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ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF MOBILE PHONES ON THE DELIVERY OF AGRICULTURAL MARKET INFORMATION IN MAGOLA SUB-COUNTY, TORORO DISTRICT.

BAB 3209: SPECIAL PROJECT

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A SPECIAL PROJECT REPORT TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRIBUSINESS AND EXTENSION TOWARDS THE PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF A BACHELORS OF AGRIBUSINESS OF BUSITEMA UNIVERSITY.

OCTOBER 2024

DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own work and has never been published at any university for any award before.

Signature ..... **Date** ....05/11/2024.....

EKISA FRED

BU/UP/2021/0200

APPROVAL

This work has been submitted to the department of Agribusiness and extension.

Signature ..... Date 11th/NOV/2024

DR. MAGUMBA DAVID (Ph.D.)

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this to my dad **Mr. Nicholas Owor Olando** and my mum **Mrs. Agnes Nyachwo Owor** for their support in all aspects during the process of this special project.

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UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information Communication Technology
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
FAS	Farm Advisory Services
ISP	Internet Service Providers
Freq	Frequency

ABSTRACT

This was aimed to assess the mobile phone influence on delivery of agricultural market information in Magola sub-county, Tororo district focusing on characteristics of mobile phone usage among small holder farmers, and factors influencing mobile phone usage in agricultural market information access. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire where 133 farmers were sampled. SPSS version 25 was used to analyse the objectives where objective one was analyzed using the T-tests and chi-square tests and objective two was analyzed using the binary probit model. The results of the study show that more males 51.1% while the females were 48.9%, majority of the farmers were married 63.3% and majority of the farmers attained primary education (45.9%). Majority of the farmers' main source of income was farming (82.7%), only 20.3% of the farmers could access agricultural credit, most farmers, 69.9% didn't belong to a farming group and majority of the farmers (51.1%) had a household size of 6-10 people. Under characteristics of mobile phone usage and small holder farmers, it was found out that the mean age of those who use mobile phones was 37.32, those with higher educational level used more of the mobile phones, and males also used the mobile phones than the females. Factors affecting mobile phone use in agricultural market information access included gender, educational level and farmers' experience of mobile phone use.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

According to the UBOS (2022), a large portion of Uganda's population resides in rural areas. Agriculture plays a significant role in the economy, contributing roughly 24% to the GDP and representing 35% of export earnings in the 2022/23 financial year (FAO). Despite the high availability of agricultural labour, Uganda's productivity levels remain lower than other countries worldwide (World Bank, 2020). The agricultural sector faces a substantial gap between current crop yields and their potential productivity (Awan, 2019). Research in Uganda has highlighted several factors contributing to this yield gap, including limited adoption of modern farming technologies (Ayim, 2020). This low adoption rate is often due to limited access to information on new agricultural technologies (UBOS, 2022). For many years, farmers in Uganda have relied on traditional extension services to receive agricultural information. However, the rapidly growing farmer population has made it difficult for the limited number of extension agents to meet demand, which has impacted the effectiveness of these services (Campenhout, 2021). In recent years, various government and non-governmental organizations have introduced mobile phone-based agricultural extension initiatives to support Uganda's farmers. Nevertheless, a common challenge in villages is farmers often lack access to market price information before traveling, due to inadequate channels of communication. Majority of the farmers still rely on traditional sources of information, such as extension services and radio broadcasts. They heavily depend on extension officers, and yet they are less in number. Under some circumstances, an entire sub-county is served by just one extension worker, making it difficult to reach all farmers.

Currently, Uganda's Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries, and Fisheries has a farmer-to-extension worker ratio of 1:33,000 (UBOS, 2017), which falls far short of the World Bank's recommended 1:500 ratio. This shortage not only stretches extension workers but also limits their ability to provide services, especially in adverse weather (Chepken, 2022). Mobile phones have the ability to enhance ease and speed up communication, as well as to create innovative methods for information sharing. Research has shown that using mobile phones in agriculture can boost productivity (Khan, 2019). Mobile phones facilitate two-way information delivery that overcomes limitations of distance, quantity, medium, and timing,

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