

The Availability and Use of Information Communication Technologies by Extension Agents in Delta Agricultural Development Project, Delta State Nigeria

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ABSTRACT The study evaluated the availability and use of information and communication technologies. The specific objectives were to identify the information communication technologies available to the extension agents; ascertain the frequency of use of information communication technologies; identify the constraints facing extension agents in the use of information communication technologies; identify the constraints facing extension agents in the use of information communication technologies; and examine the relationship in the frequency of use of interpersonal communication, print media, and information communication technologies. The sample was made up of 65 extension agents randomly selected from the three senatorial districts in the state. Questionnaire were used in data collection. Data were analysed by the use of percentage, mean and chi-square test. It was found that radio (56.92%), television (100%), mobile phone (98.46%), audio cassette player (78.46%), DVD/VCD (100%), video projector (76.92%), computer (73.85%) and Diskette (100.00%), were available to most of the extension agents. The extension agents do not often made use of information communication technologies in disseminating information to the farmers. They often made use of Diskette ($x = 2.51$). The constraints facing the extension agents in the use of information communication technologies were electricity ($x = 3.42$), inadequacy of ICTs ($x = 3.75$), lack of fund from government ($x = 2.98$), high cost of computer and other ICTS ($x = 2.94$), problem connectivity ($x = 2.65$), lack of supportive government policies and legislation on ICTs ($x = 3.63$), lack of on the job training for ICTs ($x = 3.92$), low level of education of farmers ($x = 3.37$), and transportation difficulties ($x = 3.86$). There was a significant relationship ($P < 0.05$) in the responses of the extension agents to the use of ICTs. The Federal and state governments as well as the world bank being the sole proprietors of the Delta Agricultural Development Project should provide and stimulate the use of information communication technologies.