Stakeholder's Perception Towards the Implementation of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) in Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to analyze the stakeholder's perception towards effective implementation of RKVY in Maharashtra with a sample size of 180 farmers. Garrett's ranking technique was used for prioritizing the constraints and suggestions. Results revealed that issues like delay in payment of subsidy resulted in increased number of defunct farm ponds. Procedural complexities under RKVY discouraged illiterate farmers to avail the benefits. Constraints like approval of too many schemes with insufficient manpower in the implementing agency resulted in ineffective implementation. The study suggested that greater attention should be given to areas like; provision of timely subsidy, simplification of the procedures, elimination of selectivity bias, capacity building programmes, which will help in effective implementation of the government programmes.

Keywords: Constraints, Farm pond, RKVY, Selectivity bias, Stakeholders perception

INTRODUCTION

The Government of India has initiated umpteen number of agriculture development programmes for overall development of rural areas. The main objective of these developmental programmes was to eradicate poverty through equitable resource and income distribution among the people. Government expenditure in agriculture targeted to infrastructure and provision of farm inputs and services has been an important element of agricultural policy in the country. The experiences of green revolution have also confirmed that a strategy of public support for agriculture has paid rich dividends (Fan *et al.,* 1999).

Concerned by the slow growth of the agricultural sector, the National Development Council called upon the Central and State governments to evolve a strategy to rejuvenate agriculture. In this background RKVY scheme was initiated in 2007 to ensure the holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors by allowing states to choose their own agriculture and allied sector development activities as per the district/state agriculture plan (Government of India, 2014). The scheme has come a long way since its inception and has been implemented across two plan periods (11th and 12th). Till 2013-14, the scheme was implemented as an Additional Central Assistance (ACA) to State Plan Scheme with 100 per cent central assistance. Then it was converted into a Centrally Sponsored Scheme in 2014-15 also with 100 per cent central assistance. By the end of 2017-18, RKVY programme had implemented 14504 projects with an expenditure of Rs. 56635 crores across all the states and union territories.

Although many of these continuing programmes like RKVY, National Horticulture Mission (NHM), and National Food Security Mission (NFSM) were initiated during the 2000 decade, an in-depth assessment of the public delivery of services is not readily available. The implementation of targeted interventions need to be analysed and lessons to be learnt to enhance public investment efficiency and upscaling. Further perception of the farmers and officials of the concerned department constitutes a vital input to policy makers for designing government programmes in a better way. Hence in this study an attempt was made to analyze the stakeholder's perception towards effective implementation of RKVY in Maharashtra.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was carried out in the state of Maharashtra, purposively, as the highest public expenditure under RKVY was made in this state. To achieve the desired goal of the study, a mixed approach of primary survey and focus group discussion was done with sample size of 180 households in Maharashtra. 2 sample districts have been selected purposively based on the major agricultural interventions of RKVY in sample districts, in consultation with the officials of State Department of Agriculture, Maharashtra. 1 taluk from each sample district was selected based on similar criteria. Further village cluster comprising of 4 villages were selected, purposively, from each taluk. 60 sample beneficiaries and 30 non beneficiaries were selected from each of the sample village cluster. An indicative list of focus areas has been provided in the RKVY guidelines, which includes; integrated development of major food crops, agricultural mechanization, development of rainfed farming systems, activities related to enhancement of soil health, integrated pest management etc. In the present study farm pond intervention has been selected based on area coverage, in consultation with the officials from the State Department of Agriculture, Maharashtra. Also personal interview was held with the key officials involved in the implementation to learn their views and the difficulties faced in implementation. Thus constraints faced by the different stakeholders in availing the benefit of RKVY and their suggestions to improve the programme implementation were prioritised by using Garrett's ranking technique in the following manner:

$$\text{Percentage position} = \frac{100 \ (R_{ij} - 0.50)}{N_j}$$

Where, R_{ij} = Rank given for the ith item by the jth individual and

N_j = Number of items ranked by the jth individual.

Using Garrett table the percentage position of each rank was converted into scores. For each constraint, individual respondent's score were added together and were divided by total number of respondents for whom scores were added. Thus, by arranging them in descending order, mean score for each constraint was ranked. In the same manner, suggestions for the effective implementation of RKVY were obtained from different stakeholders and then Garrett's ranking technique was used for prioritizing the constraints and suggestions. The prime advantage of this technique over simple frequency distribution is arrangement of constraints based on their importance from the point of view of respondents. It is also helpful when the same number of respondents on two or more constraints have been given different ranks (Ankhila *et al.,* 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The constraints faced by the farmers to avail the benefits of agricultural intervention under RKVY scheme have been discussed under the following sub-heads.

Perception of the RKVY beneficiaries on constraints faced and suggestions: Garett ranking analysis shows that, the major constraint faced while availing the benefits of RKVY was subsidy paid after purchase of plastic film while initial payment remains the highest problem. This constraint lead to increase in number of defunct farm ponds, because of the inability of the beneficiaries to purchase the plastic film on their own. The second major constraint was more number of documents required for availing the subsidy. This constraint forces illiterate people to deprive from the benefits of the scheme. Also, the beneficiaries opined that requirement of more number of documents and complex procedure to avail subsidy were the other major constraints faced by them while availing benefits of RKVY in the study area (Table 1). These constraints discourages illiterate farmers to come forward to avail the benefits of RKVY. These findings are in agreement with those of ISEC (2013).

Beneficiaries' suggestions for the improvement of the RKVY scheme: In the present study suggestions of beneficiaries was also obtained during primary survey. Their suggestions were divided majorly into 3 categories i.e. extension services, credit and subsidy and, marketing and general services. They suggested that there is a need of higher interaction between farmers and officials of different department, which helps in increasing awareness about new government initiatives to the farmers. As it took almost 4-5 years for RKVY to reach majority of the farmers, so from the study it may be suggested that this time lag can be reduced by increasing extension activities to reach out more number of farmers within a short period of time. Similar findings were reported by Kalamkar *et al.* (2015). Other suggestions includes timely availability of seeds of improved varieties and other inputs, and also they demanded increase in share

Table 1: Beneficiaries' perception on constraints faced while availing the benefits of RKVY

S.No.	Constraints	Garrett's Score	Rank
1	Subsidy paid after purchase while initial payment remains the highest problem	76.48	I
2	More number of documents required for availing the subsidy	62.79	II
3	Procedure for the subsidy is quite difficult	58.14	III
4	Long time gap between the purchase and receiving the subsidy amount	54.41	IV
5	Institutional financing facility is not available under the programme	51.19	V
6	Storage facility is not available under the programme	44.73	VI
7	Biased towards large land owners	44.33	VII
8	Capacity building/ technical advice is not provided under the programme	43.53	VIII
9	Information about new initiatives of RKVY reaches rarely to the households	38.03	IX
10	Poor quality of materials/ machinery are supplied	24.07	X

Source: Field survey

Table 2: Beneficiaries' suggestions for improvement of the RKVY scheme: Extension services, credit & subsidy and marketing & general services

S.No.	Suggestions	Garrett's Score	Rank
A.	**Extension Services**		
1	Higher interaction between farmers and officials of different departments	55.07	I
2	More inclusion technical advice on different aspects (PoP, Demonstrations etc.)	52.38	II
3	Wider publicity about the new RKVY scheme should be provided to farmers	42.56	III
B.	**Credit & Subsidy**		
1	Timely availability of seeds of improved varieties and other inputs should be ensured	53.17	I
2	Demand for increase in subsidy share on farm implements	50.16	II
3	Improvement in the quality of input materials	46.68	III
C.	**Marketing & General Services**		
1	Access to quality and reliable power	70.13	I
2	No political influence/ pressure should be entertained in implementation of scheme	53.50	II
3	Procurement center for major crop produce under RKVY scheme	52.87	III
4	More regular contact of Agriculture officers with farmers	40.54	IV
5	All category of farmers should be allowed to avail benefits	34.25	V

Source: Field survey

of subsidy on farm implements. In case of marketing and general services, they suggested to have access to quality and reliable power and they strongly suggested that there should not be political influence/ pressure entertained in implementation of the scheme. As opined by the non-beneficiaries there is a selection bias due to political influence while selecting the beneficiaries for the scheme in the study area (Table 2). Hence it is suggested to design proper eligibility criteria for the selection process.

Non-beneficiaries' reasons for non-participation and suggestions for improving the implementation of RKVY scheme: The major reason for non-participation

in RKVY as opined by the non-beneficiaries was selectivity bias during identification of beneficiaries. It was observed that political interference was there during the process of identification of beneficiaries of the programme. Second major reason for non-participation was that, some of the farmers did not have land records in their name, which makes them to devoid of the benefits of RKVY. Availability of inputs from input dealers on credit basis helps the farmers to repay them after sometime, which indirectly forces them to become non-participants (Table 3). The non-beneficiaries suggested that increase in the share of subsidy under RKVY and timely supply of

quality inputs through RSKs will help the inclusion of non-beneficiaries to avail benefits under RKVY. Although the major source of awareness of RKVY in the study area was Agriculture department, but some of the non-beneficiaires suggested that agricultural officers should visit farmers regularly. This may indicates that Agriculture department needs to extend its coverage to reach out the non-beneficiaries (Table 4).

Constraints faced and suggestions made by the officials for effective implemention of RKVY scheme: During the primary survey, interaction with the officials of implementing department was also held and the constraints faced by them while implementing projects under RKVY and suggestions made by them for the improvement of RKVY scheme is presented in this section.

Too many schemes and insufficient manpower was the major constraint faced by the officials while implementing projects under RKVY. As revealed by the non-beneficiaries, that selectivity bias due to political interfence; officials reiterated the same as their second major constraint. The findings of Reddy (2017) observed that the lack of skilled manpower and lack of training support to Soil Testing Laboratory workers were hindering the capacity of the Soil Health Card Scheme and the constraints holds true in effective implementation of RKVY program in the present study also. Other constraints includes: lack of co-ordination between Department of Agriculture and other agencies, monitoring, complex procedure, etc. A study by Kumar *et al.* (2017) found that the lack of adequate funding by the government, as major constraint in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and the constraint holds true in implementation of RKVY program also, delaying effective implementation of RKVY as ninth major constraint in our study. They were also of the opinion that need of independent wing and staff for RKVY at district level. (Table 5).

The major suggestion made by the officials for improvement of the RKVY scheme was filling up of vacancy position, which will help them to implement the government schemes more effectively. They also revealed the fact that majority of the posts in the department

Table 3: Non-beneficiaries' reasons for non-participation in RKVY

S.No.	Reasons	Garrett's Score	Rank
1	Selectivity bias during identification of beneficiaries	68.62	I
2	Land record not in the name of the farmer/ cultivator	66.32	II
3	Purchased inputs from input dealers on credit basis	63.47	III
4	Untimely and limited availability of quality seeds and other inputs	56.37	IV
5	Large farmers were usually excluded from availing benefits	51.33	V
6	Seed price of department was relatively higher than private market	46.13	VI
7	Not interested due to lengthy procedural requirement to avail subsidy	33.50	VII
8	Unawareness about the scheme	33.40	VIII

Source: Field survey

Table 4: Suggestions for the inclusion of non-beneficiary for availing benefits under RKVY

S.No.	Suggestions	Garrett's Score	Rank
1	Increase the share of subsidy for RKVY benefits	56.93	I
2	Timely supply of quality inputs (specifically seed) through Raitha Samparka Kendras (RSKs) is essential	52.78	II
3	Special Gram Sabha needed to train and disseminate information with farmers about the RKVY benefits and its usage	50.95	III
4	Agriculture officers should visit the villages regularly	46.57	IV
5	More publicity efforts required to popularise the RKVY	44.52	V
6	All categories of farmers should be allowed to avail benefits	38.57	VI

Source: Field survey

Table 5: Constraints faced by the officials while implementing projects under RKVY

S.No.	Constraints	Garrett's Score	Rank
1	Too many schemes and Insufficient manpower	69.47	I
2	Selectivity bias due to Political interference	68.47	II
3	Unavailability of experts	54.33	III
4	Lack of co-ordination between DoA and other agencies	50.93	IV
5	Monitoring	47.93	V
6	Complex procedure	45.60	VI
7	No training on improved technologies	45.07	VII
8	Lack of transport facility	44.73	VIII
9	Lack of sufficient fund	43.80	IX
10	Need of independent wing and staff for RKVY	30.00	X

Source: Field survey

Table 6: Suggestions made by the officials of implementing department for the improvement of RKVY Scheme

S.No.	Constraints	Garrett's Score	Rank
1	Filling up of vacancy position	73.80	I
2	Political interference should be avoided	57.53	II
3	Bridge technological gaps through training	54.80	III
4	Awareness should be increased	53.00	IV
5	Provide transport facilities	49.67	V
6	Simplification of procedure	47.33	VI
7	Timely provision of sufficient funds	36.07	VII
8	Convert contract workers to permanent	25.80	VIII

Source: Field survey

were filled on contract basis, due to which no training on improved technologies have been provided for the officials. They were of the opinion that there is need to bridge this technological gap through training and also there should be timely provision of funds in sufficient quantity will ensure the effective implementation of the schemes at ground level. Since majority of the workers in the agriculture department in the study area were contract workers, hence some of the officials were suggested to give the permanent status to contract

workers which will help in efficient implementation of the scheme (Table 6).

CONCLUSION

Different stakeholders of the RKVY programme revealed about various constraints faced by them. Major constraint to avail the benefits was found to be related with less subsidy share and its delayed payment, whereas non beneficiaries reported that the problem of selectivity bias due to political interference as the main reason for their non-participation in any government programmes. To run the programme in a better way, there is a need to formulate the structure of the programmes in such a way that it should be able to cover economically weaker section as well as the illiterate people to avail the benefits. Handling of too many government schemes with insufficient manpower might have resulted in the implementation of the schemes in an ineffective manner by the government officials. Hence there is a need to timely filling up of vacancy positions of the concerned department and to provide them with appropriate training to bridge the technological gaps. The policy makers/government should give greater attention for simplifying the procedures, higher interaction between farmers and officials, and elimination of selectivity bias, which will positively results in the effective implementation of the government programmes.

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