

Credibility Characteristics of the Program Implementers towards the Adoption of Organic Rice Farming Practices

Maryjoy S. Bacus

College of Agriculture, Central Mindanao University
Bukidnon, Philippines

Abstract

This study assessed the credibility characteristics of the program implementers towards the adoption of organic rice farming practices in the Province of Bukidnon, Philippines. The objectives of the study were: 1) determine the credibility characteristics of the program implementers in terms of their work attitude and innovativeness; 2) determine whether the farmer-adopters' level of adoption of organic rice farming practices significantly influenced the credibility characteristics of the program implementers. The respondents of the study were irrigated lowland organic rice farmers. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis were employed. The study claimed that the program implementers show an outstanding work attitude and innovativeness towards the implementation of program. This implies that farmer-adopters strongly believe in the capabilities of the program implementers towards the dissemination of the program. It also shows a positive view in motivating the farmers to become adopters of the program. It indicates a positive outlook toward the program. The study revealed that the program implementers show outstanding innovativeness towards the implementation of the program. The combined contribution of the implementers' credibility characteristics such as work attitude and innovativeness significantly influenced the adopters' level of adoption of organic rice farming practices (F-value = 183.898, $p = 0.000$). It implied that the program implementers were unselfish and prepared to spread a hand for the sake of the farmer-adopters with the end view of achieving success of the program. The program implementers must be more open to new ideas on technology improvement and farm productivity.

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CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Maryjoy S. Bacus

maryjoybacus1979@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Organic farming is one of various tactics to link the aims of sustainable agriculture. Growing populations and varying consumer behavior have been increasing demand for food commodities worldwide. According to I.S. Roidah (2015), the Philippine government has been promoting the adoption of organic agriculture, particularly for rice. Rice is one of the products that have bright projections to improve the earnings of farmers. Farmers were encouraged to further widen and expand their production and double their harvest and get high sales to meet their needs. However, during the actual harvest, the produce is abundant but the price drops, the expected production results are far from the estimates. The buyers are very low, production is minimal, costs for production activities are high.

Intensified agricultural production and productivity is because of the efforts rendered in agricultural research and extension (Danso et al., 2018). Extension essential services should play a significant role in expanding access to intelligence, credit, inputs and markets for farmers and capitalists (Mossie and Belete, 2015). There is a need for experts who work together with them. Provide a two-way connection between research institutions and rural people. Cooperate with rural development organizations to provide services and to solve the problems of rural people in the most consistent way. As such, these duties and responsibilities are carried out by extension agents (Kaynakçı and Ismet, 2019).

The declining agricultural production and productivity can be attributed to unsuccessful and ineffective agricultural extension services, (Bategeka et al., 2013).

It is on the above premises that the researcher found interest to conduct the study on the credibility characteristics of the program implementers towards the adoption of organic rice farming practices in the Province of Bukidnon, Philippines. Hence, the researcher considers the importance of conducting this study to be part of proposing to the Local Chief Executives to strictly implement or improve the credibility characteristics of the program implementers towards the adoption of organic rice farming practices in the Province of Bukidnon, Philippines for food security of the people.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and locale of the study

The data were grouped, categorized, and analyzed according to the objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics using mean was used in analyzing the credibility characteristics of the program implementers towards the adoption of organic rice farming practices. Regression analysis was used to analyze the influence of the credibility characteristics of the program implementers on the adopters' level of adoption of organic rice farming practices.

The study was conducted in the Selected Municipalities in the Province of Bukidnon, Philippines. The study areas were identified by Provincial Agriculture Office, Province of Bukidnon, Philippines. Respondents of the study were the two hundred five (205) irrigated lowland organic rice farmers in the Province of Bukidnon who adopted climate resilient organic rice farming practices. The list of irrigated lowland organic rice farmer-adopters was taken from the office of Provincial Agriculture Office handled by the provincial focal person on organic agriculture. Since organic rice farming practices are not widely implemented, complete enumeration was used to

determine the respondents. The farmer- adopters of the selected municipalities in the Province of Bukidnon, Philippines were completely enumerated to constitute the respondents. Irrigated lowland organic rice farmers in these areas were able to adopt the organic farming due to the support of the Local Government Units in its widespread campaign to sustainable organic agriculture.

Before the survey was conducted, a permit to conduct the study was secured from the concerned authority concerned to facilitate proper coordination. A questionnaire was administered to gather the needed data for the study. Guided interviews and surveys were conducted. The questionnaire was developed based on the study's objectives and was created suited to the study. The questionnaire was written in English first and then translated to the local dialect of the respondents during the interview. Some of the questions in the survey questionnaire were partially closed-ended to collect raw data from the farmer-adopters, while open-ended questions were used during the focus group discussion (FGD). Focus group discussions (FGD) were also conducted to generate data to capture the group's opinions on the subject matter and to ensure triangulation of information. Key Informant Interviews (KII) were also conducted. Moreover, to enhance the data collection process, enumerators were used to help the researcher. The accomplishment response will be collected and will be analyzed. The relevant data and information will be incorporated in the report. The facilitation of the survey among the respondents was properly handed to gather concrete and accurate data.

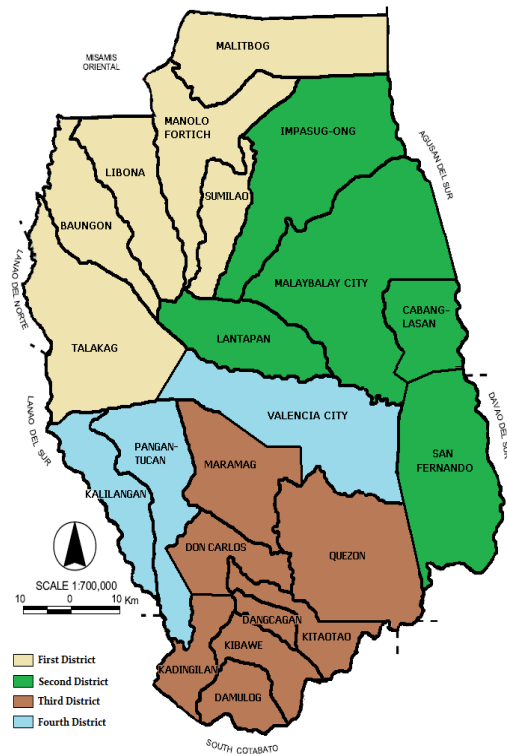


Figure 1. Map showing the locale of the study

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Credibility Characteristics of the Program Implementers in terms of their Work Attitude

The data in Table 1 reveals that the credibility characteristics of the program implementers' work attitudes show a mean score of 4.77 with a verbal description of outstanding on the contention that they "can easily communicate ideas". This denotes that the implementers can easily share remarkable ideas to farmer- adopters. Ideas which are very useful and will guide them in attaining their goals in adopting organic rice farming practices. This conforms to the study of Leeuwis and Van den Ben (2004) which states that communication should be able to carry new technique of direction in AES situational problem united with the farmer who communicate to an organization (AES), who exhibit changing degrees of activity-passivity, and who might or might not cooperate with others regarding their connection with the group.

The strength of the implementers on the contention that "has good influence and well respected" and "motivates farmers to become adopters", all had the mean rating of 4.68, with a verbal description of outstanding. This implies that farmer-adopters strongly trust the capabilities of the program implementers towards the dissemination of the ORFP. This conforms to the findings of McElwee (2008a) states that there is a need to understand better the farmers' perspective. The farmer has or can develop essential skills set such as decision making and problem-solving related to farm situation and management to promote sustainability in agriculture.

An overall mean score of 4.64 indicates that the program implementers show an outstanding work attitude. This implies that the program implementers' positive work attitude towards the implementation of organic rice farming practices contributes positive response to the farmer-adopters' to adopt organic rice farming practices. The result conforms to the findings of Sanderson (2007) which states outlooks can be observed as an overall evaluation of behavior and can be measured on a bipolar dimension. They are learned and can be changed. "The more promising a person's attitude towards the activity, the more they plan to execute that activity".

Table 1. Credibility characteristics of the program implementers in terms of their work attitude in the Province of Bukidnon

WORK ATTITUDE	MEAN	VERBAL DESCRIPTION
1. Has good influence and well respected.	4.68	Outstanding
2. Can easily communicate ideas.	4.77	Outstanding
3. Has established rapport with the farmer-adopters.	4.67	Outstanding
4. Has strong determination towards the program.	4.66	Outstanding

5. Motivates farmers to become adopters.	4.68	Outstanding
6. Sensitive to the needs of every individual.	4.51	Outstanding
7. Willingness to give time in attending meetings, seminars, field visits, field demonstrations.	4.61	Outstanding
8. Willingness to lend tools/ equipment and other resources to the farmer-adopters.	4.54	Outstanding

OVERALL WORK ATTITUDE	4.64	Outstanding
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Mean:

- 1.00 - 1.49 = Very Poor
- 1.50 - 2.49 = Poor
- 2.50 - 3.49 = Average
- 3.50 - 4.49 = Above Average
- 4.50 - 5.00 = Outstanding

Credibility Characteristics of the Program Implementers in terms of their Innovativeness

The data in Table 2 reveal that the credibility characteristics of the program implementers' innovativeness show a mean score of 4.79 with a verbal description of outstanding on the contention that they "tend to work with farmer-adopters productively and efficiently". This denotes that the implementers religiously devote themselves to their work. They work wholeheartedly to perform their job well for the farmer-adopters to be productive in their chosen field. This conforms to the study of Janseen (2000) which states that the suggestion and implementation of novel ideas require high-level communication skills for employees to effectively deliver their messages to mobilize support for innovative ideas.

The strength of the implementers on the contention that "always keep safe work site", with the mean rating of 4.74, with a verbal description of outstanding. This implies that the implementers always keep the safety of the farmer-adopters to avoid untoward incidents.

Table 2. Credibility characteristics of the program implementers in terms of their innovativeness in the Province of Bukidnon, Philippines

INNOVATIVENESS	MEAN	VERBAL DESCRIPTION
1. Action-oriented technology implementer.	4.57	Outstanding
2. Open to new ideas to improve the technology and farm productivity.	4.46	Above Average
3. Has confidence to perform necessary technology related expectations.	4.67	Outstanding
4. Initiates innovations in the farms and taps agribusiness opportunities for his product/services.	4.64	Outstanding
5. Involved in various research activities to gain more insights about the technology.	4.62	Outstanding
6. Tend to work with farmer adopters productively and efficiently.	4.79	Outstanding
7. Kept informed the farmer adopters on the necessary information about the technology.	4.66	Outstanding
8. Responded timely and effectively the needs of the farmers.	4.39	Above Average
9. Always keep safe work site.	4.74	Outstanding
10. Met program/project desired schedule.	4.66	Outstanding
OVERALL INNOVATIVENESS	4.62	Outstanding

Mean:

1.00 - 1.49 = Very Poor

1.50 - 2.49 = Poor

2.50 - 3.49 = Average

3.50 - 4.49 = Above Average

4.50 – 5.00 = Outstanding

With an overall mean score of 4.62, this indicates that the credibility characteristics of the program implementers towards the adoption of organic rice farming practices are outstanding. This implies

that the program implementers were innovative in the sense that they find ways and means to help the farmers. The result conforms with the findings of Unsworth & Parker (2003) which states that the change-oriented individual is very much open to the implementation of relevant ideas towards the adoption of an innovation. As such, novelties in organic agriculture can only be attained when they are in line with the anticipation of clients (Arbenz et al., 2015).

Regression Analysis on the Influence of the Credibility Characteristics of the Program Implementers on the Adopters' Level of Adoption of Organic Rice Farming Practices

As presented in Table 3, the combined contribution of the implementers' credibility characteristics such as work attitude and innovativeness significantly influenced the adopters' level of adoption of climate resilient organic rice farming practices (F-value = 183.898, $p = 0.000$). These independent variables are also the most significant predictors of the level of adoption. The better the work attitude of the implementers (t-value = 6.981, $p = 0.000$), the higher is the level of the technology adoption of the farmers particularly on the climate resilient organic rice farming practices. Likewise, the greater is the implementers' innovativeness, the higher is the farmers' level of technology adoption (t-value = 7.017, $p = 0.000$). This conforms to the findings of Sapbamrer and Thammachai (2021), farmers' decisions to use organic farming techniques can be influenced by things like expertise, dependability, and peer pressure.

The $R^2 = 0.642$ implies that 64.20% of the variation in the adoption of CRORFP are accounted for by the credibility characteristics of the program implementers particularly on their work attitude and innovativeness. The remaining 35.80% can be explained by other factors which are not included in Model 1. The results led to the rejection of the hypothesis which states that the farmer-adopters' level of adoption of CRORFP is not significantly influenced by the implementers' credibility characteristics in terms of their work attitude and innovativeness.

Table 3. Regression analysis on the influence of the credibility characteristics of the program implementers on the adopters' level of adoption of climate resilient organic rice farming practices in the Province of Bukidnon, Philippines

CREDIBILITY CHARACTERISTICS	DEPENDENT VARIABLE		
	Coefficient β	t-Value	p-Value
Model 1	Level of Adoption		
<i>Constant</i>	0.238	1.755	0.081
Work Attitude	0.280	6.981*	0.000
Innovativeness	0.279	7.017*	0.000

<i>Model Statistics</i>	<i>(R-Square = 0.642 , F-Value = 183.898* , p-Value = 0.000)</i>
* = significant at 5% level	

The $R^2 = 0.642$ implies that 64.20% of the variation in the adoption of organic rice farming practices are accounted for by the credibility characteristics of the program implementers particularly on their work attitude and innovativeness. The remaining 35.80% can be explained by other factors which are not included in Model 1. The results led to the rejection of the hypothesis which states that the farmer-adopters' level of adoption of organic rice farming practices is not significantly influenced by the implementers' credibility characteristics in terms of their work attitude and innovativeness. This result supported the findings of OECD (2016, 2013) which states that innovation is considered a sustainable resource, a resilient tool for rural development, the heart of value creation for small and medium enterprises, and a key strategy to improve productivity.

As such, Knowledge Intensive Services (KIS) are drivers for the transfer of knowledge (García-Quevedo et al., 2013). Thus, KIS is essential for knowledge sharing. It is a way of defining the communication rapport between providers and clients. Also, it has a crucial role in creating, disseminating new products, processes, and services (Mas-Verdú, 2007). Thus, findings found from the statement of Thedieck et al. (2013) also noted that creative workers possessing process-management abilities have a strong connection to and comprehension of products and technology, both within and beyond the organization.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results, the following conclusions were derived:

The credibility characteristics of the program implementers in terms of work attitude and innovativeness is outstanding. It implies that a person plans to execute an activity more when they have a more promising attitude toward it. The program implementers were creative in that they looked for methods to assist the farmers. The degree to which organic rice farming practices are adopted is positively influenced by the program implementers' exceptional credibility features.

The combined contribution of the implementers' credibility characteristics such as work attitude and innovativeness significantly influenced the adopters' level of adoption of organic rice farming practices.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author have no competing interests to declare.

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Author's Affiliation

Maryjoy S. Bacus

College of Agriculture, Central Mindanao University, Bukidnon, Philippines

Author's Biographical Sketch

Maryjoy S. Bacus is a faculty member of the Department of Agricultural Education and Extension for ten years from the College of Agriculture, Central Mindanao University. She finished her PhD in Extension Education at the University of Southern Mindanao last June 2019. She has been designated as the Department Chairperson, College TESDA Coordinator, and the Unit head of the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Documentation Unit of the University Extension Office. She is active in research and extension activity of the University. She is exposed to impact assessment studies as well as social science and extension activities.

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