsored schemes and those under decentralized planning were compared using independent t- test and was found out that the factors influencing the implementation in both cases were significantly different.

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## **BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

Paddy cultivation in Kerala has witnessed a steady decline since the 1980s. The sharp fall in the area under rice cultivation as well as in the quantity of rice produced in the State has important implications for Kerala's economic, ecological and social development. The reduction in rice production will lead to food insecurity, price hike and related socio-economic problems. Over the

last few years, however, there have been some signs of revival in rice production in Kerala. Apart from food security, paddy fields are a vital part of Kerala's environment and ecological systems. They provide natural drainage paths for flood waters, conserve ground water, and are crucial for the preservation of a rich variety of flora and fauna. In several regions of Kerala, paddy cultivation is carried out in a manner that

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enriches the specific geographical and ecological features of these regions (Thomas, 2011). In this context, the Central and State Governments are implementing different development programmes, especially for promoting paddy cultivation and thereby to ensure food security in country. In addition to this, under the decentralized planning system of Kerala, various area specific paddy promotional activities are also being carried out.

According to Panchayati Raj system, three tiers Kerala Panchayat Act, 1994, empowered different tiers of Panchayat to draw up their own plans. Separate budget document exclusively for Local Self Governments (LSGs) has been allocated and decision to devolve 35 to 40 per cent of the plan funds to local governments announced and around 90 per cent of this was devolved with the condition that at least 30 per cent should be spent on productive sectors, has been made. The distinctiveness of Kerala's decentralization is that, it has formularized a participatory framework with inbuilt social accountability measures to take in citizen's involvement in local planning and governance in harmony with the national and regional policies. As a result, every year all village Panchayats shall formulate and implement development plan for the village (GOI, 2006).

Implementation is the process through which technological, organizational and financial resources are configured together to provide an efficient operating system. It is the most important phase in rolling out of all developmental activities. A project is generally considered to be successfully implemented if it: comes in on-schedule (time criterion), comes in on-budget (cost criterion) and achieves basically all the goals originally set for it (effectiveness criterion) and is accepted and used by the client for whom the project is intended (client satisfaction criterion). By its basic definition, a project comprises of a defined time frame to completion, a limited budget and a specified set of performance characteristics. Further, the project is usually targeted for use by some client (Pinto and Slevin, 1987).

Varughese *et al.* (2007) in his study 'Sustainable management of paddy fields in wetland ecosystem of Kerala' stated that unlike other crops, community participation is a pre-requisite for effective planning and successful implementation of rice production programmes. Delay in project implementation not only affect their contributions to the economic growth and

result in the wastage of scarce resources, but also lead to a reduction in the employment potential to be generated on the completion of these projects. The timely completion of agricultural programmes are highly important for improving the production performance (SPB, 1989).

Having an elaborate action and implementation plan, based on the factors influencing the success of the project will ensure increased efficiency of the implementing system as well as the sustainability of the project. This is the focal point upon which this study has been anchored to study the factors influencing the implementation of paddy promotion programmes under Central, State and decentralized planning.

## RESOURCES AND METHODS

Thrissur district from Kerala State was chosen as the locale of the study as the district has shown an increase in the area under paddy cultivation in recent years (DES, 2016). Multi-stage sampling method was used. Three leading paddy producing blocks from Thrissur district *viz.*, Pazhayanur, Puzhakkal and Anthikkad and from them leading paddy producing Grama Panchayats namely, Chelakkara, Adat and Arimpur, respectively were selected. Thirty extension personnel including Assistant Directors of Agriculture (ADA), Agricultural Officers (AO) and Agricultural Assistants (AA) were randomly selected as the respondents representing selected blocks and Grama Panchayats.

In the light of pilot study conducted, literature review made and discussion with the experts, dimension wise factors affecting implementation of paddy promotion programmes for Centrally and State sponsored as well as those under decentralized planning were screened out with consensus approach and were given to selected 30 extension personnel. The respondents were requested to rate their response for each factor as 'most influenced', 'somewhat influenced' and 'less influenced' having 3, 2 and 1 as the assigned weightage, respectively.

Factor index for each dimension under factors influencing implementation was calculated by adding up the individual factor Index under each dimension there after dividing it with the number of factors under that particular dimension.

$$\text{Individual factor index (F.I.)} = \frac{\text{Total score obtained}}{\text{Maximum possible score}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Factor index (F.I.)} = \frac{\text{Sum of individual indices}}{\text{Number of individual factors}} \times 100$$

The individual factor indices thus generated for factors influencing Centrally and State sponsored schemes and those under decentralized planning were compared using independent t-test. SPSS package was used to analyze the data.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results of the study are presented as followed.

### Factors influencing implementation of programmes:

Table 1, reveals that, resource perspective followed by scheme features, beneficiary perspective and leadership style and management approach were identified as the major factors influencing implementation of paddy promotion programmes.

#### *Resource perspective:*

Among various resource aspects, the officers perceived timely release of fund followed by timely supply of adequate amount of quality inputs as the factors that mostly influence the implementation of schemes under decentralized planning as well as the Central and State schemes. Availability of institutional facilities, technical support, storage facility and storage life of the inputs as well as the transportation cost involved were considered as moderately influencing factors. Etwire *et al.* (2013) based on their study stated that farmers who require production credit are more likely to participate in different projects in order to take advantage of these credit facilities and also pointed out that most financial institutions that have credit facilities for farmers usually do not have capacity to provide technical backstopping as well as monitor effective utilization of the loans.

#### *Scheme features:*

Regarding features of Centrally and State sponsored schemes the factors perceived in the order of their importance were percentage of subsidy given under each scheme, trainings conducted and the inclusion of farmers belonging to all the categories. Whereas in case of schemes under decentralized planning all the three factors were perceived as equally influencing the implementation process. Melkotte and Vallath (1992) enlisted the factors affecting development programmes access to timely and

relevant information, involvement of farmers, financial and material aspects, market facilities and infrastructure facilities. Odoyo (2013) pointed out that exclusion of some of the members of community initially in project budget led to the project cost being escalated as a result of trying to meet the demands of such individuals for compensation.

#### *Beneficiary perspective:*

Under beneficiary aspects, co-ordination among the members of *Padashekharasamithis*, leadership exhibited by beneficiaries in effective management of programmes, improved group dynamics among the members were perceived as the most influenced factors in implementation of paddy promotion programmes. Knowledge of beneficiaries on paddy promotion programmes was perceived to have moderate influence whereas, conflicts resulting from personal and political interventions were perceived to have comparatively less influence on implementation process, which highlights the unity shown by the beneficiaries towards agricultural developmental programmes. Jeet and Kushawaha (2007) identified farmers as the key factor that affects the effective implementation and functioning of watershed programme. They also identified lack of awareness, poor economic conditions of the farmers, high cost of inputs, failure of officials to solve the non-technical problems of the farmers, indifferent behaviour in the administration, lack of guidance, non-availability of staff at the time of farmers need, lack of technical supervision and non-availability of labour. Busiinge (2010) in his research had emphasized the effect of the attitudes of the community and its leadership on implementation of project and has also stated that farmers who are the members of co-operative organizations adopted more technologies than non-members. Co-operative membership enhances access to information on improved technologies, material inputs of the technologies such as fertilizers and chemicals and credit for the purchase of inputs and payment of hired labour (Odoemenem, 2007). Kumar (1999) in his study multidimensional analysis of agricultural development programmes implemented through people's plan revealed that politics was one of important factors influencing the successful implementation of ADP's. Geetha (2002) identified that more three fourth of the labourers of *Thozhilsena* opined that political interference was the major impeding factor for the

successful implementation of any new programme.

### Leadership style and management approach of extension personnel:

Among leadership style and management approach of extension personnel, adherence to Government orders, time schedule and scientific implementation were perceived as most influencing factors, whereas experience of the officers and manpower availability were perceived as moderately influencing factors and they stated that the shortage of manpower had increased the drudgery of available officers, whether experienced or non-experienced. Etwire *et al.* (2013) has stated that agricultural extension agents are mandated to serve as a bridge between technology generation and technology

utilization and limited extension personnel act as a constraint to implementing process. Jat *et al.* (2008) in their study on 'Impact of watershed development programme' had enlisted lack of effective coordination among project officials, agriculture extension department, agriculture research station and farmers near the study area as the main factors that affected the implementation and adoption of watershed technique. Patel (2014), identified lack of scientific planning, flaws in the action plan, lack of effective co-ordination and support from other institutions and agencies, lack of monitoring the implementation process, concurrent evaluation as the important factors that had contributed to unsatisfactory performance of the Integrated Rural Development Programme. Kushwah *et al.* (2016) figured out, co-

**Table 1 : Factors influencing implementation of programmes (Sub-dimensions)**

Sr. No.	Factors influencing implementation	(n=30)			
		Centrally and State sponsored schemes		Schemes under decentralized planning	
		Factor index	Rank	Factor index	Rank
1.	<b>Leadership style and management approach of extension personnel</b>	71.00**	4	87.00**	4
	Adherence to time schedule	86.67*	2	90.00*	2
	Adherence to scientific implementation	60.00*	4	86.67*	3
	Adherence to government orders	96.67*	1	93.33*	1
	Experience of officers	65.00*	3	83.33*	4
	Availability of officers	46.67*	5	81.67*	5
2.	<b>Resource perspective</b>	77.96**	1	89.44**	1
	Timely release of fund	91.67*	1	100.00*	1
	Timely availability of inputs	83.33*	3	98.33*	2
	Timely technical support	73.33*	5	90.00*	4
	Adequate quantity of inputs	91.67*	1	100.00*	1
	Quality of the inputs supplied	90.00*	2	96.67*	3
	Availability of institutional facilities	78.33*	4	83.33*	6
	Storage life of inputs	60.00*	8	71.67*	8
	Availability of storage facilities for inputs supplied	63.33*	7	80.00*	7
	Transportation cost involved	70.00*	6	85.00*	5
3.	<b>Beneficiary perspective</b>	71.39**	3	88.05**	3
	Coordination among members of <i>Padashekarasamithi</i>	90.00*	1	98.33*	1
	Leadership in effective management of programmes	73.33*	2	96.67*	2
	Improved group dynamics among the members in <i>Padashekarasamithi</i>	71.67*	3	91.67*	3
	Personal conflicts among the members	70.00*	4	78.33*	5
	Political interventions leading to conflicts	55.00*	6	73.33*	6
	Knowledge on paddy promotion programmes	68.33*	5	90.00*	4
4.	<b>Scheme features</b>	74.44**	2	88.89**	2
	Inclusion of all sectors of farmers	68.33*	2	90.00*	2
	Trainings given for beneficiaries	65.00*	3	85.00*	3
	Subsidy given	90.00*	1	91.67*	1

(Source: Compiled from primary data)

\* Individual factor index \*\* Factor index

**Table 2 : Result of t test for factors influencing implementation**

Sr. No.	Factors influencing implementation	Mean	t- value
1.	Central and State sponsored schemes	74.28	4.3**
2.	Schemes under decentralized planning	88.48	

\*\* indicates significance of value at P=0.05

ordination between farmers and government functionaries, development agencies and voluntary organizations, and land development activities as the essential factors for effective implementation of watershed programmes.

Therefore, it can be summarized that resource aspects and the scheme features were perceived to be the most crucial factors influencing the implementation of schemes though in varying degrees for Central and State schemes and for schemes under decentralized planning. This is evident from the factor indices available in the Table 1, that the factors identified have more implication on the implementation of the schemes under decentralized planning since they are need based, involving farmer participation and utilizing locally available resources.

### Comparison of factors influencing implementation of paddy promotion programmes under different levels of planning :

Reiterating the factors influencing implementation, Table 2, t-test result shows a significant difference in case of implementation of Centrally and State sponsored schemes and schemes under decentralized planning.

$H_0$ : The factors influencing the implementation of Central and State sponsored schemes and that of the schemes under decentralized planning are same.

$H_a$ : The factors influencing the implementation of Central and State sponsored schemes and that of the schemes under decentralized planning are not the same.

Since the P value (0.00) is less than 0.05, the alternate hypothesis is accepted which means that the factors influencing the implementation in both cases are significantly different.

The higher mean value supports the actual cause of decentralized planning *i.e.*, to address the location specific issues by utilizing locally available resource factors and formulating issue addressing specific programme with the help of beneficiaries and officers. It indicates that the identified factors, therefore, have higher effect on schemes implementing at local level than at State or Central level.

### Conclusion :

The study results identified resource aspects and scheme features as the major factors that greatly influence the success rate of the implemented schemes though in varying degree. The higher mean value (88.48) supports the actual cause of decentralized planning *i.e.*, to address the location specific issues by utilizing locally available resource factors and formulating issue addressing specific programme with the help of beneficiaries and officers. The t-test results indicates that the identified factors, therefore, have higher effect on schemes implementing at local level than at State or Central level. Hence, it is strongly felt that discussed common factors could be considered for the convergence to have effective implementation of paddy promotion programmes.

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