



Research Article

Correlation attitude of farmer's towards private extension services providers' and advantages of private extension services

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SUMMARY : Present investigation was conducted with 120 farmers of Anand and Borsad talukas, to know their attitude towards private extension services. Today, 1000:1 is the farmers to extension workers ratio so, one of the key initiatives attempts to involve private sector in providing extension services to farmers. Research indicates that attitude of respondent falls from neutral to highly favourable. Regarding advantages 70.83 per cent of the respondents felt timely availability of required information, is because of private extension services. Almost all characteristics had positive and highly significant relationship with respondents attitude only age had negative while social participation and size of family fail to establish any relationship.

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KEY WORDS:

Attitude, Private extension, Advantages

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Attitude refers to the "degree of positive or negative affects associated with some physiological object" (Thurston, 1946). Commercial agriculture needs more investment, high technology and various inputs like seeds, fertilizers etc. Hence, the independent farmer of today is more depending on many players than ever before, but present extension services had lack of extension personal which leads for private extension services. Now-a-days, considerable number of private extension service providers is there in the field that can influence the ultimate profit of the farmers. India has the largest extension system in the world with 1,17,603 paid agricultural extension personnel catering to the farming and allied needs of over 90 million farm families. Among these an overwhelming majority were small and marginal farmers with an average land holding of 1.63 ha, scattered and fragmented over different agro-climatic zones. Looking to the present scenario of the nation and need of farmers for private extension services attitude of farmers toward private extension services is essential to study for proper policy making with following

objectives

- Study the attitude of farmers towards private extension services and
- Advantages of private extension services perceived beneficial by the farmers.
- Correlation of profile of farmers and their attitude towards private extension services.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The present study was carried out in two talukas of Anand district namely Anand and Borsad because these talukas were having maximum total number of farmers. Respondents were selected by using proportionate random sampling method. Thereafter, ten villages having maximum total number of farmers were selected from each taluka. In all, 120 farmers were selected to serve as the respondents.

Advantages of private extension services as perceived by the farmers are differed from person to person and at the same time there are limitations of public extension system to provide extension services in diversified areas according to needs of farmers. Farmers were asked to indicate the advantages of private extension services, which

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they perceived beneficial for agricultural development. The respondents had perceived more than one advantage of private extension services. The data in this regard are given in Table 1. Farmers' attitude towards private extension services was measured with the help of an attitude scale developed by Pandya (1998). The respondents were grouped in to five categories *viz.*, strongly favourable, favourable, neutral, unfavourable and strongly unfavourable. The data in this regard are given in Table 2.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The data in Table 1 bring in to the focus that major advantages of private extension services as perceived by the farmers in sequential order were: timely availability of required information (70.83 %), timely availability of needed inputs like pesticide, fertilizers etc. (64.16 %), creates awareness of marketing information (60.00 %), provides timely solution of farm problems at farm level (56.66 %), availability of finance for agricultural operations (51.66 %), cost efficiency with educated field staff (46.66 %), new information can be obtained speedily at farm itself (41.66 %), availability of complete and reliable information (35.83 %), provides infrastructure and diagnosis services at proper time (33.33 %) and loyalty and humbleness towards clients (26.66 %). Result clearly indicates that farmer desire is to fill-up current limitation of public extension services by utilizing private services.

The results in Table 2 indicate that a half (50.00 %) of the respondents had neutral attitude, followed by strongly favourable (18.34 %) level of attitude. This may be due to facts that farmers might have been motivated through tremendous advantages of private extension services which in turn might have played a major role in building up a favourable attitude among the respondents and at the same time present extension services had many drawbacks which reduce farmers' interest in present extension system and helps them to build strong and favourable attitude towards private extension services but at the same time they are not aware of private services so many of them had neutral attitude also.

Data given in Table 3 indicate that there was positive and highly significant relationship between respondents' occupation, Land holding, annual income, extension contact, innovativeness, economic motivation, risk orientation and scientific orientation and their attitude towards private extension services. The independent variables *i.e.* education and mass media exposure had positive and significant relationship with their attitude towards private extension services.

There was positive and non-significant relationship between respondents' social participation and size of family with their attitude towards private extension services and there was negative and highly significant relationship between respondents' age and their attitude towards private extension services.

Table 1 : Advantages of private extension services as perceived by farmers

			(n=120)	
Sr. No.	Advantages	Frequency	Per cent	
1.	Timely availability of required information.	85	70.83	
2.	Timely availability of needed inputs like pesticide, fertilizers.	77	64.16	
3.	Creates awareness of marketing information.	72	60.00	
4.	Provides timely solution of farm problems at farm level.	68	56.66	
5.	Availability of finance for agricultural operations.	62	51.66	
6.	Cost efficiency with educated field staff.	56	46.66	
7.	New information can be obtained speedily at farm itself.	50	41.66	
8.	Availability of complete and reliable information.	43	35.83	
9.	Provides infrastructure and diagnosis services at proper time.	40	33.33	
10.	Loyalty and humbleness towards clients.	32	26.66	

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to their level of attitude towards private extension services

				(n = 120)	
Sr. No.	Types of attitude	Categories	Range	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Strongly favourable	Above mean + SD	More than 73.34	22	18.34
2.	Favourable	Between mean + 0.5 SD and mean + SD	Between 69.54 to 73.34	06	05.00
3.	Neutral	Between mean - 0.5 SD and mean + 0.5 SD	Between 61.96 to 73.33	60	50.00
4.	Un-favourable	Between mean - SD and mean - 0.5 SD	Between 58.16 to 61.96	14	11.66
5.	Strongly un-favourable	Below mean - SD	Less than 58.16	18	15.00
Total				120	100.00
Mean = 61.88			S.D. = 08.25		

Table 3 : Correlation of respondents characteristics and their level of attitude towards private extension services

Sr. No.	Name of the variable	Correlation co-efficients ('r' value)
1.	Age	-0.3219 **
2.	Education	0.2093 *
3.	Social participation	0.1059 (NS)
4.	Size of family	0.0380 (NS)
5.	Occupation	0.3322 **
6.	Land holding	0.3883 **
7.	Annual income	0.3672 **
8.	Extension contact	0.3892 **
9.	Mass media exposure	0.2234 *
10.	Innovativeness	0.4320 **
11.	Economic motivation	0.3512 **
12.	Risk orientation	0.3523 **
13.	Scientific orientation	0.4409 **

NS = non significant

* and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively

Conclusion:

In general the discussion leads to conclude that genesis of private extension may be because of two reasons such as (1) inability of the public extension to reach all the farmers, all the time, regarding all problems created the space, which is gradually filled by private extension and (2) the services which are not fully covered by public extension are covered by private extension – e.g. : input supply, market support, processing etc. by knowing these facts majority of the respondents had positive and favourable attitude towards private extension services. Whereas advantages of private extension services concerned most important advantages of private extension services as perceived by the farmers were: timely availability of required information (70.83 %), timely availability of needed inputs like pesticide, fertilizers etc. (64.16 %), creates awareness of marketing information (60.00 %), provides timely solution of farm problems at farm level (56.66 %) and availability of finance for agricultural operations. Almost all characteristics had positive and highly significant relationship with

respondents attitude only age had negative while social participation and size of family fail to establish any relationship.

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