Video tutorials for agricultural practices – effective or useless?

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Abstract

With 2 billion people involved in agriculture and only a handful of extensionists to support them, it is critical to explore emerging technologies of knowledge transfer to overcome the limitations of conventional extension systems. Agriculture video tutorials have emerged as a key tool to share, assist and motivate farmers to adopt improved cultivation practices but, a systematic exploration of its efficacy compared with conventional approaches is lacking. This study investigates the potential impact of agricultural video tutorials for rural farmers by reviewing literature published within the domain of ICT for agriculture extension. It also presents considerations to increase the adoption of video tutorials. We used literature databases and search engines to collect 48 initial papers, out of which 18 were primarily selected. The analysis puts forward the finding that video tutorials are equally effective if not more, to drive behaviour change against conventional methods. Combination of motion pictures and audio can deliver information effectively overcoming the barriers of illiteracy amongst farmers. Various internal factors like income level, age, etc. and, external factors such as language and timing of screening are said to influence the impact. Video tutorials have higher reachability and replicability. They should not be used as a substitute but complemented with human mediation or other forms of ICT to boost influence and drive behaviour change among rural farmers. The study opens door for further exploration on integrating video tutorials as a conventional approach of extension and intrigues research possibilities tackling the adoption and penetration to small holding farmers in the global south.

Keywords: Agricultural extension, digital agriculture, ICT, video tutorials

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