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Analysis of Extension and Education Contents in Agricultural Cooperatives in the Lorestan Province of Iran

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was analysis of contents of extension and education in agricultural cooperatives in the Lorestan province, Iran. The population of study consisted of 832 members of agricultural cooperative in Lorestan province, Iran in which 260 people were selected as a sample size, using Krejcie and Morgan table. The results indicate that more than 66.92 percent of the agricultural cooperative members had Diploma and lower level education, while only 4.23 percent of them educated in MSc level. In order to assess the attitude of farmers regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education, seven statements were designed and asked from members to show their opinions. In this study, for analyzing attitude of farmers, the Likert scale was used. The ratings on the Likert scale were from one to five ranks (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. No opinion, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree). Based on the results, 32.31 percent of farmers were strongly agreed to desirability contents of education in agricultural cooperatives. The results of research showed the correlation between level of education, idea of farmers about cooperative practices, social participation, income, crop yield and attitude of farmers regarding contents of education in agricultural cooperatives was significant. The result of regression analysis by stepwise method indicated level of education, idea of farmers about cooperative practices, social participation, income, crop yield may well explain for 62.8% changes ($R^2 = 0.628$) in attitude of farmers regarding contents of education in agricultural cooperatives.

Keywords: Attitude, Educational Contents, Agricultural Cooperatives, Lorestan Province.

1. Introduction

Extension and education practices played an effective role in improving the technical knowledge and efficiency of the members of cooperative (Saaiehmiri et al, 2008). Azkia and Firouzabadi (2008) reported that attitude to participation, cooperation and team work was significantly stronger among the users of cooperatives than the users of micro and peasantry units. After the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the planners of the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran who had experienced the weak performance of public and private sectors in the past concluded that a third way should be found for encouraging the participation of a greater part of the society. Therefore, the economical system of Iran was based on three sectors: public, private and cooperative. In the recent years, one objective of Iranian Five-Year Economical Development Program has always been to found production cooperatives in Iran (Mohammadi et al, 2012). Many studies have been conducted on the advantages and disadvantages of cooperatives. Sadi (2007) summarizes the advantages of cooperatives as increasing the technical knowledge, increasing the availability of inputs, facilitating the communication between farmers. Pezeshki-Raad and Kianimehr (2001) stated that the production cooperatives of Sabzevār province, had significant effect on technical knowledge of farmers. Mirakzadeh and Ghiasvand Ghiasy (2011) in their research about factors affecting the development of agricultural production cooperatives stated educational factors are most important factor this regards. Educational activities role in the development of agricultural cooperatives is very important. One of the success factors in agricultural cooperatives is conducting the appropriate extension and education programs. The content of these programs should be appropriate to the characteristics of the audience. Pilehvarnavidi (2009), Harandizadeh (2010), and Verzat and Bachle

(2006) believe that educational factors affect the development of entrepreneurship in cooperatives.

2. Materials and methods

The purpose of this research was analysis of attitude of farmers regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education in the Lorestan province, Iran. The population of study consisted of 832 members of agricultural cooperative in Lorestan province, Iran in which 260 people were selected as a sample size, using Krejcie and Morgan table. In order to gathering the information, the questionnaires' was prepared and validated by the judgment of the experts in agricultural extension. The reliability of the main scales of the questionnaires' was examined by Cronbach Alpha coefficients, which ranged from 0.714 to 0.948, indicating the tool of study is reliable. The method of research was a correlative-descriptive and research conducted in 18 September 2014 to 1 September 2015. The data were analyzed by SPSS version 20.0. Appropriate statistical procedures such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient were applied to analyze the data. In order to measure the attitude of farmers regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education, different appropriate scales were developed and included in the final format of the questionnaire. In order to assess the attitude of farmers regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education, seven statements were designed and asked from members to show their opinions. In this study, for analyzing attitude of farmers, the Likert scale was used. The ratings on the Likert scale were from one to five (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. No opinion, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree). Then a total score was calculated for different scales by summing up the item's assigned scores, which indicated overall score for attitude of farmers.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Personal Characteristics

Results showed that the mean of the agricultural cooperative members' age was about 47 years old with a standard deviation of 6.54 years old. Table 1 showed the education levels of the agricultural cooperative members. The results indicated that more than 66.92 percent of the agricultural cooperative members had Diploma and lower level education, while only 4.23 percent of them educated in MSc levels.

Table 1. Frequency of members based on personal characteristics.

Characteristics	*f*	%	Cumulative %
Age			
20-30	55	21.1	21.1
30-40	40	15.3	36.4
40-50	54	20.7	57.1
50-60	53	20.3	77.4
60-70	32	12.3	89.7
70-80	17	6.5	96.2
80-90	9	3.4	100
Education level			
Illiterate	47	18.08	18.08
Lower than Diploma	59	22.69	40.77
Diploma	88	33.85	74.62
BSc	55	21.15	95.77
MSc	11	4.23	100

3.2 Attitude of farmers regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education

In this study, for analyzing attitude of farmers, the Likert scale was used. The ratings on the Likert scale were from one to five (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. No opinion, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree). In final, computed score represented the overall level of attitude. The Table 2 revealed the answer of farmers to each item of attitude of farmers regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education and Table 3 identified the level of overall attitude regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education after computing 7 items of attitude. Based on the results, 32.31 percent of farmers had very high attitude to desirability contents of cooperatives agricultural education.

Table 2. Statements regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Sd	CV	Rank
1. Appropriateness of content provided with labor market needs.	66	59	45	50	40	2.77	0.33	0.18	1
2. Appropriateness of content with the interests of the learners.	41	36	48	61	74	3.35	0.48	0.26	2
3. The appropriateness of the content provided by the problems.	49	49	26	46	90	3.30	0.73	0.40	3
4. Relationship presentations with students experiences.	39	22	49	69	81	3.50	0.73	0.40	4
5. The appropriateness of content with a time of teaching	36	54	101	23	46	2.96	0.93	0.51	5
6. The appropriateness of educational content, with resources up to date, valid, and the needs of society.	28	59	89	75	9	2.92	1.03	0.56	6
7. To-date content provided in training.	81	54	91	19	15	2.36	1.09	0.59	7

1=very agree, 2=agree, 3= no idea, 4= disagree and 5= very disagree

Table 3. Level of overall attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education.

Attitude	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Very low	16	6.15	6.15
Low	31	11.92	18.08
Moderate	64	24.62	42.69
High	65	25.00	67.69
Very high	84	32.31	100.00
Total	260	100	

3.3 Correlation study:

Spearman correlation coefficients to test hypotheses was used, the results of this test are as follows (Table 4):

The results of table 4 showed the correlation (r=0.339) between level of education and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that with 99% of confidence, we can conclude that farmers with high level of education had high level of attitude. The results of table 4 showed the correlation (r=0.412) between idea of farmers about cooperative practices and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that with 99% of confidence, we can conclude that farmers with high level of idea of farmers about cooperative practices had high level of attitude. The results of table 4 showed the correlation (r=0.517) between level of social participation and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that with 99% of confidence, we can conclude that farmers with high level of social participation had high level of attitude.

The results of table 4 showed the correlation (r=0.548) between level of income and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that with 99% of confidence, we can conclude that farmers with high level of income had high level of attitude. The results of table 4 showed the correlation (r=0.481) between level of crop yield and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that with 99% of confidence, we can conclude that farmers with high level of crop yield had high level of attitude.

3.4 Regression analysis

Table 5 shows the result for regression analysis by stepwise method. Liner regression was used to predict changes in attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education by different variables. Level of education, idea of farmers about cooperative practices, social participation, income, crop yield may well explain for 63.8% changes (R^2 = 0.638) in attitude of farmers regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education.

$Y=1.\ 043+0.755x_1+0.534x_2+0.561x_3+0.649x_4+0.545x_5$

Table 4. Relationship between attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education and independent variables.

Independent variable	Dependent variable	r	p
Level of education	Attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education	0.339	0.000
Idea of farmers about cooperative practices		0.412	0.000
Social participation		0.517	0.000
Income		0.548	0.000
Crop yield		0.481	0.000
Age		0.031	0.067
Size of farm		0.054	0.081

Table 5. Multivariate regression analysis

Independent variable	B	Beta	T	Sig
Level of education	0.755	0.933	3.244	0.000
Idea of farmers about cooperative practices	0.534	0.835	3.232	0.000
Social participation	0.561	0.756	4.243	0.000
Income	0.649	0.923	4.034	0.000
Crop yield	0.545	0.253	3.632	0.000
Constant	1.043	----	5.823	0.000

R^2=0.628 F=8.232, Sig= 0.000

4. Conclusion and recommendations

Based on the results, 32.31 percent of farmers had very high attitude to desirability contents of cooperatives agricultural education. The results of research showed the correlation (r=0.339) between level of education and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. The findings of Jamshidi et al (2015), Ehsani et al (2015) and Dehhaghi et al (2014) supported this result. We can conclude that farmers with high level of education had high level of attitude desirability contents of cooperatives agricultural education. Also the results showed the correlation (r=0.412) between idea of farmers about cooperative practices and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. The result is in line with research Hashemi et al (2014) and Ehsani et al (2015). In addition the results showed the correlation (r=0.517) between level of social participation and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that with 99% of confidence, we can conclude that farmers with high level of social participation had high level of attitude. Ansari et al (2015) and John et al (2001) confirmed this result. Also, the results showed the correlation (r=0.548) between level of income and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that with 99% of confidence, we can conclude that farmers with high level of income had high level of attitude. John et al (2001) confirmed this result. The results of table 4 showed the correlation (r=0.481) between level of crop yield and level of attitude toward contents of cooperatives agricultural education at the level of 0.01 was significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that with 99% of confidence, we can conclude that farmers with high level of crop yield had high level of attitude. The result of regression analysis by stepwise method indicated level of education, idea of farmers about cooperative practices, social participation, income, crop yield may well explain for 62.8% changes (R^2 = 0.628) in attitude of farmers regarding contents of cooperatives agricultural education.

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تحلیل محتوای آموزش و ترویج در تعاونی‌های کشاورزی استان لرستان، ایران

الهه رشیدی پور

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چکیده

هدف از اجرای این تحقیق تحلیل محتوای ترویج و آموزش در تعاونی‌های کشاورزی استان لرستان بوده و جامعه آماری شامل ۸۳۲ نفر عضو تعاونی‌های کشاورزی در سطح استان می‌باشد. بر اساس جدول کرجسی و مورگان ۲۶۰ نفر به عنوان نمونه آماری انتخاب شد. نتایج نشان داد بیش از ۶۶/۹۲ درصد از اعضا دارای سطح تحصیلات دیپلم و پایین‌تر و فقط ۴/۲۳ درصد از افراد دارای تحصیلات کارشناسی ارشد بودند. به منظور ارزیابی دیدگاه اعضا در زمینه محتوای ترویج و آموزش در تعاونی‌های کشاورزی، از طیف لیکرت استفاده شد. بر اساس نتیجه حاصل ۳۲/۳۱ درصد از اعضا در حد قوی محتوای برنامه‌ها را در حد مطلوب ارزیابی نمودند. همچنین مشخص شد بین سطح تحصیلات، دیدگاه اعضا در زمینه فعالیت‌های تعاون‌گونه، مشارکت اجتماعی، درآمد، عملکرد محصول و دیدگاه اعضا در زمینه محتوای ترویج و آموزش در تعاونی‌های کشاورزی معنی‌دار بود. نتایج رگرسیون به روش گام‌به‌گام نشان داد که متغیرهای مذکور ۶۲/۸ درصد از تغییرات دیدگاه اعضا در زمینه محتوای ترویج و آموزش در تعاونی‌های کشاورزی را تبیین می‌کند.

کلمات کلیدی:
نگرش، محتوای آموزشی، تعاونی کشاورزی، استان لرستان