

SCIENTISTS PREFERENCES TOWARDS PRIVATIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

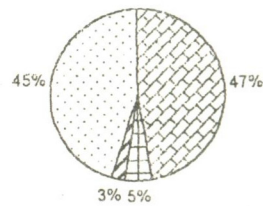
INDIA'S public extension system is one of the largest downward network system in the world. In the context of global change liberal economic policy besides high cost and generally disappointing performance of public extension. has triggered the issue like privatization of public extension system. As privatization means cost recovery for the service rendered to the users, in this direction, there is a need to identify area, type of farmers, geographic location etc., to whom private extension can suit. Hence, the study was undertaken with the objective to know the preferences of scientists towards privatization.

The present study was conducted in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu, to measure the scientists preferences towards privatisation. The sample of 40 scientists representing social science disciplines like agricultural extension, agricultural economics and who were much exposed to agricultural development issues and working in Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Sugarcane Breeding Institute (SBI) and Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR) were included as respondents. Three major dimensions of preferences such as; crop-wise, farmers category-wise and agro-climatic zone-wise were identified after review of literature, discussion with experts and farmers. Each major dimension was subdivided and responses were obtained by putting a tick mark in the appropriate preference against each statement. Results have been expressed in frequency and percentage.

With respect to scientists preference towards PAEs the results indicated that, nearly half of the scientists (47.5 per cent) preferred privatization in all the crops invariably, similarly almost equal per cent of scientists (45 per cent) preferred privatization only for commercial agricultural and horticultural crops. Majority of the scientists preferred privatization for all the categories of farmers (55 per cent) and nearly half of the proportion of scientists (45 per cent) preferred privatization only for large farmers. Majority of the

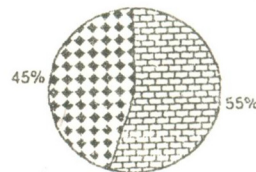
scientists (75 per cent) preferred privatization in all agro-climatic zones.

Preferences towards crops



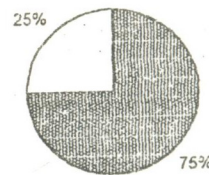
- All the crops
- Commercial agricultural & horticultural crops
- Horticultural crops
- Commercial agricultural & horticultural crops

Preferences towards clientele groups



- All the categories of farmers
- Large farmers

Preferences towards agro-climatic zones



- All agro-climatic regions
- Wet and garden lands

Scientists Preferences Towards Privatisation of Agricultural Extension Service

Nearly half of the scientists preferred privatization only for commercial crops, it might be due to the fact that the private extension agencies do not usually apply their resource to the food grain crops, but on those who produce cash crops (Baxter, 1987). Majority of the scientists preferred privatization for all the categories of

TABLE

Scientists preferences towards privatisation of agricultural extension service

Preferences	Scientists	
	Number	Per cent
Preferences towards crops		
i. All the crops invariably (agricultural and horticultural crops)	19	47.5
ii. Only for commercial agricultural crops	2	5.0
iii. Only for horticultural crops	1	2.5
iv. For commercial agricultural crops and horticultural crops	18	45.0
Preferences towards clientele groups		
i. All the categories of farmers	22	55
ii. Only to large farmers	18	45
iii. Only to medium farmers	0	0
iv. For small and marginal farmers	0	0
Preferences towards agro-climatic zones		
i. All agro-climatic regions	30	75
ii. In wetland areas only	0	0
iii. In garden land only	0	0
iv. Both wet and garden lands	10	25

farmers and all agro-climatic zones. This response might be due to their assumption that, farmers even if poor, will be willing to pay for an input whose expected value is greater than its cost. Due to involvement of cost, users will treat private extension as an economic input and it generates new income (Keynan *et al.*, 1997). Considerable proportion of scientists preferred privatization only in wet and garden lands might be due to the fact that generally most of the commercial agencies concentrate their activities on areas having favourable physical environment such as fertile soil and sufficient irrigation facilities (Harter and Hass, 1992).

Based on the above findings it can be concluded that good decisions can only be made by experimenting privatization of agricultural extension service on small

scale with categories of farmers, crops and agro-climatic zones.

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