

Major drives and constraints in adoption to traditional rice cultivation in dry zone of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Rice is the staple food of Sri Lankan and has contributed for the economic and social welfare of the population especially in the Dry Zone. An impressive trend in traditional rice cultivation has been identified at present in Sri Lanka due to changes in consumption patterns of health conscious consumers. Therefore, a study was conducted to recognize major drives and constraints in traditional rice cultivation in the Dry Zone with 100 traditional paddy growers and 100 non-traditional paddy growers in Anuradhapura district, which represent more than 50 % of Dry Zone of Sri Lanka. A questionnaire survey and focus group discussions were conducted to collect data and information. Regression analysis was performed to recognize the major drives and a simple constraint analysis was carried out to recognize major constraints in adoption of traditional rice cultivation in the study area. The regression analysis results revealed that, the awareness of medicinal and nutritional values of traditional rice (Odds Ratio(OR)=4.025), higher farm gate price (OR=1.704), prevailing non-communicable disease conditions among farm households (OR=2.356), presence of fragmented farming lands (OR=-4.361), prolong experience in rice production (OR=1.17), adoption for conservative agricultural practices especially organic farming (OR=1.317) and positive environmental concerns (OR=0.001) as significant major drives ($P \leq 0.05$) in adoption of traditional rice cultivation. Constraint analysis disclosed that lack of availability of assured market followed by difficulties in varietal verification for seed paddy, labour shortage due to labor migration, unavailability of manure and organic fertilizer, poor access to credit facilities, poor infrastructure in farming areas, less government intervention and lack of extension services as major constraints in adoption of traditional rice cultivation. The results conclude that though there are significant drives for adopting traditional rice cultivation in the Dry Zone, the constraints limit the adoption rate of the traditional rice cultivation. Hence, the study suggests the need of government intervention in addressing the constraints of the paddy farmers for raising the rate of adoption of traditional rice cultivation in the Dry Zone.

Keywords: *Adoption, Constraints, Drives, Dry zone, Traditional rice*

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