



ATTITUDE OF FARM YOUTH TOWARDS ICT TOOLS IN TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT OF TAMILNADU

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Abstract

Global population is projected to reach 9 billion by 2050 and the number of young people (aged 15 to 24) is also expected to increase to 1.3 billion, accounting for almost 14 percent of the projected global population. Most born in the developing countries of Africa and Asia, where more than half the population still live in rural areas. India is expected to have 34.33 percent share of youth in the total population by 2020, which is a huge reserve of human resource and potential. Information is critical to the social and economic activities that comprise the development process and right information at right time will play a crucial role for development of Indian agriculture. Here comes the role of ICTs, which are powerful and productive with new ideas, methods of the technology dissemination and further improving the knowledge and information among the society. Keeping this in mind a research study was taken up to assess the attitude of farm youth towards the ICT tools in Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu. A total sample size of 120 farm youth were selected. The collected data were analysed with the help of SPSS software. The results indicated that more than two fifth (44.17 percent) of the respondents had favourable attitude towards ICT tools followed by least favourable (31.67 percent) and most favourable (24.16 percent) attitude towards ICT tools

Key words: Attitude, Farm Youth, Information and Communication Technology.

Introduction

Agriculture is core to every nation's development and it remains fundamental to poverty reduction and economic growth especially for the developing countries in the 21st century (World Bank, 2008). India is an agricultural-oriented country, two third of the population here is dependent on agriculture. Youth are the backbone of the country, youth have ability to understand the new innovation and new practices related to the agriculture. Present scenario shows that the agriculture needs the involvement of the new generation. Social media play a vital role to disseminate the information related to the agriculture and new techniques.

The use of the social media can be increased in the agriculture by the involvement of the youth because the young generation can easily use the proper use of the social media, our aged farmers don't want the increase of the social media in agriculture they think that the it's time consuming and also having some risks to use. So firstly we need to train them. In other hand lack of education is also a major problem due to this problem

majority of the farmers were not interested in the use of social media in agriculture another reason behind that is they don't know proper use of the social media (Mohitkumar *et al.*, 2019).

Majority of the farmers using the traditional methods of the farming due to lack of awareness about the new practices and also they thoughts that the traditional method are easy to use then modern. India is losing more than 2,000 farmers every single day and since 1991, the overall number of farmers has dropped by 15 million. This has several implications for the future of Indian agriculture and India's food security. Young farmers can play an important role in ensuring food security if they are encouraged to get involved in farming and the challenges they face are addressed. Over the past few years, rural youth have been shying away from agriculture and globally there is an increasing interest in finding ways of engaging youth in agriculture (Mohitkumar *et al.*, 2019).

ICTs play an important role in addressing these challenges and uplifting the livelihoods of the farmers. ICTs are increasing day-by-day among different

communities for obtaining the information about related issues, problems and their solutions. In the context of agriculture development, ICTs have played important role in developing countries. ICTs can provide easy access to local or global information, knowledge and are simple channels for two-way communication (Kavaskar and Sharmila, 2019). 47.50 percent of the respondents were having medium knowledge level on mobile agro advisory service (Suriyapriya and Kavaskar, 2019).

Materials and Methods

The study was taken up in Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu. A total sample size of 120 farm youth were selected. A comprehensive interview schedule covering all the aspects of ICT tools was developed. The collected data were analysed with the help of SPSS software. For measuring the attitude of the respondents, a 5-point Likert scale was used. There were twenty (20) statements including both positive and negative against the 5-point scale to avoid the biasness of the respondents. The 5-point scale: 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' with assigned score 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for positive statements and a score of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 was assigned for negative statements. There were fourteen positive statements and six negative statements. The maximum and minimum scores varied from 20 to 100 respectively. The overall attitude of the respondents was assessed under three categories *viz.*, least favourable, favourable and most favourable using cumulative frequency method. Further, based on the scores obtained, the respondents were grouped into five categories for interpreting the results of individual attitude statements.

Results and Discussion

Overall attitude of farm youth towards ICT

The overall attitude of farmers towards ICT tools is presented in table 1. It was observed that more than two-fifth (44.17 percent) of the respondents had favourable attitude towards ICT tools followed by least favourable (31.67 percent) and most favourable (24.16 percent) attitude towards ICT tools among the respondents. The possible reason might be the due to the fact that majority of respondents had medium level of knowledge on ICT tools which would have resulted with favourable attitude among majority of the respondents.

Further, majority of the respondents were literate. This might also have influenced them to possess favourable attitude. Majority of the respondents had low level of awareness and had less exposure. This would have resulted with least favourable attitude towards ICT tools.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their overall attitude towards ICT (n = 120).

S.No.	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Least favourable	38	31.67
2.	Favourable	53	44.17
3.	Most favourable	29	24.16
Total		120	100.00

Statement wise attitude of farm youth towards ICT

ICTs reach the farmers in short period of time: Nearly half the proportion of the respondents strongly agreed (48.33 percent) with the statement, followed by agreed (33.33 percent), disagreed (10.00 percent), strongly disagreed (5.00 percent) and only (3.34 percent) of the respondents reported neutral with the statement.

ICTs provide right solution for the problems faced by the farmers: Most of the respondents strongly agreed (45.00 percent) with the statements followed by agreed and disagreed (22.50 percent) and strongly disagreed (10.00 percent).

It is very difficult to enhance the overall efficiency of agriculture production system with the use of ICTs: More than two-fifth (44.16 percent) of the respondents disagreed with the Statement, followed by strongly disagreed (35.00 percent), agreed (10.83 percent). Only 5.00 percent of the respondents under each strongly agreed and were neutral with the statement.

ICTs can be accessed all the time (24 hrs /7 days): It could be observed that nearly three-fourth (71.67 percent) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, followed by agreed (24.17 percent) and disagreed (4.16 percent) with the statement.

ICTs can be accessed from any part of the globe world without any geographical barriers: More than half of the respondents strongly agreed (51.67 percent) with the statement, followed by agreed (36.67 percent), neutral and disagreed (5.83 percent under each).

Sustainability of agriculture is independent of access to information to the ICTs: More than two-fifth (41.67 percent) of the respondents disagreed with the statement, followed by strongly disagreed (33.33 percent), agreed (10.00 percent), neutral (8.33 percent) and strongly agreed (6.67 percent) with the statement.

Socio-cultural barriers can be overcome through use of ICTs: About two-fifth (41.67 percent) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, followed by disagreed (36.67 percent), neutral (19.17 percent) and agreed (2.50 percent) with the statement.

Use of ICTs is cost effective: A little less than half of the respondents strongly agreed (46.67 percent) with the

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their statement wise attitude towards ICT (n = 120).

S. No	Statements	Response categories				
		SA	A	N	DA	SDA
1	ICTs reach the farmers in short period of time	58 (48.33)	40 (33.33)	04 (3.34)	12 (1.00)	06 (5.00)
2	ICTs provide right solution for the problems faced by the farmers	54 (45.00)	27 (22.50)	0 (0)	27 (22.50)	12 (10.00)
3	It is very difficult to enhance the overall efficiency of agriculture production system with the use of ICTs	06 (5.00)	13 (10.83)	06 (5.00)	53 (44.16)	42 (35.00)
4	ICTs can be accessed all the time (24 hrs/7 days)	86 (71.67)	29 (24.17)	0 (0)	05 (4.16)	0 (0)
5	ICTs can be accessed from any part of the globe world without any geographical barriers	62 (51.67)	44 (36.66)	07 (5.83)	07 (5.83)	0 (0)
6	Sustainability of agriculture is independent of access to information to the ICTs	08 (6.66)	12 (10.00)	10 (8.33)	50 (41.67)	40 (33.33)
7	Socio-cultural barriers can be overcome through ICTs	0 (0)	03 (2.50)	23 (19.17)	44 (36.67)	50 (41.67)
8	Use of ICTs is cost effective	56 (46.67)	29 (24.17)	06 (5.00)	21 (17.50)	08 (6.67)
9	Getting information on agriculture and allied fields through ICTs saves time.	64 (53.33)	48 (40.00)	04 (3.33)	09 (7.50)	0 (0)
10	ICTs are the best means to collect latest information regarding weather, cultivation practices and market prices etc.	55 (45.83)	43 (35.83)	08 (6.67)	09 (7.50)	05 (4.16)
11	Farmers get confused with lot of information obtained from ICTs	07 (5.83)	29 (24.17)	09 (7.50)	30 (25.00)	45 (37.50)
12	ICTs empower the farmers in taking decisions on cultivation practices, pest and disease management etc.	45 (37.50)	38 (31.67)	16 (13.33)	15 (12.50)	06 (5.00)
13	Interactive discussion is possible through ICTs tools.	28 (23.33)	29 (24.17)	09 (7.50)	20 (16.66)	34 (28.33)
14	ICTs use to enhance the social communication of farmers.	50 (41.67)	60 (50.00)	02 (1.66)	08 (6.67)	0 (0)
15	All kinds of information exchange are not possible through ICTs	10 (8.33)	36 (30.00)	0 (0)	46 (38.33)	28 (23.33)
16	ICTs can contribute towards the overall development of farmers	33 (27.50)	34 (28.33)	06 (5.00)	28 (23.33)	19 (15.83)
17	Farmers could not get access to market information at different locations using ICTs	0 (0)	02 (1.66)	11 (9.17)	60 (50.00)	47 (39.17)
18	The information available through ICTs is reliable and adequate	33 (27.50)	22 (18.33)	12 (10.00)	33 (27.50)	20 (16.67)
19	ICTs usage requires skills	70 (58.33)	38 (31.67)	12 (10.00)	0 (0)	0 (0)
20	The infrastructure for ICTs is costly and difficult to maintain.	35 (29.17)	34 (28.33)	0 (0)	39 (32.50)	12 (10.00)

statement, followed by agreed (24.17 percent), disagreed (17.50 percent), strongly disagreed (6.66 percent) and neutral (5.00 percent) with the statement.

Getting information on agriculture and allied fields through ICTs saves time: More than half of the respondents strongly agreed (53.33 percent) with the statement, followed by agreed (40.00 percent), disagreed (7.50 percent) and neutral (3.33 percent) with the statement.

ICTs are the best means to collect latest information regarding weather, cultivation practices and market prices etc: More than two-fifth of the respondents strongly agreed (45.83 percent) with the statement, followed by agreed (35.83 percent), disagreed (7.50 percent), neutral

(6.67 percent) and strongly disagreed (4.16 percent) with the statement.

Farmers get confused with lot of information obtained from ICTs: Majority of the respondents strongly disagreed (37.50 percent) with the statement, followed by disagreed (25.00 percent), agreed (24.17 percent), neutral (7.50 percent) and strongly agreed (5.83 percent) with the statement.

ICTs empower the farmers in taking decisions on cultivation practices, pest and disease management etc : More than one-third (37.50 percent) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, followed by agreed (31.67 percent), neutral (13.33 percent), disagreed (12.50 percent) and strongly disagreed (5.00 percent) with the statement.

Interactive discussion is possible through ICT tools: More than one-fourth (28.33 percent) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, followed by agreed (24.17 percent), strongly agreed (23.33 percent), disagreed (16.66 percent) and neutral (7.50 percent) with the statement.

Use of ICTs enhance the social communication of farmers: Half of the respondents strongly agreed (50.00 percent) with the statement, followed by agreed (41.67 percent), disagreed (6.67 percent) and neutral (1.66 percent) with the statement.

All kinds of information exchange are not possible through ICTs: More than one-third (38.33 percent) of the respondents disagreed with the statement, followed by strongly disagreed (23.33 percent), agreed (30.00 percent) and strongly agreed (8.33 percent) with the statement.

ICTs can contribute towards the overall development of farmers: Majority of the respondents agreed (28.33 percent) with the statement, followed by strongly agreed (27.50 percent), disagreed (23.33 percent), strongly disagreed (15.83 percent) and neutral (5.00 percent) with the statement.

Farmers could not get access to market information at different locations using ICTs: Half of the respondents disagreed (50.00 percent) with the statement, followed by strongly disagreed (39.17 percent), neutral (9.17 percent) and agreed (1.66 percent).

The information available through ICTs is reliable and adequate: An equal proposition of the respondents (27.50 percent under each) strongly agreed and disagreed with the statement, followed by agreed (18.33 percent), strongly disagreed (16.67 percent) and neutral (10.00 percent).

Usage of ICT require skills: More than half of the respondents strongly disagreed (58.33 percent) with the statement, followed by agreed (31.67 percent) and neutral (10.00 percent) with the statement. Infrastructure for ICTs is costly and difficult to maintain: One-third of the

respondent (32.50 percent) disagreed with the statement, followed by strongly agreed (29.17 percent), agreed (28.33 percent) and strongly disagreed (10.00 percent).

Overall attitude of farm youth towards ICTs: More than two-fifth (44.17 percent) of the respondents had favourable attitude towards ICT tools followed by least favourable (31.67 percent) and most favourable (24.16 percent) attitude towards ICT tools.

Conclusion

The study revealed that nearly 68.33 percent of the respondents had favourable to most favourable attitude towards ICT tools. Therefore, there is a need to make available these tools at village level along with creating awareness about the importance of ICT tools and types of services providing by these tools to the farming community. Providing such facilities at village level will further attract them to use these tools for farm communication. Further providing services in local language and making the tools more users friendly which will result in developing positive attitude towards ICT tools. It was revealed from the findings that, 32.67 percent of the respondents fell in least favourable attitude towards ICTs use. Hence attention may bestowed by the extension functionaries on the respondents belonging to less favourable attitude by providing timely, useful, needy information to change their attitude towards ICTs use.

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