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Extent of utilization of ICT tools among farming community in Mirzapur (UP)

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Abstract

The study was conducted in Mirzapur district. Itis a part of Mirzapur division. This district is known for the Vindhyavasini temple in Vindhyachal and several tourist attractions like waterfalls like Rajbari and Devadasi and dams. Most of the respondents had belonged to middle age group, High school (19.16%) education, Marginal category (33.34%) land holding, medium category (50%) of annual income and more than half of ICT tools had low level (45%) of social participation. Extent of utilization of different ICT tools among farming community: It was observed that majority of the ICT tools had medium level (52.50%) of ICT utilization.

Key words- Marginal land holding, Income, waterfalls, utilization, community.

Introduction

ICT is the technology required for information processing. The ICT term includes all technical terms that are used for handling information and facilitating communication including computers network, hardware, communication lines and all the necessary software. ICT is an acronym of Information and Communication Technology. The set of technologies developed to manage information and send it from one place to another. They cover a wide range of solutions. They include technologies to store information and retrieve it later.

Evolution of ICT

We cannot live in isolation. We need to interact and communicate with each other and with our surroundings. In the ancient times people used smoke signals, drum sounds, pigeons and messengers as modes of communication. These were relatively slow, unreliable and sometimes unsafe means of communication. With the advent of new technologies, the modes and methods of communication are changing very fast. Radio,

television, computers, telephones, smart-phones, digital camera, laptop and interactive board have revolutionized the ways of communication. These are very fast and can link distant locations within no time. We can easily send messages across the globe and learn about events all over the world in a blink of eye. Numerous technological tools have come up which help us not only to communicate but to create, store and manage information. The diverse set of technological tools and resources used to store, manage, manipulate, create and communicate digital information come under information and communication technologies (ICTs). In 1959, India acquired its first television set for an experimental television service in Delhi. Television gradually expanded to the urban reach. In 1961 Educational Television (ETV) was introduced in the secondary schools in Delhi. This was a pilot project by UNESCO and the Ford Foundation. The first computer was the UNIVACI, developed by John Eckert and John W. Mauchly in 1951. The phrase ICT has been used by academic researchers since the 1980's. The term ICT become popular after it was used in a report to the UK govt. by Dennis Stevension in 1977 and in the revised national curriculum for England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2000.

Research methodology

The study was conducted purposively in Pahari Block of Mirzapur. 10 villages were selected named Sariya, Sindhora, Kathinai, Dagmagpur, Sagar Semar, Gopalpur, Padri, Hinauti, Kota, Danti. After the selection of the villages, a village wise list of the mustard growing farmers was prepared and 12 farmers from each village were selected randomly. Thus, the total sample was Comprises of 120 farmers. Extent of ICTs utilization was operationalized as frequency of use of ICTs by the farmers for obtaining information on different areas related to agriculture. The variable was measured by using schedule developed for the study. The schedule consisted of 12 areas of information. The ICT tools used of these 12 areas were studied. The extent of use was studied for the above 12 areas on a five-point continuum viz., daily, weekly, monthly, occasionally and never with the scores of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The total score of each respondent for all the 12 areas put together was used to see the association. Based on summing up of the scores, the respondents were categorized into three groups based on mean and standard deviation.

S. No.	Category	Score
1.	Low	Below Mean- S.D
2.	Medium	Mean- S.D to Mean+ S.D
3.	High	Mean+ S.D and above

The study required data on several variables from farmers. So, an interview schedule was considered most appropriate tool for data collection. The schedule was

prepared keeping in view the objectives of the study. The data for the study were collected with the help of structured interview schedule by personal interview method.

A data collection was qualitative as well as quantitative. The quantitative data were interpreted in terms of percentage and qualitative data were tabulated on the basis of approved categorization method as described earlier. The following statistical techniques were used in the study. Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation were used in analysis of data.

Results and discussion

1. Distribution of respondents according to their age

A perusal of Table no.1 revealed that, more than half of farmers belonged to old age (46.66%) category, followed by middle age (35.00 %) category and young age (18.34%) category.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their age (n=120)

S. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Young age (Below 34 years)	22	18.34
2.	Middle age (34 to 58 years)	42	35.00
3.	Old age (Above 58 years)	56	46.66
	Total	**120**	**100**

The probable reason might be due to the fact that migration of young age group to the nearby towns and cities for education and employment leaving behind the old age and middle age people in the villages as they were depending on agriculture. The result was in accordance with Sankri (2012).

2. Distribution of respondents according to their education

It was observed from Table no. 2 that more than 19.16 per cent of the farmers had high school education, followed by illiterates (17.50), primary school (15.83%), graduation (15%), middle school (11.67%), other education (10.84%), and post-graduation (10.00%).

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to their education (n=120)

S. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Illiterate	21	17.50
2.	Primary school	19	15.83
3.	Middle school	14	11.67
4.	High school	23	19.16
5.	Graduation	18	15.00
6.	Post-Graduation	12	10.00

7.	Other	13	10.84
	Total	**120**	**100**

The reason for this could be lack of interest in education, dearth of higher educational facilities in their villages and poor economic conditions forcing the farmers to earn their livelihood from childhood. The result was in agreement with the earlier findings of Naik (2009).

3. Distribution of respondents according to their land holding

It was observed from table 3 inferred that more than one forth (33.34%) of the farmers had marginal land holding, followed by small land holding (23.33%), semi medium land holding (20%), medium land holding (15 %) and large land holding (8.33%).

Table 3. Distribution of respondents according to their land holding (n=120)

S. No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Marginal (below 1 Acre)	40	33.34
2.	Small (1 to 2 Acre)	28	23.33
3.	Semi Medium (2 to 4 Acre)	24	20.00
4.	Medium (4 to 10 Acre)	18	15.00
5.	Large (above 10 Acre)	10	8.33
	Total	**120**	**100**

The reason might be due to conversion of agricultural lands into industries, real estates and ever increasing of population and also due to fragmentation of land holdings from one generation to other. The result was in accordance with the findings of Painkra (2014).

4.Distribution of respondents according to use of ICT tools

From the Table no.4 majority (48.34%) of the respondents belonged to high category of ICT tools followed by Low category (28.33%) and rest (23.33%) of the respondent's belonged to middles of ICT tools.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents according to use of ICT tools (n= 120)

S. No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low(<10.69)	34	28.33
2	Meddle(10.69 to 16.01)	28	23.33
3	High(>16.01)	58	48.34
	Total	**120**	**100**

The possible reasons for the above trend might be due to the fact that the majority of the farmers with high income that helps them to purchase a new ICT tool. The result was in accordance with Saikia (2016).

Sl. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Radio	70	58.34
2.	Television	30	25
3.	Mobile	100	83.33
4.	Memory Card	10	8.34
5.	Computer	00	00
6.	Laptop	05	4.16
7.	Digital Camera	00	00
8.	Smart T.V	85	70.83

Table 4 depicts that highest number of farmers posses android mobile (83.33 %) followed by Smart T.V (70.83%), Radio (58.34%), Television (25%), Memory card (8.34%) and Laptop (4.16%).

5. Distribution of respondents according to their Annual Income

It is clear from the Table no.5 that more than half (55.84%) of the respondents belonged to low level of Annual Income followed by medium (29.16%), and rest (15.00%), of the respondents have high level of annual income.

Table 5. Distribution of respondents according to their Annual Income (n=120)

S. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (Below Rs 82000)	67	55.84
2	Medium (Rs 82000 to Rs 116000)	35	29.16
3	High (Above to Rs 116000)	18	15.00
	Total	**120**	**100**

The reason lies in the fact that majority of farmers attributed to non-farm occupation like dairy to support their income,Whereas, number of earning member were found in different occupation other than agriculture. The result was in accordance with Manimekalai (2011) and Meagy (2013).

6. Distribution of respondents according to their Social Participation

Table 6 illustrated that majority (45%) of the respondents had medium level of social participation, followed by (30%) of them with high level and (25%) of them with low level of social participation.

Table 6. Distribution of respondents according to their Social Participation

S. No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (<7.08)	54	45
2	Medium (7.08 to 14.86)	30	25
3	High (> 14.86)	36	30
	Total	**120**	**100**

This trend was because of the respondents remained busy in their farming activities and less involved in social organizations. They were sparing much time for farming activities rather than social activities. Some of the farmers have high social participation due to village level institutions.

Hence, it is desirable to encourage farmers to become members in various social organizations and large scale participations of farmers in social activities through the development of voluntary organizations. The result was in confirmation with the results of Manoj (2008) and Nayak (2014).

7. Extent of Utilization of Different ICT tools Among Farming Community

An overview of Table no.7 makes it clear that (52.50%) of farmers had medium level of ICT utilization followed by high (40.00%) and rest (7.50%) had high level of ICT utilization.

Table 7 Distribution of respondents according to their Extent of ICTs use (n=120)

S. No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (< 9.95)	9	7.5
2	Medium (9.95-25.93)	63	52.5
3	High (> 25.93)	48	40
	Total	**120**	**100**

The reason was lack of awareness of existence of ICT tools and their use; reliability on informal sources like neighbours, friends, relatives, progressive farmers, Adarsha Rythu and input dealers for information on agriculture and non-agriculture matters rather than formal sources of information and mass media and lack of farmers interest in using the ICT tools. The result was in accordance with Kavitha (2015).

Conclusion

Majority of the farmers belonged to medium level of extent of use of ICTs and had a moderately favourable attitude towards ICTs use. Due the lack of credibility in the information provided by the ICT tools, the farmers are not adopting the recommendations given by them. So, the extension agents should make efforts to enhance the credibility of the ICTs by providing adequate, timely and useful information and impart skill in using ICT tools.

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