

The Analysis of Factors Affecting Horticulturist Intention and Participation in Agricultural Training-extension Programs in Western Azerbaijan Province

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Extended Abstract

1. INTRODUCTION

Agricultural extension originated in the fields of social psychology, sociology, education and economics. It has traditionally drawn on areas like adult education and learning, communication, adoption and diffusion theory, systems theory, participatory research, learning styles and program logic. One of the main aims of agricultural extension is to effect behavior change in the target audience, whether they are, amongst others, farmers, land managers or consultants (Conte et al., 2010).

Literature suggested that quality planning was important to maintain and promote new audiences. Same suggestions for improving program planning include gathering valuable information about the target audiences and their needs, having the clientele participate in the planning process, understanding the program life cycle and knowing when to end a program, and properly evaluating the programs.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory of planned behavior (TPB) state that attitudes alone are not sufficient, to predict behavior, and social pressures and the perceived difficulty in carrying out the action are also important. It is derived from the expectancy-value model and the theory of reasoned action. TPB regards beliefs as the fundamental blocks of behavioral intentions. They represent the information an individual has about a specific behavior and the attributes of this behavior. Three different types of beliefs are distinguished: behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs and control beliefs, all of which are underlying, cognitive structures.

Factors in the TPB reflect some of the constructs already addressed in planning and evaluating Extension programs or activities, which it is appropriate for applying in such research that confront with human behavior. This research has been applied this theory for prediction of farmers behavior and intention.

3. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research was used in this study. The population included all the Horticulture farmers in Western Azerbaijan Province. About 231 Horticulture farmers were selected using Morgan Table. Simple random sampling method was used as a research sampling method. The instrument to collect data was a questionnaire that its content and face validities were established by a panel of experts and its reliability was calculated by Cronbach's-alpha coefficient for each part. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used for data analysis.

The hypotheses of the planned behavior model for prediction of farmers' intention in participation at horticultural extension programs are as follows:

H1. Behavioral beliefs are positively associated with their attitude toward behavior of horticulturists (ATB).

H2. Normative belief of horticulturists (NB) is positively associated with their subjective norm (SN).

H2. Control beliefs of horticulturists (CB) are positively associated with their perceived behavioral control (PBC).

H3. Attitude toward behavior of horticulturists (ATB) is positively associated with their intention (I) for participation in agricultural extension and training programs.

H4. Subjective norm of horticulturists (SN) is positively associated with their intention (I) for

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participation in agricultural extension and education programs.

H5. Perceived behavioral control of horticulturists (PBC) is positively associated with their intention (I) for participation in agricultural extension and training programs.

4. DISCUSSION

Results calculated with Logistic Regression and LISREL are used for the structural equation modeling. The estimations are based on the maximum likelihood method. The research results based on Logistic Regression revealed that Outcome expectancy (OE) and behavioral control of horticulturists (PBC) are factors that distinguished two groups of horticulture.

The structural equation model which has obtained through confirmatory factor analysis the model is structurally appropriate. Based on this model, the research hypotheses were tested through examining the structural model.

According to results, research hypotheses were confirmed except the fifth and sixth hypotheses.

Based on results, it can be concluded that Intention can be changed with change in Attitude, Subjective norms and belief norms of horticulture.

5- CONCLUSION

According to results, factors that distinguished two group of horticulture revealed and based on agricultural extension planers can solve psychological problems that farmers deal with and it is obstacle for participation in extension training programs. The present research results compared to other research in this context are in line and confirmed with our research. Based on results some recommendations are presented as well as:

1- Extension planners should pay enough attention to psychological parameters which affect farmer's participation in their programs.

2- According to results regarding to external factors such as financial aids, subsidies and etc., agricultural extension works should pay enough attention to internal and psychological parameters of farmers.

3-Agricultural extension programs should be trained in knowledge, skills and attitudes about thoughts and internal desires of farmers and they should be known that we never fined solving matter in outdoors because farmers thoughts is fundamental factors that can be changed your world.

Key words: Horticulture, Theory of planned Behavior, participation, Intention, Extension programs.

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