Farmers' Acceptance Behaviour in Using Mobile Phones for Agricultural Marketing in Iringa Region, Tanzania

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Abstract
Agriculture plays a unique role in reducing poverty and is an important engine for growth in developing countries, especially Tanzania. This is, in part, due to the large numbers of poor people engaged in it; the sector employs 80% of Tanzanians. For years, poor farmers have faced difficulties marketing their produce. They are often forced to sell their produce at very low prices because they have little, or no choice about whom they sell to or at what price. Farmers have been disconnected from consumers and policy-makers. Mobile phones can be used as great facilitators in agricultural marketing by providing connectivity between farmers and buyers. Unfortunately, prior studies indicated that mobile phones have been used merely for social communication and not for business purposes by many people living in rural areas. The study used Unified Theory of Usage and Acceptance of Technology (UTUAT) to identify determinants for the acceptance and use of mobile phone technology for agricultural marketing in Tanzania. This study was conducted in Iringa; Southern Highlands of Tanzania. It involved 250 farmer households. Performance Expectancy (β=.227), Social Influence (β=.295) and Facilitating Conditions (β=.318), were found too uniquely, significantly and positively influence the prediction of behaviour intention to accept and use a mobile phone for agricultural marketing. Influence of effort expectancy was significant when moderated by experience, meaning farmers with relative higher experience in using mobile phones are more sensitive to the effort needed to use technology than those with little experience.