

Impact of Individual Characteristics of AIs on Knowledge Transfer Process

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Agriculture extension services are designed to enable the diffusion of knowledge about farm technology. Agriculture Instructors (AIs) act as bridges between researchers and farmers implying that their capacity to absorb and diffuse knowledge is crucial for the effectiveness of the entire knowledge dissemination process. Despite the vast amount of research done on organizational dimensions on knowledge transfer, few studies address individual dimension in general and the role of knowledge transfer in particular. In this study, we examine the extent to which individuals' capability to identify, assimilate, utilize and transfer new knowledge from external environment is shaped by their motivation, ability and opportunities drawing on MAO (Motivation, Ability and Opportunity) framework. To explore this, 72 AIs in the Southern province of Sri Lanka were surveyed using a semi-structured questionnaire. Multiple regression model was used for our analysis and first we tested basic four assumptions of regression analysis. This study found a positive and statistical insignificant effect of individual Ability on knowledge transfer process ($\beta=0.183, P > 0.05$). Further, we found that individual motivation has a negative, statistically insignificant impact on knowledge transfer ($\beta=-0.008, P > 0.05$). Moreover, Opportunities show positive and significant impact on transfer process ($\beta=0.039, P < 0.05$). Therefore, study has concluded that individual ability and opportunities positively impacted on knowledge transfer process of AIs in Sri Lanka. Based on these research findings, the Government in Sri Lanka should not emphasize motivation to the AIs as the primary mechanism for improving their performances and Instead, the government should stimulate their interest by developing and sustaining opportunities through social interaction.

Keywords: Ability, AI officers, Knowledge transfer, Motivation, Opportunity