

Farmers Involvement and Information Seeking Behaviour from Raitha Samparka Kendra's(RSK's) in Belagavi District: A Study

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(Abstract : Agriculture is a part of rural life and an economic activity in the Indian sub continent. Agriculture and its allied activities are also the major source of employment generation in India as well as Karnataka particularly in rural areas. India, which is in the run for information development has introduced and is carrying forward nationwide digital programmes to modernize agriculture with a view to attain food security and also to bring in structural changes including socio-economic transformation among farming community. It can be said that, information diffusion play a pivotal role in enhancing agricultural productivity. Information administered in the right way can enable right knowledge to reach intermediaries and small farmers in a timely manner. Such timely dissemination of information undoubtedly reduces the risk and uncertainty. But, efficient agricultural information management depends on adequate mechanisms to generate, capture and disseminate the same effectively. This calls for institutional arrangements. A successful agricultural programme is one which amalgamates both scientific research and indigenous knowledge. The respective governments have taken several measures to develop agriculture through various new programmes.)

Keywords: Farmers, Information, Agriculture, Raitha Samparka Kendra,behaviour

1. Introduction:

Raitha samparka kendras was introduced by the government of Karnataka under ministry of Agriculture and Co-operation during 2000-01 to provide effective Agricultural extension services to farmers. This was anticipated to meet the growing demands of farming community to adopt the latest technologies. Raitha Mitra Yojane was implemented in the State since 2000-01. The Agricultural Extension Centres opened under this new programme at Hobli level are called Raita Samparka Kendras (RSK).The main aim of the RSKs is to provide up-to-date information on farm practices and market intelligence to the farmers. The 2006 Karnataka state policy has came up with more initiatives to strengthen the working of RSKs.

The Karnataka Government has started computerized Raitha Samparka Kendra at every Hobli Head quarters. In Belagavi District, totally 35 Raita Samparka Kendras have been providing their services to farmers.

1.1. The objectives of Raita Samparka Kendra are as following:

1. To give proficient information of Farm establishment and its combined exercises.
2. To make feasible situation of cultivating information sources like compost, seeds and so on.
3. To help state of urgent tests administrations like seed germination and quality tests/soil testing and so forth.
4. To bear the cost of both public and private seed assets and contribution at the Kendra level.
5. To give an open door for correspondence among public and private distribution improvement and information.

1.2. The Scope and Limitation of the Study :

It is the study pertaining to the information needs and information seeking behavior of the farmers of agricultural dominant area entitled as “Farmers involvement with Raitha Samparka Kendra’s(RSK’s) in Belagavi District: a study ” The nature of agriculture and its type, socio-agricultural variables of farmers, the type of information the farmers seek, all these are the subject-matter of this study.

It is the scope and limitation of the present study is confined to the information needs and information seeking behavior of around 500 farmers of 10 Raita Samparka Kendras of Belagavi district, with special emphasis on their information needs and seeking patterns. The scope in the present study is further limited to the farmers of rural Belagavi district and does not cover the farmers’ information needs of other districts in the Karnataka.

1.2. Need and significance of the study:

Though studies have been made on the information needs and information seeking behavior of farmers in some other areas like our study such as “Farmers involvement with Raitha Samparka Kendra’s(RSK’s) in Belagavi District: a study ” and comparison has been made with the rate and range of progress achievement which is varying.

Despite the fact, development in science, technology has been made for disseminating information and its use, the level of progress in the receptivity of information and its use has not been attained by the farmers as per the expectations. It is happening due to the reasons called as the determining factors which act as barriers on the information seeking behaviours. Some of the factors like poor knowledge of sharing culture due to selfishness of users, personal barriers such as age, gender, resistance to change attitude and external or environmental factors such as illiteracy, costly information providing materials, poverty and simplicity of local languages, all these influence on the information seeking behaviour of stakeholders.

1.3. Objectives of the Study:

The present study is concerned with both exploratory as well as analytical goals. It is chiefly concerned with investigating different factors act as barriers on the information seeking behaviour in view of having increased improved means of ICT. The main objectives of the present study are the following:

1. To understand the information needs of rural farmers.

2. To find out the sources of information
3. To examine information seeking behaviour of the farmers.
4. To know the accessibility of various communication channels to the farmers.
5. To examine the impact of different factors act as barriers on the information seeking behaviours of stakeholders.

2. Information from Raitha Samparka Kendra:

Raitha Samparka Kendra plays an important role development of agriculture. To know the involvement of farmers towards RSKs, some questions were asked and the responses provided are given in following tables.

Table 2.1 Frequency of information seeking from Raitha Samparka Kendra

S.No.	Frequency	Response	Percentage
1	Daily	42	8.4
2	Occasionally	278	55.6
3	Sometimes	134	26.8
4	Never	38	7.6
5	No Answer	8	1.6
	Total	500	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 2.1 Frequency of Visiting Raitha Samparka Kendra.

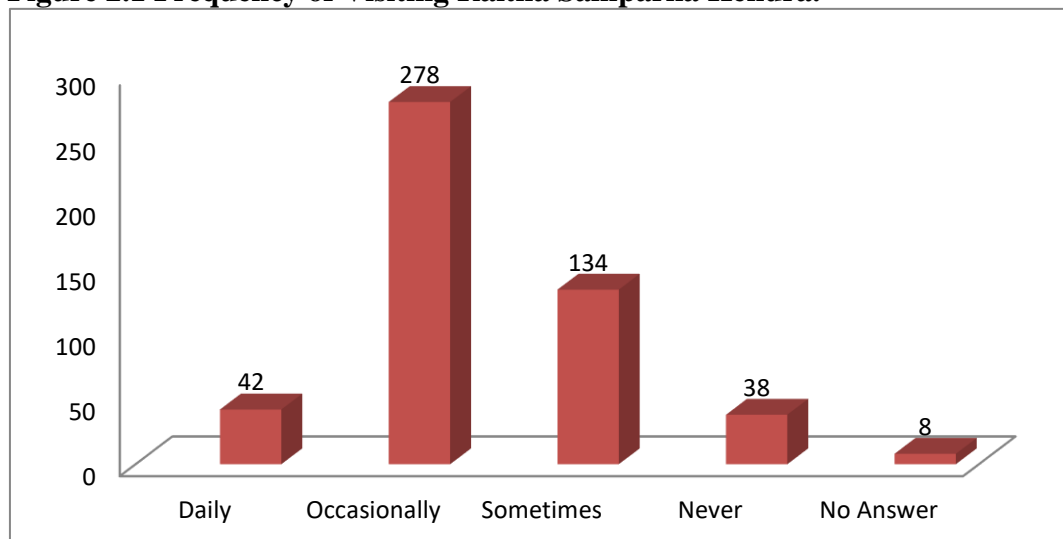


Table and Figure no.2.1 explains that 55.60% of respondent farmers are visiting RSK occasionally, 26.80% of farmers response is that they are visiting the RSK sometimes. 8.40% of farmers visits RSK daily, 7.60% of farmers they never visited RSK and 1.60% of farmers were not answered.

Table 2.2 Farmers beneficiary Response about Raitha Samparka Kendra

Sl. No.	Farmers Opinion	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly agree	82	16.4
2	Agree	334	66.8
3	Undecided	54	10.8
4	Disagree	20	4
5	Strongly Disagree	10	2
	Total	500	100

Source: Field Survey

Figure 2.1 shows about extent of benefits get by Farmers from RSKs.

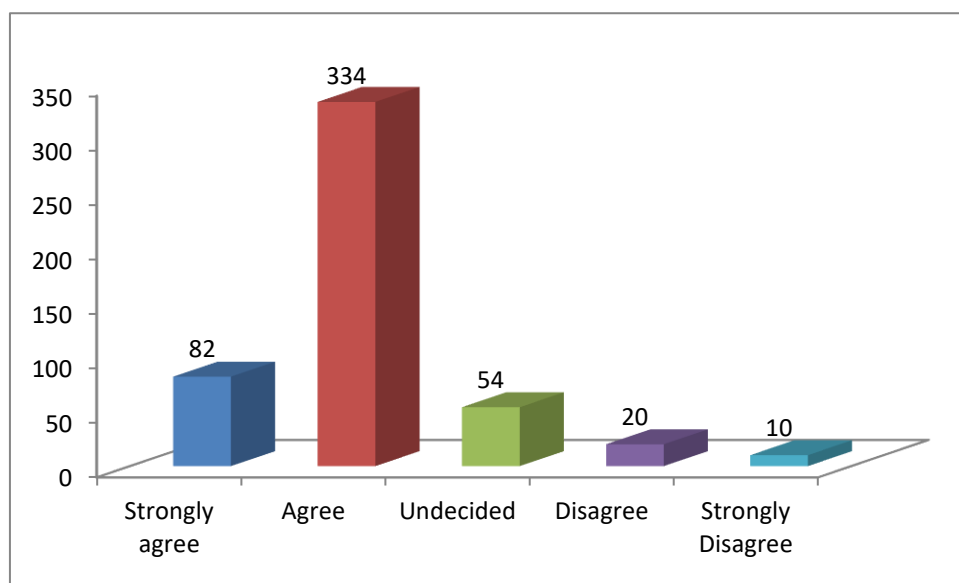


Table and Figure no.2.1 shows that 66.80% of respondent farmers are benefited by services provided by Raitha Samparka Kendra; about 16.40% of farmers are more benefitted from Raitha Samparka Kendra. About 10.80% of farmer's response is not benefited, where as 4% of farmers response that 'Can't say' and 2% of farmers are not responded by services rendered by Raitha Samparka Kendra.

Table 2.3 Farmers' opinion about RSKs Impact on Agriculture.

Sl. No.	Farmers Opinion	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	97	19.4
2	Agree	228	45.6
3	Undecided	89	17.8
4	Disagree	57	11.4
5	Strongly Disagree	29	5.8
	Total		100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 2.3 Farmers' opinion about RSKs Impact on Agriculture.

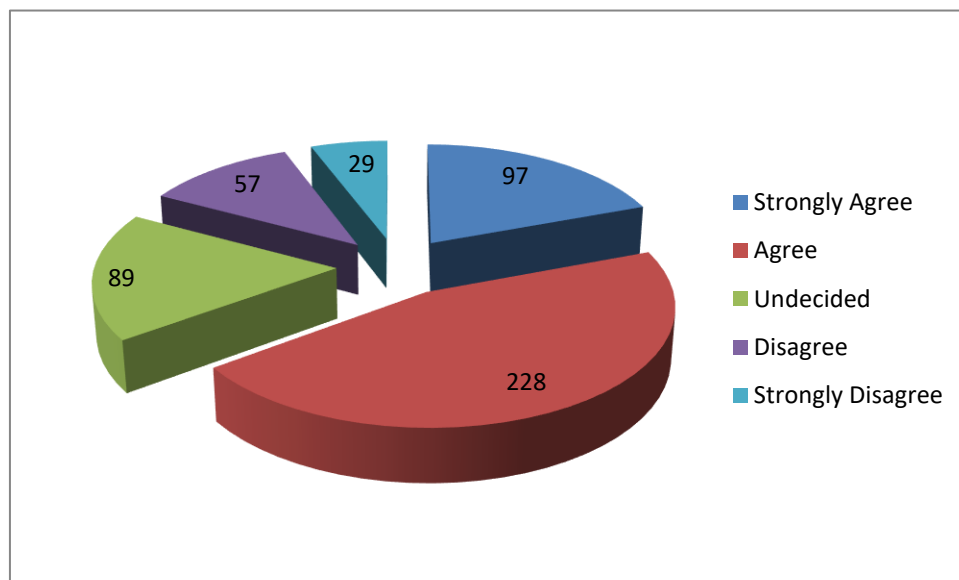


Table and Figure no.2.3 shows that 45.6% of respondent farmers are Agree that, RSK has impact on agricultural services, about 19.4% of farmers are Strongly Agree on impact of Raitha Samparka Kendra on agriculture, 17.8% of farmer's undecided about impact of Raitha Samparka Kendra, where as 11.4 % of responded farmers Disagree about the impact of Raitha Samparka Kendra and 5.8% of farmers are Strongly Disagree about impact on agriculture services given by Raitha Samparka Kendra.

Table 2.4 RSKs importance Towards Poor Farmers.

Sl. No.	Farmers Opinion	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	95	19
2	Agree	98	19.6
3	Undecided	35	7
4	Disagree	77	15.4
5	Strongly Disagree	195	39
	Total	500	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 2.4 Shows about RSKs importance to poor Farmers.

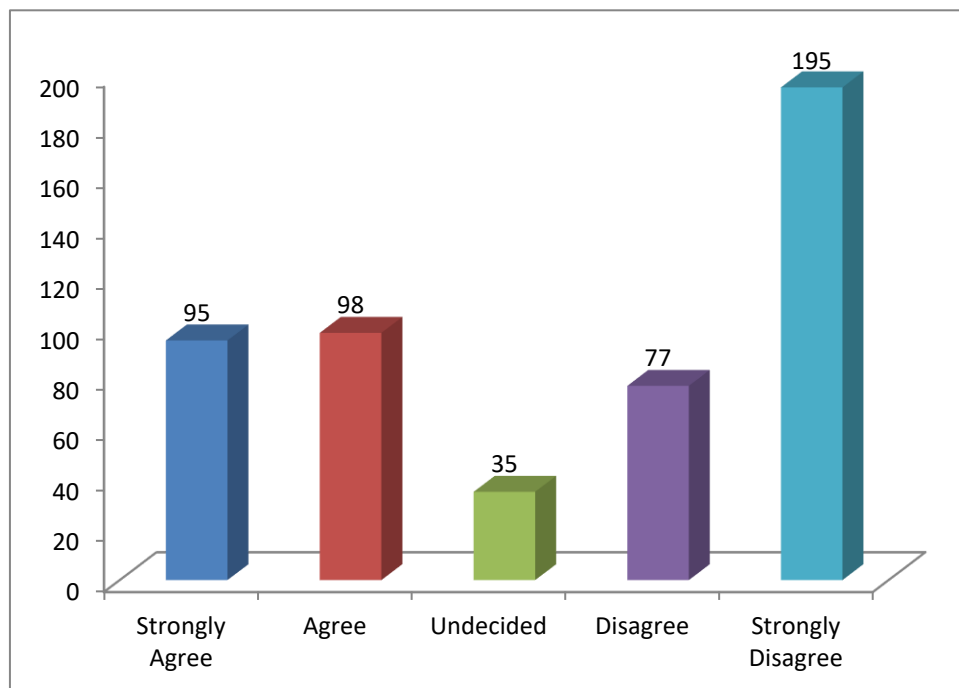


Table and Figure no.2.4 shows that 39% of respondent farmers Strongly Disagree about RSKs importance towards poor people; about 19.6% of farmers are Agree about RSKs importance towards poor people, 19% of farmer's Strongly Agree that RSK is given importance to poor farmers, where as 15.4 % of responded farmers Disagree about the service given by Raitha Samparka Kendra towards poor farmers and 7% of farmers are undecided about the importance given to the poor farmers by Raitha Samparka Kendra.

Table 2.5 Shows about opinion of farmers on agricultural innovations of RSKs.

Sl. No.	Farmers Opinion	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	78	15.6
2	Agree	149	29.8
3	Undecided	48	9.6
4	Disagree	113	22.6
5	Strongly Disagree	112	22.4
	Total	500	100

Source: Field Survey

Figure 2.5 Shows about opinion of farmers on agricultural innovations of RSKs.

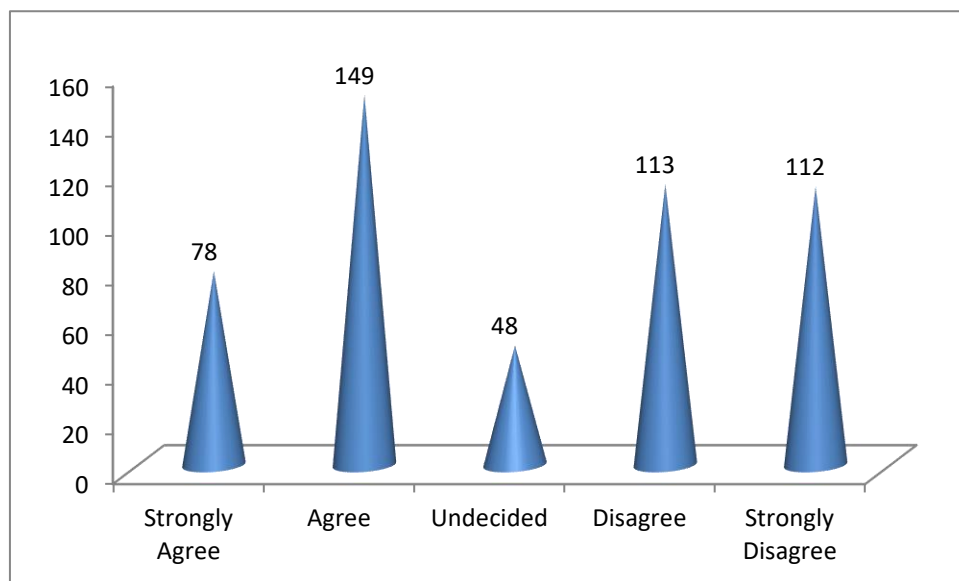


Table and Figure no.2.6 shows that 29.8% of respondent farmers are Agree the innovations taken by RSK in agriculture, about 22.6% of farmers Disagree about innovations taken on agriculture by RSK, 22.4% of farmer's Strongly Disagree about agricultural innovative services provided by Raitha Samparka Kendra, where as 15.6 % of respondent farmers Strongly Agree about the innovations services given to agriculture by Raitha Samparka Kendra and 9.6% of farmers are Undecided about the innovation services provided by Raitha Samparka Kendra.

Table 2.7 RSKs role in improvement of Economic conditions of Farmers.

Sl. No.	Farmers Opinion	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	78	15.6
2	Agree	170	34
3	Undecided	94	18.8
4	Disagree	114	22.8
5	Strongly Disagree	44	8.8
	Total	500	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 2.7 shows about role of RSKs in improvement of economic conditions of Farmers.

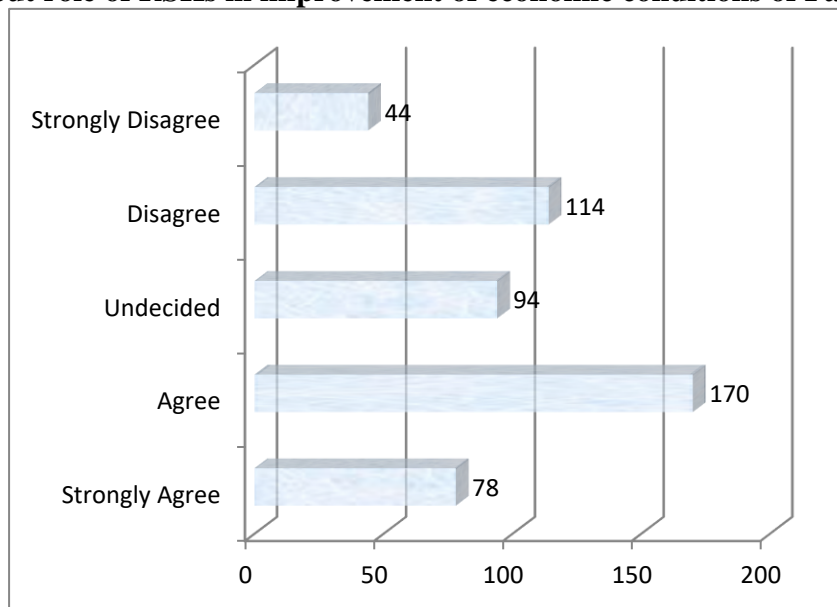


Table and Figure no.2.7 shows that 34% of respondent farmers Agree the role of RSKs in improvement of economic conditions of farmers, about 22.8% of farmers Disagree the role of RSKs role in improvement farmers economic conditions, 18.8% of farmer's undecided about role of RSKs in improvement of economic condition, where as 15.6 % of respondent farmers Strongly Agree that RSKs has role in improvement of economic conditions of Farmers and 8.8% of farmers Strongly Disagree about the role of RSKs in economic improvement of farmers.

Table 2.8 Opinion of farmers about Raitha Samparka Kendra's Facilities.

Sl. No.	Farmers Opinion	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	259	51.8
2	Agree	118	23.6
3	Undecided	74	14.8
4	Disagree	37	7.4
5	Strongly Disagree	12	2.4
	Total	500	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure No. 2.8 Shows about opinion about facilities provided by RSKs.

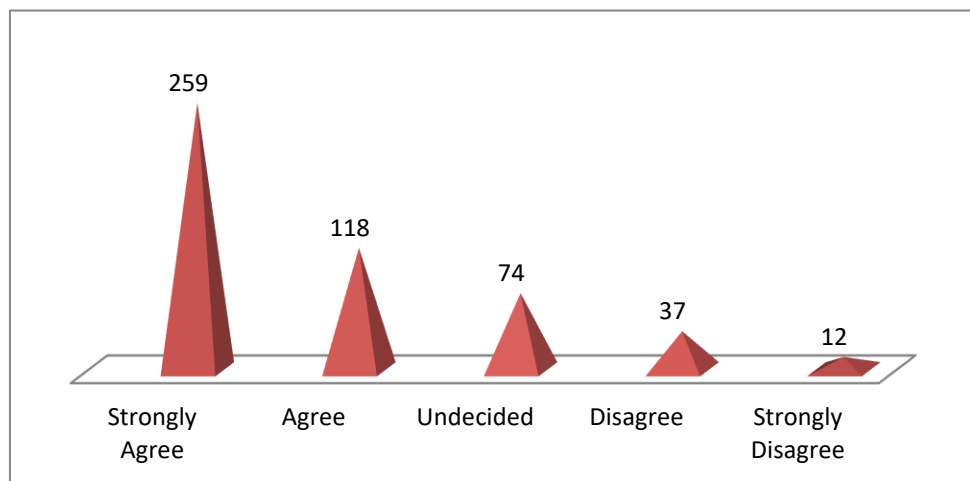


Table and Figure no.2.8 shows that 51.8% of respondent farmers Strongly Agree about the Facilities available in Samparka Kendra, about 23.6% of farmers Agree about the facilities of Raitha Samparka Kendra, 14.8% of farmer's undecided about the facilities provided by Raitha Samparka Kendra, where as 7.4 % of respondent farmers Disagree about the facilities available with Raitha Samparka Kendra and 2.4% of farmers Strongly Disagree about the facilities provided by Raitha Samparka Kendra.

Table 2.9 opinion about services of RSKs towards Remote Villages.

Sl. No.	Farmers Opinion	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	68	13.6
2	Agree	107	21.4
3	Undecided	84	16.8
4	Disagree	123	24.6
5	Strongly Disagree	118	23.6
	Total	500	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 2.9 shows that percentage wise distribution of opinions about services of RSKs to Remote Villages

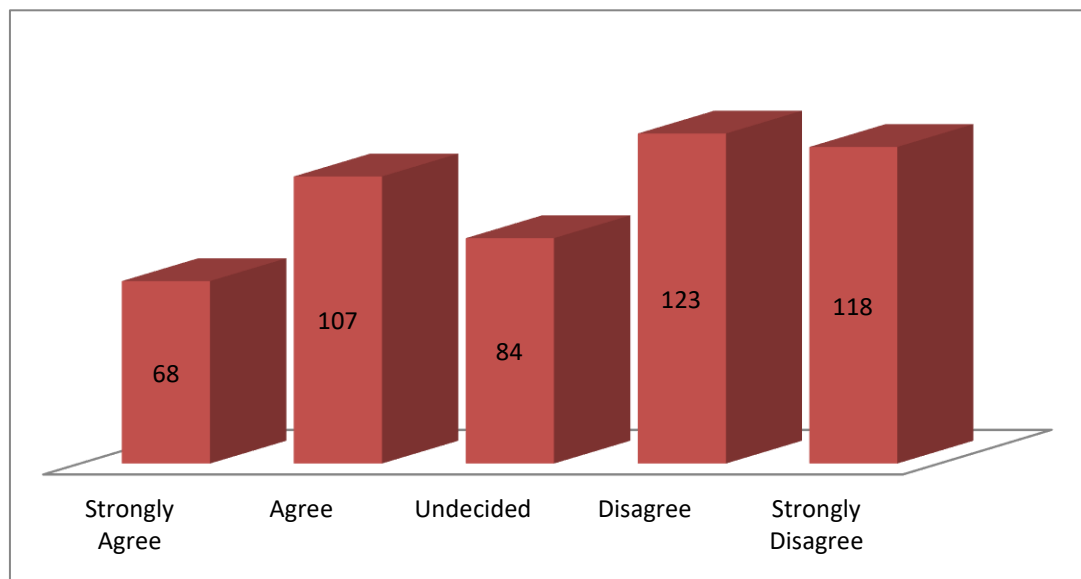


Table and Figure no.2.9 shows that 24 % of respondent farmers Disagree with the services rendered by Raitha Samparka Kendra to remote villages; about 23.6% of farmers Strongly Disagree by the services provided by Raitha Samparka Kendra, 17.8% of farmer's undecided about the services provided by Raitha Samparka Kendra, where as 11.4 % of responded farmers Disagree about the service given by Raitha Samparka Kendra and 5.8% of farmers Strongly Disagree about the services provided Raitha Samparka Kendra.

Table 2.10 RSKs importance towards Rich People.

Sl.No.	Farmers Opinion	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	305	61
2	Agree	148	29.6
3	Undecided	13	2.6
4	Disagree	18	3.6
5	Strongly Disagree	16	3.2
	Total	500	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 2.10 shows about RSKs to Importance given Towards Rich People.

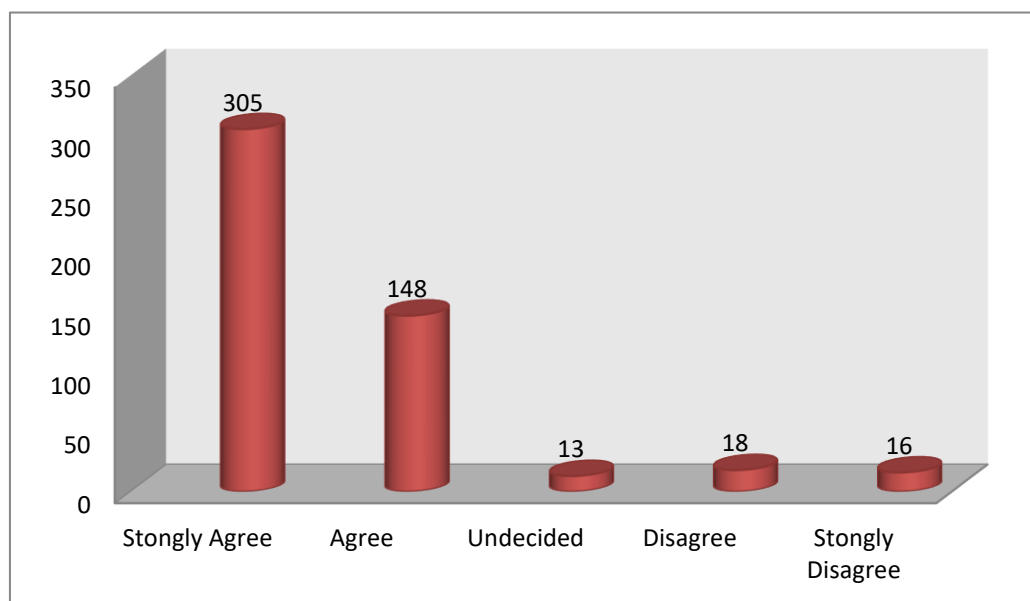


Table and Figure no.2.10 describes that 61 % of respondent farmers Strongly Agree with the opinion about, Raitha Samparka Kendra gives importance to Rich People; about 29.6% of farmers Agree that Raitha Samparka Kendra is giving importance to Rich people and only 8.2% of the Respondent Farmers Strongly Disagree for this opinion.

3.CONCLUSION:

Since agriculture is the primary industry in the state, the government has taken a number of steps to enhance this industry through sharing information about agriculture. Since a few years ago, Raitha Samparka Kendras have been in operation in the State. These serve as the farmers' knowledge bases, disseminating knowledge on market and agriculture practises. However, significant improvements must be made to the way that Raitha Samparka Kendras operate and move. The RSK should support new technologies, information on agricultural practises, market information and potential market changes, and information about markets. If the Kendras are effectively staffed and trained, this can be accomplished.

4. REFERENCES:

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