

## ATTITUDE OF THE EMPLOYEES ABOUT ICTS APPARATUS FOR EXPLORING AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study was conducted in Navsari, Valsad, Surat, Tapi, Narmada, Bharuch and The Dang districts of South Gujarat. A random sample of total 200 employees who engaged in welfare activities for the farming community from well-established institutions and organizations were selected for present study. The data were collected by personal contact. Ex-post-facto research design was used. Majority (98.50 per cent) of the employees of NAU, NGO and line departments as well as private stakeholders possessed favorable to more favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus. The accessibility and utility pattern found to have positive and highly significantly correlated with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus. Whereas, the education, source of information, training received, mass media utilization, innovative proneness and scientific orientation had positive and significant correlation with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus.*

**Keywords:** attitude, employees, ICTs apparatus

### **INTRODUCTION**

Agricultural extension largely depends on information exchange among the farmers. Attitude of employees toward ICTs apparatus will be abundant to increase the use of ICT's apparatus in the area in order to explore agricultural information. Beyond the tools like radio, television and telephone, the well established apparatus in present scenario are exploring wide range of agricultural information through internet based mobile services, computer, video conferencing, e-mails, e-farm magazines, e-newspaper, e-journals, agricultural portals, subject oriented websites and social networking. ICTs apparatus are offering need based and demand driven information to farming communities. This infers that the ICT generate a lot of hopes to exploring updated information for the farming community to overcome the barriers of distance. The introduction of relevant ICTs apparatus for exploring the agricultural information could help to the farmer's to access market information, land resources and services, management of pest and diseases, rural development programmes and help in broadening the orientation of farmers in production activities. It is therefore assumed that the higher level of knowledge of ICT's apparatus, the higher would be its extent of exposure. In the present study, attitude is conceptualized as positive or negative feelings of the employees towards the ICTs apparatus for exploring agricultural information. In the transfer of technology work, attitude toward ICTs apparatus has played important role and speedup the potential of extension personnel to reach the farmers. Several literatures reported that the attitude of an

individual plays a significant role in the adoption or rejection of an innovation. The success or failure of any programme largely depends upon the attitude towards ICT apparatus used by the clients while the programme. Considering the extension agents and their services are a crucial one to agricultural and rural development then the attitude about use of various ICTs apparatus becomes important. This has prompted the researcher to study the attitude of the employees about ICTs apparatus for exploring agricultural information.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- (1) To measure the attitude of the employees towards ICTs apparatus for exploring agricultural information
- (2) To ascertain the relationship between the profile of employees and their attitude towards ICTs apparatus for exploring agricultural information

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study was conducted in Navsari, Valsad, Surat, Tapi, Narmada, Bharuch and The Dang districts of South Gujarat. The well-established organizations and institutions of South Gujarat, the employees engaged in these organizations and institutions as well as the private stakeholders who engaged in welfare activities for the farming community were identified. Thus, total 200 employees from Navsari Agricultural University, Line Departments, Non-Government Organizations and Private stakeholders were randomly selected for present study. The data were collected

by personal contact. Ex-post-facto research design was used. Attitude of employees about ICTs apparatus was measured by construction of scale by following the Equal Appearing Interval Scale technique. By following this techniques, 28 statements of the attitude were finalized. Out of the 28 selected statements, eleven statements were the indicators of the unfavorable attitude and seventeen statements were the indicators of favorable attitude. Against these 28 statements, there were three columns representing three points continuum of favorableness and unfavorableness to the statements. The three points on continuum were favorable, neutral and unfavorable with respective weights of 1, 2 and, 3 for the positive statements while 3, 2, and 1 for the negative statements. The respondents were asked to express their reaction in terms of their favorableness or unfavorableness with each statement by selecting one of three response categories. The total attitude score for each respondent was obtained by adding all the scores of their responses of all the

statements. By following the arbitrary method of calculation, the respondents were categorized into Less favourable, Favourable and More favourable attitude. The collected data were analyzed by using statistical tools viz; frequency, percentage and correlation coefficient ( $r$ ).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Attitude of the employees towards ICTs apparatus

Attitude was conceptualized as positive or negative feelings of employees towards the use of ICTs apparatus for exploring the agricultural information. The information in regards was collected from the respondents and grouped as; (i) less favourable attitude (up to 47 score), (ii) favorable attitude (48 to 65 score), and (iii) more favorable attitude (above 65 score). The data in this respect are presented in table 1.

(n=200)

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their attitude**

Sr.	Level of attitude (n=60)	NAU (n=40)	NGO (n=40)	Pvt. Stkh. (n=60)	Line dept. (n=200)	Total
1	Less favourable attitude	02 (3.33)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	01 (1.67)	03 (1.50)
2	Favourable attitude	09 (15.00)	09 (22.50)	11 (27.50)	24 (40.00)	53 (26.50)
3	More favorable attitude	49 (81.67)	31 (77.50)	29 (72.50)	35 (58.33)	144 (72.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage)

The data presented in table 1 reveals that majority (81.67 per cent) of the NAU respondents had more favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus followed by 15.00 and 3.33 per cent of them had favourable and less favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus respectively.

In context to NGO, majority (77.50 per cent) of the respondents had more favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus and 22.50 per cent of them had favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus. While none of them had less favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus.

In case of private stakeholders, majority (72.50 per cent) of the respondents had more favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus and 27.50 per cent of them had favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus. While none of them had less favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus.

The majority (58.33 per cent) of line departments respondents had more favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus followed by 40.00 and 1.67 per cent of them had favourable and less favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus respectively.

Overall, majority (72.00 per cent) of the respondents had more favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus followed by 26.50 and 1.50 per cent of them had favourable and less favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus respectively.

Thus, the above results shows that majority of the respondents (98.50 per cent) possessed favorable to more favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus. This might be due to that the employees perceived the spectrum of advantages of ICTs apparatus in job along with its role in exploring agricultural information for performing their activities.

The finding is in partially concurrence with finding reported by Nagalakshmi and Swamy (2011), Raja Shekar and Sandhya (2011), Sharma *et al.* (2012), Baig (2015) and

Sangeetha *et al.* (2015), Asari *et al.* (2021) and Yamini *et al.* (2024).

**Relationship between the profile of employees and attitude towards ICTs apparatus**

The association of employees profile *viz.*, age, education, gender, landholding, service experience, annual income, source of information, training received, mass media utilization, social participation, innovative proneness, scientific orientation, accessibility and utility pattern with attitude of employees toward ICTs apparatus for exploring agricultural information were worked out with the help of coefficient of correlation and findings are presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Relationship between the profile of employees and attitude towards ICTs apparatus (n=200)**

Sr. No.	Characteristics	Coefficient of correlation (r)
X <sub>1</sub>	Age	-0.142*
X <sub>2</sub>	Education	0.175*
X <sub>3</sub>	Gender	-0.014 <sup>NS</sup>
X <sub>4</sub>	Landholding	-0.114 <sup>NS</sup>
X <sub>5</sub>	Service experience	-0.153*
X <sub>6</sub>	Annual income	-0.128 <sup>NS</sup>
X <sub>7</sub>	Source of information	0.144*
X <sub>8</sub>	Training received	0.162*
X <sub>9</sub>	Mass media utilization	0.180*
X <sub>10</sub>	Social participation	0.024 <sup>NS</sup>
X <sub>11</sub>	Innovative Proneness	0.168*
X <sub>12</sub>	Scientific orientation	0.165*
X <sub>13</sub>	Accessibility	0.249**
X <sub>14</sub>	Utility pattern (Overall)	0.295**

(\* Significant at 0.05 level, \*\* Significant at 0.01 level, NS Non significant)

The data depicted in table 2 indicates that the accessibility (0.249\*\*) and utility pattern (0.295\*\*) found to have positive and highly significant correlation with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus.

However, the education (0.175\*), source of information (0.144\*), training received (0.162\*), mass media utilization (0.180\*), innovative proneness (0.168\*) and scientific orientation (0.165\*) had positive and significant correlation with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus.

Whereas, the age (-0.142\*) and service experience (-0.153\*) possessed negative but significant correlation with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus.

Further, the social participation (0.024) was found to be positive and non-significantly associated with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus while gender (-0.014), landholding (-0.114) and annual income (-0.128) shown negatively non-significantly association with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus.

This finding is in the conformity with findings of Hassan *et al.* (2011), Hashemi *et al.* (2014), Baig (2015), Raksha and Shaik (2015), Bhuva *et al.* (2021); Das *et al.* (2023); Anusha *et al.* (2023); Yeragorla *et al.* (2023); Yamini *et al.* (2024) and Shukla *et al.* (2024).

**CONCLUSION**

On the basis of findings it can be concluded that majority of the employees of NAU, NGO and line departments as well as private stakeholders possessed favorable to more favourable attitude towards ICTs apparatus. The accessibility and utility pattern found to have positive and highly significantly correlated with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus. Whereas, the education, source of information, training received, mass media utilization, innovative proneness and scientific orientation had positive and significant correlation with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus while age and service experience possessed negative but significant correlation with the attitude of employees towards ICTs apparatus.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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