

Preliminary Analysis of Adoption of Sago Smallholders Satellite Estate Development (SSSED) Programme among Sago Cultivators in Mukah/Dalat Areas of Sarawak, Malaysia

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Abstract

Purpose: The main aims of our study are to examine the awareness and level of knowledge among sago cultivators concerning the Sago Smallholders Satellite Estate Development (SSSED) programme as well as their readiness and willingness to participate in the programme.

Design/methodology/approach: Framed based on the Diffusion of Innovation theory (Rogers, 1995), the study focuses on the first three stages of the Innovation-Decision Process model: Knowledge, Persuasion and Decision. Based on the still ongoing fieldwork, this paper reports some of the preliminary findings on adoption decisions made by the respondents. Data collected from 64 sago cultivators surveyed were analysed.

Findings: Initial findings of the study indicate that slightly more than half of the respondents claimed to be the participants in the SSSED program. However, surprisingly their levels of awareness of the program as well as readiness and willingness to participate in the program measured in various dimensions, were reported to be at the moderate level only. Hence, investigating the underlying reasons leading to such findings is warranted in the future.

Research limitations/implications: The study is confined to the examination of only the first three stages (i.e. knowledge, persuasion, decision) of the five-stage diffusion of innovation process.

Practical implications: The findings can be considered by the relevant authorities for the purpose of strategizing the dissemination of information with respect to the SSSED project.

Originality/value: This study tests the applicability of the diffusion of innovation theory in a real context involving smallholders of an agricultural development project.

Keywords: Adoption, Diffusion of Innovation, Innovation-Decision Process, SSSED Programme