

Pastoralists adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT): an examination of its effects on their livelihoods in South Wajir, Kenya

Abstract:

Using Purposive sampling method in selecting typical pastoral settlements from the two sublocations - Abaqkoorey from Habasweine Division and Dadajbula of Sabule Division of Wajir South District and data analysis based on descriptive statistics such as mean, mode, median, frequency distributions and percentages, the study was aimed at investigating the levels and benefits of pastoralists' adoption of Information and Communication Technology in Wajir South District, Kenya and levels of access to ICT and its contribution to food security. It further sought to explore the types and sources of information accessible to pastoralists in Wajir South as well as risks and benefits involved in using traditional and/or Modern information sources. The analysis did not exhibit any statistically significant variations across household characteristics in accessing modern sources. The pastoralists rely heavily on traditional sources as opposed to modern sources and there is a high level of traditional information sharing amongst the pastoralists, attributable to the high levels of illiteracy, lack of technical knowledge and awareness among adults and limited coverage of modern information sources. However, the analysis indeed indicates that cost, knowledge/education, proximity to ICT centers and availability of supportive infrastructure for modern ICT services determine the extent to which these facilities are used and limited the use of different variety of ICT sources. Though the development of ICT use in Wajir South District is still in its infancy, it is evident that, irrespective of cost of modern ICT, the gains realized by adopting them among pastoralists have been immense and have had a far-reaching influence upon the livelihoods of the residents in terms of earnings improvement, knowledge transfer and participation in both rural and other development programs in the district as opposed to usage of traditional sources of information. Key Words: Information and Communication Technology, Dadaab, risks and benefits, modern and traditional information sources.