

Original Article

The Quality of Services Provided by Veterinary Dispensaries in Satara District

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Abstract

Animal husbandry is a critical component of agricultural economies worldwide, especially in developing countries where livestock serves as a significant source of livelihood, food security, and employment. Globally, the livestock sector contributes approximately 40% of the global value of agricultural output and supports the livelihoods and food security of almost 1.3 billion people. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) highlights that demand for livestock products is expected to double by 2050 due to population growth, urbanization, and rising incomes. International bodies have emphasized sustainable livestock development, disease control, and improved breeding practices to enhance productivity and ensure food safety. Additionally, climate change mitigation through better livestock management is increasingly a priority in global animal husbandry policy discussions. Recommendations include enhancing farmer awareness, promoting collaboration between government and private practitioners, and fostering continuous quality improvement in veterinary healthcare. The outcomes provide valuable insights for policymakers, veterinary professionals, and farmers to strengthen livestock management and support sustainable rural development.

Keywords- Veterinary Services, Service Quality, Animal Husbandry, Satara District, Rural Development

Introduction

In India, the animal husbandry sector is a vital pillar of the agricultural economy, contributing significantly to rural incomes and national GDP. According to the 20th Livestock Census (2019), India has a livestock population of over 535.78 million. The sector contributes about 4.5% to the total Gross Value Added (GVA) and around 30% to the agricultural GVA. India ranks first in milk production globally, with an annual output exceeding 210 million tonnes. Government initiatives such as the Rashtriya Gokul Mission, National Livestock Mission, and Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund aim to improve breed quality, provide veterinary healthcare, and enhance the infrastructure required for animal product processing and marketing. The government also focuses on improving fodder availability, managing livestock diseases, and encouraging dairy entrepreneurship among youth and women. Satara district is located in the Indian district of Maharashtra, which is western India. The district has a long history of animal husbandry and agriculture, and veterinary services have played a crucial role in the growth and development of the area. One of the primary roles of the government in providing veterinary services is to ensure the health and welfare of animals. This includes the provision of animal health care services, such as vaccination, treatment, and surgery.

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In many countries, the government plays an active role in providing these services, either directly or through partnerships with private veterinarians. In some countries, the government may provide veterinary services free of charge to farmers or subsidize the cost of veterinary services. This is particularly common in developing countries, where farmers may not have the financial resources to pay for veterinary care. In other countries, veterinary services may be provided by private practitioners, but the government may regulate the profession and ensure that standards of care are met. The government plays an essential role in providing veterinary services and animal health care.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the role of the government in veterinary services.
2. To suggest remedies for making improvements in the veterinary services provided in Satara the district.

Scope of the Study

This study is useful for various government dispensaries as well as it also help to identify the factors that influence the selection of various veterinary services. It also helpful to the farmers whose livelihood is depends on livestock.

Data collection

For this study secondary data will be collected from the government veterinary hospitals and animal husbandry departments such as the annual budget, veterinary services provided by government veterinary dispensaries, statements of receipts and payments and annual reports, etc.

Measurement

It is based on expert's opinions, situation specific condition, available information on internet. This study based on conceptual in nature, qualitative as well as exploratory study is done in this research.

Theoretical framework

Quality of veterinary services can be defined as the extent to which services meet the needs and expectations of animal owners, in terms of both the technical quality of the services provided and the level of customer satisfaction. Technical quality refers to the knowledge, skills, and equipment used by veterinary professionals, while customer satisfaction is influenced by the communication skills of veterinarians, the availability of services, the cost of services, and the perceived value of the services provided.

There have been several studies on veterinary services in India. Here are a few examples:

1. Quality of Veterinary Services

2. Factors Influencing the Quality of Veterinary Services
3. Assessment of the Quality of Veterinary Services

Here are some qualities that are generally considered important for high-quality veterinary services as following:

1. **Compassion:**
Veterinarians should show empathy and understanding towards their patients (animals) and their owners.
2. **Expertise:**
Veterinarians should have a high level of knowledge and skill in their area of practice, including diagnostic and treatment techniques.
3. **Communication:**
Veterinarians should be able to effectively communicate with pet owners, providing clear explanations of diagnoses, treatment plans, and prognosis.
4. **Collaboration:**
Veterinary services should collaborate with other veterinary specialists, such as radiologists, anesthesiologists, and surgeons, when necessary to provide the best care for their patients.
5. **Transparency:**
Veterinary services should be transparent with their pricing, policies, and procedures.
6. **Cleanliness:**
Veterinary facilities should be clean and well-maintained to ensure the health and safety of the animals and their owners.
7. **Availability:**
Veterinary services should be available when pet owners need them, including providing emergency services.
8. **Personalization:**
Veterinary services should be tailored to the specific needs of each individual animal and their owner, taking into account factors such as the animal's breed, age, and health status.
9. **Continuing education:**
Veterinarians should keep up-to-date with the latest research and developments in their field and continually seek to improve their knowledge and skills.
10. **Professionalism:**
Veterinary services should conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, demonstrating respect for their clients and their profession.

Factors influencing the quality of veterinary services

Several factors can affect the quality of veterinary services, including the availability of

resources, the level of education and training of veterinary professionals, the level of public awareness about animal health issues, and the regulatory environment. Inadequate resources, such as limited funding and lack of equipment and medicines, can lead to substandard care. In addition, low levels of education and training can result in poor diagnostic and treatment practices, while a lack of public awareness can lead to a lower demand for services. Finally, the regulatory environment, including licensing and accreditation requirements, can also have an impact on the quality of veterinary services.

There are several factors that can influence the quality of veterinary services, including:

- Competence and expertise of the veterinarians delivering the services
- Availability of modern diagnostic and treatment equipment
- Adequate staffing and resources to provide high-quality services
- Effective communication and collaboration among veterinary professionals, animal owners, and other stakeholders
- Adoption of evidence-based practices
- Continuous quality improvement
- Access to appropriate drugs and other medical supplies
- Effective record-keeping and data management systems
- Compliance with regulatory standards and guidelines
- The use of appropriate biosecurity measures
- Availability of emergency care services
- Attention to animal welfare considerations
- Provision of client education and support services
- Availability of referral services for specialized care
- Integration of veterinary services with other animal health and management services, such as nutrition and housing.

There are several factors that influence the quality of veterinary services, and investing in these factors can lead to several advantages, including:

1. Competent and skilled veterinarians:

The expertise of the veterinarians delivering the services is a crucial factor influencing the

quality of veterinary services. Investing in the education and training of veterinarians can lead to higher-quality services, better disease diagnosis and treatment, and improved animal health outcomes.

2. Access to modern diagnostic and treatment equipment:

The availability of modern diagnostic and treatment equipment can significantly improve the quality of veterinary services. Access to such equipment can help veterinarians diagnose and treat diseases more accurately and effectively, leading to better health outcomes for animals.

3. Adequate staffing and resources:

Adequate staffing and resources are necessary to provide quality veterinary services. Investing in these resources can lead to more efficient and effective services, reduced waiting times, and higher satisfaction among clients.

4. Effective communication and collaboration:

Effective communication and collaboration among veterinary professionals, animal owners, and other stakeholders are critical for providing high-quality veterinary services. Encouraging open and effective communication can help identify and address problems more quickly, leading to improved outcomes for animals.

5. Adoption of evidence-based practices:

Evidence-based practices are supported by scientific research and are proven to be effective. Investing in research and the adoption of evidence-based practices can help ensure that veterinary services are based on the best available science, leading to improved animal health outcomes.

6. Continuous quality improvement:

Perpetual improvements in quality are the constant assessment and enhancement of the performance of good services provided. Investing in continuous quality improvement can lead to more efficient and effective services, higher client satisfaction, and improved animal health outcomes.

Related studies Factors Influencing the Quality of Veterinary Services in India:

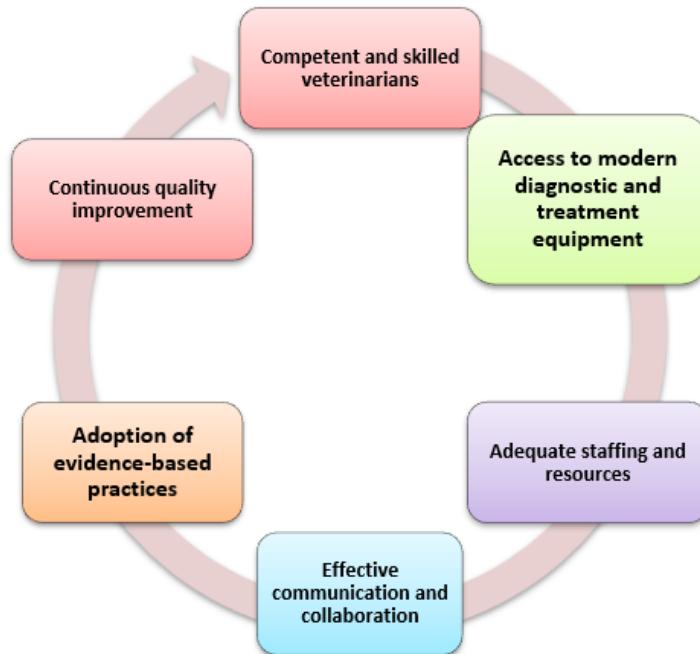


Fig1.1: Factors influencing Quality of Veterinary Services

Above diagram shows that the assessment quality of veterinary services. It will help to boost the performance of veterinary dispensaries.

Research Gap

To identify research gaps, it's important to conduct a literature review to understand what research has been done in this area. Some research gaps in this area could include:

1. **Limited research on the quality of veterinary services in Satara district specifically:** While there may be some research on the quality of veterinary services in other districts or regions, there may be limited information on Satara district specifically. This gap could be addressed by conducting a study specifically focused on veterinary services in Satara district.
2. **Lack of comprehensive data on the quality of veterinary services:** Even if there is research on veterinary services in Satara district, there may be gaps in the available data that make it difficult to fully understand the quality of services. For example, there may not be data on the number of veterinarians in the district, or on the types of services they provide. This gap could be addressed by collecting comprehensive data on veterinary services in Satara district.

Findings

1. Both government dispensaries and private practitioners must make certain that the facilities and equipment at their disposal are contemporary and up to date 2. It is important

for the government to provide education and training opportunities for veterinary professionals

2. There needs to be better communication between those who provide veterinary services and farmers so that farmers are aware of the services that are available to them and how they may make use of those services to their advantage.
3. Service providers have a responsibility to maintain information regarding the quality of the services they offer, including the prices of those services and the treatment plans.
4. To raise the standard of veterinary care provided in the Satara District, Government Dispensaries and Private Practitioners ought to work together sharing best practices and developing a more complete and efficient animal healthcare system.

Suggestion

The study reveals a shortage of qualified and experienced veterinary staff. More veterinarians and paramedical staff must be recruited to meet the growing demand. Many cattle owners expressed concerns over the cost of private services. A graded fee system based on income levels and livestock ownership can be implemented to ensure inclusivity. As the responses indicate, awareness about government schemes, veterinary rights, and services is low. Launching awareness drives through local media, WhatsApp groups, community events, and printed leaflets in Marathi will be beneficial.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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