



Preference of Dairy Farmers in Availing Doorstep Veterinary Services in Puducherry

KEYWORDS

Livestock services, Puducherry, preference

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ABSTRACT *Dairying plays an important role in poverty reduction, nutritional security and supporting livelihood of poor people. Effective delivery of Veterinary services plays an important role in enhancing the production of the livestock. The main service providers in Puducherry are veterinarians from SDAH, PONLAIT, RIVER, KVK, NGOs, Registered veterinary private practitioners, para vets, local healers and quacks. The study was conducted among 160 dairy farmers in five rural communes and two municipalities of Puducherry region to ascertain the preference of dairy farmers in availing veterinary services. Majority of the dairy farmers preferred that veterinary services should be at their door steps. The dairy farmers availed three type of service from the service providers' namely clinical services, breeding services and advisory services. The preference of the dairy farmers were mainly based on time, money and availability of the service provider.*

INTRODUCTION:

Dairy sector plays an important role in socio-economic development of rural households in India. This sector is emerging as an important growth engine of the Indian economy. The contribution of livestock and fisheries sector to the total GDP was 3.6 per cent during 2010-11 (NAS, 2012). In recent years, livestock output has grown at a rate of about 5 per cent a year, higher than the growth in agricultural sector. In India 14.9 million people are engaged in farming of animals in both rural and urban areas combined (DAHD, 2012).

About 68 per cent of population lives in more than 6.38 lakh villages of India (GOI, 2011). According to the NSSO report (2010), cattle rearing supplements family income and generates gainful employment in the rural areas, particularly among the landless women labourers, small and marginal farmers. Several empirical studies have supported the claim that livestock rearing has significant positive impact on equity in terms of income, employment and poverty reduction in rural areas (Singh and Hazell, 1993; Thornton et al., 2002 and Birtal and Ali, 2005). Improvement in livestock production is, therefore, an important pathway for increasing the income of marginal and small farmers and landless labourers (Venkatasubramanian and Rao, 2011).

Knowledge dissemination on scientific livestock management is one of the most important services to improve the livelihoods of livestock dependent families (Garforth, 2003). Veterinary services play an important role in knowledge dissemination and livestock production that has potency to improve the lives of millions of people.

This paper reviews the veterinary services rendered by various service providers and preference of the dairy farmers towards the delivery of veterinary services with research evidence.

MATERIALS AND METHOD:

A survey was carried out among the dairy farmer to assess their preference in availing veterinary services in Puducherry.

All the five rural communes and two municipalities of Puducherry region were included in this study. The study was confined to the veterinary services which included the service receiver (dairy farmer) and the service provider (veterinarians from SDAH, PONLAIT, RIVER, KVK, NGOs, Registered veterinary private practitioners, para vets, local healers and quacks). The main objective of this study was to find the preference of dairy farmers in availing veterinary services in Puducherry. The lists of respondents were obtained from the service providers and from this list, 10 dairy farmer respondents were selected by using systematic random sampling technique. Thus a total of 160 dairy farmer were interviewed directly with a structured interview schedule to assess their preference in availing veterinary services.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The results of the study are presented under different sub heads which include type of veterinary services availed from service provider, preference of dairy farmers and different approaches made by dairy farmer.

Type of veterinary services availed by the dairy farmers from the service providers

The main service providers in Puducherry are veterinarians from SDAH, PONLAIT, RIVER, KVK, NGOs, Registered veterinary private practitioners, para vets, local healers and quacks. The dairy farmers availed three major services viz., Clinical services- treatment, Breeding services-Artificial Insemination (AI) and Information services- scientific cattle rearing, advise on management etc.,

Type of services availed from the service providers

The results revealed that the dairy farmers availed services to treat various types of cases grouped into emergency cases, clinical cases and miscellaneous cases such as Dysentery (42), Bloat (25), Milk Fever (19) Pyrexia (9) and uterine prolapse (9). Few respondents also contacted the veterinarians for other clinical cases like retention of placenta (6), indigestion (5), diarrhoea, jaundice, mastitis, lameness, ephemeral fever, and few rarely occurring cases like cow fell in well, Traumatic Reticulo Pericarditis, Haemorrhagic

Septicaemia, Foot&Mouth Disease and choke.

Breeding services availed were mainly Artificial Insemination and type of information received was regarding the first aid and management of animals and scientific rearing

Most of the service availed are rendered at the door step of the dairy farmers on payment basis

Preference of dairy farmers in availing veterinary services

In case of clinical services majority of the respondents (54%) availed services from both veterinarian and para veterinarian whereas 40 per cent of the respondents availed these services exclusively from the veterinarian. (Table.1).

In case of AI, about 44 per cent of the respondents availed the service from veterinarian alone, followed by 24 per cent of the respondents had availed service from both veterinarian and para-veterinarian. There were 19 per cent of the respondents had availed service from para-veterinarian alone.

In case of information service, majority of the respondents (86%) contacted veterinarians to receive the information. The choicest source of the dairy farmer respondents to get information was the veterinarian. Only when they could not contact veterinarian they approached other service providers to get information. The results in Table .1 clearly indicated that they preferred veterinarians for major ailments such as dystokia, uterine torsion, caesarian, fractures, etc., and paravets for minor ailments namely pyrexia, enteritis, etc., and local healers and quacks were preferred for wound cleaning and dressing of wound and for first aid. The preference of the dairy farmers were mainly based on time, money and availability of the service provider.

Table. 1 Services availed by the dairy farmer respondents N=160

Sl.No	Service Provider	Clinical Services	Breeding Services	Information Services
1	Veterinarian	64(40%)	70 (43.8%)	137 (85.6%)
2	Para veterinarian	03(1.8%)	41(25.6%)	03 (1.9%)
3	Both(vet& para vet)	86 (53.8%)	49(30.6%)	12 (7.5%)
4	Vet, paravet & others	07 (4.4%)	-	08 (5.05%)

Persons contacted by dairy farmer regarding veterinary services:

The dairy farmers contacted various persons in addition to veterinarians and para veterinarians . All the 160 respondents contacted veterinarians for various purposes like clinical services, breeding services and information services. Similarly 146 respondents contacted para-veterinarian in addition to veterinarians. About 128 respondents contacted brokers in animal transaction and 106 respondents contacted the input supplier for knowing the arrival of feed, 82 respondents contacted their fellow farmers for getting information on management activities.

Different approaches made by the dairy farmer respondents to contact service providers:

Dairy farmers used various approaches to contact the service providers to avail the veterinary services (Fig.1). Invention of cell phones helped them in contacting the service provider with ease (Tamizhkumaran and Natchimuthu, 2011). Majority 157 dairy farmers used cellphones to avail

veterinary services followed my usage of neighbor phones (23), pay phones (15) few dairy farmer took help from their lay leaders (10) and very few availed services directly from the dispensary.

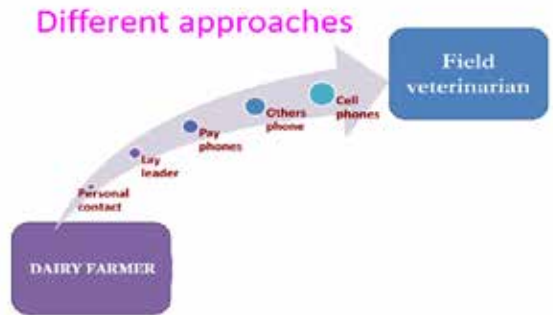


Fig.1 Different approaches made by dairy farmers to contact service providers:

Constraints perceived by the Dairy farmers in availing veterinary services

Majority of the respondents (78%) were satisfied with the delivery of veterinary services. However, 13 per cent of the respondents reported that there was a delay in arrival of veterinarians to attend cases followed by 6 per cent of the respondents who experienced the problem of veterinarian's failure in attending to the cases. Whether a veterinarian attends to a case or not depends upon i) seriousness of the case; ii) distance of travel, iii) ability and willingness of the owner to pay the fee, iv) social status of the client and vi) the client relationship. It also depends upon his decision to depute the para- veterinarian or not to attend the case. There were few respondents who complained that the veterinarians never turned up to deliver services even after calling three or four times.

CONCLUSIONS:

Majority of the dairy farmers 86 per cent preferred veterinarians for advisory services, 40 per cent for clinical services and (44%)breeding services and both veterinarians and para veterinarians for clinical services(54%) and breeding services(A.I) (31%). They preferred veterinarians for major ailments such as dystokia, uterine torsion, caesarian, fractures, etc., and paravets for minor ailments namely pyrexia, enteritis, etc., and local healers and quacks were preferred for wound cleaning and dressing of wound and for first aid. The preference of the dairy farmers were mainly based on time, money and availability of the service provider. As the dairy farmers get their services at their door step and the veterinarian in turn gets paid for his service, majority of the dairy farmer respondents were satisfied with the delivery of veterinary services at their door steps from the service providers.

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