

Independent Study Title : Factors Determining the Membership of Sugarcane Planters Association at Kokha District, Lampang Province

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were to investigate the personal characteristics, socio-economic and other factors affecting the membership of Sugarcane Planter Association, problems and implications for sugarcane planting occupation development.

The respondents of this study were 130 sugarcane planters of Kho-Kha District, Lampang Province who were selected by purposive sampling technique from the total population of 431. Ninety eight of them were classified as the member of Sugarcane Planters Association and thirty-two were non-member of Sugarcane Planters Association. Data collected were statistically analysed by percentage, mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum value, as well as Chi-square test.

The research finding indicated that the sugarcane planters had an average age of 43.75 years old and finished

primary school (Pratomsuksa 4-6). An annual average income from sugarcane planting was 42,805.67 Baht with an average sugarcane planting size of 10.3 rai while an average farm size was 16.3 rai. Main information source was neighbours. They highly understand the purposes and the operation of the association, while their satisfaction on the association's operation was at the medium level.

Hypothesis testing showed that being a member of the sugar factory and understanding of the purposes and operation of the Sugarcane Planter Association were highly related to the membership of the Khelangankorn sugarcane planter association. While age, educational level, income, farm size, agricultural information source, loan need and the satisfaction of the association operation were not related to the membership of Khelangnakorn Sugarcane Planter Association at all.

Association problems enlisted included minimal services from the association, no public relations of new members, shortage of personnel, and inefficient coordination between the sugar factory and the association. While farmer's problems were that the selling price was not covered input costs and labour shortage because of labour movement from agricultural sector to industrial sector e.g. ceramic industry.

Recommendations from this research were to enhance the public relations about the purpose and the operation of the association as well as new member announcement. In addition, technical information on agriculture and training should be provided as well as to accelerate the coordination between the sugar factory and the association more promptly.