Relationship Between Profile Characteristics of Farmers and their Attitude towards ICTs Use

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ABSTRACT

The study revealed that majority (71.67%) of the respondents had moderately favourable attitude towards ICTs use, followed by less favourable (15.00%) and highly favourable (13.33%). The relationship between profile characteristics of farmers and their attitude towards ICTs use indicated that computed r-values of education , farming experience, information seeking behavior, extension contact , economic status, achievement motivation, scientific orientation and innovativeness were positively correlated with the attitude towards ICTs use and the relationship was found significant at 1 per cent level of probability. While age , land holding and socio-politico participation showed non-significant relationship with the attitude towards ICTs use.

Key words : Farmers attitude**,** ICTs use, Profile, Relationship.

Though India has achieved self sufficiency in food grain production, we cannot complacent with the increasing population. There is a need to increase production and productivity of agriculture. Hence, the Indian farmers need to be updated with the latest knowledge about new techniques of farming, new cultivars, farm machinery, market and trade situation etc. In this context, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) plays an important role in reaching the unreached, supplement and reinforce the extension efforts.

ICTs can be broadly interpreted as technologies that facilitate communication, processing and transmission of information by electronic means. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are the basket of technologies which assist in storage, processing and dissemination of the information. ICT includes any communication device or application encompassing radio, television, mobiles, internet, kiosks, call centres, satellite systems etc; Hence the present study was undertaken with an objective to find out the relationship between profile characteristics of farmers and their attitude towards ICTs use in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research was conducted during the year 2011 in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh. The selected crops include paddy, cotton and chilli. Ex-post facto research study was followed. Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh was selected purposively. One mandal for each crop with highest area of cultivation was selected for the study. Thus a total of three mandals viz., Bapatla for paddy, Amaravathi for cotton and Veldurthy for chillies were selected for the study. Four villages from each mandal were selected randomly with a total twelve villages. For each crop forty farmers were selected by following proportionate random sampling constituting the total sample size to 120. Data was collected through Interview schedule, which was subjected for statistical analysis and interpretation. Attitude of farmers towards ICTs was measured using the developed attitude scale.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A cursory look at Table 1 indicated that, majority (71.67%) of the respondents had moderately favourable attitude towards ICTs use, followed by less favourable (15.00%) and highly

Table 1. Distribution of total respondents according to their attitude towards ICTs use.

(n=120)

S.No	Category	F	%
1.	Less favourable	18	15.00
2.	Moderately favourable	86	71.67
3.	Highly favourable	16	13.33
	Total	120	100.00

Mean = 89.3083   SD=8.4423

Table 2. Relationship between independent variables of respondents and their attitude towards ICTs use.

S.No	Independent variable	r-value
1.	Age	-0.2140NS
2.	Education	0.7249**
3.	Farming Experience	0.7110**
4.	Land Holding	0.2340NS
5.	Information seeking behaviour	0.7595**
6.	Socio-politico participation	0.2489NS
7.	Extension contact	0.7298**
8.	Economic status	0.7452**
9.	Achievement motivation	0.7177**
10.	Scientific orientation	0.7416**
11.	Innovativeness	0.7436**

** = 1% Level of significance   NS=Non Significant

favourable (13.33%). This might be due to the dependence of farmers on informal sources such as input dealers, neighbour farmers, friends and relatives to get information related to agriculture and they were not getting authentic information at correct time from the existing extension system. Hence, they were showing positive attitude towards ICT tools, which provide information round the year without time and space barriers. The results provide an opportunity to develop and popularize the ICT tools among the farming community.

Relationship between profile characteristics of farmers and their attitude towards ICTs use

An attempt has been made to find out the association between independent variables and dependent variables through correlation coefficient (r) values. The results are presented in Table 2.

The r-values in table 2. indicated that education (0.7249), farming experience (0.7110), information seeking behavior (0.7595), extension contact (0.7298), economic status (0.7452), achievement motivation (0.7177), scientific orientation (0.7416) and innovativeness (0.7436) were positively correlated with the attitude towards ICTs use and the relationship was significant at 1 per cent level of probability. The r-values of age (-0.2489), land holding (0.2340) and socio-politico participation showed non-significant relationship with the attitude towards ICTs use.

The above finding could be explained as, the higher the education, farming experience, information seeking behaviour, extension contact, economic status, achievement motivation, scientific orientation and innovativeness, the more favourable would be the attitude towards ICTs use. As the age increased, the favourable attitude towards ICTs use decreased but the relationship was not significant. As the land holding and socio-politico participation increased, favourable attitude towards ICTs use also increased but the relationship was not significant. Thus, it could be concluded that the

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression of selected independent variables with attitude towards ICTs use.
(n=120)

S.No	Independent variables	Regression coefficient	Standard error	t-value
1.	Age	-0.5041	0.5267	-0.9571NS
2.	Education	1.5563	0.4840	3.2156**
3.	Farming Experience	3.2933	0.6446	5.1088**
4.	Land Holding	3.7648	1.3712	2.7456**
5.	Information seeking behaviour	0.4331	0.2844	1.5230NS
6.	Socio-politico participation	0.1219	0.0986	1.2360NS
7.	Extension contact	0.3375	0.2097	1.6092NS
8.	Economic status	1.6930	0.3256	5.1997**
9.	Achievement motivation	0.1930	0.3013	0.6405NS
10.	Scientific orientation	0.7555	0.3536	2.1365NS
11.	Innovativeness	0.2597	0.3080	0.8433NS

a=39.3435 R^2=0.8687

** = 1% Level of significance   NS=Non Significant

attitude towards ICTs use was independent of age, land holding and socio-politico participation. These findings were in accordance with the findings of Senthilkumar (2000), Geetha (2002), Maniar (2002), Sridevi (2003) and Ganeshkumar et al., (2008).

Multiple Linear Regression of selected independent variables with attitude towards ICTs use

An attempt has been made to find out the amount of contribution made by the independent variables in explaining the variation in the dependent variable through multiple linear regression. The results are presented in table 3.

It was observed from Table 3. that the eleven independent variables with attitude of farmers towards ICTs use taken on Multiple Linear Regression Analysis gave the R^2 (Co-efficient of multiple determination) value of 0.8687. Hence, it could be inferred that independent variables put together contribute 86.87 per cent of the total variation in the attitude towards ICTs use by the farmers, leaving the rest to extraneous factors. The independent variables viz., education, farming experience, land holding, economic status of the respondents had contributed significantly at 0.01 level of probability towards the variation in the attitude towards ICTs use.

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