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Constraints faced in availing the benefits and reasons for not availing benefits of the feed and fodder development programmes by the livestock farmers

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Abstract

The prime objectives of study were to find out the constraints faced by the livestock farmers in availing the benefits of the feed and fodder development programmes and reasons for not availing the benefits. All the feed and fodder development programmes implemented in study districts for the period 2007-2016 were considered for the study. The programmes are; Fodder minikits distribution, Trainings and demonstrations on feed and fodder, azolla and silage making, Chaff cutter distribution and Fodder banks and *Goshalas* (Cow shelters). Study conducted followed *ex-post facto* research design and carried out in 2016-17. Totally 120 livestock farmers (60 beneficiary and 60 non beneficiary farmers were contacted for data collection from Belagavi, Baglkote and Gadag districts of North Karnataka. Among the constraints, many procedures to attend to avail benefits ranked as top constraint with the mean garret score of 60.36. This was followed by inadequate support received from the department and slow response from government department while availing benefits ranked 2nd with the mean garret score of 59.85 and lack of nearby training facility stood at 3rd rank with the mean garret score of 54.85.

Keywords: Fodder development, beneficiaries, constraints, Animal husbandry

Introduction

Crop cultivation, animal husbandry and other allied activities have been the core livelihood for majority of the rural people since time immemorial. Animal husbandry in particular provides productive employment, especially self-employment and the most valuable supplementary income to a vast majority of rural households dominated by small and marginal farmers and landless labourers. Livestock provides increased economic stability to the poor masses. They act as a cash buffer in case of small stock and as captive reserve in case of larger stock. Livestock provides quality animal protein to human population in the form of milk, eggs, meat and value added products. They provide draught power for agricultural operations, organic manure for agriculture and raw materials like skin, hides, blood, bone, hoof, horn, *etc.* for various industries.

India's livestock sector is one of the largest in the world both for livestock numbers and production. The contribution of livestock to agriculture GDP is 15.10 per cent and accounts for 4.11 per cent to total GDP. The productivity of livestock is however low owing to poor feeding practices followed by farmers. Though feed and fodder is one of the most important contributing factors for the growth of livestock sector, development of this sector has not received the required level of focus in the past. It is estimated that the 60-70 per cent of total cost in livestock production is due to feed and fodder. Any attempt towards enhancing feed availability and economizing the feed cost would result in increased margin of profits to livestock owners. Adequate availability of livestock feed and fodder both quantitatively as well as qualitatively is going to be one of the key inputs in the growth of livestock sector during 12th plan period and beyond. With greater focus being given towards productivity enhancement in the recent years, it becomes all the more essential for ensuring the availability of quality feed and fodder to sustain higher productivity of animals. The schemes so developed by Government have not only to address the issue of green fodder seed production but also encompass other aspects like area expansion of green fodder, fodder conservation, fodder densification, establishment of fodder banks, and nutritional enhancement of crop residues, capacity building, and extension. The ongoing schemes on 'Feed and Fodder Development' are fodder minikits distribution, trainings and demonstrations on feed and fodder, azolla and silage making, chaff cutter distribution, fodder banks and *Goshalas* (Cow shelters). The specific objective of the study were to find out constraints faced by the livestock farmers in availing the benefits of the feed and fodder development programmes and reasons for not availing benefits of feed and fodder development programmes by non-beneficiaries.

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Materials and Methods

In North Karnataka, three districts having highest (Belagavi), medium (Gadag) and lowest (Bagalkote) livestock population were selected for the study. From each district, one taluka was selected based on highest livestock population. From each taluka, four villages were selected based on more number of beneficiaries of feed and fodder development programmes. From each village, five beneficiary and five non-beneficiary respondents were selected randomly. So the study covered three districts, three talukas and twelve villages. The total sample size for the study was 120.

Pre-tested and standardized interview schedule was used for data collection from 60 beneficiaries and 60 non-beneficiaries of feed and fodder development programmes through personal interview technique.

Possible constraints in availing the benefits from feed and fodder development program were enlisted in the interview schedules. Respondents were asked to rank these constraints based on their actual encountering of these problems. Garret scores for each of these constraints were worked out by applying the formula given below.

$$\text{Per cent position} = 100 (R^j - 0.5) / N^j$$

Where,

R^j = Rank given for the i^{th} variable by j^{th} respondents

N^j = Number of variable ranked by j^{th} respondents

Constraint with highest garret score was assigned first rank and with least garret score was given least rank. List of constraints along with garret scores and ranks were presented in tabular form.

Reasons for not availing benefits of feed and fodder development programmes by non-beneficiaries

Possible reasons for not availing benefits were listed separately in interview schedule for each program considered for the study. A response for this variable was obtained only from non-beneficiary respondents. They were asked to rank the reasons for not availing the benefits. Garret scores for each of the reason were worked out by following the similar procedure applied for ranking the constraints, details of which are already given. Reasons along with garret scores and ranks were presented in tabular form.

Results and discussion

Results on constraints faced by the beneficiaries while availing benefits from the feed and fodder development programmes were given in Table 1. Constraint of many procedures to attend to avail benefits ranked as top constraint with the mean garret score of 60.36. This was followed by inadequate support received from the department and slow response from government department while availing benefits ranked 2nd with the mean garret score of 59.85 and lack of nearby training facility stood at 3rd rank with the mean garret score of 54.85. Other constraints expressed were lack of

knowledge about banking activities for completing procedures to avail subsidy (4th rank, garret score 50.88), poor quality of supplied fodder seeds (5th rank, garret score 50.46), not very effective teachings in training programmes (6th rank, garret score 49.13), not getting fodder seeds at proper time (7th rank, garret score 48.91), lack of practical classes in training programmes (8th rank garret score 47.65) and trainings were of short duration (9th rank garret score 41.15).

Observing many procedures to avail benefits was the major constraint. All the fodder and feed programmes considered for the study are implemented by state Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services (AHVS) department. This being a Government department needs to observe many documentation procedures to extend benefits to the farmers. Certificate from bank, insurance of animals, animal health certificate from veterinarian, land records, Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards *etc.* are the various documents need to be produced. Further these documents will be subjected for verification from designated committees comprising of local elected representatives. These procedures are laid to identify appropriate beneficiaries with all the fairness. The second constraint was inadequate support received from the department while availing benefits and Government department was slow in responding. Majority of the farmers have inert inhibition to approach different Government departments might be due to their non-cosmopolite background. AHVS department handles several projects related to animal health (e.g vaccination camps) besides fodder and feed development. Non-availability of staff during the visit of farmers might be the reason for respondents expressing this as constraint.

Livestock rearing is an activity that demands presence of farmers all through the day. Some livestock farmers might have felt it difficult to attend training outside their village. This could be the reason for considering location of training facility in far off place as constraint. As mentioned earlier, some farmers have inhibition to approach banks and are devoid of knowledge on banking activities. Chaff cutter, construction of silage pits *etc.* are the activities depend on subsidy amount which requires certificate from bank authorities. Lack of knowledge about banking activity was considered as constraint by the beneficiary.

Minikits program involves supply of fodder seed. Poor quality of fodder seed (5th rank) and supply not at proper time (7th rank) were the constraints expressed. Availability of fodder depends on quality of seed supplied at right time to livestock farmers. Not very effective teachings in training programmes (6th rank), lack of practical classes in training programmes (8th rank) and training were of short duration (9th rank) were other constraints expressed. These trainings were attended by heterogeneous group of farmers. Wide variation in their age, education levels, farming experience and other characteristics could be the reason for the constraints related to training programmes.

Table 2: Constraints faced by the beneficiaries while availing benefits from the programmes

S. No.	Constraints	Beneficiaries $n_1 = 60$	
		Mean Garret scores	Rank
1.	Had to attend many procedures to avail benefits	60.36	1
2.	Inadequate support received from the department while availing benefits and slow responses from Government department was slow in responding	59.85	2
3.	Training facility located far off	54.85	3
4.	Lack of knowledge about banking activities for completing procedures to avail subsidy	50.88	4
5.	Fodder seeds supplied were not of good quality	50.46	5

6.	Not very effective teachings in training programmes	49.13	6
7.	Not getting fodder seeds at proper time	48.91	7
8.	Lack of practical classes in training programmes	47.65	8
9.	Trainings were of short duration	41.15	9

Reasons for not availing benefits of feed and fodder development programmes by non-beneficiaries

Table 3 presents the reasons for not availing benefits of feed and fodder development programmes by non-beneficiaries. Reasons were ranked program wise.

Non-beneficiaries mentioned four reasons for not attending training programmes on feed and fodder. Among them

trainings are not useful as opined by those who attended stands 1st rank with the mean garret score of 53.67 followed by training schedule was not convenient (2nd rank, mean garret score 52.31), training centre is far (3rd rank, mean garret score 48.30) and lack of awareness about such trainings (4th rank, mean garret score 48.20).

Table 3: Reasons for not availing benefits of feed and fodder development programmes by non-beneficiaries

S. No.	Particulars	Non-Beneficiary n ₂ = 60	
		Mean Garret scores	Rank
1	Training programme on feed and fodder		
a.	Trainings are not useful as opined by those who attended	53.67	1
b.	Training schedule was not convenient	52.31	2
c.	Training centre is far	48.30	3
d.	Lack of awareness about such trainings	48.20	4
2	Chaff cutter supply		
a.	Lack of awareness about the scheme on chaff cutter	54.90	1
b.	Many procedures to follow	54.08	2
c.	Only limited numbers of chaff cutters are provided. So difficult to get	49.10	3
d.	It was not required	48.26	4
e.	Don't meet criteria fixed for beneficiary identification	43.63	5
3	Demonstrations on silage making/azolla cultivation/urea enrichment and production units		
a.	Information on demonstration place and day was not known	53.71	1
b.	Felt such demonstrations are unrealistic to our farm condition	53.16	2
c.	Demonstration's field are far from farmers place	51.30	3
d.	Lack of awareness such demonstrations per se	48.85	4
e.	Lack of awareness about the benefits of silage/azolla/urea treatments	48.35	5
f.	Demonstrations' timings were not suitable for us	47.06	6
4	Minikits		
a.	Lack of awareness about free distribution of fodder seeds	56.60	1
b.	Requires frequent visit to department to get seeds	55.88	2
c.	Only small quantity of seeds are given	51.93	3
d.	Seeds are not distributed at right time	45.86	4
e.	Good quality seeds are not distributed	40.88	5

For not availing benefit of chaff cutter distribution/supply, non-beneficiaries expressed five reasons. First ranked reason was lack of awareness about the scheme on chaff cutter with the mean garret score of 54.90. With the mean garret score 54.08, many procedures to follow stood at 2nd rank. Only limited numbers of chaff cutters are provided, so it is difficult to avail the benefit got 3rd rank with the mean garret score of 49.10. It was not required and don't meet criteria fixed for beneficiary identification were the reasons with 4th and 5th ranks, with the mean garret scores of 48.26 and 43.63, respectively.

Six reasons were expressed for not getting benefits of demonstrations on silage making/azolla cultivation / and production units. Information on demonstration place and day was not known, felt such demonstrations are unrealistic to our farm condition and demonstration fields are far from farmers place obtained 1st, 2nd and 3rd ranks with the mean garret scores of 53.71, 53.16 and 51.30, respectively. Lack of awareness about such demonstrations, lack of awareness about the benefits of silage/azolla/urea treatments, demonstrations timings were not suitable for them received 4th, 5th and 6th ranks with the mean garret scores of 48.85, 48.35 and 47.06, respectively.

Farmers expressed five reasons for not availing benefits from minikits programmes. Lack of awareness about free distribution of fodder seeds got 1st rank with the mean garret

score of 56.60, for conducting effective trainings good teaching faculty is very important. Dairy Farm Instructors (DFIs) are expressed that they need skills and knowledge in fodder production and management, fodder preservation, fodder disease management and fertilizer application (Vimalraj Kumar *et al.*, 2013). Because of lack of sufficient number of experts in training farmers on fodder and feed related aspects, they might have felt trainings as not useful and conveyed it to others. Followed by it requires frequent visit to department to get seeds (2nd rank, mean garret score 55.88), only small quantity of seeds are given (3rd rank, mean garret score 51.93), seeds are not distributed at right time (4th rank, mean garret score 45.86) and good quality seeds are not distributed (5th rank, mean garret 40.88). Training needs analysis in respect of content, method, place and time of training on fodder and feed could help to address these issues. Lack of knowledge on schemes of chaff cutter was the reason mentioned by non-beneficiary respondents. This is coupled with other reasons like many procedures to follow, fixed criteria for beneficiary selection and limited number of chaff cutters. Poor extension contact and mass media participation of non-beneficiary respondents could be the reasons for these findings.

Conclusion

Many of the present feed and fodder development programmes identify farmers as beneficiaries based on caste and size of land holding. Along with these two factors efforts must be made to identify livestock farmers with enough experience in livestock rearing having good extension contacts and mass media exposure as these factors expressed positive relationship with benefits derived from feed and fodder programmes. Such efforts will broaden the base of target group and help to obtain more benefits from these programmes. Lack of awareness about feed and fodder development programmes and also about benefits of participating in such programmes was one findings of the study. Utilization of various mass media along with Information Communication Technologies must be advocated by the Animal Husbandry Department to generate more awareness about different fodder programmes. This will help to reach the benefits to the unreached livestock farmers.

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