

Job Performance of Extension Personnel Functioning in Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) of Palnadu District in Andhra Pradesh

SREE LEELA YEKULA, N. S. SHIVALINGE GOWDA AND M. N. VENKATARAMANA

Department of Agricultural Extension, College of Agriculture, UAS, GKVK, Bengaluru - 560 065

e-Mail : yekulasreeleela@gmail.com

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

SREE LEELA YEKULA :

Conceptualization, investigation, data analysis and manuscript preparation;

N. S. SHIVALINGE GOWDA :

Conceptualization, supervision, review and editing manuscript;

M. N. VENKATARAMANA :

Methodology and guidance on experimentation

Corresponding Author :

SREE LEELA YEKULA

Received : November 2023

Accepted : January 2024

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to know the attitude of extension personnel towards functioning of Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) particularly in the Palnadu district of Andhra Pradesh. Ninety extension personnel from three mandals of Palnadu district were selected and interviewed. The results of the study indicated that, two fifth (40.00%) of the respondents had medium level of job performance followed by 33.33 per cent and 26.67 per cent had high and low level of job performance. Thus, it could be concluded that significant proportion of the respondents belonged to the medium job performance category. The possible cause for this was due to lack of proper planning of extension activities and close supervision, weekly follow up from Agricultural officers at mandal level.

Keywords : Job performance, Extension personnel, Rythu Bharosa Kendra (RBK)

AGRICULTURE plays an important role in Indian economy. Agriculture and allied sectors provide employment to around 58 per cent of the nation's population and contribute Rs.19.48 lakh crores to the country's Gross Value Added (GVA). Agriculture accounts for around 51 per cent of geographical land, demonstrating the importance of agriculture in the Indian economy, whereas cropping intensity has increased by 25 per cent after independence. It demonstrates that, India has progressed from a food deficit to food secured country. Andhra Pradesh is India's rice bowl and one of the country's most important agricultural states. Andhra Pradesh rural population is around 63 per cent. In 2021-22, the Gross Value Added (GVA) from agriculture to states income is 18.8 per cent. Agricultural and allied sectors reported a growth rate of 14.50 per cent, agriculture alone contributed to a growth rate of 6.30 per cent. The horticulture and livestock sector witnessed a growth rate of 13.24 per cent and 11.46 per cent, respectively (Agriculture Department

of Andhra Pradesh). Government of Andhra Pradesh launched Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) for the farmers as one-stop solution for all agriculture and allied firm's products and services on 30th May 2020. RBK is a one-stop shop for all farm needs at the village level. These RBKs are monitored jointly by the Department of Agriculture, Horticulture, AP Seeds, Sericulture, Fisheries and Animal husbandry. RBKs are operated by Village Agriculture Assistant or Horticulture Assistant and Village Animal Husbandry Assistant/ Sericulture Assistant/ Village Fisheries Assistant are responsible for running RBKs in their respective jurisdictions and handling tasks related to agriculture, horticulture, veterinary, fisheries and sericulture. The newly formed RBKs have digital kiosks and apps to assist the farmers in buying the Agri inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, livestock feeds and veterinary medicine and the staff will deliver the product at right time for the market price. After placing an order, it takes 48 hours to reach the farmer. RBKs prevent the middleman and spurious

goods. An integrated call center has been established to address the problems and give solutions to them. With this call center, the farmers get the solution for their problems and the government also knows what type of problems are being faced by the farmers.

RBKs provide services like the Rythu Bharosa-welfare scheme an input subsidy scheme has been introduced for providing financial support to purchase input product and e-crop booking. It is all about documenting the farming land to get free crop insurance for the farmers. Polam-Badi is an extension program where farmers are trained in the field about minimum usage of inputs and getting maximum output and reducing the cost of cultivation. Weather forecasting and market information related to agriculture and allied sectors are also available at RBKs. Registration for tenant farmer's service is also offered by RBKs at the farm gate. RBKs are also acting as procurement centers and giving assurance to farmers for getting MSP for their products. RBKs are also providing the soil testing service. The main objective of the study was to analyze the job performance of extension personnel working in Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs)

METHODOLOGY

The present study conducted in Palnadu district of Andhra Pradesh. Three mandals with highest number of RBKs was selected namely Narasaraopet, Sattenapalle, Rompicherla in Palnadu district of Andhra Pradesh, from each mandal 30 extension personnel were randomly selected for the study and constitute 90 respondents. *Ex-post facto* research

design was adopted for the study and data was collected through a structured interview schedule was developed for the study and primary data was collected from respondents through personal interviews.

Dependent variable *i.e.*, Job performance and sixteen Independent variables namely age, qualification, working experience, work load, training received, organizational climate, mass media participation, extension contact, extension participation, awareness about ICTs, achievement motivation, scientific orientation, job satisfaction, co-ordination, risk orientation, conflict management were selected for the study. Interview schedules was used for collecting data from extension personnel. The interview schedules were handed over to the respondents for filling up required information. The data analysis was carried by means of statistical tools used were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, correlation, Multiple regression and kruskal-wallis test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the above Table 1, it is evident that, two fifth (40.00%) of the respondents had medium level of job performance followed by 33.33 per cent and 26.67 per cent had high and low level of job performance. Thus, it could be concluded that significant proportion of the respondents belonged to the medium job performance category. The possible cause for this was due to lack of proper planning of extension activities and close supervision, weekly follow up from Agricultural officers at mandal level.

TABLE 1
Overall job performance of extension personnel working in RBKs (n=90)

Categories and criteria	Extension personnel		Mean	SD
	No.	%		
Low < (115.37)	24	26.67	118.92	7.18
Medium (115.37-122.51)	36	40.00		
High > (122.51)	30	33.33		

The above findings were in agreement with the findings of Abdul Sattar Fazely (2016) with overall job performance of Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors and Kshatriya Amita Madhavrao (2020).

From the data in Table 2, it is clear that a significant proportion (44.44%) of the extension personnel demonstrated high job performance when it comes to studying the local situation, identifying problems, and finding solutions as part of their planning responsibilities, followed by 43.33 per cent of the respondents showed high job performance in planning and preparing village action plan. About 41.11 per cent of the respondents demonstrated high job performance in planning and conducting method and result demonstrations. Same proportion, 41.11 per cent of the respondents exhibited very high job

performance in conducting crop damage analysis seasonally and statistically and a significant proportion 44.44 per cent of the respondents showed high job performance in selecting farmers and farms for conducting adaptive trials. Data reveals various aspects of job performance among extension personnel. Notably significant proportion (46.67%) of respondents demonstrated a strong ability to provide technical advice and share scientific knowledge with farmers. Additionally, a significant proportion (51.11 %) excelled in educating farmers about the critical importance of soil testing for assessing soil fertility levels. More than half (52.22 %) of respondents exhibited exceptional competence in educating farmers about government programs and effectively implementing these initiatives. Furthermore, 56.67 per cent of respondents were providing timely market information to farmers,

TABLE 2
Statement wise job performance of Extension personnel working in RBKs (n=90)

Job aspects	V. High	High	Med	Less	Least
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
I Planning					
Studying local situation and identifying problems and finding solutions	31 (34.44)	40 (44.44)	13 (14.44)	6 (06.68)	0 (00.00)
Planning and preparing village action plan	38 (42.22)	39 (43.33)	3 (03.33)	7 (07.79)	3 (03.33)
Planning and conducting method demonstrations and result demonstrations	22 (24.45)	37 (41.11)	21 (23.33)	10 (11.11)	0 (00.00)
Conducting crop damage analysis seasonally and statistically	37 (41.11)	33 (36.67)	12 (13.33)	6 (06.67)	2 (02.22)
Selecting farmers and farms for conducting adaptive trials	30 (33.33)	40 (44.44)	15 (16.68)	5 (05.55)	0 (00.00)
Planning and preparing effective AV aids to facilitate interaction with farmers	32 (35.57)	20 (22.22)	29 (32.22)	4 (04.44)	5 (05.55)
II Education					
Giving technical advice and scientific knowledge to farmers	28 (31.11)	42 (46.67)	15 (16.67)	3 (03.33)	2 (02.22)
Educating about importance of soil testing to know the fertility status of soil	46 (51.11)	30 (33.33)	4 (04.44)	3 (03.33)	7 (07.79)
Educating farmers about government programmes and executing them effectively	47 (52.22)	33 (36.68)	3 (03.33)	1 (01.11)	6 (06.66)

Continued....

TABLE 2 Continued....

Job aspects	V. High	High	Med	Less	Least
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
Providing information about weather forecasting	44 (48.90)	28 (31.11)	14 (15.55)	4 (04.44)	0 (00.00)
Providing market information timely	51 (56.67)	35 (38.89)	4 (04.44)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Capacity building and knowledge dissemination of farmers through class room and field trainings	41 (45.56)	43 (47.78)	4 (04.44)	2 (02.22)	0 (00.00)
III Supervision					
Ensuring that farmers are receiving appropriate technical recommendations	38 (42.22)	40 (44.45)	12 (13.33)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Proper supervision for different programmes	52 (57.79)	20 (22.22)	14 (15.55)	4 (04.44)	0 (00.00)
Organizing FFS (Polam Badi) effectively	46 (51.11)	38 (42.22)	6 (06.67)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Organizing farmers group meetings periodically	31 (34.44)	52 (57.78)	7 (07.78)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Ascertaining that incentives given to farmers are used properly	41 (45.56)	35 (38.89)	14 (15.55)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Help the farmers in online ordering of Agri/Horti inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides through kiosks	39 (43.33)	34 (37.77)	17 (18.90)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
IV Office work					
Maintaining office records and registers up to date	50 (55.56)	23 (25.55)	17 (18.89)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Submitting routine reports to higher authorities	56 (62.22)	22 (24.44)	6 (06.68)	4 (04.44)	2 (02.22)
Attending official meetings regularly	55 (61.11)	31 (34.45)	4 (04.44)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Maintaining punctuality in office timings	34 (37.78)	41 (45.55)	15 (16.67)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Maintaining good relation with village panchayat members	37 (41.11)	31 (34.45)	22 (24.44)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Keep updating skills on ICT aspects to increase job competency	56 (62.22)	24 (26.67)	10 (11.11)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
V Evaluation					
keep track of all activities for timely monitoring	41 (45.56)	40 (44.44)	9 (10.00)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)
Evaluating the success of group meetings and exhibitions	43 (47.79)	34 (37.77)	10 (11.11)	3 (03.33)	0 (00.00)
Knowing whether the subsidized inputs are actually used or not	39 (43.33)	44 (48.90)	5 (05.55)	2 (02.22)	0 (00.00)
Evaluating extension activities by taking feedback from farmers	47 (52.22)	36 (40.00)	4 (04.45)	0 (00.00)	3 (03.33)

enhancing their decision-making processes. A noteworthy observation is that a substantial portion, accounting for (45.56 %) of respondents, exhibited high level of job performance in conducting capacity-building exercises and disseminating knowledge to farmers. These efforts were conducted through a combination of classroom instruction and field training, indicating a comprehensive approach to skill development and knowledge enhancement.

Significant proportion (44.45%) of the respondents showed high job performance in ensuring that farmers are effectively obtaining the right technical guidance. More than half (57.79%) of the respondents exhibited very high job performance in supervising different programmes. More than half of the responders (51.11%) showed extremely high job performance in efficiently organizing FFS (Polam Badi) sessions. More than half (57.78%) of respondents did a good job of scheduling regular meetings of the farmers group. About (45.56%) and (43.33%) respondents showed excellent job performance in making sure that the incentives given to farmers are used appropriately and in assisting the farmers in online ordering of Agriculture/ Horticulture inputs like seeds, fertilizer and pesticides through kiosks, respectively, which were in supervision job aspects.

More than half of the respondents (62.22%) showed very high job performance in submitting reports to higher authorities, keep updating skills on ICT aspects to increase job competency in the area of office work,

respectively. 61.11 per cent of the respondents showed very high job performance in attending official meetings on a regular basis. Significant proportion (45.56%) and (47.79%) of the respondents demonstrated very high job performance in keep tracking all activities for timely monitoring and evaluating the success of group meetings and exhibitions. About (48.90%) of respondents performed exceptionally well when assessing whether or not the subsidized inputs are actually utilized and more than half (52.22%) performed exceptionally well when assessing the effectiveness of the extension activities.

Based on the information provided in Table 3, several key findings emerge regarding the priorities in relation to their job performance. Administrative tasks, such as office work involving program management and farmer group meetings, stand out prominently, securing the 1st rank with an impressive mean percentage of 87.33. This preference suggests that respondents are heavily engaged in maintaining office records, registers and participating in official meetings, highlighting the significance of administrative duties in their roles. Evaluation factors, specifically timely monitoring of activities, claim the 2nd rank with a substantial mean percentage of 86.83, emphasizing the importance of tracking their work. Supervision, encompassing the effective organization and oversight of meetings and activities, follows closely as the 3rd ranked aspect, receiving an 86.22 mean percentage. Education of farmers through the dissemination of scientific knowledge holds the

TABLE 3
Job performance of extension personnel in different job aspects

(n=90)

Job Aspect	No. of Statements	Max. Score	Total Score	Mean		Rank
				Score	%	
Planning	6	30	2147	23.85	79.51	V
Education	6	30	2304	25.60	85.33	IV
Supervision	6	30	2328	25.86	86.22	III
Office work	6	30	2358	26.20	87.33	I
Evaluation	4	20	1563	17.36	86.83	II

4th position with a notable mean percentage of 85.33, underscoring the commitment to enhancing the knowledge of farmers. Surprisingly, planning of extension operations falls to the 5th rank with a mean percentage of 79.51. This low ranking could indicate that respondents may not prioritize comprehensive planning of extension activities as much as other aspects of their roles. These findings collectively shed light on the varying levels of importance assigned to different job responsibilities by the respondents, offering valuable insights into their professional perspectives and priorities.

In Table 4, it becomes evident that certain activities have been assessed and ranked. Leading rank was, the act of attending regular meetings, secured the top with a notably high mean score of 4.56. Following that timely provision of market information, earned the 2nd rank with a mean score of 4.52. In 3rd place, with a mean score of 4.51, is the importance attributed to regularly updating skills in ICT to enhance job competency. The effective organization of Farmer Field Schools (Polam Badi) takes the 4th position, supported by a mean score of 4.44. Ranking 5th, with

a mean score of 4.40, is the activity of submitting routine reports to higher authorities, underlining the significance of timely and accurate reporting. The 6th position emphasizes the value of evaluating extension activities through feedback from farmers, with a mean score of 4.37. Capacity building and knowledge dissemination for farmers, achieved through classroom and field training, hold the 7th rank with a mean score of 4.36 and in 8th place, is the practice of tracking all activities for timely monitoring, denoting its importance with a mean score of 4.35. These rankings and mean scores collectively provide valuable insights for decision-making and prioritization within the surveyed context, with attending meetings, providing timely market information and continuous ICT skill development emerging as particularly esteemed activities.

From the above Table 5, it reveals comparative analysis. It is seen from the findings that the mean rank of job performance of extension personnel found to be higher (52.70) in Narasaraopet followed by Sattenapalle (51.25) and less (32.55) noticed in

TABLE 4
Job performance of extension personnel based on their mean score and rank

Job aspect	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
(n=90)			
I Planning			
Studying local situation and identifying problems and finding solutions	366	4.06	XXI
Planning and preparing village action plan	372	4.13	XX
Planning and conducting method demonstrations and result demonstrations	341	3.78	XXV
conducting crop damage analysis seasonally and statistically	363	4.03	XXIII
Selecting farmers and farms for conducting adaptive trials	365	4.05	XXII
Planning and preparing effective AV aids to facilitate interaction with farmers	340	3.77	XXVI
II Education			
Giving technical advice and scientific knowledge to farmers	361	4.01	XXIV
Educating about importance of soil testing to know the fertility status of soil	375	4.16	XIX
Educating farmers about government programmes and executing them effectively	385	4.27	XIV
Providing information about weather forecasting	383	4.25	XVI
Providing market information timely	407	4.52	II
Capacity building and knowledge dissemination of farmers through class room and field trainings	393	4.36	VII
Continued....			

TABLE 4 Continued....

Job aspect	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
III Supervision			
Ensuring that farmers are receiving appropriate technical recommendations	386	4.28	XIII
Proper supervision for different programmes	389	4.32	XI
Organizing FFS (Polam Badi) effectively	400	4.44	IV
Organizing farmers group meetings periodically	384	4.26	XV
Ascertaining that incentives given to farmers are used properly	387	4.30	XII
Help the farmers in online ordering of Agri/Horti inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides through kiosks	382	4.24	XVII
IV Office work			
Maintaining office records and registers up to date	391	4.34	IX
Submitting routine reports to higher authorities	396	4.40	V
Attending official meetings regularly	411	4.56	I
Maintaining punctuality in office timings	379	4.21	XVIII
Maintaining good relation with village panchayat members	375	4.16	XIX
Keep updating skills on ICT aspects to increase job competency	406	4.51	III
V Evaluation			
keep track of all activities for timely monitoring	392	4.35	VIII
Evaluating the success of group meetings and exhibitions	387	4.30	XII
Knowing whether the subsidized inputs are actually used or not	390	4.33	X
Evaluating extension activities by taking feedback from farmers	394	4.37	VI

Rompicherla mandal. The high job performance of Narasaraopet mandal respondents might be because they were planning extension activities properly and close supervision from superiors and farmers in that locality were well aware about functioning of RBKs and their services. The data subjected for Kruskal - Wallis test approach comprising of Chi- square test statistic. The result finally indicates that difference in job performance of three mandals under study found to be highly significant ($x^2-11.14^{**}$) ($p < 0.01$).

Data presented in Table 6, indicates the relationship between the profile of extension personnel with job performance. The extension personnel characteristics viz., Qualification, working experience, training received, organizational climate, mass media participation, extension participation, awareness about ICTs, achievement motivation, scientific orientation, job satisfaction, co-ordination,

TABLE 5
Comparative analysis of job performance of extension personnel among three mandals (n=90)

Name of Mandal	Sample (n)	Mean	Chi-Square value (x^2)
Narasaraopet	30	52.70	
Sattenapalle	30	51.25	11.14 **
Rompicherla	30	32.55	

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability, (0.01,2df) = 9.210

Note : Kruskal- Wallis Test

conflict management were found to have positive and significant relationship with job performance at 1 per cent level of significance. work load has negative and significant relationship with job performance at 1 per cent level of significance and extension contact was found to be positive and

significant at 5 per cent level and age, risk orientation were found to be positive and non-significant with job performance of extension personnel working in RBKs. Independent variable age which is non-significant is in line with Rukundo-Aimabde (2012), Murai (2016) and qualification is in line with Manjunath (2015).

It is evident from the Table 7, that nine independent variables namely age, work load, training received, extension contact, extension participation, scientific orientation, job satisfaction, co-ordination, conflict management established highly significant and were influencing the job performance of extension personnel ($P < 0.01$). Further, six independent variables considered namely qualification, working experience, organizational climate, mass media participation, awareness about ICTs, risk orientation

established significant and influencing the job performance ($P < 0.05$). However, the remaining independent variable achievement motivation found to be non-significant with respect to statistical results towards job performance ($P > 0.05$). It can be concluded that 'F' test assessing the contribution of all these sixteen independent variables establishing high significance ($F = 17.14^{**}$, $P < 0.05$). It is finally evident that all these sixteen independent variables put together contribute 61.90 per cent of the variation in job performance of extension personnel.

The present study was conducted to analyze the job performance of extension personnel working in Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBK). The findings of the study showed that, majority (73.33%) of the extension personnel working in RBKs had medium level to

TABLE 6
Relationship between job performance of extension personnel with their profile (n=90)

Independent Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)
Age	0.107 ^{NS}
Qualification	0.397 ^{**}
Working experience	0.535 ^{**}
Work load	-0.159 ^{**}
Training received	0.548 ^{**}
Organizational climate	0.408 ^{**}
Mass media participation	0.523 ^{**}
Extension contact	0.146 [*]
Extension participation	0.451 ^{**}
Awareness about ICTs	0.401 ^{**}
Achievement motivation	0.377 ^{**}
Scientific orientation	0.307 ^{**}
Job satisfaction	0.292 ^{**}
Co-ordination	0.353 ^{**}
Risk orientation	0.095 ^{NS}
Conflict management	0.476 ^{**}

*Significance at 5% level, **Significance at 1% level, NS-Non-significant

TABLE 7
Multiple regression analysis of profile of the extension personnel with their job performance (n=90)

Independent variable	Regression Coefficient (b)	Standard Error (SEb)	value (t)
Age	0.122	0.151	2.804 ^{**}
Qualification	0.318	0.107	2.197 [*]
Working experience	1.447	0.819	1.998 [*]
Work load	-0.525	0.202	2.603 ^{**}
Training received	1.700	0.436	3.901 ^{**}
Organizational climate	0.430	0.346	2.242 [*]
Mass media participation	0.702	0.292	2.401 [*]
Extension contact	0.352	0.357	3.987 ^{**}
Extension participation	0.597	0.246	4.405 ^{**}
Awareness about ICT	0.691	0.830	1.992 [*]
Achievement motivation	0.243	0.239	1.020 ^{NS}
Scientific orientation	0.516	0.317	2.629 ^{**}
Job satisfaction	0.291	0.104	2.789 ^{**}
Co-ordination	0.731	0.305	2.934 ^{**}
Risk orientation	1.657	0.718	2.308 [*]
Conflict management	0.345	0.274	4.261 ^{**}

$R^2 = 0.619$; F-Value = 17.14^{**}; NS= Non- Significant
* Significant at 0.05 level of probability; ** Significant at 0.01 level of probability

high level of job performance. This implies that still 26.67 per cent of the respondents job performance need to be enhanced. By conducting trainings, self and management development programs, which contribute enhancing the extension personnel growth and development and also helps in updating the knowledge, skills and to make aware of their roles and responsibilities.

REFERENCES

ABDUL SATTAR FAZELY, 2016, Job performance of state agricultural university teachers in karnataka, *Mysore J. Agric. Sci.*, **50** (4) : 762 - 767.

KSHATRIYA AMITA MADHAVRAO, 2020, Job perception, job performance, job satisfaction and job stress of extension personnel working in state agriculture department. *M.Sc. (Agri.) Thesis*, Vasant Rao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani.

MANJUNATH, V. B., 2015, Job perception and job performance of Panchayat Development Officers. *Ph.D. (Agri.) Thesis*, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad.

MURAI, A. M., 2016, Job performance and job satisfaction of academic staff of Vasant Rao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani.

RUKUNDO-AIMABDE, 2012, Job Performance of Teachers - A case study of University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore. *Mysore J. Agric. Sci.*, **46** (2) : 388 - 392.