Journal of Rural Development, Vol. 30, No. (4) pp. 487 - 499
NIRD, Hyderabad.

STRUCTURAL, FUNCTIONAL AND SITUATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PRIVATISATION OF VETERINARY SERVICES IN ANDHRA PRADESH

M.Srinivasa Reddy and Sudhakar Rao B.***

ABSTRACT

The veterinary services are not reaching the needy farmers at the right time in right form in the traditional extension system due to various reasons/drawbacks such as lack of funds, high cost, dissatisfaction of the veterinarians over the administrative and para staff, incentives, lack of software and hardware support etc. Privatisation of veterinary services is one of the frontier areas, whose potential is unlimited in the Animal Husbandry sector. An ex-post facto research design was used to analyse and compare the structural and functional aspects of the operating agencies/ organisations like state department of Animal Husbandry, private and semi-government organisations and consultants involved in livestock development with reference to the identified services which influence the privatisation of veterinary services in Andhra Pradesh. The various issues pertaining to the situational factors viz. policy support, input support, marketing support, industrial support, MNC intervention, export potentiality, institutional and organisational support were analysed, synthesised and discussed. The initiatives which will also influence the feasibility of privatisation of veterinary services were discussed at appropriate places.

Introduction

In most of the developing countries the livestock extension services have been traditionally funded, managed and delivered by the public sector and this public sector monopoly came under a threat first in 1930's as many started questioning the desirability of this situation on economic and efficiency grounds when it became clear that the government agencies are unable to provide quality livestock health services (Anteneh, 1984; De Haan and Nissen, 1980). The livestock population has increased enormously and in the recent past the government budgets have not kept pace and government agencies have suffered from lack of funds (Carney, 1998). The concerns being raised about the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector veterinary services have led to search for an alternative mechanism of providing those services. Thus, the emphasis in recent years has been shifted over to decentralisation, cost recovery, withdrawal from selected services and contracting, encouraging private veterinary practitioners for privatising the livestock extension services.

* Associate Professor and Professor & Univ.Head (Retd), respectively, Department of Veterinary & A.H.Extension, College of Veterinary Science, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.

Part of Ph.D thesis of first author submitted to the Acharya N.G.Ranga Agricultural University, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.

But in India majority of the livestock owners are small, marginal farmers and landless labourers whose ability to pay for the veterinary services is poor and it is therefore, necessary to safeguard their interests while implementing the privatisation of veterinary services. Therefore, the time has come to make transitional shift to private sector for support, though not for total substitution. Intermediate steps do exist between a solely public veterinary service system along with private partnership.

Keeping the above facts in view, the present study is designed to analyse the structural and functional aspects of the operating agencies/organisations involved in livestock development with reference to the identified services which influence the privatisation of veterinary services in Andhra Pradesh. Besides this similar attempts were made to analyse the situational factors like policy support, input support, and other parameters, which will also influence the feasibility of privatisation of veterinary services.

Materials and Methods

An ex-post facto research design was used to conduct the present study in three mandals comprising six villages of Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. A total of 90 farmers were selected based on stratified random sampling method. Twenty five Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VASs) from state department of Animal Husbandry, 20 from private organisations and 10 consultants who were engaged in private practice were selected for the study. A structured interview schedule was developed and used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Structural Aspects of Different Organisations/Agencies

In the study area, few organisations were involved in providing veterinary services in varying magnitudes and types of services. The structural and functional aspects of these organisations were studied and presented for better understanding of the various dimensions of service providers.

State Department of Animal Husbandry : In case of dairy, 25 VASs working in the state department of Animal Husbandries were selected at random and their responses were checked and categorised as followed.

The general jurisdiction of each VAS covers one mandal and in very few cases it may range up to two or three mandals. Out of the 25 respondents, 7 respondents (28 per cent) expressed their satisfaction over the administrative staff availability whereas 18 respondents (72 per cent) indicated their dissatisfaction to the same. Only three respondents (12 per cent) voiced their satisfaction over the para staff availability, and the rest (88 per cent) were dissatisfied with the same. On an average, each Veterinary Assistant Surgeon has got 3.2 field staff under his span of control.

About 92 per cent of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction over the vehicle availability except for two (8 per cent) who were satisfied with the same. They are supposed to maintain regular contacts with farmers but as it is need based they are not even contacting once in a week. Twenty one respondents (84 per cent) expressed their dissatisfaction over the availability of budget for travelling allowance and daily allowance and only four respondents (16 per cent) expressed their satisfaction towards the same. Twenty respondents (80 per cent) expressed their dissatisfaction towards the time of payment of TA. All the respondents (100 per cent) said that they were not receiving any incentives from the department. Except for implementation of *Pasukranthi* programme and fertility camps, the veterinarians are not concentrating much on other extension

activities. Eighteen respondents (72 per cent) expressed their satisfaction towards the availability of physical inputs in the hospitals. Twenty respondents (80 per cent) expressed their dissatisfaction towards the accessibility of the information and also the timeliness of the information. As such, there is no regular mechanism in the Department of Animal Husbandry for transfer of technical information and/or of latest advancements in Veterinary sciences. Very few interested veterinarians who are providing private consultancy services are accessing various information sources. This indicates that these people are handicapped in most of the structural aspects.

From the analysis of the structural aspects it was observed that the veterinarians were supported by insufficient administrative staff for running the department efficiently. They are not getting sufficient subject matter support from various sources they are supposed to get. They do not have sufficient field staff both in terms of number and the quality of service to be provided suiting to the farmers' requirements. Most of the VASs are not concentrating on all aspects of dairy farming except those few Veterinary Assistant Surgeons who have got their own consultancy which suggest that there is no proper contact between VASs of state department of Animal Husbandry and the dairy farmers. They have got good organisational and administrative hierarchy to coordinate and monitor the activities of the subordinates but they are not concentrating on dairy development exclusively prompts that overload of work because of multifarious activities or sometimes lack of information support, or might have lost interest as the farmers are approaching consultants and ignoring the VASs.

Majority of the VASs are not provided official vehicles to visit and/or provide veterinary services to the needy farmers at their door-steps. Further, the veterinarians are not paid their due fixed travelling allowance due to budgetary constraints, thus hampering the extension and other developmental activities. In addition, better performers are not rewarded by way of incentives from the department, hence they are not being motivated by any means. They are giving veterinary services in general as routine along with health camps, livestock shows to the farmers, but not following any specific extension methodology on dairy development.

Input Agencies : In the study area, the input agencies such as Heritage Foods, Jersey, Creamline, J.K.Trust and APLDA which is semi-government agency are operating in the Animal Husbandry sector. The representatives of the input agencies who are involved in provision of veterinary services are consulted for information. Most of the agencies are private enterprises, which are profit oriented and mostly concentrating on the treatment of animals etc. for their profit maximisation by marketing their products. Generally each staff member has got 4-5 mandals under his control. Cent per cent of the respondents expressed their satisfaction over the administrative staff availability and supporting field staff. Twenty seven respondents (90 per cent) expressed their satisfaction towards the subject matter support which they are getting, only 3 respondents (10 per cent) expressed for more training in the subject matter concerned. They are contacting the dairy farmers in the peak season of disease incidence and production. All the respondents were provided with vehicle by their organisation. Cent per cent of the employees expressed their satisfaction towards the travelling and daily allowances paid to them. Eighty per cent of the respondents expressed their satisfaction towards the incentives given to them. They regularly participates in the animal health camps, farmer meets, farmer contact programmes, organising farmers' days etc. Cent per cent of the respondents expressed

their satisfaction towards the availability of physical inputs and opined that they had access to latest technical information which is also timely for their needs. Organisations which own research and development systems supporting their employees keep abreast with latest information regularly. Sometimes they may even depend upon the university research system for latest trends in scientific information.

As a part of their profit maximisation programmes, the input agencies are providing services to the farmers and in the process awareness was created among the farming community. The advantage of input agencies in providing veterinary services include good infrastructural facilities like vehicle, organisation support, motivating factors like incentives, bonus, increments, allowances etc. Regular and timely information was provided by their research and development wing and also from the various research institutes. Good infrastructural facilities and different motivating factors and pressure to achieve physical targets making these agencies and their personnel to be in touch with dairy farmers regularly and providing timely and quality services to them thus making these agencies much stronger and efficient. Sometimes the input agencies are funding University research system for scientific solutions to emerging problems, which emphasises that these agencies are putting more efforts for updating scientific knowledge which is lacking in the public system.

Consultants : Generally consultants are operating on their own and can be classified as private as they are focused on income generation. These are mainly based at mandal headquarters with required infrastructure facilities for carrying out the practice. They do not have any territorial boundaries, may go and visit any dairy farmer at any distant place and accordingly the farmers are charged for the services provided. Usually they do the work alone or sometimes may depend on other specialists on contract basis. There is no specific limitation for the number of contacts with the farmers under each consultant. They are equipped with their own vehicles or sometimes transport is arranged by the livestock owner depending on the need. Charges for consultancy are based on several factors - per visit / per season and hence consultants do not depend on the allowances and incentives. The number of visits mainly depend on the need of the dairy farm. In general it varies between 20-25 visits throughout the year if the client had yearly contract. They are usually self-equipped regarding the latest technical information. Here veterinary services are mainly privatised, and charges are dependent upon the client needs, consultants' reputation, experience, expertise, prevailing market demand for the consultant and other related aspects.

Dairy farming, especially commercial enterprises, is based on the consultants in the study area. They are playing a key role in Chittoor district. The consultants are taking care of dairy farming in their respective fields of specialisation on contract basis throughout the year. They have got their own soft and hardware support to cater to the needs of the farmers in this area. To be competent enough in the consultancy arena, they are regularly updating their knowledge and information through their own research or in consultation with the research scientists or through other sources like magazines, scientific journals and field experiences. Consultancy is the strong backing force for the dairy farmers who are engaged for long time in the study area. Because of their keen interest, commitment towards work, money orientation, mutual accountability, these consultants are working hard and providing expert veterinary services in dairy farming at their best level, which is making them sustain for a longer period in the consultancy market. The results are in line with Rogers (1987), De Haan and Bekure (1991) and Farrington (1994).

Functional Aspects

The functional aspects of various organisations/agencies were studied for better understanding and comprehension.

State Department of Animal Husbandry : The different job chart/ functions/ duties formed the basis for functional aspects of various agencies involved in providing the services to their clients.The details are provided in Table 1.

In the study area, about 25 VASs were interviewed for analysing the functional aspects of State Animal Husbandry Department. It was found that the average number of health camps conducted per year were only two as a part of their duty. 390 calves were born per 1000 Artificial

Table 1 : Functional Aspects of State Department of Animal Husbandry

N=25

S.No.	Functional aspect	Frequency	%
1	Average number of cases treated / year	10,000 / year	-
2	Average number of health camps conducted/year	2/ yr	-
3	Average number of A.I conducted	1000/yr	-
4	No of vaccinations conducted / year	2000/Yr	-
5	Average number of calves born	390/yr	39
6	Farmer group discussion & demonstrations	15	60
7	Contribution to articles	3	12
8	Visits to farmers' fields on request	18	72
9	Arranging for timely supply of fodder seeds and inputs	5	20
10	Organising gynaec camps	23	92
11	Giving training to farmers	10	40
12	Recognising innovative farmers	12	48
13	Mailing letters to farmers	1	4
14	Getting requests from farmers for their farm visit	25	100
15	Supplying printed information material	10	40
16	Using latest diagnostic techniques	4	16
17	Organising deworming and vaccination camps	15	60

Inseminations conducted in an year. Only 72 per cent are visiting the dairy farms as against the 100 per cent of them getting requests from farmers to their farm visit. About 92 per cent of the VASs are organising gynaecological camps. Half of the VASs are able to recognise the innovative farmers in their operational area. Only 16 per cent VASs are using latest diagnostic techniques in treatment of animals, which indicates that the veterinarians are relying more on the traditional methods of diagnosing rather than new scientific methods. This situation calls for the attention of the top administrators to consider regular updating and skill training to the veterinarians for better service provision. Only 20 per cent of the veterinarians are arranging for timely supply of fodder seeds and inputs to the farmers, which was due to irregular supply from the department. The supply of fodder seed is mostly affected by the prevailing weather conditions during that particular year. In the Department of Animal Husbandry , training to farmers was not on the main agenda of the department, only 40 per cent of the VASs are involved in giving training to the farmers. Very few percentage (below twenty per cent) of the VASs have contributed to the functional aspects in the last year like contributing to articles on dairy farming, giving programmes on AIR or Doordarshan etc. The probable reason for the above trend may be due to the fact that VASs are concentrating more on non-technical activities other than veterinary services that they are supposed to do.

Input Agencies : The functional aspects of various input agencies are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 : Functional Aspects of the Input Agencies

N=20

S.No.	Functional aspect	Frequency	%
1	Average number of cases treated/year	10000/ yr.	—
2	Average number of health camps conducted/year	10/ yr.	—
3	Average number of A.I conducted	1500/yr	—
4	Average number of calves born	700	46.6
5	Farmer group discussions & demonstrations	18	90
6	Contribution to articles	5	25
7	Visits to farmers' fields on request	20	100
8	Arranging for timely supply of fodder seeds and inputs	18	90
9	Organising gynaec camps	20	100
10	Giving training to farmers	5	25
11	Reorganising innovative farmers	18	90
12	Mailing letters to farmers	1	5
13	Getting requests from farmers for their farm visit	20	100
14	Supplying printed information material	17	85
15	Using latest diagnostic techniques	15	60
16	Organising deworming and vaccination camps	16	80

The functional aspects of input agencies varied significantly with that of Animal Husbandry department (Table 2). Regular visits to their clients is one of the significant factors which culminated in success in providing effective veterinary services. Out of 1500 AI conducted/year 700 calves were born (46.6 per cent), which is significantly varying. About 90 per cent are organising farmers' group discussions and demonstrations. All the VASs representing the input agencies are getting requests from farmers for their farm visit and visiting the dairy farms regularly. All the VASs are organising fertility camps regularly, which is also used as a platform for their extension activities. Most of VASs (90 per cent) are recognising the innovative farmers. The use of latest diagnostic techniques was much higher (60 per cent) than those of Department of Animal Husbandry. Timely supply of fodder seed and inputs by the VASs was maximum (90 per cent). Only 25 per cent of the veterinary doctors are involved in giving training to the farmers. They are contributing a little through the articles in various magazines, but using AIR/Doordarshan to their maximum extent for the publicity of their organisation. Rest of the functions like organising campaigns, giving special training to farmers, recognising innovative farmers, mailing letters to farmers and special contact farmers' programmes etc., are being done by very little proportion of the input agencies which are not profitable. By observing the above result it can be concluded that majority of the functional aspects, which maximise the profit to the agency are being taken care of by them.

Consultants : The functional dimensions of various consultants are given below in Table 3.

Table 3 : Functional Aspects of the Consultants

N=10

S.No.	Functional aspect	Frequency	%
1	Average number of cases treated/year	9000/yr	—
2	Average number of health camps conducted/year	—	—
3	Average number of A.I conducted	—	—
4	Average number of calves born	—	—
5	Farmer group discussions & demonstrations	—	—
6	Contribution to articles	4	40
7	Visits to farmers' fields on request	10	100
8	Arranging for timely supply of fodder seeds and inputs	2	20
9	Organising gynaec camps	—	—
10	Giving training to farmers	1	10
11	Reorganising innovative farmers	10	100
12	Mailing letters to farmers	8	80
13	Getting requests from farmers for their farm visit	10	100
14	Supplying printed information material	1	10
15	Using latest diagnostic techniques	9	90
16	Organising deworming and vaccination camps	8	80

Table 3 revealed that most of the functional aspects like organising farmer group discussions, arranging timely supply of fodder seeds and inputs, giving training to farmers, supply of printed information material to farmers etc., are not focussed by the consultants of the study area. Treatment of cases, contribution to articles, visits to farmers' fields on request, reorganising innovative farmers, mailing letters to farmers, getting requests from farmers for their farm visit, using latest diagnostic techniques and organising deworming and vaccination camps were the activities taken care of by the consultants. The consultants had regular special contact farmer programmes. It can be concluded that most of the functional aspects of these consultants are focused on dairy farming, but on commercial basis. The quality of services is exceptional for those who need the veterinary services.

These consultants are regularly visiting the dairy farmers on their request to provide expert services. The consultants are operating on contract basis, so their responsibility to look after the animals regularly is ensured. They do not concentrate on groups of farmers but concentrate on individual clients who pay for them. Demonstrations were conducted on the individual farm based on the need. They mail letters and provide technical information to the farmers on request on payment basis. It can be concluded that most of the functional aspects of these consultants are based on dairy, but on commercial basis, which is making consultants more strong and efficient. Similar findings were observed by Sashidhar and Sontakki (2003) and Turkson (2004).

Descriptive Analysis of the Situational Factors

Input Support for the Farmers : Ninety per cent of the respondents are getting their feed, machinery, fodder, seeds, drugs etc. from local markets, veterinary hospitals and nearby towns like Chittoor, Madanapally and Srikalahasthi which are very closely located to the selected sample area. Majority (80.00 per cent) of the respondents are getting inputs within 6-10 kms and expressed that labour which is an important input for dairy farming are easily available throughout the year. Even if the wages are high, they are affordable by these farmers. Among all the selected respondents (100.00 per cent) of the study, the maximum distance of the farm located from towns is 10 kms and the maximum distance of the farm located from research station is 60 kms. From the above trend it can be observed that these dairy farmers have got good input support. It can be concluded that dairy farmers have got good input and research support as well.

Marketing Support to the Farmers : As far as dairy farming is concerned, it has got good marketing infrastructure in Chittoor district; endowed with potential cross-bred population of the state with strong cooperative societies in each village and private dairies in the district. These societies have got good transport, storage, regular price information, liaison facilities etc. But very few dairy farmers (9 per cent) are selling their milk to the local vendors who procure from the farmers' house itself. Majority (90.00 per cent) of the dairy farmers expressed that at a maximum of 12 kms distance, the regulated cattle markets are located and a good storage and chilling facilities were available for their milk and milk products at chilling centres and milk product factories in the district. So it can be concluded that there is absolutely no problem in marketing of the produce both for export and domestic market.

Policy Support : As for the policy support for dairy farming, there are no limitations in terms of the area, number and type of animals for rearing. Government is not imposing any restrictions for rearing of animals. Majority (86.00 per cent) of the dairy farmers expressed that they are enjoying the incentives given by

the government in the form of subsidies. Most of the farmers (74.00 per cent) are covered under *Pasukranthi Padhakam* of State Government and getting loans from DRDA, S.C./B.C. Corporation etc. Private dairies are also extending the loan facility to the farmers, but the farmers (71.00 per cent) are expecting still more support from Government side for the promotion and development of dairy farming. Delicensing policy of the Government is encouraging and many private dairies were established in this area, leading to enhanced rearing of cattle. Government is also providing short-term and long-term loans for dairy development through various banks which is a proactive step for encouraging the dairy farming. Tenancy reforms and wage policies are common as in the case of other sectors. Dairy farming has got good policy support for the processing of milk and milk products and for the establishment of the private dairies in the nearby areas of Chittoor.

Industrial Support : Majority of the dairy farmers (62.00 per cent) opined that, because of the encouragement given to the small scale industries to flourish in this area many processing firms entered in dairy farming giving a wider scope for rearing dairy animals. Well developed network of milk chilling centres, bulk milk cooling units and milk product factories indicate the growth of dairy industry in the study area. A good number of entrepreneurs are procuring milk from the farmers and value addition of the same by converting into milk products like cheese, milk powder, sweets, ghee etc. and exporting to Bangalore and Hyderabad cities. Milk powder is sent to the Indian Army and ghee to Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam which are all the favourable factors for rearing of the cattle.

MNC Intervention : It is a well known fact that many National and Multinational companies are being involved in the dairy industry at various levels in various places but not depicted in the study area which is discouraging the dairy industry. Some of the key players like Vijaya, Heritage, Creamline etc., have got tie-up agreements with various multinational industries like Smithkline Beechem, Reliance etc. which are making the dairy industry more profitable and with global opportunities in the district. Most of the multinational companies which are directly or indirectly involved in dairy farming are the milk product manufacturers and cheese makers for whom distance is not the criterion. Hence establishing such industries will obviously make the dairy farming more profitable. Because of this intervention it will ensure that the dairy farmers will get boost in their business indirectly from the organisations.

Export Potentiality of the Dairy : Dairy sector has attained self-sufficiency in its production as India becomes first largest milk producer in the world, largely on account of available excellent native and cross-bred animals and adoption of improved dairy technologies by the farmers in the country. This has created considerable demand for milk products in the external markets. During 2007-08, India exported milk and milk products worth ₹ 1207 crore which has further given boost to our dairy exports confirming to WTO norms as many countries evinced interest to import quality milk and milk products from India. Each cross-bred animal has got a production potentiality of 15-20 lts per day on an average which can meet the export requirements and the domestic market requirements of the milk.

Institutional and Organisational Support : Dairy farming has got sufficient institutional or organisational support in this area. Almost all the farmers (98.00 per cent) are organised into milk producers' cooperative societies to solve the problems that they are facing in dairy farming and marketing of their produce at a remunerative price. But most of the dairy farmers (67.00 per cent) expressed their dissatisfaction over the functioning of the

societies due to political interference and government policies. The farmers (62.00 per cent) are regularly getting their loans for long-term investments on their fields from various commercial and agricultural banks in Chittoor district, thus dairy farming became more sustainable and profitable. In this context, Sri Venkateswara Veterinary University located at Tirupati and research station at Palamaner are also contributing to scientific information needs of the farmers in the district through transfer of technology. The results were in accordance with the findings of Suresh Kumar (1997).

Socio-economic Status of the Dairy Farmers

The socio-economic status and perception towards privatisation of veterinary services are studied and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 : Distribution of the Respondents According to their Socio-economic Status and Perception on Privatisation of Veterinary Services

S.No.	Characteristic	Category					
		Low		Medium		High	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Socio-economic status	21	23.3	51	56.60	18	20.0
2	Perception on privatisation of veterinary services	16	17.78	52	57.78	22	24.44

It is evident from Table 4 that, majority (56.60 per cent) of the dairy farmers belonged to medium category of socio-economic status followed by low socio-economic status (23.00 per cent) and high socio-economic status category (20.00 per cent). From these results it could be inferred that it was a good sign that majority of the respondents were in the medium category of socio-economic status and extension agencies should concentrate more on those farmers whose socio-economic category was low and appropriate initiatives may be taken up to improve their livelihoods. The findings are in line with the results of Raju (2003) and Raju et al. (2006) who reported that majority of the respondents were in medium to low socio-economic status category.

It was also observed that, majority (57.78 per cent) of the dairy farmers had medium followed by high (24.44 per cent) perception towards privatisation of veterinary services. It could imply that they are ready to pay for the services. As it was being a commercially profitable farming, high technology oriented, services are species-specific and provide livelihood security to the farmers resulting in the services competent enough to meet their specific needs and requirements.

Farmers' preferences on veterinary services suitable for privatisation in dairy farming were also studied and are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 : Mean Scores of the Veterinary Services Suitable for Privatisation in Dairy Farming

N=180

S.No.	Veterinary services	Farmers
1	Artificial Insemination	6.4*
2	Pregnancy diagnosis	3.2
3	Laboratory diagnosis	3.5
4	Radiography	3.4
5	Vaccination	6.6*
6	Deworming	4.6
7	Control of ticks	6.0*
8	Medical treatment	5.5*
9	Major surgical treatment	5.4*
10	Minor surgical treatment	2.7
11	Gynaecological & obstetrical treatment	4.5
12	Livestock advisory services	2.1
13	Distribution of fodder seedlings/ slips	2.3
14	On-farm consultancy services	5.3*
15	Supply of publications	2.8
16	Round the clock services	6.4*
17	Issue of health certificate	6.4*
18	Issue of postmortem certificate	5.5*
19	Meat inspection	2.9
20	Drug distribution	3.3
21	Continuing education and training	3.1
22	Door delivery of services	6.3*
23	Preparation of project reports	3.6
24	Information on government schemes	1.8
25	Supply of feed	4.4

*above mean

The results indicated in Table 5 reveal that farmers preferred 10 veterinary services that are suitable for privatisation and considered to be charged.

The farmers strongly felt that the veterinary services like artificial insemination, vaccination, control of ticks, medical treatment, major surgical treatment, on-farm consultancy services, round the clock services, issue of health certificate, issue of postmortem certificate and door delivery of services were suitable for privatisation and also were above mean score of 5 and rest should not be privatised. It may be due to the fact that these services are involved in the overall health care of animals which is of primary concern and mandatory for any welfare state.The perceived economic gains like getting high-yielding progeny, increased production and productivity etc. made them consider the above services for privitisation. So farmers are ready to pay for the above noted few services. But for the other veterinary services, thorough discussions with the scientists, farmers and Veterinary Assistant Surgeons are required to foresee the consequences and to tailor these veterinary services suitable for privatisation. The results were in accordance with the findings of Rajashree (2000) and Ravikumar *et.al.* (2006).

Conclusion

So far as dairy farming is concerned, different organisations have got enough number of veterinary services with them, the VASs are ready to extend those services. The farmers had medium socio-economic status, progressive, dynamic having high and medium categories of profile characteristics and have positive perception towards the privatisation of veterinary services. Further, these farmers do not have enough confidence on the public organisations operated by state department of Animal Husbandry. A thorough analysis of their structural and functional aspects revealed that very little time is spared for important veterinary services in dairy. But the input agencies and the consultants on whom the dairy farmers are depending mostly for their input and round the clock service requirements are performing better and catering efficiently to the needs of the farmers. These farmers have got good input, marketing support, and the dairy farming as a whole has good policy support, industrial support, MNC's intervention and good export potentiality. Majority (65.00 per cent) of the dairy farmers expressed that they are also getting sufficient, institutional and organisational support and the service support from the consultants which paved the way for privatisation of veterinary services. The state department of Animal Husbandry can withdraw from the forward linking extension and can act as backward linking extension i.e., creating congenial atmosphere where other stakeholders can comfortably operate. The state department of Animal Husbandry and public service providers can be strengthened in terms of manpower, service delivery system, budget provision for TA and DA, subject matter support and provision of information in time to cater to the needs of the farmers. The input agencies, which are holding the main stake, are to be supported and monitored carefully by the public organisations. Considering the strengths and weaknesses of veterinary services, it is felt appropriate to develop a proper linkage strategy between public and private veterinary services.

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