



Identified Constraints and Suggestions given by Beneficiary Respondents for Effective Implementation of Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI) Programme in Rajasthan

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) has designed a one year diploma programme titled "Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers" (DAESI) for converting the input dealers as para-extension professional. This program was launched in the year 2003 on pilot basis on self-financing mode. State Institute of Agriculture Management (SIAM) is designated as state level implementing institute in Rajasthan. DAESI diploma holders and non DAESI input dealers in Jaipur and Kota district of Rajasthan were studied as respondents. A list of thirteen constraints were submitted before the beneficiary respondents and their responses were recorded. They might have faced problem in different fields like the course should be open for all input dealers, less number of field visit and classroom session are lengthy etc. They suggested that "DAESI programme should be compulsory for all input dealers". After that majority of them

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suggested that “Contact numbers and email Ids of the resource person should be provided to the DAESI dealers for future interaction and clarification of doubts” and “The DAESI programme should be continued”.

Keywords: Constraints; DAESI; input dealers.

1. INTRODUCTION

India accounts for only about 2.4% of the world's geographical area and 4% of its water resources, but has to support about 17% of the world's human population and 15% of the livestock” [1]. Being the largest component of India's economy, agriculture is of utmost importance for the vast number of people. Agriculture sector employs 50% of the total workforce and share of agriculture and allied sectors including agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishery sub sectors in terms of percentage of Gross Domestic Product was 20.2% during 2020-21 at current prices. (MoA&FW, 2020-21). Several factors have played a role in the development of agriculture in the country but the agri-input dealers playing tremendous role in reaching the farmers by performing dual role of providing agri-inputs as well as technological back up to the farmers informally [2-3]. The agri input dealers are the major sources of supply of farm inputs to the farmers. These dealers mostly supply seeds, fertilizers and pesticides to the farmers. So, to transform agri input dealers into para-extension professionals and enable them to address the day to day problems and issues faced by the farmers at field level, MANAGE designed this one year diploma named as Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in agro-climatic zone IIIa (Semi Arid Eastern Plain) and V (Humid South Eastern Plain) of Rajasthan because these two zones have highest number of registered agri input dealers under DAESI programme among the all ten agro climatic zones. Out of these two agro-climatic zones, one district from each agro-climatic zone i.e. Jaipur from zone IIIa and Kota from zone V was purposely selected for present investigation based on highest number of registered agri input dealers under DAESI programme. From both the selected districts, total 160 beneficiaries (80 beneficiaries from each district separately) were selected. The data were collected through structured schedule; thereafter these data were

analysed, tabulated and interpreted. The mean per cent score and ranks were used to present the data in tables and draw inferences [4-7].

2.1 Mean Percent Score (MPS)

It was calculated by multiplying total obtained score of the respondents by 100 and divided by the maximum obtainable score.

$$\text{Mean percent score} = \frac{\text{Total score obtained}}{\text{Maximum obtainable score}} \times 100$$

2.2 Rank

Ranks were accorded on the basis of the mean percent score obtained. This was used to find out the constraints severity and suggestions in order of priority.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Constraints Faced by Beneficiary Respondents during DAESI Programme

A list of thirteen constraints were submitted before the beneficiary respondents and their responses were recorded. They might have faced problem in different fields like the course should be open for all input dealers, less number of field visit and classroom session are lengthy among others. Data related to these constraints were given in Table 1.

An insight look at data revealed constraint that highest number of beneficiaries felt with rank 1st (48.75 MPS) “The course should be open for all input dealers rather than restricting only for the dealers who have passed 10th standard examination”, followed by “Less number of field visits is organized to different institutions and agro industries” with rank 2nd (48.13 MPS) and “Classroom theory sessions are very lengthy” with 3rd rank (42.50 MPS). After that the constraints felt by respondents were “It is difficult for an input dealer to pay Rs. 10,000/- as course fee” rank 4th, “The duration for the diploma course of 48 weeks is very lengthy” rank 5th and “Classes on sundays and market holidays affect your business” rank 6th with 40.00, 38.13 and 35.00 MPS respectively.

Table 1. Constraints related to implementation of DAESI programme perceived by the beneficiary respondents

S. No.	Statements	Beneficiaries (n=160)	
		MPS	Rank
1.	The course should be open for all input dealers rather than restricting only for the dealers who have passed 10 th standard examination.	48.75	I
2.	Less number of field visits is organized to different institutions and agro industries.	48.13	II
3.	Classroom theory sessions are very lengthy.	42.50	III
4.	It is difficult for an input dealer to pay Rs. 10,000/- as course fee.	40.00	IV
5.	The duration for the diploma course of 48 weeks is very lengthy	38.13	V
6.	Classes on Sundays and market holidays affect your business.	35.00	VI
7.	The resource persons don't use local language in classroom.	33.13	VII
8.	The course curriculum does not cover all necessary chapters required for input dealers	31.25	VIII
9.	Less number of skill oriented practical classes in DAESI programme are conducted.	30.63	IX
10.	There is no mechanism of contacts with resource persons after the diploma programme.	30.63	X
11.	The distance is far away from home to training institute which create difficulty.	21.88	XI
12.	There is no accommodation facility in the training institute.	18.13	XII
13.	Resource persons who deliver lectures in classroom are not competent with their respective subjects.	06.25	XIII

MPS = Mean Percent Score

The constraints like "Resource persons who deliver lectures in classroom are not competent with their respective subjects", "There is no accommodation facility in the training institute" and "The distance is far away from home to training institute which create difficulty" felt less by the beneficiaries with rank 13th, 12th, and 11th (06.25, 18.13 and 21.88 MPS) respectively. Though we got a number of constraints, but it is possible to get over of it if the Government and the specialists will involve more to make this programme a huge success with a right kind of planning and execution and work on the suggestions which were given by the beneficiaries for effective implementation and to make this programme attractive to input dealers.

3.2 Suggestion given by Beneficiary Respondents to Overcome the Constraints and to Improve the Effectiveness of DAESI Programme

The beneficiary respondents were provided twelve major suggestions to overcome the constraints. They were also asked, to give some more suggestion other than these twelve. The responses on suggestions are presented in Table 2.

All the beneficiaries with 100.00 MPS were suggested that "DAESI programme should be compulsory for all input dealers". After that majority of them suggested that "Contact numbers and email Ids of the resource person should be provided to the DAESI dealers for future interaction and clarification of doubts", "The DAESI programme should be continued", "The course curriculum should include latest agricultural technology including ICT tools and mobile applications" and "Some extra benefits should be provided by government to DAESI dealers for expanding business" with 99.37, 98.75, 97.50 and 95.00 MPS respectively.

They were also suggested that "Group discussion should be organised after completion of every chapter/component of the curriculum", "To and fro transportation charges up to the training center should be provided to the input dealers during the diploma programme" and "Theory and practical sessions should be allotted equal time" with 94.38, 88.13 and 66.25 MPS, respectively. Besides above twelve, they were also asked to give some more suggestions other than these twelve suggestions and then 27 respondents (16.87%) out of 160 beneficiaries suggested that "They should provide updated printed material every year related to region

Table 2. Suggestions for improving the effectiveness of DAESI programme given by the beneficiary respondents

S. No.	Statements	Beneficiaries (n=160)	
		MPS	Rank
1.	DAESI programme should be compulsory for all input dealers.	100.00	I
2.	Contact numbers and email Ids of the resource person should be provided to the DAESI dealers for future interaction and clarification of doubts.	99.37	II
3.	The DAESI programme should be continued.	98.75	III
4.	The course curriculum should include latest agricultural technology including ICT tools and mobile applications.	97.50	IV
5.	Some extra benefits should be provided by government to DAESI dealers for expanding business.	95.00	V
6.	Group discussion should be organised after completion of every chapter/component of the curriculum.	94.38	VI
7.	To and fro transportation charges up to the training center should be provided to the input dealers during the diploma programme.	88.13	VII
8.	Theory and practical sessions should be allotted equal time.	66.25	VIII
9.	Refresher training should be organised for diploma holder input dealers in one year interval.	66.25	IX
10.	Number of field visits should be increased.	60.00	X
11.	Diploma fee should be completely exempted.	49.38	XI
12.	Duration of DAESI programme should be minimized to 6 months.	46.88	XII

MPS = Mean Percent Score

specific package of practices of crops, pest and disease control chemicals among others by the state implementing agency of DAESI programme (i.e. SAMITI) or state agriculture department". Some of them also suggested to conduct the classes at field level and more field visits for good exposure, more emphasis should be given on skill oriented sessions by displaying the specimens, models, charts etc. related to nutrient deficiency, insects damage and disease symptoms. It was also suggested that the duration of training should be reduced to 15 to 30 days only, their input selling license should be timely renewed, the resource person should be invited from reputed pesticides industries, seed production and certification agencies and agriculture implements manufacturing industries. Participants should visit reputable pesticides industries, seed production and certification agencies and agriculture implements manufacturing industries. A few of them also suggested to make loan process easy to DAESI dealers. So that they can easily expand their business [8-10].

From the above findings it is suggested that most of these points could be used to improve the DAESI programme and make it more attractive to the input dealers for whom it is meant. Doing this would enhance the attainment of the goal to provide better extension services to the farming community.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Due to the shortage of manpower as well as funds of the public extension service, the only way out is providing and supplementing service through private extension system. Through DAESI programme much more could be achieved if the problems faced at implementation as well as post implementation are well addressed in sustainable manner using participatory methodologies. DAESI programme is a very creative and innovative step to help the input dealers in getting and delivering the right knowledge and information regarding agri inputs to the farmers [11]. Hence, this programme should be continued for the development of farmers as well as input dealers.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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