

UTILIZATION OF LIVESTOCK FARM SERVICES PROVIDED BY AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION CENTRE (ATIC) OF TAMIL NADU VETERINARY AND ANIMAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study is to find out the scope and extent of utilization livestock farm service provided by the Agricultural Technology Information Center (ATIC), TANUVAS, Kattupakkam, Chengalpattu district of Tamil Nadu. The available records for a period of two years from January 2021 to December 2022 were analysed to study the number of farmers visited, and their purpose of visits at ATIC, Kattupakkam. The findings of the study revealed that a total of 1727 farmers visited ATIC, Kattupakkam in which majority (86.21%) respondents were males. Among the specific purpose of visits, purchase of fodder seeds (35.95%) was their high priority followed by purchase of publications (32.42%), farm advisory (13.60%), livestock feed (11.92%) and others (6.07%). On farm advisory, majority were benefited on goat farming (31.66%) than other livestock farming practices. It was concluded that during the study period more than 65% of farmers benefited through the purchase for fodder seeds and publication and around 68% of the livestock farmers were likely to be more specific in their purpose of visits at ATIC, Kattupakkam.

Keywords: ATIC, utilization, livestock, farm services, farm advisory

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INTRODUCTION

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To develop or to cultivate a scientific farming population, extension process includes Transfer of technology (TOT) programs for the

transfer and spread of technical or scientific innovation and information (Koutsouris, 2018). Agricultural or livestock extension services are mainly focused on their local production problems and a range of solutions to increase their productivity by providing awareness, education and decision making skills through technology transfer. Technology transfer or transfer of technology also includes additional function of technical input services.

Till 90s, there was a huge gap between the extension service and farmers mostly due to the lack of infrastructure, organization, orientation specialist manpower (Elias *et al.*, 2016) to support agricultural and livestock enterprises. (Kaur and Kaur, 2013) opined Many research studies stated that linkage between stakeholders was not strong and their participation was less that led to a gap in adoption on various technologies. As a solution to reduce the gap, a linkage mechanism between the farmers and scientists through the establishment of Agricultural Technology Information Centers. Usually spreading of technology or service should reach the right farmer at right pace and at right time (Singh and Kalra, 2019a). For the fast and efficient transmission of agricultural or livestock production related technical information, a single window delivery system for information, services and products, Agricultural Technology Information Centre (ATIC) was established in all central and state Agricultural Universities under National Agriculture Technology Project (Dutta *et al.*, 2021). Similarly, Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS)

also established an ATIC at Kattupakkam, Kattankulathur Post, Chengalpattu District under the financial assistance of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in 1999 under the control of Directorate of Extension Education, TANUVAS, Chennai. Kumar and Singh (2007) and Kumar *et al.* (2020) stated that ATIC acts as a bridge between the farmers and scientists and thereby enhance the linkage between research and client system. About 52% of farmers have adopted animal husbandry activities with the help of ATIC (Sankanagoudar and Nagnur, 2015) while nearly 40% of population were unaware about resources and services provided at ATIC completely (Pandey and Solanki, 2014). Hence, a study was framed with the objective to know the scope and extent of utilization of livestock farm services by the farmers of Tamil Nadu at ATIC, Kattupakkam.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted at Agricultural Technology Information Center (ATIC), Kattupakkam, located at 45 km south of Chennai on Grand South Trunk Road, Chengalpattu district of Tamil Nadu under the Directorate of Extension Education, Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Chennai. The location of ATIC is very easily accessible by the farmers of Tamil Nadu. To study the scope and extent of utilization of ATIC, Kattupakkam on livestock farm services, data was collected for a period of two years from January 2021 to December 2022 from the available records. Factors considered for livestock farm services were

the numbers of farmers visited (farmers and members of farmers group) and the purpose of visits viz., livestock farm advisory services (in personal, telephone, mail, whatsapp); purchase of fodder seeds, publications (TANUVAS and ICAR), livestock feed (mineral mixture and salt lick), tree fodder saplings and subscription of TANUVAS farmers magazine (Kalnadai Kathir). The data was analyzed with suitable statistical tools using SPSS (version 20.0).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Number of farmer visits

Number of farmers visited ATIC for livestock farm services is shown in Table 1 which revealed that a total of 1727 farmers visited ATIC, Kattupakkam during the study period. Among them, majority were male (86.21%) than female (13.78%). Similarly, farmers (93.76%) and members of farmers group (64.41%) consisted mainly male as compared to female (6.23% and 35.58%) (Fig. 1). The results revealed that proportionately less than 40% of the farm women visited ATIC, Kattupakkam. The frequency and number of visits coincided with the findings of Sharma *et al.* (2008). Pandey and Solanki (2014) also stated that only few women farmer were aware or utilizing ATIC in their State. Women have multiple roles in family and farm, her access to extension services is constrained and therefore her opportunities get limited (Pandey and Upadhyay, 2020). The results also implied that members of farmers group had a better percentage of female than individual farmers. It showed that the schemes under Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA)

or women self-help group training organized by State or NGOs had provided them the opportunity to utilize the center.

Purpose of visits

Table 2 shows that on an overall analysis, a higher proportion of farmers utilized livestock farm advisory services (31.45%) followed by purchase of fodder seeds (27.79%); purchase of various publications (26.25%) and purchase of livestock feed, tree fodder saplings and monthly magazine subscription (14.45%) respectively. Majority of the farmers (>80%) utilized ATIC, Kattupakkam for farm advisory, purchase of fodder seed and publications. Moreover, 67.99% of farmers have utilized a combination of services rather than specific service. Similar to these results, Sankanagoudar and Nagnur, (2015) also stated that 74% of farmers have utilized combined farm advisory services and veterinary services at ATIC, Dharwad.

In the overall utilization of advisory services shown in the Table 3, a total of 779 advisory services were provided by ATIC, Kattupakkam in which highest farm advisory is on goat farming (31.66%) followed by poultry farming (27.40%), dairy farming (16.39%), integrated farming (9.63%), pig farming (6.63%), rabbit farming (4.25%) and sheep farming (4.00%) (Fig. 2). Among the farm advisory based on gender, majority of the recipients were male (>87%) in all farm advisory category (Fig. 2). In line with the results, Singh and Kalra (2019b) stated that 60-80% of farmers have utilized farm advisory services and it's the top most service

Table 1. Number of farmers visited ATIC

Category	Male (n)	Female (n)	Total (n)
Livestock Farmers	1203	80	1283
Members of farmer group	286	158	444
Total	1489	238	1727

Table 2. Overall utilization of Livestock farm services

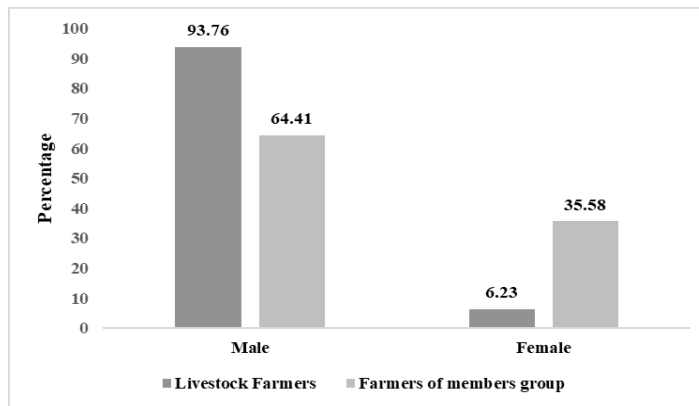
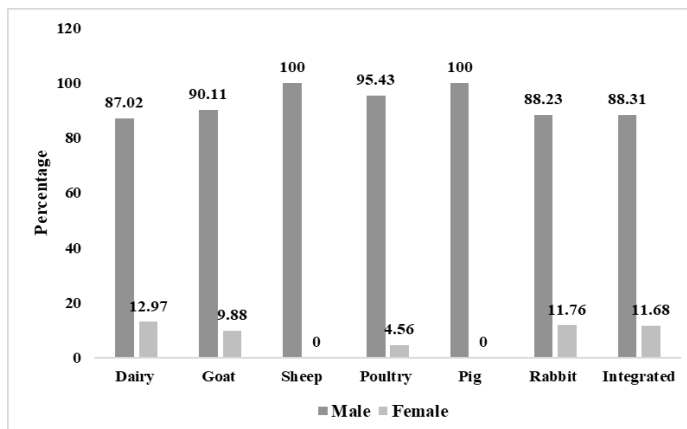
Category	Overall		Rank
	(n)	(%)	
Livestock farm advisory	799	31.45	I
Sale of fodder seed	706	27.79	II
Sale of publication	667	26.25	III
Sale of livestock feed	216	8.50	IV
Sale of tree fodder sapling	145	5.70	V
Subscription of magazine	07	0.27	VI
Total	2540	100.00	

Table 3. Number of farmers utilized different livestock farm advisory services

Category	Total		Rank
	(n)	(%)	
Dairy Farming	131	16.39	III
Goat Farming	253	31.66	I
Sheep Farming	32	4.00	VII
Poultry Farming	219	27.40	II
Pig farming	53	6.63	V
Rabbit farming	34	4.25	VI
Integrated farming	77	9.63	IV
Total	799	100.00	

Table 4. Specific utilization of different livestock farm services

Category	Exclusive Utilization		Rank
	(n)	(%)	
Livestock farm advisory	235	13.60	III
Sale of fodder seed	621	35.95	I
Sale of publication	560	32.42	II
Sale of livestock feed	206	11.92	IV
Sale of tree fodder sapling	102	5.09	V
Subscription of magazine	03	0.17	VI
Total	1727	100.00	

**Fig. 1. Percentage of farmer visited ATIC****Fig. 2. Percentage of farmers utilized farm advisory services**

availed from ATIC. Farmers usually come for advisory services on breed selection, fodder production and vaccination. Marketing is the major problem they are facing in pig and rabbit farming. Reason for more number of farmers seeking advisory on goat and poultry farming could be due to the establishment of more commercial goat and poultry farming in the districts of Kanchipuram, Chengalpattu, Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram of Tamil Nadu. Mostly farmers from these districts were highly utilizing the services of ATIC, Kattupakkam due to their close proximity.

Among the purpose of visits, Table 3 shows that farmers exclusively or specifically visited ATIC, Kattupakkam for purchase of fodder seed (35.95%) followed by purchase of publication (32.42%), livestock advisory services (13.60%), purchase of livestock feed (11.92%), purchase of tree fodder (5.09%) and subscription of magazine (0.17%). The results revealed that (Table 4) the highest priority of farmers to visit ATIC, Kattupakkam was for the purchase of fodder seed followed by publication and availing farm advisory services. Even though the farmers might have come for purchase of seed, additionally they also utilized farm advisory services and publication. Similar to the present study, Pandey and Solanki (2014) and Singh and Kalra (2019b) also reported that more than 80% of farmers visited ATIC for purchase of seeds due to its availability, variety, quality and disease resistance.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that majority of the farmers utilized ATIC, Kattupakkam for the purchase of fodder seeds. The livestock farmers were much specific in their purpose of visit. Though women were actively involved in agricultural and animal husbandry activities, the utilization of services of ATIC was poor. Hence there is a need to create more awareness among the farm women, women entrepreneurs about the available services of ATIC to enrich their knowledge and livelihood. Huge scope exists on tree and fodder seeds sale and hence necessary steps may be taken in future to ensure continuous supply of a variety of fodder seeds according to individual species of livestock farming and farmers' demand.

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