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A STUDY ON ASSESSING THE ATTITUDE OF ATMA AND KVK PERSONNEL TOWARDS E-EXTENSION

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ABSTRACT

*In India, the public extension system is the major actor involved in disseminating information to farm families. Institutions like Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK), have their roots in every corner of the country and are playing a major role in disseminating the cutting-edge technologies to rural families. e-Extension is an internet-based learning environment delivering scientific information on a 24*7*365 basis. For effective dissemination of ICT enabled extension services to the farmers, it is the need of the hour to know the attitude of personnel towards e-extension. The present study was undertaken nine districts located in the jurisdiction of Anand Agricultural University. A total of 199 personnel of ATMA and KVK of central Gujarat in which 155 ATMA personnel and 44 KVK personnel. Majority of ATMA personnel had a neutral to favourable attitude towards e-extension where as in KVK personnel half (50.00 per cent) of the respondents had a favourable attitude towards e-extension.*

***Keywords**: ATMA, attitude, extension personnel, e-extension, KVK*

INTRODUCTION

The Indian agriculture has shown a tremendous and decreasing trend of growth rate in a national perspective. The reasons being not that there are dearths of researches but lack of knowledge among the farming community about the advanced and latest technologies. The main role to bring this change bestows of the extension personnel, who are mainly embodied with the task and responsibility of transfer of technology, change in knowledge, attitude and belief and effective diffusion and adoption of improved technologies (Chavai *et al.,* 2017).

The earlier role of extension studies was a traditional approach emphasizing on face-to-face, personnel contact method of information and technology dissemination. Since information is an indispensable resource wherein information at right time at right place to right person is sine-qua-non for effective and efficient farming decision by a farmer, there is always a felt need to use the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). It has been elucidated from the past researches and literature that favourable attitude towards the use of information and communication technologies plays a remarkable role in the rejection or adoption of an innovation or an innovative idea. The success or failure of any programme or an innovation greatly depends on the attitude of the respondents towards that particular programme or innovation.

In India, the public extension system is the major actor involved in disseminating information to farm families. Institutions like Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK), have their roots in every corner of the country and are playing a major role in disseminating the cutting-edge technologies to rural families.Therefore, the need to study the attitude of extension functionaries towards e-extension has been felt. Henceforth, the present paper is an overview to study the attitude of of ATMA and KVK personnel towards the e-extension.

OBJECTIVE

(1) To study the attitude towards the e-extension of of ATMA and KVK personnel in central Gujarat

(2) To study the relationship between profile of ATMA and KVK personnel and their attitude towards e-extension

METHODOLOGY

Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The present study was undertaken in the jurisdiction of AAU. There are nine districts located in the jurisdiction of AAU, namely Ahmedabad, Anand, Botad, Chhotaudepur, Dahod, Kheda, Mahisagar, Panchamahals and Vadodara. From all nine districts of central Gujarat, 155 ATMA personnel and 44 KVK personnel were selected as respondents. Thus, a

total of 199 personnel of ATMA and KVK of central Gujarat were selected for the present study.

Attitude refers to the degree of the negative or positive effect associated with some psychological object (Thurstone *et. al* 1928). For assessing the attitude of extension functionaries, standardized scale developed by Yeragorla *et. al* (2021) was used. The attitude scale was administered to the 199 respondents of the study. They were asked to express their reaction in terms of their agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting one of five response categories. The responses were collected in five-point continuums and scoring techniques were used as mentioned in step 5. The total attitude score for each respondent was obtained by adding all the scores of their responses to all the statements. The maximum score obtained by the respondents was 60 and the minimum was 12. Thereafter the percentage score of each individual was calculated and the respondents were classified into five categories viz. strongly favourable (above 80.00 per cent), favourable (60.01 to 80.00 per cent), neutral (40.01 to 60.00 per cent), unfavourable (20.01 to 40.00 per cent) and strongly unfavourable (up to 20.00 per cent) attitude towards e-extension. For collection of information, personal contact method of data collection was used and data were compiled, tabulated and analyzed to draw valid conclusion. Frequency, percentage, arbitrary method andcoefficient of correlation were used as statistical tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Attitude towards e-extension

Attitude refers to the degree of the negative or positive effect associated with some psychological object. In the present study, the attitude has been conceptualized as positive or negative feelings of ATMA and KVK personnel towards e-extension. To measure this, the researcher developed and standardized attitude scale adopting appropriate statistical procedures. Recent studies in behavioural science and neuroscience reveal scientific proof and evidence of the power of a positive mental attitude.

The data in Table 1 reveals that nearly one-third (32.90 per cent) of ATMA personnel had a neutral attitude towards e-extension while 25.16, 16.77, 15.48 and 9.68 per cent had a favourable, unfavourable, strongly favourable and strongly unfavourable attitude towards e-extension, respectively. Thus, it can be concluded that slightly more than half (58.06 per cent) of ATMA personnel had a neutral to favourable attitude towards e-extension. The majority of the personnel were either about to accept e-extension in their everyday job activities. This might be due to the recognition and understanding amongst the personnel about the tremendous usefulness of ICT tools and their application to make agricultural extension and research smoother and more successful.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their attitude towards e-extension (n=199)

Sr. No.	Categories	ATMA (n=155)		KVK (n=44)		z value
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
1	Strongly unfavourable (Up to 20.00 per cent)	15	09.68	00	00.00	5.49**
2	Unfavourable (20.01-40.00 per cent)	26	16.78	00	00.00	
3	Neutral (40.01-60.00 per cent)	51	32.90	10	22.73	
4	Favourable (60.01-80.00 per cent)	39	25.16	22	50.00	
5	Strongly favourable (Above 80.00 per cent)	24	15.48	12	27.27	

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability

It was further observed in the case of KVK personnel that half (50.00 per cent) of the respondents had a favourable attitude towards e-extension while 27.27 and 22.73 per cent had strongly positive and neutral attitude towards e-extension, respectively. Whereas no respondent had exhibited unfavourable and strongly unfavourable attitude towards

e-extension. Hence, it can be concluded that the more per cent (77.27 per cent) of KVK personnel had a positive to strongly favourable attitude towards e-extension. The probable reason of the above findings might be that enough exposure, ICT facilities and infrastructure are provided to the personnel of KVKs.

The results from Table 1, the 'z' calculated value (5.49) show a significant difference in attitude towards e-extension between ATMA and KVK personnel. This might be because of less availability and low exposure of various e-extension tools to ATMA personnel compared to KVK personnel. The findings are in line with the results of Dishant (2017) and Kothari (2019).

Table 2 : Relationship between the profile of ATMA and KVK personnel and their attitude towards e-extension

(n=199)

Sr. No.	Independent Variables	ATMA (n=155) (' r 'value)	KVK (n=44) (' r 'value)
X_1	Age	-0.211*	-0.311*
X_2	Gender	0.020	0.165
X_3	Academic qualification	0.189*	0.243
X_4	Medium of education	0.140	0.133
X_5	Work experience	-0.205*	-0.386*
X_6	Trainings received on ICTs	0.205*	0.764**
X_7	Annual income	-0.178*	0.253
X_8	Possession of ICT tools	0.389**	0.725**
X_9	Nativity	0.066	0.132
X_{10}	Inter-personal communication	0.169*	0.656**
X_{11}	Source of information about ICTs	0.111	0.145
X_{12}	Mass media liveliness	0.172*	0.325*
X_{13}	Professional zeal	0.072	0.357*
X_{14}	Innovativeness	0.165*	0.300*
X_{15}	Extension service orientation	0.574**	0.325
X_{16}	Job satisfaction	0.044	0.286
X_{17}	Organizational climate	0.035	0.273
X_{18}	Decision-making ability	0.029	0.174
X_{19}	Information management orientation	0.690**	0.656**
X_{20}	Perception towards professional development	0.188*	0.381*

*Significant at 0.05 level of probability ** Significant at 0.01 level of probability

Profile of ATMA personnel and their attitude towards e-Extension: Variables like academic qualification, trainings received on ICTs, interpersonal communication, mass media liveliness, innovativeness, and perception towards professional development had positive and significant association; age, work experience and annual income had a negative and significant association between the profile of ATMA personnel and their attitude towards e-extension at 5 per cent level of probability. Meanwhile, possession of ICT tools, extension service orientation, and information management orientation had positive and significant association with the profile of ATMA personnel and attitude towards e-extension at a one per cent level of significance. Eventually, Medium of education**,** Nativity**,** Source of information about ICTs**,** Professional zeal**,** Job satisfaction**,** Organizational climate and Decision-making ability had a non-significant association with the profile of ATMA personnel and attitude towards e-extension.

Profile of KVK personnel and their attitude towards e-extension

Variables like mass media liveliness, professional zeal, innovativeness, extension service orientation, and perception towards professional development had positive and significant association; age and work experience had a

negative and significant association between the profile of KVK personnel and their attitude towards e-extension at 5 per cent level of probability. Meanwhile, trainings received on ICTs, possession of ICT tools, interpersonal communication, and information management orientation had a positive and significant association with their profile of KVK personnel and their attitude towards e-extension at a one per cent level of significance. Eventually, gender, academic qualification, medium of education, annual income, nativity, source of information about ICTs, job satisfaction, organizational climate and decision-making ability had a non-significant association with the profile of KVK personnel and their attitude towards e-extension. Similar findings are also reported by Joshi (2009), Prodhan and Afrad (2014) and Chandana (2017).

CONCLUSION

The findings indicated that majority of ATMA personnel had a neutral to favourable attitude towards e-extension where as in KVK personnel half of the respondents had a favourable attitude towards e-extension. Meanwhile, mass media liveliness, professional zeal, innovativeness, extension service orientation, perception towards professional development trainings received on ICTs, possession of ICT tools, interpersonal communication, and information management orientation had a positive and significant association with their profile of ATMA and KVK personnel. Therefore the management of the ATMA and KVK should arrange and conduct the necessary trainings for the extension personnel of the respective agricultural institutions for the effective utilization of e-extension. The recent and advanced ICT tools should made accessible and available to the extension personnel based on their requirement and should quip them with necessary skill to use and utilize the advanced e-extension tools for developing favourable attitude toward e-extension.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This is to declare that there is “No conflict of interest” among researcher.

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