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A study on the utilization pattern of information technology among dairy farmers of Varanasi (U.P.)

Sandeep Yadav and Anuj Tiwari

Abstract
The dairy business generates jobs and extra income for families, particularly for small farmers, women who work on farms, and those without land ownership. For many, it also offers milk and other dairy products at a reasonable price that are also healthful. The current observation was carried out in two Mandals in the Varanasi district of the kingdom of Uttar Pradesh, where the maximum number of dairy animals were purposefully chosen. It was clear that 41.70%, 31.7%, and 26.7% of the respondents, respectively, used the ICT tools at high, optimal, and low levels. It was determined how the dairy farmers responded to the use of various ICT tools, including information kiosks, cell phones, video conferencing, the internet, Open Knowledge Network, multimedia CDs, teleconferencing, Wi-Fi conversations, FM radio, Telnet, film suggestions, expert systems, call centers, discussion businesses, and news corporations. The results showed that most dairy farmers used a low percentage of ICT equipment, with high and medium categories being used in conjunction with it.

Keywords: Dairy farmers, ICT tools, utilizations, technologies

Introduction
The dairy business generates jobs and extra income for families, particularly for small farmers, women who work on farms, and those without land ownership. For many, it also offers milk and other dairy products at a reasonable price that are also healthful. Dairy farming is therefore viewed by experts as a crucial means of fostering community development and enhancing people's lives. India produces 15% of the world's bulk milk, making it the world's largest producer even though it only has 20% of the world's cow population (Gandhi and Singh 2006). Over the years, the average yearly growth in our nation's milk output has been 4%. Even though India has made great progress toward being the world's greatest milk producer, the country still only accounts for a very small portion of the global milk production, despite having the most cows in the world (Kadian and Gupta).
Reaching millions of farmers with information is a huge task because of India's many agroclimatic zones and small, scattered, and fragmented holdings. The inability to reach all farmers, the inability to reach the needy farmers in the right form and at the right time, the fact that extension activities are costly and time-consuming, the fact that they degrade the quality of the messages, and the emphasis on the necessity of alternative mechanisms for information dissemination are just a few of the disadvantages of extension activities, despite their generally traditional nature. For communication to be effective, new and creative dissemination techniques were required.

Materials and Methods
A total of eight villages have been decided after four villages were chosen at random from each of the two decided-on mandals. 15 dairy farmers—who are operationally defined as those who own and raise dairy animals in addition to farm animals, such as buffaloes—were chosen at random from each of the chosen villages, for a sample size of 120 dairy farmers. Because the variables chosen have already gone away and there is no way to change them, the current study adopted an ex-post facto research strategy.

Utilization of ICT tools
With the help of dairy farmers, a schedule was created for assessing the ICT utilization sample.

By assigning weights of three, two, one, and zero to the responses "particularly often," "occasionally," "rarely," and "never," respectively, the frequency of usage of the acknowledged ICT equipment was measured.

Results and Discussion

Knowledge on ICT tools

Based on their familiarity with ICT technologies, the dairy producers were divided into three groups, which are shown below:

Table 1: Distribution of respondent according to their knowledge on ICT tools

S. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	30	25.00
2	Medium	59	49.20
3	High	31	25.80
	Total	120	100.00

Mean =17.08 S.D=5.21

About half (49.20%) of the respondents had medium knowledge followed by high level (25.80%) and low level (25.00%) of knowledge in ICT tool

Utilization pattern of ICT among dairy farmers

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according their utilization pattern of ICT

S. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Less	50	41.70
2	Optimum	32	26.70
3	High	38	31.70
	Total	120	100.00

Mean =15.98 S.D=9.

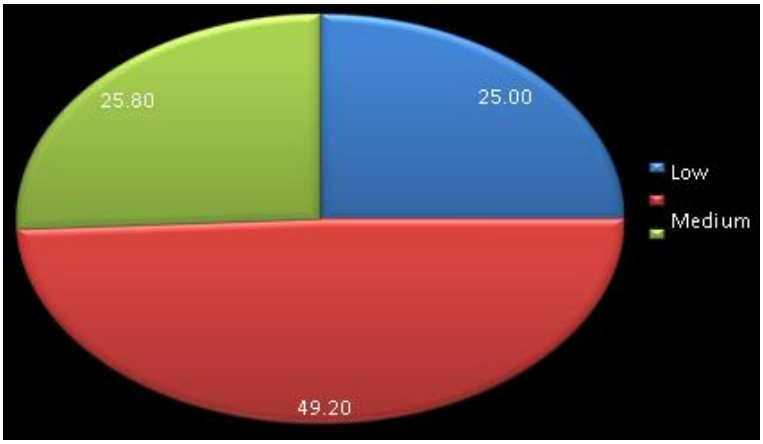

Fig 1: Distribution of respondents according to their knowledge on ICT

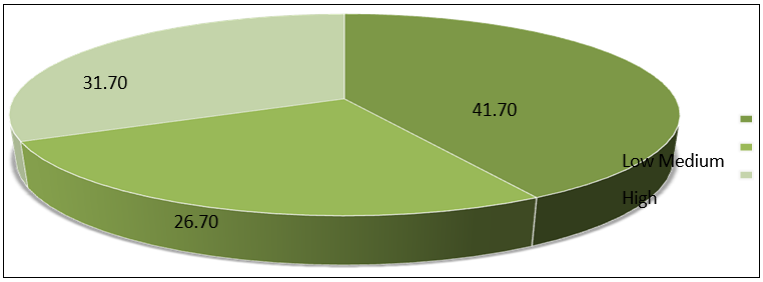

Fig 2: Distribution of respondents according to their ICT utilization patter

According to the data and table above, 41.70%, 31.7%, and 26.7% of the respondents, respectively, used ICT tools at a low, high, and optimal level.

Conclusion

The findings showed that, out of all dairy farmers, over half of the respondents fell into the medium range, which was indicated by high and low proficiency with ICT equipment, respectively. Every aspect of life was influenced by facts and verbal communication, and dairy farming is no different. In order to improve farming performance, the majority of dairy farmers in the area under observation have been using amazing ICT tools, such as TVs, the internet, multimedia CDs, cell phones, and many more. Furthermore, the majority of farmers who were using ICT equipment more frequently were middle-aged and well-educated. Information on ICT equipment was largely influenced by the farmers' training, earnings, fulfillment motivation, farming automation, and use of ICTs in daily dairy operations. These elements might have played a role in the medium level of ICT tool knowledge according to Kabir (2015) [1], Agwu *et al*. (2013) [12], Ajayi *et al*. (2013) [3], Nagalakshmi (2008) [4], and Raju *et al*. (2005)

[5], the majority of respondents had a medium degree of experience with ICT equipment, supporting the aforementioned effects.

In order to effectively provide professional statistics, the government, the general public, and various cooperatives must make use of the capabilities of ICT equipment. The specified facts can be provided via text SMS, voice SMS, or MMS using cellular telephone. Additionally, social media is becoming more popular for product promotion. Additionally, ICT must be used to strengthen the networking of dairy producers, specialists, and customers.

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