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Assessment of perceived workload of extension personnel in agricultural extension service systems in Telangana

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ABSTRACT

Workload is a critical determinant of extension personnel's motivation, job performance, and overall effectiveness in delivering agricultural extension services. Excessive or poorly managed workload can lead to stress, reduced job satisfaction, and diminished quality of farmer interactions, thereby affecting the outcomes of extension programmes. The paper focuses on the perceived workload of extension personnel in three extension service systems in Telangana i.e., Public, Private and NGO extension service systems. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study with a total sample of one hundred and twenty-six extension personnel. From the analysis, it was found that majority of extension personnel from public extension service system i.e. 49.02 per cent of extension personnel had medium workload, followed by high (27.45%) and low (23.53%) levels of workload. Majority of extension personnel from private extension service system i.e. 46.66 per cent of extension personnel had medium workload, followed by equal per cent (26.67) of extension personnel had low and high workload each. Majority of extension personnel from NGO extension service system i.e. 46.67 per cent had medium workload, followed by high (30.00%) and low (23.33%) workload. An effective change in the 13 dimensions taken in consideration concerning the job workload can be corrected to subsequently reduce the workload of the extension personnel.

Keywords: Workload, Extension Personnel, NGO, Public, Private

Introduction

Workload is an important organizational and psychosocial factor influencing the efficiency, job satisfaction and overall performance of extension personnel. Agricultural extension personnel perform diverse responsibilities, including technology dissemination, farmer advisory services, training, field demonstrations, programme implementation, documentation and coordination with stakeholders. Consequently, the nature and intensity of their workload may vary across extension service systems. Previous studies have consistently indicated variation in the perceived workload of extension and related personnel, with a considerable proportion experiencing moderate levels of workload. Amit *et al.* (2014) [1], Gopika *et al.* (2015) [2], Abdul (2016) [3], James (2020) [4] and Kusumalatha *et al.* (2021) [5] reported predominantly medium levels of perceived workload among extension personnel and allied professionals, although both high and low levels were also observed. However, comparative evidence across different agricultural extension service systems remains limited. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to assess the perceived workload of extension personnel across public, private and NGO agricultural extension service systems in Telangana.

Methodology

The Telangana state was purposively selected for the study, the three agro climatic zones of state i.e., North, South and Central zones were considered. One district from each zone, thus a total of three districts were selected randomly for the study. i.e., Rangareddy, Warangal and Karimnagar. Under public extension service systems, *Krishi Vigyan Kendra, District Agricultural Advisory and Transfer of Technology Centres and State Department of Agriculture*, in case of private extension system, *Corteva, Syngenta and Bioseed* companies and in case of NGO extension service system, *Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA), Modern Architects of Rural India (MARI), Sankalp and Sarvodaya* were selected purposively. Ten extension personnel from State Department of Agriculture i.e., Mandal Agricultural Officers (5) and Agricultural Extension Officer (5) from each district were selected by using simple random sampling method. In Rangareddy district, there are 27 mandals, 27 MAOs, 88 AEOs. In Karimnagar district, there are 16 mandals, 16 MAOs and 79 AEOs. In Warangal district, there are 13 mandals, 13 MAOs and 59 AEOs. The extension personnel (MAOs & AEOs) were randomly selected from the list of one to respective totals and selected using random number generator. Thus constitute thirty (30) extension personnel from State Department of Agriculture for the study. Seven extension personnel were selected from KVKs (5) and DAATTCs (2), So a total of twenty-one extension personnel were included from KVKs and DAATTCs. Thus, constitute fifty-one extension personnel from

public extension service system. Five extension personnel from the list of one to respective totals were selected from each private extension service system. Thus, a total of forty-five (45) extension personnel from private extension service systems. Five extension personnel were selected from the list of one to respective totals from each NGO extension service system. Thus constitute thirty (30) extension personnel from NGO extension service system.

The data from the extension personnel on workload was collected with the help of closed-ended questionnaire. Data collected was analyzed and interpretations were drawn based on results.

Results and discussion

The results presented in table 1. revealed that majority of extension personnel from public extension service system i.e. 49.02 per cent of extension personnel had medium workload, followed by 27.45 per cent of extension personnel had high workload and 23.53 per cent of extension personnel had low workload.

The reasons for majority of extension personnel of public extension service systems were having medium to high level of workload because the extension personnel were always busy and rushed with respective job activities like crop booking, validation of Rythu Bandu and Rythu Bima to the beneficiaries, procurement of paddy, conducting OFT and FLD along with non-job chart activities. The extension personnel were pressurised with the technical plan work of the organisations, they felt the number of requests, complaints dealt were than they expected.

Majority of extension personnel from private extension service system i.e. 46.66 per cent of extension personnel had medium workload, followed by 26.67 per cent of extension personnel had low workload and 26.67 per cent of extension personnel had high workload.

The reasons for majority of extension personnel of private extension service systems were having medium level of workload were because of the large targets of the company sales which have to achieved within the limited period, they had the target to complete huge number of trainings and new product introduction of seeds and chemicals in their respective areas. Each

Majority of extension personnel from NGO extension service system i.e. 46.67 per cent had medium workload, followed by 30.00 per cent of extension personnel had high workload and 23.33 per cent of extension personnel had low workload.

The reasons for majority of extension personnel of NGO extension service systems were having medium to high level of workload were because of project deadlines to complete the agricultural extension services in the location. NGO extension personnel had to cover the large areas in mobilising the farmers to form into FPOs for availing the services of the organisation. The work done by extension personnel was hindered by the amount of work assigned to them.

The results are in conformity with the results obtained by Nagananda (2005), Sandika (2006) and Debnath and Saravanan (2014) [1] wherein majority of the respondents expressed medium workload in the organization.

Table 1. Distribution of extension personnel according to their perceived workload ($n = 126$)

S.No.	Category	Class interval	Public		Private		NGO	
			f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Low level	5-7	12	23.53	12	26.67	7	23.33
2	Medium level	7-9	25	49.02	21	46.66	14	46.67
3	High level	9-11	14	27.45	12	26.67	9	30.00
	Total		51	100	45	100	30	100

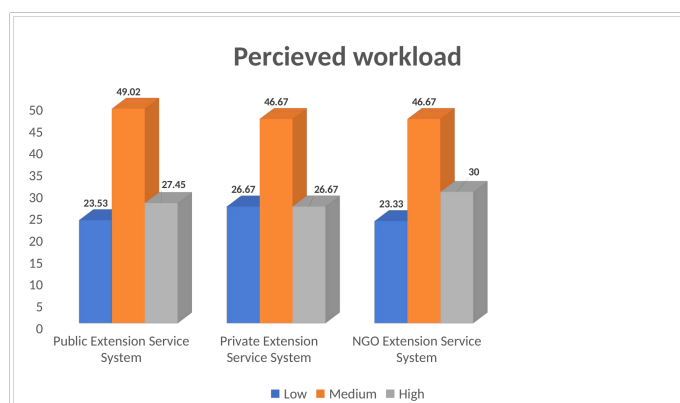


Figure 1. Distribution of extension personnel according to perceived workload

Conclusion

The study revealed that perceived workload among extension personnel was predominantly at a medium level across public, private and NGO agricultural extension service systems in Telangana. Extension personnel in the public system experienced workload due to crop booking, validation of farmer welfare schemes, procurement activities, OFTs, FLDs, technical planning and handling requests and complaints. In the private system, workload was mainly associated with achieving sales targets, conducting trainings and introducing new agricultural products. In the NGO system, project deadlines, extensive

geographical coverage and mobilisation of farmers for forming FPOs contributed to medium to high workload. Overall, the findings highlight the need for systematic workload management through rational distribution of responsibilities, realistic targets, adequate manpower, effective planning and coordination, and reduction of unnecessary non-job-chart activities. Addressing these workload dimensions can improve personnel efficiency and strengthen agricultural extension service delivery.

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Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest

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