

CHARACTERISTICS INFLUENCING INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR (ISB) OF RESEARCH AND EXTENSION PERSONNEL IN THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

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The process of farm technology generation, development, dissemination and adoption requires a great deal of information input by all parties involved in this complex endeavor. This overall process, as taking place within the so called "agricultural information and knowledge system", involves researchers, extensionsists, farmers and other stakeholders such as farm supply dealers, creditors, agri-business companies among others. Therefore, although the research and extension personnel are being looked as the main elements of the system, information and knowledge of all partners is of equal importance as that generated through the scientific research.

In view of the above, ISB of research and extension personnel is an important variable that need to be investigated and understood along with all the factors affecting it for the purpose of enhancing and accelerating the process of information generation, dissemination, and utilisation. The characteristics of those personnel are some of the factors influencing their ISB and hence this study is undertaken with the following objectives.

Objective

1. To study the ISB of the research and extension personnel
2. To examine the relationship between

selected personal and socio-psychological characteristics of the research and extension personnel and their ISB; and

3. To find out the contribution of the personal and socio-psychological characteristics of the research and extension personnel towards their ISB

Methodology

The study was conducted in the Republic of Yemen. Six regions having both research and extension services were selected for the study. Out of the total 700 research and extension personnel in the country, 200 (about 30%) were selected as a sample for the study using the stratified random sampling method. However, 189 (27% of the total population) served as respondents for the study among whom 96 extensionists and 93 researchers as they have returned the filled-up questionnaire after sufficient time lapsed. The questionnaire method was employed for collecting data from the respondents. The questionnaire was duly pretested with a group of research and extension personnel in area other than the study area.

Findings & discussion

1. Information seeking behaviour

The results presented in table (1) indicate that majority of the extensionists

were found under the average category of ISB, followed by high (14%) and low (13%) categories. Less than half of the researchers (43%), however, were found under the high category of ISB, followed

by average (39%) and low (18 %) categories. For the pooled sample, majority (55.5%) were found under the average ISB category, followed by high (28.6%) and low (15.9%) categories.

Table 1 : Distribution of respondents according to their information seeking behavior ISB

Category	Extensionists N=96		Researchers N=93		All respondents N=189	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Low	13	13.5	17	18	30	15.9
Average	69	72	36	39	105	55.5
High	14	14.5	40	43	54	28.6
	Mean = 0.21		0.11			
	S.D. = 0.29		0.12			

2. Correlation of (ISB) and the Independent variables

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) was computed to find out the relationship between ISB and the independent variables for the whole sample. The data in table (2) reveals that ISB of respondents was positively and significantly associated with their education, job experience, income, job satisfaction, and role awareness at 1% level of probability. The results also shows that ISB had a positive and significant relationship with respondent's age,

satisfaction with resources & facilities, and attitude towards R-E Linkages at 5% level of probability.

The Correlation Coefficient (r) was also calculated for each subgroup separately. The results shown in table 2 indicate a positive and significant relationship between the ISB of the extensionists sub-group and their knowledge on communication methods and techniques, satisfaction with resources and facilities, and role awareness at 1% level of probability.

Table 2 : Association Between Information Seeking Behavior (ISB) and Independent variables

Sl. no.	Code	Variables	'r' values		
			Extensionists (N=96)	Researchers (N=93)	All (N= 189)
1	X ₁	Age	0.0768 NS	0.0616 NS	0.1528 *
2	X ₂	Family Size	0.0120 NS	0.0011 NS	0.0310 NS

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3	X ₃	Education	0.1135 NS	0.1574 NS	0.2340 **
4	X ₄	Job Experience	0.1660 NS	0.1302 NS	0.2117 **
5	X ₅	Income	-0.0131 NS	0.1453 NS	0.2990 **
6	X ₆	Social participation	-0.0244 NS	0.2753 **	0.0698 NS
7	X ₇	In-Service Training	0.0591 NS	-0.2474 *	-0.0845 NS
8	X ₈	Job Satisfaction	0.1992 NS	0.2980 **	0.2811 **
9	X ₉	Achievement Motivation	0.0876 NS	0.0955 NS	0.1126 NS
10	X ₁₀	Attitude towards Job	0.2198 *	0.0777 NS	-0.0452 NS
11	X ₁₁	Perception on Research/Extension	0.1919 NS	0.0981 NS	0.1428 NS
12	X ₁₂	Knowledge on Communication Methods and Techniques	0.3168 **	0.1503 NS	0.1304 NS
13	X ₁₃	Satisfaction with Resources & Facilities	0.3212 **	0.0073 NS	0.1795 *
14	X ₁₄	Role Awareness	0.2712 **	0.5769 **	0.4832 **
15	X ₁₅	Attitude towards R-E linkages	-0.0195 NS	0.2121 *	0.1611 *

* Significant at 5% level ** Significant at 1% level NS: Not Significant

On the other hand, the extensionist's ISB has shown a significant and negative association with attitude towards their jobs. Income, social participation, and attitude towards R-E linkages showed a negative but insignificant relationship with ISB of the extensionists. Remaining variables such as age, job experience and education have not shown significant association with extensionist's ISB.

In the case of researcher-respondents as presented in table (2), there exists a

positive and significant association between ISB and their social participation, job satisfaction, and role awareness at 1% level of probability and with attitude towards R-E linkages at 5% level of probability. Moreover, researcher's ISB have manifested a significant but negative relationship with the in-service training they received. Other variables have not shown significant correlation with researcher's ISB.

Contribution of the Independent variables towards (ISB)

The data of ISB index was subjected to Multiple Regression Analysis (MLR) to find out the contribution of the 15 independent variables towards the respondent's ISB. The results are presented in table (3) for researcher, extensionists and all respondents, i.e. the pooled sample.

From the results in table (3), it is clear that only three variables have made a significant contribution towards the ISB of all respondents. These were job experience, and social participation, both at 5% level, and role awareness, at 1% level of probability. The same three variables have exerted their significant influence on the ISB of the researchers but all at 5% level. In the case of extensionists, however, perception on research, satisfaction with resources and facilities, and role

awareness, have significantly contributed towards their ISB again all at 5% level of probability.

It is apparent from table 3 that other variables showed either a positive or a negative, but, insignificant contribution towards the ISB of researchers, extensionists and pooled sample. Regarding the F values, in all instances, it showed a significant R2 at 1% level of probability. Similar trend was recorded by Ambastha (1986), Jawahar (1993) and Veerayasamy et al (1992).

It can be concluded therefore, that when the 15 variables working simultaneously could explain only a variation of 32.11% of the ISB scores in the case of extensionists, 49.28% of the ISB scores of the researchers, and 35.96% of the ISB of the pooled sample.

Table 3 : Regression of Information Seeking Behavior (ISB) with Independent variables

Code	Variables	Extensionists (N=%)		Researchers (N=93)		All (N= 189)	
		RC	t value	RC	t value	RC	t value
X ₁	Au.c	-0.0123	0.0617NS	-0.1394	0.9619NS	-0.0947	0.7889NS
X ₂	Famrily Size	0.0269	0.20 19NS	-0.0299	0.3226NS	-0.0439	-0.5639NS
X ₃	Education	0.0518	0.2775NS	0.1207	0.8268NS	0.0660	0.6254NS
X ₄	Job Experience	0.2737	1.3142NS	0.1813	1.5855NS	0.2187	2.0863*
X ₅	Income	-0.0258	0.0561NS	-0.0578	0.3207NS	0.1589	1.4079NS
X ₆	Social Participation	-0.1134	1.0821NS	0.2246	2.3096*	0.0060	-0.0912NS
X ₇	In-Service Training	-0.1023	0.8438NS	-0.1857	2.3036*	-0.1529	2.2068*
X ₈	Job Satisfaction	-0.0343	0.2744NS	0.0588	0.5968NS	0.0790	1.0152NS

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X ₉	Achievement Motivation	0.0859	0.8726NS	0.0823	0.9084NS	0.0352	0.5330NS
X ₁₀	Attitude towards Job	0.1471	1.1125NS	0.0789	0.760 INS	0.1052	1.3325NS
X ₁₁	Perception on Research/Extension	0.2706	2.3462*	0.0095	0.1230NS	0.1154	1.7486NS
X ₁₂	Knowledge on Communication Methods and Techniques	0.1495	1.1747NS	0.0659	0.7453NS	0.0487	0.6446NS
X ₁₃	Satisfaction with Resources & Facilities	0.2886	2.8471*	-0.0909	0.9073NS	0.1275	1.7800NS
X ₁₄	Role Awareness	0.2945	2.6123*	0.4918	5.5209**	0.4235	5.9784**
X ₁₅	Attitude towards R-E linkages	-0.1925	1.6436NS	0.1301	1.3539NS	-0.0266	0.3506NS
R		.5667		.7020		.5997	
R ²		.3211		.4928		.3596	
F		2.5230**		4.9885**		6.4764**	

Significant at 5% level. Significant at 1% level NS : Not Significant

Conclusion

Results of the present study indicate that some characteristics of researchers like social participation, job satisfaction, role awareness, and attitude towards R-E linkages had shown a positive and significant relationship with their ISB. Similarly, the extensionist's attitude towards job, knowledge on communication methods and techniques, satisfaction with

resources & facilities and role awareness had manifested a positive and significant association with their ISB. Those characteristics, therefore, need to be given due attention by the concerned agencies in order to enhance the ISB of the research and extension personnel and thereby foster the R-E linkages as well as ultimately improve the research and extension programmes.

References

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