

Editor's Note

This issue of the JPAD contains five research papers and two policy-related papers. Five of the seven submissions directly deal with issues pertaining to the agricultural sector, while two (one research paper and one policy paper) are more indirectly related. As it is in the study of development as a whole, it is true in CPA's study of the development of its "public," namely, the rural and agricultural sector, where there is a growing need to be aware that development is multinational and multidisciplinary in nature. This issue of JPAD offers a perspective based on this awareness.

The research paper by **Armand Christopher Rola** provides a comparative analysis of agricultural insurance in the Philippines and Japan, for both upland and lowland farmers. While this might be likened to comparing apples and oranges, the value of this paper lies in providing a benchmark by which the Philippines could guide its agricultural insurance system to become more effective. Based on interviews with farmers in both countries, this paper finds that Filipino farmer respondents do not have access to a standalone insurance scheme, unlike their Japanese counterparts. While this might be considered a good mechanism for diversification, the downside is the additional cost of maintaining many insurance sources that could have been used to build savings. This points to the importance of upgrading our agricultural cooperatives to a point where the costs of insurance for our farmers are reduced.

The research paper by **Racquel Garcia Agustin** reviews an important approach in community development: participatory rural appraisal (PRA). Through a survey of related literature found in the UPLB Journal subscription, the paper confirms the usefulness of PRA and identifies four factors (given the acronym TIIS) that contribute to PRA's successful implementation, and I think, remains relevant. First is transparency, where the objectives of the PRA are made clear at the outset to all stakeholders. Second is inclusivity, where all stakeholders are represented during the conduct of the PRA. Third is involvement, where the stakeholders are kept engaged even after the PRA throughout the implementation of the extension activity. Fourth is sustainability, where the stakeholders continue with the extension activity on their own.

The research paper by **Nelson Jose Vincent Querijero, Rhea Gumasing, Arlene Gutierrez, Ruth Anne Ruelos, and Charina Krissel Tingson** is one of the two submissions not directly related to the agricultural sector but looks at a relevant component that would be

vital in enhancing the productivity of this sector: science and technology. Through extensive surveys and interviews, the paper examines, from both sides, the procurement process of projects by various Research and Development Institutes, which are funded by government agencies close to our agricultural sector. The paper finds that despite a world-class rating from the World Bank, our procurement law's implementation remains problematic, requiring adjustments in the provisions of our procurement law and process to be more synchronized to the peculiarities of research and development, as well as the capacity building of procuring agencies and the suppliers.

The research paper by **Mochamad Sugiarto, Yusmi Nur Wakhidati, Siwi Gayatri, and John Erinorio Perez** studies goat farmers in Indonesia to confirm a relationship between the intellectual capital and profitability of these farmers. Intellectual capital is further divided into three categories of capital: human, which is related to experience and expertise in goat farming; relational, which is akin to social capital; and structural, which pertains to institutional norms or rules. As expected, this paper finds a positive association between the farmer's intellectual capital and profitability. Based on an extensive survey of goat farmers, it was found that human and relational capital have a significant correlation with profitability, but not in the case of structural capital. The recommendation, therefore, was to focus on capital building of human and relational capitals, especially in the case of the latter which was observed to be lower on the average than the former. The case contributes to the validation of the observation that social capital tends to be low in the rural sector.

The research paper by **Elmer Lorenzana** studies the factors contributing to the utilization of credit for rice farmers who are members of cooperatives in Albay province. Using a cross-sectional field survey of a large random sample of rice farmers, the study found at least two novel factors that affected the probability of farmers using borrowed capital purely for the production of rice. One of these factors is related to the categorization of borrowers in terms of being output maximizers or cost minimizers. It is to be noted that both types of borrowers were almost evenly represented in the sample of farmers. The paper finds that output maximizers tend to increase the probability of borrowed capital for rice production. Another novel factor that also tends to increase the rice-producing probability is being male. The novelty of this lies in its flying in the face of many studies that have found women to be often better in managing borrowings. The paper attributes this finding possibly to a case of women being overburdened with household responsibilities. At any rate, this paper points out that profiling farmer borrowers should be done on a case-to-case basis.

The policy paper by **Meljun Banogon**, **Lielanie Barrion**, **Imelda Olvida**, and **Ma. Theresa Sawit** points to the problem of low adoption of new agricultural technologies, in this case, a new variety of government-certified rice seeds. On initial investigation, this problem is traced to the poor performance experienced by farmers with government-certified seeds. On further consultation with a group of experts in Sariaya, Quezon, consisting of both farmers and extension workers, it was found that this problem may be resolved through the deployment of more agricultural extension workers. In consultation with the expert group, a system of identifying and evaluating policy alternatives, which was based on a weighted set of criteria consisting of social acceptability, administrative feasibility, and technical feasibility, was conducted. This led to the policy choice of increasing the number of LGU-based extension workers. Given the pervasiveness of low adoption of new agricultural technologies despite the abundance of possible interventions, it would be interesting to see how this policy choice works out prior to replication in other areas.

Finally, the policy review paper by **Wan-Ling Liao** and **Armand Christopher Rola** provides a look at the recent sentiments in Taiwan based on interviews with a group of Taiwanese of various ages and backgrounds, amidst the growing geopolitical tensions in the region brought about by the emergence of hawkish leadership in Mainland China, Taiwan, and the US. I wish to emphasize that this is a policy review, and not simply a policy paper, as it focuses on diplomatic choices of the Taiwanese government towards peace in the region. This paper finds a consensus on maintaining diplomatic relations with Mainland China and other countries and a tendency towards finding other means of maintaining economic and cultural relations with sovereign nations while navigating around the sensitive political issue with Mainland China. Taiwan's sterling performance in handling COVID-19, despite not being an official member of WHO, hints at the value, on both national and subnational levels, of this tendency for Taiwan to find means of maintaining economic and cultural relations. Interestingly, this tendency resonates with that of a recent study by CPAf on ASEAN+3 (China, Japan, South Korea), which recommends subnational units go beyond national borders and link up, as a way to push forward the regional agenda for peace and prosperity.



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