



Infrastructure Status of Karnataka State Department of Agriculture in Central Dry Zone of Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

The survey was carried out in the central dry zone of Karnataka during 2018-19. An attempt has been made to understand the infrastructure availability status of Karnataka State Department of Agriculture (KSDA) in central dry zone. 75 respondents (extension personnel) were sampled by employing the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. In total 15 infrastructure facilities were listed and the results revealed that the managerial aspects of infrastructure *viz.*, Coordination of activities, Authority & responsibility and Monitoring & evaluation were stood at first with highest availability whereas, last two positions were conquered by the physical aspects of infrastructure *viz.*, Vehicles for mobility and Residential quarters facility.

Key Words: Dry zone, Extension personnel, Infrastructure availability.

INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure is very helpful to operate every organization in successful way by taking care of the welfare of its employees (Agada and Zeb-Obipi, 2018). That means infrastructure is such an important aspect for any organization which brings the ease in performing the work more effectively and efficiently. The State Department of Agriculture, Karnataka is a public organization under the Ministry of Agriculture serving the farming community of the state. It's the major public organization in the state which is taking care of the extension service/extension activities in the agricultural sector (raitamitra.kar.nic.in). The extension personnel in the department have to serve the diversified needs of culturally and economically diversified clients (farmers) who are distributed in distant locations in rural areas. Hence sufficient infrastructural assistance is critical need for them to give their service more efficiently and effectively. By keeping in mind, the instrumental importance

of infrastructure, this study has been framed with an objective to assess the infrastructure availability status in the State Department of Agriculture in central dry zone of Karnataka.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study area was central dry zone of Karnataka and the respondents were the extension workers *i.e.*, the employees of Karnataka State Department of Agriculture (KSDA). The proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to make the convenient sample size of 75 respondents. By consulting the experts and review of literature, in total 15 infrastructure facilities required for smooth running of extension activities were identified. For the easy understanding, the different infrastructure listed were categorised under three sub-heads *viz.*, physical aspects, managerial aspects and financial aspects. To find the availability status, respondents were given with four options for each listed infrastructure *viz.*, Timely available and adequate,

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Timely available but inadequate, Timely not available but adequate and Timely not available and inadequate. The obtained responses were analysed and the results were as follows.

RESULTS DISCUSSION

Physical aspects

Office building

More than four-fifth (82.67 %) of the employees reported office buildings facility as timely available and adequate Whereas, remaining less than one-fifth were reported as timely available but inadequate (17.33 %). But none of them reported as timely not available but adequate and timely not available and inadequate (Table 1).

The results confirmed the proper availability and adequacy of office building facility, as most of the employees (82.67 %) confirmed that they have proper own/rent buildings to carry out their work. Still, there were nearly one-fifth of the respondents tried to convey the problems prevailed w.r.t. adequacy and timely availability of office buildings. Here non-availability might also represent the insufficient working space within the available office building and their improper locations. Even problems of proper go downs to store and distribute the agricultural inputs were included here. Hence it might be very useful if KSDA pay an attention on this aspect.

Furniture facilities

Almost three-fifth (58.67 %) of the extension personnel expressed furniture facilities as timely available and adequate whereas, remaining two-fifth were expressed as timely available but inadequate (38.67 %) and timely not available and inadequate (2.67 %). But none of them expressed as timely not available but adequate. Here more than two-fifth of the employees confirmed loopholes existed w.r.t. adequacy and timely availability of furniture facilities. This aspect might demand critical attention of the KSDA as proper furniture facility improves the ease of work for the employees.

Computer & internet facilities

Computer and internet facilities play key role in this digital era. Even government also trying its best to bring efficiency and transparency in providing services to the public through digitalization. From the results, it was found that almost half (46.67 %) of the respondents disclosed the issues prevailed in the department w.r.t. adequacy and timely availability of computer and internet facilities. Hence, this might needs critical attention of the KSDA to facilitate smooth functioning as internet is most essential even to carry out day to day activities. Majority (88.00 %) of the employees reported telephone & communication facilities as timely available and adequate whereas, remaining few were reported as timely available but inadequate (8.00 %) and timely not available and inadequate (4.00 %). But none of them reported as timely not available but adequate (Table 1). The results disclosed that on an average one-tenth of the employees felt loopholes in telephone & communication facilities. Even though there is room for improvisation, telephone & communication facilities had been taken care well by the KSDA in central dry zone.

Vehicles for mobility and residential facilities

The findings clearly exposed the inadequacy and non-availability of the vehicles facilities in the KSDA as almost two-third of the employees noticed inadequacy and timely non-availability. This might be due to the facility of vehicles was available only to the higher posts i.e., ADAs, DDAs and JDAs whereas, AOs and AAOs need to arrange vehicles themselves. Practically it might not be feasible for the department to provide individual level vehicle facility to all extension personnel. Still, attractive and regular travelling allowance facility might serve as a solution to this problem. Residential quarter facilities were found to be in a pathetic condition as more than nine-tenth (92.00 %) of the employees felt it either as inadequate or not available. Residential quarter's facility would be essential to the extension personnel who were working at faraway places from their hometown.

Infrastructure Status of Karnataka State Department

Table 1 Infrastructure availability and adequacy status of KSDA in central dry zone of Karnataka (N=75)

Sl. No.	Infrastructure	Timely available and adequate		Timely available but inadequate		Timely not available but adequate		Timely not available and inadequate	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Physical aspects									
1	Office building	62	82.67	13	17.33	0	0.00	0	0.00
2	Furniture facilities	44	58.67	29	38.67	0	0.00	2	2.67
3	Computer & internet facilities	37	49.33	35	46.67	0	0.00	3	4.00
4	Telephone & communication facilities	66	88.00	6	8.00	0	0.00	3	4.00
5	Vehicles for mobility	19	25.33	26	34.67	3	4.00	27	36.00
6	Residential quarters facility	6	8.00	34	45.33	4	5.33	31	41.33
Managerial aspects									
7	Resource persons	23	30.67	48	64.00	3	4.00	1	1.33
8	Training facilities to farmers	34	45.33	40	53.33	1	1.33	0	0.00
9	Promotions to staff	40	53.33	32	42.67	1	1.33	2	2.67
10	Coordination of activities	67	89.33	6	8.00	1	1.33	1	1.33
11	Authority & Responsibility	67	89.33	8	10.67	0	0.00	0	0.00
12	Supervision & Recognition	65	86.67	6	8.00	2	2.67	2	2.67
13	Monitoring & Evaluation	67	89.33	7	9.33	1	1.33	0	0.00
14	Input Supply to the advocated technology	63	84.00	9	12.00	2	2.67	1	1.33
Financial aspects									
15	Budget	52	69.33	22	29.33	0	0.00	1	1.33

Managerial aspects

More than two-third (69.33 %) of the respondents felt the inadequacy and timely non-availability of resource persons in the department. This might be due to the availability of Subject Matter Specialists (SMSs) in the department only at the district level. In case of any need of resource persons, extension personnel might have to depend on nearby KVKs, farm universities and research stations. Hence this issue might need the attention of KSDA to find necessary solutions in future. More than half of the employees felt training facilities to farmers as either inadequate or timely not available. That means there were training programmes going on in the department but not sufficient to cover vast population of farmers. Hence, this matter needs to be taken care by KSDA if desires to make any improvements. At least to cover more farmers in providing very useful and essential training programmes which had high impacts in terms of increased and sustainable profits to the farmers.

Promotions to staff

Almost half of the extension personnel felt promotions in the department either as inadequate or timely not available. This might be due to long service of the staff in the same position/designation. Also very less number of designations at higher hierarchical level compare to lower hierarchical level creating tough competition to the employees to get promotions. Even the career/professional growth was considered as one of the independent variables in this study. There also same results were found w.r.t. this issue in the department where the majority of extension personnel felt to have medium level of career growth opportunities in the department.

Coordination of activities, Authority & responsibility

Great majority of the respondents felt coordination in the department as adequate. As coordination is very essential to carry out any activity in a smoother way and to make it successful. In this way department found to have sufficient

coordination. Still there is scope for improvement as remaining one-tenth of the staff expressed coordination of activities in the department either as inadequate or timely not available. One can witness that almost nine-tenth of the extension personnel felt authority & responsibility in the department as adequate and timely available. That really a very good sign for any organization whereas, remaining one-tenth of the respondents created a room for improvisation.

Supervision & recognition

Majority felt supervision and recognition as adequate in the department. Supervision and recognition is very essential in an organization as supervision provide way to keep tracking the progress and recognition gives a way to motivate the staff. Still more than one-tenth of the staff felt the need of improvement of this aspect of infrastructure. Great majority (89.33 %) of the extension personnel expressed monitoring & evaluation in the department as timely available and adequate. Remaining few were expressed as timely available but inadequate (9.33 %) and timely not available but adequate (1.33 %). But none of them expressed as timely not available and inadequate (Table 1).

Input supply to the advocated technology

Majority (84.00 %) of the respondents reported input supply in the department to the advocated technology as timely available and adequate whereas, remaining few were reported input supply to the advocated technology as timely available but inadequate (12.00 %), timely not available but adequate (2.67 %) and timely not available and inadequate (1.33 %) (Table 1)

Financial aspects

Budget

The data (Table 1) clarified the sufficiency of budget in the department in terms of adequacy and timely availability as more than two-third of the employees felt it as timely available and adequate. But one can't neglect remaining 30.0 per cent who

Infrastructure Status of Karnataka State Department

Table 2. Ranking of infrastructure of KSDA (in central dry zone) based on their status of timely availability and adequacy.

Sr. No.	Infrastructure	F	%	Rank
Physical aspects				
1	Telephone & communication facilities	66	88.00	II
2	Office building	62	82.67	V
3	Furniture facilities	44	58.67	VII
4	Computer & internet facilities	37	49.33	IX
5	Vehicles for mobility	19	25.33	XII
6	Residential quarters facility	6	8.00	XIII
Managerial aspects				
7	Coordination of activities	67	89.33	I
8	Authority & responsibility	67	89.33	I
9	Monitoring & evaluation	67	89.33	I
10	Supervision & recognition	65	86.67	III
11	Input Supply to the advocated technology	63	84.00	IV
12	Promotions to staff	40	53.33	VIII
13	Training facilities to farmers	34	45.33	X
14	Resource persons	23	30.67	XI
Financial aspects				
15	Budget	52	69.33	VI
N=75				

felt budget as insufficient either in terms of adequacy or timely availability. Hence there would be a room for improvisation to reach better. Better might be reached either by increasing the budget size or by choosing alternative way of allocating currently available budget to get used efficiently. Thereby it might be possible to enhance the smoother and better functioning of the extension personnel for better promotion of sustainable dry farming.

Majority of the staff felt input supply to the advocated technology as timely available and adequate. KSDA being a public sector organization is taking care of agricultural inputs supplying function along with extension advisory services. Department also have supervision over the input dealers for quality control and/or to minimise the exploitation of peasants by them.

The ranking was done and the coordination of activities, 'authority & responsibility and monitoring & evaluation were fell in the first position by getting response from 89.33 per cent of the staff as adequate and timely available. Followed by telephone & communication facilities (88.00 %), supervision & recognition (86.67 %), input supply to the advocated technology (84.00 %), office building (82.67 %), budget (69.33 %), furniture facilities (58.67 %), promotions to staff (53.33 %), computer & internet facilities (49.33 %), training facilities to farmers (45.33 %), resource persons (30.67 %), vehicles for mobility (25.33 %) and residential quarters facility fell at last position by getting response from very few (8.00 %) percentage of the staff as adequate and timely available (Table 2).

CONCLUSION

It was visible that coordination of activities, authority & responsibility and 'monitoring & evaluation were found to be in better position in their timely and adequate availability. This might be as these three managerial aspects of infrastructure facilities require comparatively minimum physical investments and could be taken care with the available staff. The training facilities to farmers (tenth rank), resource persons (eleventh rank), vehicles for mobility (twelfth rank) and residential quarters facility (thirteenth rank) were found to be in worst position in their timely and adequate availability. This might be due to their easy observability *i.e.*, staff could feel either their inadequacy or timely non-availability more easily.

Also these infrastructures might require additional budget, physical investments and need to create new posts (recruitment of additional staff) to serve the purpose. As the infrastructure is very essential, the State Department of Agriculture, Karnataka needs to look into the shortfalls in the required infrastructure.

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Received on 30/5/2022

Accepted on 22/8/2022