



Perceived Constraints among Veterinary Livestock Development Assistants while delivering livestock Services in Haryana

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to assess different constraints faced by Veterinary Livestock Development Assistants (VLDAs) of Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Haryana while providing livestock services to the farmers of the state. Thirty two independent constraints were taken for the study, which were later classified under nine set of constraints. Asymptotic significance obtained from the Friedman test was 0.0 ($p < 0.01$) with chi-square value of 168.689 and 8 degrees of freedom. Significance value showed, Monte Carlo value was significant at 99 per cent degree of confidence interval and hence, it could be interpreted that there was significant difference among the nine set of constraints. The most severe set of constraints perceived by the respondents was financial followed by situational, technological, motivational, administration and human resource development constraints, policies, system and regulation constraints, social constraints and infrastructural constraints. The study concluded that adequate financial powers should be delegated to VLDAs to deal with the contingent situation at the villages, regular recruitment of VLDAs to fill vacant position, fair provision of awards, incentives, promotion and other emoluments as compared to veterinarians and other officers.

Key Words: Constraints, Livestock, Service, Veterinary, Assistants.

INTRODUCTION

The livestock sector plays a crucial role in poverty alleviation and providing gainful employment, steady income and overall socio-economic development of the rural population. India boasts of huge livestock wealth (512 m livestock and 729 m poultry population), accounting for 11.6 per cent of world livestock population (Anon, 2014). Infact, performance of India's livestock sector is one of the poorest in the World (Chander *et al*, 2010). Government of India and state governments enacted different policies and programmes on animal husbandry to ensure livestock development through many state and non-state organizations. The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAH&D), Haryana, is one of the oldest departments held responsible for providing health care, breeding facilities and conducting extension activities for the precious livestock of the state. The

execution of livestock services lies exclusively with the Veterinary Officers (VOs) and the Veterinary Livestock Development Assistants (VLDAs) working at the Government Veterinary Hospitals (GVHs) and dispensaries (GVDs). The VLDAs at the lowest level of organizational hierarchy, considered as an integral part of veterinary service delivery system, committed towards development of animal husbandry and dairy sector in the state.

In any working condition, existence of constraints is a common feature. Constraints are elements, factors, or subsystems that restricts an entity, from achieving its potential with reference to its goal (Rahman, 2011). Therefore, it has become vital to identify and prioritize the factors that hamper the performance of Veterinary Livestock Development Assistant (VLDAs) to imply remedial measures for making them more effective and efficient in delivery of livestock services.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in all the four divisions (Hisar, Rohtak, Ambala and Gurugram) of Haryana state. Later on, using multi-stage random sampling method 20 VLDAAs was favoured from a district (Hisar, Karnal, Kurukshetra and Mahendergarh) from each division, making a final sample size of 80 respondents. Ex post facto research design was used to study the 9 set of constraints perceived by VLDAAs viz. motivational, infrastructural, financial, technological, situational, social, administrative and human resource development and other miscellaneous constraints. The responses to these constraints were recorded on three point continuum of most severe, severe and not severe with the respective weights of 3, 2 and 1. Plausible constraints were prioritised on the basis of mean score calculated for each constraint and ranking was done under each set of constraint. In addition to this, non-parametric test i.e. Friedman two-way ANOVA by ranks test, as exemplified by Ray and Mondal (2011) was used to identify the most severe set of constraint faced by respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ranking of different items under each set of constraint

Table 1 illustrates the major administrative and human resource development constraints were insufficient number of para-professionals in field (1.91) and poor accessibility to professional development opportunities (1.91), as only 2019 of them were present against 3200 sanctioned posts, pegging undue load on the existing strength of VLDAAs. Moreover, professional development opportunities were negligible with very low frequency of trainings conducted in extension subject matter. The motivational constraints indicated very little chances of promotion for these diploma holders with absence of policy on awards, rewards, performance appraisal and other motivational methods opted by the organization to enhance and sustain the performance of their employees. These findings were in line with the

study of Goyal *et al* (2014) and Goyal *et al* (2018) on veterinary surgeons in Haryana. Under situational constraints, it can be deduced that respondents were upset with the department for not providing vehicle for doorstep service delivery in conjunction with delay in sanctioning their travel allowance for field visit and shortage of basic equipments like syringe, needles, sterilization sets, medicine supply etc. which rendered them to be inefficient.

In this era, advanced diagnostic technologies such as ultrasounds, sex sorted semen and modern extension teaching aids are necessary for effective delivery of livestock services with competency to utilise them. But looking at technological constraints (Table 2) it can be said that respondents were constrained by inadequate availability of modern equipments at hospitals and their incompetency to utilize them. The ranking pattern of social constraints (Table 2) gave a brief picture of the social system prevailing in the state with majority of the para-veterinarians perceived less integration of SDAH with rural organizations (1.69) as the most important social constraint followed by misguidance of livestock owners by quacks (1.09), self-centered attitude of farmers (0.56) and lack of farmers faith on livestock services provided by SDAH (0.49). These all together affects livestock health and put reputation of department at stake and attenuate farmers' faith to avail livestock services. Similar contentions are supported by Goyal *et al* (2014) and Goyal *et al* (2018). Table 2 also revealed that lack of financial powers (2.05) and insufficient incentives for VLDAAs (2.03) were the major constraints faced by them during delivery of livestock services. Among policy and regulation related constraints, inadequate policies and regulation was the most prominent (1.75) followed by few people got all benefits (1.61), lack of supervision, monitoring and evaluation (1.40), Weak coordination among authorities at headquarters and field (1.24) and lack of advocacy by department for livestock services (1.22) hampered livestock service delivery. Similar arguments were recorded by Goyal *et al* (2018) while assessing constraints affecting veterinary surgeons in Haryana.

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Table 1. Response of the veterinary livestock development assistants on extent of severity for constraints faced during livestock service delivery. (n=80)

Sr. No.	Constraint	Yes Response	Severity Level			Mean Score	Rank
			MS	S	LS		
A. Administrative and human resource development constraints							
1.	Insufficient number of para-professionals and poor accessibility to professional development	82.50	52.24	25.37	20.89	1.91	I
2.	Biased trainings for different services	71.25	7.25	42.03	33.33	1.20	II
3.	Discussing field problems get less priority	66.25	20.37	24.07	53.70	1.10	III
B. Motivational constraints							
4.	Less avenues for promotion	86.25	68.12	17.39	14.49	2.19	I
5.	Lack of awards and rewards	83.75	50.75	20.90	28.36	1.86	II
6.	Lack of feedback	50.00	62.50	35.00	2.50	1.30	III
7.	Poor support from higher authorities	67.50	16.67	38.89	44.44	1.16	IV
C. Situational constraints							
8.	Arbitrary target fixation	72.50	72.41	24.14	3.45	1.95	I
9.	More emphasis on records and reports	77.50	54.84	22.58	22.58	1.80	II
10.	Lack of proper guidance in crisis situation	63.75	60.78	27.45	11.76	1.59	III
11.	Need to perform multitude tasks	65.00	36.54	50.00	13.46	1.45	IV
D. Infrastructural constraints							
12.	Lack of facilities for services at farmers' doorstep	67.50	42.59	25.93	31.48	1.45	I
13.	Ill-equipped GVH&D	52.50	45.24	33.33	21.43	1.17	II
14.	Lack of conveyance facilities	27.50	45.45	36.36	18.18	0.62	III
15.	Less availability of inputs and Less use of ICT	25.00	5.00	10.00	85.00	0.30	IV

LS=Least Severe, S=Severe, MS=Most Severe.

Ranking of different sets of constraints using Friedman Test

Table 3 showed that the asymptotic significance obtained from the Friedman test was 0.0 ($p < 0.01$) with chi-square value 168.689 at 8 degrees of freedom inferred that the level of influence of different sets of constraints during livestock service delivery is varying based on VLDA's perception. In addition, Monte Carlo value was also found to be highly significant at 99 percent confidence interval. Hence, it can be interpreted that there was a significant difference between different sets of constraint faced by VLDA's while delivering livestock services.

It can be seen (Table 3) that the Friedman Mean Rank Value Score (FMRVS) corresponding to Financial Constraints (FMRVS=6.91) was the highest and hence it was a major set of constraints perceived by VLDA's. Such result was due to the fact that VLDA's are the lowest level functionary, bereft of incentives and budget to run the dispensaries effectively. The second most severe constraint was the Situational Constraints (6.09), which might be due to the arbitrary targets set by the department for artificial insemination and more emphasis on maintaining records and sending reports. Third in the line was Technological Constraints (5.83) followed by Motivational Constraints (5.69), and

Table 2. Response of the veterinary livestock development assistants on extent of severity of constraints faced during livestock service delivery. (n=80)

Sr. No.	Constraint	Yes Response	Severity Level			Mean Score	Rank
			MS	S	LS		
A. Technological constraints							
1.	Lack of modern extension teaching aids	63 (78.75)	42 (66.67)	14 (22.22)	7 (11.11)	2.01	I
2.	Lack of advance diagnostic facilities	75.00	66.67	25.00	8.33	1.94	II
3.	Inadequacy of sex sorted semen	63.75	66.67	17.65	15.67	1.60	III
B. Social constraints							
4.	Less integration of SDAH with rural organizations	66.25	60.38	33.96	5.66	1.69	I
5.	Misguidance of farmers by quacks	42.50	61.76	32.35	5.88	1.09	II
6.	Self-centered attitude of farmers	31.25	36.00	8.00	56.00	0.56	III
7.	Lack of farmers faith in SDAH services	23.75	31.58	42.10	26.31	0.49	IV
C. Financial constraints							
8.	Lack of financial powers	80.00	14.06	39.06	57.81	2.05	I
9.	Lack of incentives	86.25	55.07	26.09	18.84	2.03	II
10.	Paucity of budget	88.75	54.93	30.98	4.22	1.42	III
D. Policies, system and regulation constraints							
11.	Inadequate policies and regulations	68.75	69.09	16.36	14.54	1.75	I
12.	Few people got all benefits	65.00	61.54	25.00	13.46	1.61	II
13.	Lack of supervision, monitoring and evaluation	70.00	30.36	39.28	30.36	1.40	III
14.	Weak coordination	72.50	20.69	29.31	50.00	1.24	IV
15.	Lack of advocacy for services	52.50	50.00	33.33	16.67	1.22	V
F. Any other constraints							
16.	Lack of linkage among SDAH and SVUs	51.25	46.34	36.58	17.07	1.17	I
17.	Lack of public-private partnership	30.00	37.50	45.83	16.67	0.66	II

LS=Least Severe, S=Severe, MS=Most Severe;

Administration and Human Resource Development constraints (5.54) which might be due to the fact that only few hospitals were equipped with modern diagnostic technologies with very few training programmes conceived by department to enhance their capacities. Sixth most severe constraint was Policies, System and Regulation Constraints followed by Social Constraints, Other Constraints and Infrastructural Constraints, which implied that these were the least severe sets as these were

broadly perceived by other field officers too like veterinary surgeons, sub-divisional officers etc.

Suggestions given by Veterinary Livestock Development Assistants (VLDAs)

During investigation some of the suggestions emerged out from focused group discussion with various respondents for effective delivery of livestock services were:

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Table 4. Ranking of broad constraint sets perceived by VLDAs based on Friedman Mean Rank Values

S. No.	Constraints category	FMRVS	Rank
1	Financial constraints	6.91	I
2	Situational constraints	6.09	II
3	Technological constraints	5.83	III
4	Motivational constraints	5.69	IV
5	Human resource and human resource development constraints	5.54	V
6	Policies, system and regulation constraints	5.14	VI
7	Social constraints	3.42	VII
8	Any other constraints	3.36	VIII
9	Infrastructural constraints	3.01	IX

Chi-Square = 168.689; df = 8; Asymptotic Sig. = .000; Monte Carlo Sig. = .001

FMRVS: Friedman Mean Rank Value Score; df: Degree of Freedom

- Regular recruitment of the para-veterinary professionals should be made by the department.
 - Parity in provision of awards, incentives, promotion and other emoluments for VLDAs.
 - Targets for various activities should be fixed after deliberate consultation with VLDAs.
 - Timely supply of funds and inputs with adequate financial powers.
 - Digitalisation of records and report submission with provision for a technical person
 - Department should arrange advance diagnostic facilities and extension teaching aids with adequate capacity building activities for VLDAs.
 - Department should advocate its services with strict control on quacks and integration with the rural organizations.
- test was employed to identify the most severe constraints, while appropriateness of the test was confirmed with the asymptotic and Monte Carlo significance level. The present study concluded that most severe set of constraint among VLDAs was ‘financial constraints’ as result revealed that ‘lack of incentives’, ‘paucity of budget’ and ‘lack of financial powers’ constraints perceived by more than eighty percent of respondents in the independent category. This pointed out the fact that department should endeavour towards timely supply of funds and inputs at the field hospitals/dispensaries with adequate financial powers to VLDAs to deal with the contingent situation at the villages. The study also recommended regular recruitment of VLDAs in department, provision of awards, incentives, promotion and other emoluments to them at par to veterinarians and other officers as well as targets for various activities like artificial insemination fixed after due consultation with VLDAs.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to investigate perceived constraints among Veterinary Livestock Development Assistants (VLDAs) during livestock service delivery in Haryana. The nine set of constraints with varying number of statements under each set have been investigated. Friedman

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Received on 30/6/2018

Accepted on 31/7/2018