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Analyze the Knowledge Level of Extension Personnel About ICT Tools

Patil R. L.¹, Chavai A. M.² and Bhange S. B.³

Abstract: The use of Internet by extension personnel is now common in India. Extension personnel use the Internet for social, research and educational purposes. This study focused on exploring knowledge level of extension personnel about ICT tools.

The data were collected from 110 extension personnel through a paper-based questionnaire. The results identified overall knowledge about ICT tools, it was found that, 63.63 per cent of MSDA extension personnel had medium level of knowledge followed by high (19.10%) and low (17.27%). The knowledge level of MSDA extension personnel about individual ICT tools in the order of priority were; cent per cent of the respondents possess knowledge about ICT tools like radio and television followed by mobile and internet (99.09%), telephone, computer and e-mail (98.18%), video conferencing (92.72%), e-newspaper (85.45%), kiosk (83.63%), e-agricultural magazine (71.81%) ICT meaning and decision support system (63.63%). The possible reason may be that, young age, educational qualification, more accessibility, more utilization of ICT tools, more innovative, higher achievement motivation, infrastructure and other resource facility to MSDA extension personnel could support the above findings.

Key words: Internet, ICT tool, Extension Personnel, MSDA and Knowledge level.

INTRODUCTION

Internet use has significantly increased globally in India. Agriculture is an educational service which brings information and new technologies to farming communities to enable them to improve their production, income and standard of living. At present the extension personnel in department of agriculture has the major responsibility of

transferring technologies to the farming community from time to time with the help of ICT tools.

The term Information communication technology was coined by Stevenson in 1997. ICT stands for the information and communication technologies which can be broadly interpreted as technologies that facilitate communication, processing and transmission of information by

electronic means. It is defined as technologies involved in collecting, processing, storing, retrieving, dissemination and implementation of data and information using microelectronics, optics, telecommunication and computers.

Access to such information sources is a crucial requirement for the sustainable development of the farming systems. They also added that ICT can be of immense help by enabling extension workers into knowledge workers (KW). The emergence of such knowledge workers will result in the realization of the much talked about bottom-up, demand-driven technology generation, assessment, refinement and transfer.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra state. Ahmednagar district was selected as it has largest area among the districts of Maharashtra state. In Ahmednagar district there are 14 tahsils. Among which these four tahsils namely Rahuri, Sangamner, Shrirampur and Rahata were randomly selected for present study. Ex-post facto design was used for the study.

Thus total 188 personnel were working. From these by proportionate sampling method 9 Agri. Officer, 15 Agri. Supervisor, 86 Agri. Assistant thus total 110 respondents were selected for the present study. The data were collected by personal and well-structured interview schedule.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of the study are presented as under.

In this study, knowledge as a body of understood information possessed by an individual. The information regarding the knowledge about ICT tools of the extension personnel were collected, tabulated and analyzed. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Overall knowledge level of extension personnel about ICT tools

<i>MSDA (N = 110)</i>			
<i>Sr. No.</i>	<i>Knowledge Categories</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>
1.	Low (< 10)	19	17.27
2.	Medium (11-12)	70	63.63
3.	High (> 12)	21	19.10
		Mean = 11.53	SD = 1.11

Table 1 represents the overall knowledge about ICT tools, it was found that, 63.63 per cent of MSDA extension personnel had medium level of knowledge followed by high (19.10%) and low (17.27%).

Knowledge can be increased only through the education. It can be acquired and developed through lifelong learning process. Knowledge can be overwhelmed with more research, experience and training. As some of the MSDA extension personnel are more qualified and exposed towards more training and research and mass media. So it is obvious that they have more Knowledge compared to that of other extension personnel. Further, result showed that, MSDA extension personnel should be made aware about ICT tools and need to be trained on use of ICT tools.

A perusal of Table 2 revealed the knowledge level of MSDA extension personnel about individual ICT tools in the order of priority were; cent per cent of the respondents possess knowledge about ICT tools like radio and television followed by mobile and internet (99.09%), telephone, computer and e-mail (98.18%), video conferencing (92.72%), e-newspaper (85.45%), kiosk (83.63%), e-agricultural magazine (71.81%) ICT meaning and decision support system (63.63%). The possible reason may be that, young age, educational qualification, more accessibility, more utilization of ICT tools, more innovative, higher achievement motivation, infrastructure and other resource facility to MSDA extension personnel could support the above findings.

Table 2
Knowledge level of extension personnel about ICT tools

Sr. No.	Knowledge	MSDA (N = 110)	
		Freq	%
1.	ICT stands for–Information and communication technology	70	63.63
2.	Radio–An electronic audio-medium used for broadcasting the programmes	110	100
3.	Television–An electronic audio-visual medium which provides pictures with synchronized sound	110	100
4.	Telephone–The telephone or phone is a telecommunications device which is used to transmit and receive sound (most commonly voice and speech) across the distance	108	98.18
5.	Mobile–An electronic telecommunications device, often referred to as a cellular phone or cell phone, it connect to a wireless communications network through radio wave or satellite transmissions and provide voice communications, Short Message Service (SMS), Multimedia Message Service (MMS), and newer phones may also provide Internet services such as Web browsing and e-mail.	109	99.09
6.	Computer–Is a programmable machine that receives input, stores and manipulates data/information, and provides output in a useful format.	108	98.81
7.	Internet — Is a global system of interconnected computer networks that use the standard Internet Protocol Suite (TCP/IP) to serve billions of users worldwide.	109	99.09
8.	E-mail — Is a method of exchanging digital messages across the Internet/computer network	108	98.18
9.	Decision support system —It is a computer based information system that support business and organizational decision.	70	63.63
10.	Video conferencing–Is a video channel or a 2-way cable television system which provides the picture and sound of both the sender and receiver of message.	102	92.72
11.	Kiosks–It is a computer based terminal or display that provides information or services in public places.	92	83.63
12.	e-newspaper–Is a newspaper that exists on the World Wide Web or Internet	94	85.45
13.	e-agricultural magazine–Is a magazine that exists on the World Wide Web or Internet	79	71.81

CONCLUSION

The knowledge level of MSDA extension personnel about individual ICT tools in the order of priority were; cent per cent of the respondents possess knowledge about ICT tools like radio and television followed by mobile and internet (99.09%), telephone, computer and e-mail (98.18%), video conferencing (92.72%), e-newspaper (85.45%), kiosk (83.63%), e-agricultural magazine (71.81%) ICT meaning and decision support system (63.63%). More than half

of MSDA extension personnel had medium level of knowledge about ICT. About cent per cent of MSDA extension personnel possessed knowledge about ICT tools like radio and telephone.

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