

Application of Information and Communication Technology by Agricultural Advisory Consultants in Iran

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Abstract: *This is a fact that access to information is the main factor for development in any occupation. Information and communication technology were playing important and vital role in agricultural production and marketing. The major purpose of this paper was study the application of information and communication technology by agricultural advisors consultants in Iran. The population of this study consisted of Personnel that were working in the consultants advisory services networks in west Azerbaijan province in Iran (N=1631). Questionnaire reliability was estimated by calculating Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.91. Finding shows that the application of ICT by Agricultural Advisory consultants was in a good level. Also results show that 92.4 percent of Agricultural Advisory consultants have computer and the average age of respondents' access to the internet was 8.23 and 95 percent of them having an Email. Also agricultural consultants were point that they could use ICT for access to new information. By using multivariate regression analysis, independent variables could explain 68 percent of variance in application of ICT by agricultural consultants.*

Keywords: *Agricultural Advisory Consultants, Information and Communication Technology, application, Agriculture, Iran.*

1. Introduction

Computer-based Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays an important role for any organization ([Juergen Kai-Uwe](#), 2005). During last decade we could see that progress in ICT affected all spheres of our life. Due to progress in technologies, we could be able to use computers with huge storage capacities with affordable cost. Also, database can be used to store and retrieve large amount of information that can be coupled with Internet technology to deliver information for our needs (Phougat, 2006; Sharma, 2003).

Access and use of information plays a crucial role in any activity (Rasouliazar *et al.*, 2011). The Information Technology could use into many different aspects of our life, especially in agricultural sector (Curtin, 2003). For examples web allows information to be shared across the world. Web sites give farmers to access and use information on anything related to agriculture, including crops, animal husbandry, buying and selling equipment, livestock and different methods of farming.

Agriculture plays a unique role in food safety. Also Information Technology provides new opportunities to improve the utilization and performance of agricultural system such as farm level, farm management, deliver of new methods for cultivation, exchanging information among farmers, researchers and extension educator and suppliers. Then we must improve farmer's ability to use information technology through various education programs responsive to the information age of the 21st century (Rasouliazar, 2011).

In most studies, researchers indicated that there are positive attitudes about application of ICT and their results indicated that the users used ICT in their activities (Yaghobi, 2004; Karimi *et al.*, 2007; Rasouliazar *et al.*, 2006; Movahedmohamadi, 2002; Effatnejad, 2002; Alammr, 2004; Rasouliazar and Sadighi, 2008; Falaki *et al.*, 2007).

Heysung studies (2004) regarding factors that affected the adoption of ICT among educators, showed that using of these technologies has positive effect on their educational performance. Karimi *et al* (2007) stated that

