

Privatization of Agricultural Extension Services

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SUMMARY

Privatization is emerging as an important factor to cut down government expenses, to get rid of embarrassment to public extension system to increase in efficiency, influence and involve farmers in extension activity and to increase competition among different extension service providers for quality services. Since independence till date public extension workers are not able to perform as effective diffusion agents and because of which modern technologies are not readily available for the use of the farmers. Agricultural extensions services in India are mostly funded and delivered by public systems till recently are increasingly coming under private extension services. It is due to shift in nature of agriculture from subsistence to profit oriented public extension services and widely viewed as supply driven rather than demand driven. In existing environment experimentation or implementation of Privatization of Agricultural Extension Services, deserve prioritization.

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural production systems are complex even with well-defined components. It continues to demand an increasing level of intensive management, input supply, market infrastructure, support and processing to help farmers in maintaining competitive edge. At present, the technology is developing very fast in terms of quality and quantity. The problem is not the lack of technology but its integration into farming practices by the farmers in order to convert it to production accomplishment. Research and Extension are the two founding pillars of agricultural systems. Research network has considerably stridden in the last four decade but the information and communication support is almost conventional and inadequate. Extension personnel are considered as friend and philosophers of the farmers to take the decision. In the WTO era, the problems and challenges become sharper and extension personnel will have to be equipped with a strategy to meet the challenges more promptly. There will be increasing specialization in farm technology and therefore they have to keep themselves up-to-date with respect to these trends and evolving matching technologies and methods for taking same to farmer's fields. "Privatization" means transfer of ownership from state in to private hand. According to Collin, Privatization means handling over a company a concerned that has been previously owned by state to private individual or parties (Raut and Singh, 2001). The term Privatization has been used in three ways: (i) Reliance of private sector institutions to fulfill peoples need, (ii) Reduction of the role of government and consequently increase the role of private sectors in an activity or in the ownership of assets, (iii) Transfer of government enterprises or assets to private sectors.

Privatization

- Process of funding and delivering the extension services by private individual or organization is called Private Extension
- Privatization is the act of reducing the role of government or increasing the role of private sector in an activity or in the ownership of assets
- Privatization is the incidence or process of transferring ownership of business from the public sector (government) to the private sector (business)
- Private Extension is solely the act of private individuals or organizations where the decision of privatization solely rests with government implemented in liaison with Private Extension Service Provider.

Privatization of Agricultural Extension Service (PAES): (The Urgent Need of Indian Agriculture)

Private extension is the service rendered in the area of agriculture and allied aspects by extension personnel or organization, as supplementary or alternative to public extension services and services on payment basis.

Why Privatization

- To reduce the financial burden on government
- Disappointing performance of Public Extension Services

- Low coverage of Public Extension system.
- Wide extension workers: Farmers ratio in India i.e. 1:1000
- Confined Role of village level extension workers
- Commercialization of Agriculture
- To reduce marketing problems.

Objectives:

- Maximum possible profit to the clients through advisory services because their main objective is to increase the income of the farmers.
- To become more efficient and effective in providing services because their survival depends upon nature of their performance.

Types of Private Extension Services:

Entirely private type

The first is entirely private type which is directly involved in farming activities through consultants, agri-business, agricultural input industries etc.

Semi-Government Type

The second type consists of farmer's organizations, NGOs etc. which remain largely dependent on government subsidies.

Public Extension System in India

- India public extension system concentrated on rural community development objectives, rather than having strong agriculture focus
- Policy issue
- Disappointing in transfer of technologies

Weak Points of Public Extension System

- Extension worker : Farmers ratio-1:1000
- Inability to reach all farmers
- Inability to reach all farmers
- No need assessment
- Women involvement is low.

Need of Privatization

- Indian agriculture is self reliant in food production.
- Out of 1,10,000 extension staff of whom around 20% are graduates
- Low cost technology.

Benefits from Private Extension Services

- Generate new, additional income.
- Provides demand driven services.
- Increase the voice and commitment of farmers.
- Extension Services more cost effective with efficiency.
- Complement or supplement the role of public extension system.
- Extension personnel become more clients accountable.
- Increase staff professionalism.

Role of Private Extension System

- Farm advisory services for profit maximization of clients
- Timely input supply for better production

- Providing market information and market intelligence
- Processing the clients produce
- Marketing the clients produce
- Providing credit facilities to the farmers
- Providing infrastructure facilities like transport and storage.

CONCLUSION

Private extension is very crucial for agricultural development in country to attain self sufficiency in food grains, for effective service delivery system and market management etc. Privatization of agricultural extension services can bring desirable changes in Indian agriculture, better services and trained manpower satisfying clientele need, has more face to face contact, increase farm management skills of farms which made them more self reliant and opened up employment opportunities. Analysis the whole perspective, it is clear that private service providers are deep rooting day by day through their multidimensional activities and contributing in agriculture development. Considering the significant presence of private service providers, the public-private partnership may be the answer to the present and future agriculture.

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