

Introduction

- Plant health clinics, a demand-driven approach, were established worldwide to help farmers reduce losses from pests and diseases.
- Gender disparities persist in access to plant health advisory services. Female farmers face barriers rooted in cultural norms, limited control over productive resources, and entrenched gender roles.
- Smallholder tomato farmers face losses from pests (e.g., American bollworm, *Tuta absoluta*) and diseases (e.g., fusarium rot, bacterial soft rot).

➤ This study examined gender differences in smallholder tomato farmers' plant health advisory services seeking behaviour, based on gender-disaggregated data



Fig. 1: Farmers seeking technical advice at a plant health clinic

Materials and Methods

- A household survey of 385 smallholder tomato farmers (who produced tomatoes in the previous years) was conducted in February 2025.
- Farmers' behaviour was evaluated using the extended Theory of Planned Behaviour, with a motivation construct added to enhance its predictive power.
- Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Multigroup Analysis in SmartPLS4.

➤ Legend: AT – Attitude; SN – Subjective Norm; PBC – Perceived Behavioural Control; MT – Motivation; SUI – Service Use Intention; SUB – Service Use Behaviour

Results

- Male farmers' intentions → Service use behaviour

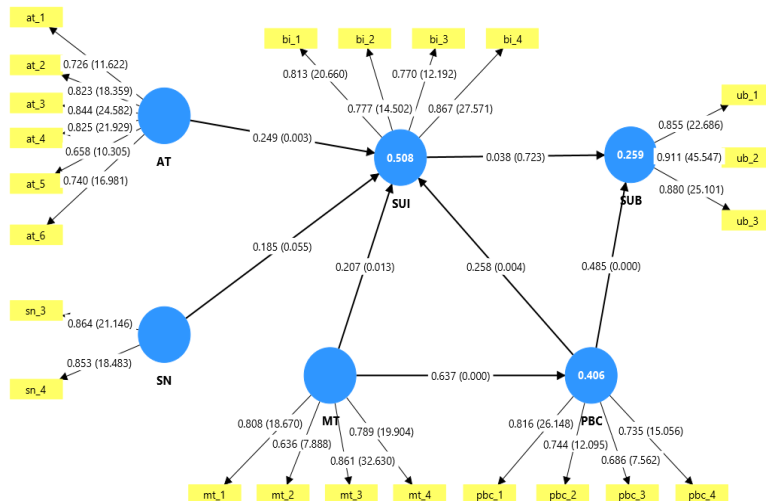


Fig. 2: Behavioural constructs shaping advisory service use among male farmers

- Female farmers' intentions ≠ Service use behaviour

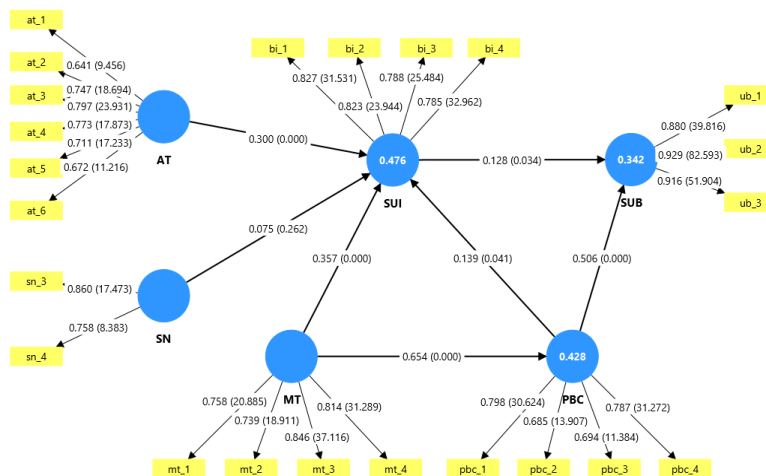


Fig. 3: Behavioural constructs shaping advisory service use among female farmers

Conclusions

- Gender gap: Male farmers acted on their intentions, unlike female farmers.
- Polices are to strengthen the presence of female extension staff and promote gender-sensitive training for plant health clinic personnel.

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