

PERCEPTION OF THE RYTHU BANDHU SCHEME AMONG THE BENEFICIARIES**Gurralla Priyanka¹, Pandhiri Kruparani² and Menta Anusha³**

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ABSTRACT

Rythu Bandhu Scheme (RBS) is a government scheme to support farmers for two seasons to benefit the landowning farmers through a grant of Rs. 5,000 per acre per farmer each season through direct benefit transfer (DBT). An ex post facto research design was adopted for the study. Since agricultural diversification has taken place in Telangana over the last ten years, the Mahaboobnagar district was purposefully chosen for the study. Four mandals and three villages from each mandal were selected randomly from a district with a total sample size of 120 beneficiaries. The study aimed to examine farmers' perceptions of the Rythu Bandhu Scheme. The data was analysed using the Mean Per cent Score. The findings showed that more than half of the farmers (59.17 %) had a medium perception, followed by high (27.50 %) and low (13.33 %) perceptions regarding RBS. The significant association between profile characteristics of the beneficiaries and their perception towards the RBS showed that it was similar to landholding, farming experience, information seeking behaviour, extension contact, achievement motivation, economic motivation, and innovativeness. The results show that respondents' perception of RBS ranged from 44.00 to 87.66 per cent in all the statements.

Keywords: RBS, farmers, telangana state, perception, innovativeness

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is fundamental to the growth of developing nations, serving as the backbone of their economies. It is imperative to recognize that a significant portion of the population in these countries relies on agriculture and related activities for employment and their livelihoods (Vinaya and Shivamurthy, 2021). A significant portion of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihood, comprising landowners, tenant farmers cultivating specific plots of land, and agricultural labourers employed on these farms. Despite this reliance, agriculture contributes only 18.5 percent to the GDP (Anon., 2022), highlighting a clear disparity between employment in the sector and its economic impact.

The agriculture sector is a principal source of employment for around 55.00 per cent of the population in the state. Telangana's Gross State Value added at current prices has consistently improved from 16.30 per cent in 2014-15 to 18.60 per cent in 2021-22. There was a 155.70% increase in the Gross Value Added by the sector between 2014-15 and 2021-22. Since its formation, the contribution of the Agriculture and Allied Sectors to Telangana's Gross State Value Added at current prices has consistently increased from 16.00 percent in 2014-15 to 18.70 percent in 2021-22. Additionally, their inability to access credit and insurance services and their vulnerability to climate fluctuations, pests,

and other risks further complicate their situation. For farmers, having access to affordable credit is essential for starting and maintaining a successful crop cycle. This access allows them to invest in quality inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, machinery, and equipment. Agricultural credit also plays an important role in providing these essentials during adversity and in being able to absorb the shock of crop failure. To help the farming community during the start of crop operations, every year, the Indian government and all the state governments facilitate them by providing subsidies, and farmers are availing themselves of them. Further, the Telangana government marched ahead in providing investment support to every farmer to take up agricultural operations on time, and they called it the "Rythu Bandhu Scheme" in 2018. Additionally, the Telangana government has taken significant steps to offer investment support to help every farmer initiate their agricultural operations on time.

Access to essential agricultural inputs, such as water, electricity, fertilizers, pesticides, seeds, labour, and machinery, is crucial for achieving good yields. This access promotes efficient production and enhances productivity. Recognizing the role of financial support in reaching these goals, the Government of Telangana introduced the Rythu Bandhu scheme in the 2018-19 fiscal years to support farmers' investments. The primary aim of the Rythu Bandhu scheme is to assist Telangana farmers in overcoming financial challenges by breaking the cycle of rural indebtedness.

(Anon., 2022a).

Under this scheme, landowning farmers receive financial support of ₹5,000 per acre per season, which is directly transferred to their bank accounts. In line with the Hon'ble Chief Minister's motto, "Na Darkaz, Na Daftar," the scheme aims to minimize bureaucracy and provide a beneficiary-friendly delivery mechanism.

Additionally, the Government of Telangana has expanded the scheme to include all landowning farmers, regardless of the size of their land holdings. The financial support is calculated per-acre basis, allowing farmers to receive benefits proportional to the land they own. This amount is directly transferred to the farmers' bank accounts. In line with the Honorable Chief Minister's motto of "Na Darkaz, Na Daftar," the delivery mechanism of the scheme aims to minimize red tape and be friendly to beneficiaries.

The financial support is calculated per acre, allowing farmers to receive benefits corresponding to the land they own. This approach ensures that farmers can access sufficient funds to purchase the necessary inputs for their farming activities.

OBJECTIVE

To study the perception of the Rythu Bandhu Scheme among the beneficiaries

METHODOLOGY

The Study was conducted in the Mahaboobnagar district of Telangana State during the *kharif* and *rabi* seasons of 2022-23. An ex post facto design was used in the study (Kerlinger, 1976). Mahaboobnagar district was purposively selected with the criteria of a high level of crop diversification over the past ten years, Kamraju *et al.* (2017). Out of 15 mandals, four mandals, namely Jadcherla, Koilkonda, Devarakadra, and Nawabpet, were selected for the study, keeping in view the highest number of beneficiaries, after contacting district officers in the district. Among all the villages listed, three villages from each mandal were selected using random sampling. The requisite sample of 120 respondents was finalised based on a simple random sampling method *i.e* 10 RBS beneficiaries from each village was selected. Thus, the total sample size was 120. To study this objective, a structured interview schedule was developed and the procedure followed by Sneha (2020) with little modifications was used in this study.

For each respondent, the schedule administered whether the perception of the scheme was Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree. The

responses were recorded on a five-point continuum ranging from Strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly disagree, with a scoring pattern of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The data was collected and analysed using statistical tools like percentage, mean percent score, mean weighted score, standard deviation and Pearson's correlation coefficient. The respondents are categorised into three categories (low, medium, and high) based on the inclusive class interval technique. The maximum and minimum possible scores were 80 and 16, whereas the obtained scores were 74 and 41, respectively. The data were analysed using excel and SPSS software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 : Distribution of beneficiaries according to the overall perception about the Rythu Bandhu Scheme (n=120)

Sr. No.	Category	f	%
1	Low (41-52)	16	13.33
2	Medium (53-63)	71	59.17
3	High (64-74)	33	27.50

f = frequency % = Per cent

The data presented in Table 1 reveals that 59.17 per cent of the beneficiaries had a medium perception about the Rythu Bandhu Scheme, followed by high perception (27.50 %) and low perception (13.33 %). The probable reason for having medium perception about Rythu Bandhu Scheme by the beneficiaries was that the scheme has been instrumental in supporting farmers and enhancing agricultural output. It has been lauded for its direct benefit transfer mechanism, which ensures that the financial assistance reaches the intended beneficiaries. The findings were similar with Priyanka (2024).

Statement-wise perception of beneficiaries about Rythu Bandhu Scheme

It is evident that, majority (87.66 %) of beneficiaries perceived that, Rythu Bandhu Scheme is applicable for farmers, followed by more effective than other the scheme (75.66 %), political advantages/votes (75.33 %), children education (74.33 %), provides timely input purchase (73.16 %), reduces burden on availing of private loans (73.00 %), useful for increase in Standard of living of farmers (70.33 %), only for large farmers (68.88 %) and only for absentee land owners (68.16 %). Further, 63.16 per cent of beneficiaries perceived that, Rythu Bandhu Scheme was introduced for farmers welfare, followed by any agricultural operations can be adoptable (61.33 %), production of crops speeds

Table 2 : Distribution of beneficiaries according to the statement-wise perception about the Rythu Bandhu Scheme

(n=120)

Sr. No	Statements	MPS	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Useful for farmers	87.66	04.38	00.65
2	Provides timely input for purchase	73.16	03.65	00.86
3	Reduces the burden of availing private Loans	73.00	03.65	00.75
4	Clears outstanding loans	53.83	02.60	00.60
5	Used only for political advantage /votes	75.33	03.70	00.90
6	Introduced for farmers' welfare	63.16	03.15	00.79
7	Useful only for large farmers	68.88	03.44	01.02
8	Useful only for absentee landowners	68.16	03.40	00.96
9	Useful for social events	49.83	02.50	01.09
10	Useful for children's Education	74.33	03.71	00.74
11	Helpful to have social parties/get-togethers	44.00	02.20	00.77
12	Increasing in Standard of living of farmers	70.33	03.52	00.80
13	More effective than other schemes	75.66	03.78	01.12
14	Bank formalities to disburse the amount are easy	54.00	02.70	01.20
15	Any agricultural operations adopted with the help of the RBS amount	61.33	03.06	01.18
16	Production of crops speeds up	59.33	2.30	01.04

MPS = Mean per cent score

up (59.14 %), bank formalities to disburse amount are straightforward (54.00 %), helps to clear outstanding loans (53.83 %), useful for social events (49.83 %) and 44.00 per cent of beneficiaries perceived that Rythu Bandhu Scheme beneficial for social parties/ get-together. Thus, from the above results, the perception of beneficiaries about the Rythu Bandhu Scheme ranged from 44.00 per cent to 87.66 per cent in all the statements. The mean weighted score of

respective statements with more than three was perceived as a positive perception, and less than three was perceived as a negative perception. It was also evident that, among all 16 statements, 11 were perceived as a positive perception and the remaining statements as a negative perception about RBS by beneficiaries. The findings were similar with Bagheri. *et.al*, (2008); Vinaya and Shivamurthy (2021); Gamit and Vinaya (2024); Krushnpalsinh and Vinaya (2020).

Table 3: Relationship between independent variables and perception of RBS beneficiaries about Rythu Bandhu Scheme

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Independent Variables	Correlation (r)
X ₁	Age	0.026 ^{NS}
X ₂	Gender	-0.101 ^{NS}
X ₃	Level of education	-0.091 ^{NS}
X ₄	Family composition	-0.035 ^{NS}
X ₅	Land holding	-0.307*
X ₆	Farming experience	0.267**
X ₇	Information seeking behaviour	0.326*
X ₈	Social participation	0.0102 ^{NS}
X ₉	Extension contact	0.379**
X ₁₀	Awareness on government schemes	0.209*
X ₁₁	Achievement motivation	0.217*
X ₁₂	Economic motivation	0.197*
X ₁₃	Financial management	0.208*
X ₁₄	Risk orientation	0.149 ^{NS}
X ₁₅	Innovativeness	0.224*
X ₁₆	Management orientation	0.017 ^{NS}

**Significant at 0.01 level *Significant at 0.05 level NS = non-significant

It is revealed from the Table 3 that, information seeking behaviour, awareness on government schemes, achievement motivation, economic motivation, financial management and innovativeness were noticed positive and significant relationship at five per cent level of significance. This might be because the respondents with high achievement motivation will always help in set specific goals, gives self-confidence and perceiving challenges as an opportunity. Farmers were better understanding the benefits obtained from different and trusting government which had an impact on livelihood. Rythu Bandhu Scheme helps farmers in debt management, financial security, confidence in future financial prospects and reducing financial regret. Farmers were very interested in adopt new ideas and technologies in agriculture and non-agriculture, as the government was providing financial support. The above findings are in line with Thakur *et.al* (2017); Joshi (2021); Sneha (2020); Gupta (2023); Lekha et al. (2025); Saifuddin et al. (2025); Gurralla et al. (2024); Saifuddin et al. (2024).

CONCLUSION

The study results prove that the Rythu Bandhu Scheme was providing an amount only for landholding farmers, but not for tenant farmers. This scheme was very useful as it provided investment support to farmers before the commencement of the season, which helped them reduce the cost of cultivation, increase their income, and improve their Standard of living

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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