

F-17: Adoption levels of innovations in coffee: a case study in the Central Province of Sri Lanka

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A substantial yield gap has been observed between the average national production and the potential yield even with optimal plant density. One possible reason for poor performance of coffee may be low adoption of technological innovations. The study was aimed at investigating the above issue. Data were collected from 2 main coffee growing districts, *Kandy* and *Nuwara Eliya* of the Central Province of Sri Lanka. Farmers were selected proportionately from the 2 districts (*Kandy* and *Nuwara Eliya*) randomly. Equal number of subsidy and non-subsidy farmers (total 140) were included in the study.

The 3 most important innovations of coffee: fertiliser application, coffee pruning and shade regulation were assessed by Association. Each innovation was itemised into 8 components. The researcher observed the number of items adopted by each farmer from the innovation packages. In determining percentage of adoption, the number of items from each innovation package adopted by farmers were observed and percentage calculated taking account of total number of items supposed to be adopted in a package. Total adoption was determined by assigning a score for each item of a package of innovation. A score of 24 was given for complete adoption of all the items of the 3 innovations. Degree of adoption of the 3 innovations were assessed. Associations between total adoption score and other variables namely, district, gender, education level, age, assistance scheme, land extent, cultivation age, source of advice, knowledge and yield were examined. Results showed that adoption of the innovations are poor. Non-adopters of the sample for fertiliser application, coffee pruning and shade regulation are 63.6%, 41.4% and 40.7%, respectively. More than three-fourths of farmers adopted less than half of the items from each innovation package. Therefore, poor yield levels of coffee can be attributed to low adoption of innovations.

From the variables studied, source of advice, yield and knowledge showed significant associations with total adoption score. High adopters are farmers who obtained advice from extension officers. High adopters obtained higher yield levels and the high adopters were more knowledgeable than low adopters.