

Constraints Analysis of KISSAN KERALA User Farmers in Utilizing Multi Modal-Delivery Services

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ABSTRACT

Karshaka Information System Services and Networking (KISSAN Kerala) is a multimodal agri-advisory service started by Kerala government. The study was conducted in two districts of Kerala: Alappuzha and Thrissur. A total of 240 user-farmers were selected for the study. KISSAN Kerala has mainly five mode of agri-advisory service. The study focussed to bring out the constraints and suggestions faced by the user-farmers in accessing the services. Data was collected using interview schedule. The user-farmers were asked to express their constraints and suggestions. The responses were converted into frequency and ranked. Majority opined about the difficulty in accessing the online agri-advisory services of KISSAN Kerala.

Keyword: KISSAN, Multimodal, Constraints, Agri-advisory Services

INTRODUCTION

It is the age of digitilisation and agriculture is also no exception to this phenomenal digital transition. Kerala's e-governance system has been benefitting citizens in a paramount manner. One such initiative started in 2003 with the fountainhead of Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management. Karshaka Information Systems Services and Networking (KISSAN) is an integrated, multi-modal delivery of agricultural information system, which provides several dynamic and useful information and advisory services for the farming community across Kerala (Kiran, 2005). It is one of the leading citizen centric e-governance projects of the Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Kerala. The project was conceived, developed and managed by the Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management-Kerala for the Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Kerala. The basic objective of this project is to provide "Right Information to the Right Person (s) at the Right Time in the Right Place (s) and in the Right Context". Albeit of its effective delivery several users who have poor e-readiness are finding some of the services hectic, thus it becomes inevitable to analyse the constraints faced by the user-farmers.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in two districts of Kerala: Allapuzha and Thrissur, these two districts are agriculturally active in Kerala, selected through purposive sampling. KISSAN KERALA programme has covered the entire Kerala, but based on the availability of highest number of farmer beneficiaries two panchayats from each district and two villages from each panchayat were selected for the investigation. Panchayats selected were Cheppad, Chettikulangara from Alappuzha and Madakkatara and Pananchery from Thrissur.

Thus four villages from each district were selected randomly for the study From each village 30 user farmers were selected. It is a tedious task to include required number of non- users in this study as KISSAN KERALA is implemented across Kerala. Since control group forms an indispensable factor in impact analysis, a list of non-users were prepared from each selected village and 5 non-user farmers were selected randomly to augment the credibility of the study. Thus making a total sample size of 280. The constraints experienced were ranked according to the importance of the constraints enlisted by them.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Constraints faced by the user farmers with respect to KISSAN Kerala Programme

Constraints/Problems	n=240		
	Response		Rank
	No.	%	
Online pest–disease diagnose system doesn't work properly	233	97.08	I
It is not always possible to clear queries via KISSAN Kerala website	223	92.92	II
The feedback system is not efficient	211	87.92	III
Queries via telephone are sometimes not answered	215	89.58	IV
GIS weather information system is not functional for all districts	204	85	V
Website based information can be accessed only by e-literate people	112	46.67	VI
Lack of awareness about KISSAN Kerala services	88	36.67	VII

It is observed from Table 1 that 97.08 complained about the technical errors in the working of online pest-diagnose system. While 92.92 faced difficulties in online query clearance via KISSAN KERALA website. 87.92 per cent of the user-farmers complained about the feedback system. Whereas 89.58 per cent faced problems in using tele-advisory service of KISSAN KERALA. Non-functional GIS weather information system had been reported as another constraint by 85 per cent of the user-farmers. About 46.67 per cent of the user-farmers posed e-illiteracy of people to access KISSAN KERALA website as a problem. 36.67 per cent user-farmers stressed the need to popularise KISSAN KERALA services to the unreached. To chalk out effective strategies to tide over the constraints suggestions were also elicited from the respondents.

A critical analysis of Table 2 showed that 96.67 per cent of the user-farmers opined that the telephone delivery services of KISSAN KERALA should be scaled up. Suggestions came from about 95.83 per cent of user-farmers to make fertilizer recommendation system available offline. 94.16 stressed on the need to improve the query clearance system. To increase the efficacy of the KISSAN KERALA service about 83.33 per cent of the user-farmers opined to incorporate offline pest and disease recognise system. Need for efficient feedback system has been suggested by 82.5 per cent of the user-farmers. While 75 per cent suggested to make free service of SMS. 74.58 per cent opined the need for active query clearance system. About 70.83 per cent of the userfarmers suggested that KISSAN KERALA website should be updated. While 69.17 per cent user-farmers opined the need for strengthening district wise e-literacy programme. The need for conducting awareness campaigns on KISSAN KERALA services was suggested by 47.08 per cent of the user-farmers.

Table 2: Suggestions of the user farmers for effective implementation of KISSAN Kerala programme

Suggestions	n=240		
	Response		Rank
	No.	%	
Telephone service delivery needs to be more efficient	232	96.67	I
Fertilizer recommendation system should be made offline	230	95.83	II
Improve the query clearance system	226	94.16	III
Offline pest and disease recognise system should be incorporated	200	83.33	IV
Feedback system needs to more efficient	198	82.5	V
SMS service should be free	180	75	VI
Online query clearance should be more active	179	74.58	VII
Official website of KISSAN Kerala should be updated	170	70.83	VIII
District wise e literacy programmes should be strengthened	166	69.17	IX
KISSAN Kerala services awareness campaign should be conducted	113	47.08	X

CONCLUSION

It is evident from the aforesaid discussion that user-farmers do face practical difficulties in accessing the multiple services of KISSAN Kerala. These constraints can be pragmatically solved if the suggestions raised by the user-farmers are taken up. E-readiness of the people should be increased for increasing the acceptability of digital technologies. KISSAN KERALA has wide opportunities and can give impetus to technology driven agriculture. The same could be possible by augmenting the interest of the farmers and motivating them to readily use this technology for reaping maximum benefits in agriculture.

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