




Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of Abaca Craft Producers: Philippine illustrations

Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of Abaca Craft Producers: Philippine Illustrations

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the knowledge, attitude, and practices of abaca craft producers in Marihatag, Surigao del Sur. Specifically, the study sought to determine the socio-demographic profile and the knowledge, attitude, and practices in abaca craft production of the respondents. This study used a quantitative and qualitative research design, utilizing a set of questionnaires and an interview guide involving 134 abaca craft producers, who were selected through a random sampling method. The abaca craft producers were also interviewed through focus group discussion. The results indicated that respondents are 41 or older (41.8%), female (78.4%), have finished secondary level education (55.2%), have 5 to 6 dependents (38.06%), are married (70.9%), have been an abaca craft producer for less than a year (41.4%), and have attended 1 to 2 trainings (46.27%) on abaca craft production. It was found that the level of knowledge, attitude, and practices still needs improvement, with mean values of 3.46, 3.62, and 3.70, respectively. The intervention tools, therefore, should be developed to enhance knowledge, attitudes, and practices, particularly product development training and marketing support, due to the limited market area and the need to adapt to modern methods of marketing. It also identified the lack of funding for equipment and transportation vehicles, where the need to collaborate with local government units and other agencies is recommended. A proposal for a product development project for abaca craft producers is hereby recommended.

RESUMO

O estudo determinou o conhecimento, a atitude e as práticas dos produtores artesanais de abacá em Marihatag, Surigao del Sur. Especificamente, o estudo buscou determinar o perfil sociodemográfico e os conhecimentos, atitudes e práticas na produção artesanal de abacá dos entrevistados. Este estudo utilizou um projeto de pesquisa quantitativa e qualitativa, utilizando um conjunto de questionários e um guia de entrevista envolvendo 134 produtores artesanais de abacá, que foram selecionados por meio de um método de amostragem aleatória. Os produtores artesanais de abacá também foram entrevistados por meio de discussões em grupos focais. Os resultados indicaram que os entrevistados têm 41 anos ou mais (41,8%), são do sexo feminino (78,4%), possuem ensino médio completo (55,2%), possuem de 5 a 6 dependentes (38,06%), são casados (70,9%), já foram artesão de abacá há menos de um ano (41,4%) e realizou de 1 a 2 treinamentos (46,27%) sobre produção artesanal de abacá. Verificou-se que o nível de conhecimento, atitude e práticas ainda precisam melhorar, com valores médios de 3,46, 3,62 e 3,70, respectivamente. Os instrumentos de intervenção devem, portanto, ser desenvolvidos para potencializar conhecimentos, atitudes e práticas, nomeadamente formação no desenvolvimento de produtos e apoio ao marketing, devido à área limitada do mercado e à necessidade de adaptação a métodos modernos de marketing. Também identificou a falta de financiamento para equipamentos e veículos de transporte, onde é recomendada a necessidade de colaboração com unidades do governo local e outros órgãos. Recomenda-se uma proposta de projeto de desenvolvimento de produto para produtores artesanais de abacá.

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Introduction

The Municipality of Marihatag was once known as the third biggest producer of abaca in the region. However, abaca production in the municipality remains a poor man's crop, and the farmers get meager income from it. Some have shifted to other high-yielding crops as a result. If not addressed, abaca production will decline and, worse, vanish.

The appropriate procedures for deciding what kind of community extension program should be undertaken will be determined by measuring the knowledge of the local farmers. Successful businesses are those that regularly generate new knowledge, disseminate it widely throughout the organization, and swiftly incorporate it into new technologies and products at a time when markets change, technologies proliferate, competitors multiply, and products become obsolete almost overnight. As a result, Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices (KAP) surveys have gained popularity, particularly in the agricultural and production sectors, where they contribute to the collection of crucial data for the planning, design, and implementation of livelihood initiatives. A KAP survey should preferably come before a program of awareness or an intervention program. The survey's findings will give program designers the information they need to create successful programs and will serve as a starting point for future program performance assessments.

This research intends to determine the knowledge, attitude, and practices of abaca craft producers and abaca farmers in the municipality of Marihatag to provide benchmark information or to propose an intervention plan to be presented to the barangay officials for review and consideration. This will also increase awareness of abaca production as a primary economic force for the local farmers in the area.

Materials and Methods

This study used a quantitative and qualitative research design, utilizing a set of questionnaires and an interview guide involving 134 abaca craft producers, who were selected through a random sampling method. The abaca craft producers were also interviewed through focus group discussion. This study was conducted in the upland barangays and in those that were identified as practicing abaca crafting and abaca farming in Marihatag, Surigao del Sur. Four out of 12 barangays from the municipality of Marihatag were identified, namely: Brgy. San Isidro, Brgy. Mahaba, Brgy. Amontay, and Brgy. Mararag. Hard-to-reach places that are only accessible by foot or local modes of transportation were visited since most abaca craft producers and farmers in the municipality are located in these areas. From a total population of 200 individuals, 134 participants were identified through simple random sampling from the selected barangays of the municipality.

In order to find truth in the findings from the collected information, the researchers used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of data gathering in order to collect high-quality responses from the identified respondents. An interview guide was prepared in order to collect information about the challenges that the abaca craft producers encountered during production. These questionnaires have undergone validity tests and were validated by professionals in the fields of business, trading, and agriculture. A reliability test was conducted in the municipality of San Agustin to ensure the quality of the questionnaires. These questionnaires will help identify the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of abaca craft producers.

The questionnaires contain two sections. Section I is for the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, and Section II is for knowledge, attitude, and practices. An interview guide was also used to determine the challenges met in order to triangulate the responses of the respondents. The researchers scheduled a focus group discussion (FGD) in the identified barangays to ensure quality interviews. The respondents answered all two (2) sections of the questionnaire and participated in the interview.

In this study, the researchers used audio recordings and field notes to gather information on the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of abaca craft producers and the challenges in abaca craft production. To ensure the clarity of the recordings, transcription was done after audio recording. The responses of the participants were written down to provide clear information. We continued the process for the remaining interviews, which allowed the researchers to analyze the data throughout the study. After gathering the data, the results were analyzed and translated from Kamayo and Bisaya into English. The researchers then identified the knowledge, attitude, and practices of abaca craft producers and the challenges they faced during production and product sale. Through the use of the indicators, the results were analyzed and transcribed.

Results and Discussions

To aid in the systematic presentation, the datasets were presented in the order of the study's specific objectives. These were presented in five (5) sections: Section 1 discusses the socio-demographic profile of the abaca craft producers as to age, religion, sex, educational attainment, number of dependents, marital status, number of years as an abaca craft producer, and number of trainings attended on abaca craft production and farming. Section 2 discusses the knowledge level of the abaca craft producers as to factual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge. Section 3 shows the attitude components of the respondents' attitudes as affective, behavioral, and cognitive. Section 4 discusses the practices of the abaca craft producers as to

purchasing, crafting, and marketing. Lastly, Section 5 discusses the challenges that the respondents experienced and is presented through a deductive thematic analysis.

Table 1.

Socio-demographic Profile: Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
18-25	24	17.9%	3 rd
26-32	34	25.4%	2 nd
33-40	20	14.9%	4 th
41 and above	56	41.8%	1 st

Source: Own authorship.

As shown in the table, most abaca craft producers are ages 41 and above, making up 41.8% of the total population, while ages 33–40 have the lowest number of abaca craft producers, with only 14.9%. This implies that most abaca craft producers in the municipality of Marihatag are old practitioners of the craft. Abaca crafting is limited to those who have undergone training in the past, and the recent pandemic has limited possible training programs. In spite of their greater physical frailty than younger adults, post-reproductive adults report developing additional conceptual and procedural proficiency as they age past their earlier years of peak performance. Adults accurately perceive their competence levels and skill sets—a crucial insight for social comparison, learning, and education. This is further supported by the study by Schniter et al. (2015).

Table 2.

Socio-demographic Profile: Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Male	29	21.6%	2 nd
Female	105	78.4%	1 st

Source: Own authorship.

As shown in the table, most abaca craft producers are female, which is 78.4% of the total population. The results demonstrated women's crucial role of their contribution in craft-making and in enhancing the creative value of their abaca products. These women supplement their family's income while still carrying out their domestic responsibilities, like caring for their

children and cooking, by incorporating their motifs into abaca crafts. This is further supported by the study of Subiyantoro (2021).

Table 3.

Socio-demographic Profile: Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Rank	Percentage
No-Formal Education	3	5th	2.2%
Primary	38	2nd	28.4%
Secondary	74	1st	55.2%
College Level	14	3rd	10.4%
College Graduate	5	4th	3.7%

Source: Own authorship.

As shown in the table, most of the respondents' educational attainment is on secondary level which is 55.2%. The upland areas of the municipality of Marihatag have poor road access and have limited educational institutions. Most of the residents in these areas often work on the fields after they have finished their secondary level of education. In contrast to this, a farmer with more education is known to use information, guidance, and training more effectively, participate in government programs more frequently, and be more proactive in embracing change and making plans for the future of the company. The need for these qualities is growing as change occurs more quickly. This is further supported by the study of Gasson (1998).

Table 4.

Socio-demographic Profile: Number of Dependents

Number of Dependents	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1-2	31	23.13%	3 rd
3-4	44	32.84%	2 nd
5-6	51	38.06%	1 st

7 and above	8	5.97%	4 th
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Source: Own authorship.

As shown in the table, most abaca craft producers have 5–6 dependents which is 38.06% of the total population, while those with 7 or more only make up 5.97%. The upland barangays of Marihatag are mostly secluded due to limited road access. Most of these communities are of common ancestry, and these families practice a common Filipino tradition of harboring cousins and other relatives in their homes. Farmers and their families typically need work off the farm to supplement their income. The environmental factors have a significant impact on and determine how to preserve and support the family and its survival. This is further supported by the study of Sadguna et al. (2017).

Table 5

Socio-demographic Profile: Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Single	34	25.4%	2 nd
Married	95	70.9%	1 st
Widow/Widower	5	3.7%	3 rd
Divorced	0	0	

Source: Own authorship.

As shown in the table, most abaca craft producers are married, taking 55.2%, while there are only 3.7% who are widowed or widowers. This implies that married people are more likely to be interested in farming and may even have their spouses help them out with certain tasks. Abaca craft production is labor-intensive, and practitioners typically require a large family to support production labor and reduce labor costs. This is further supported by the study of Ebewore and Isiorhovoja (2019).

Table 6: Socio-demographic Profile: Number of Years as an Abaca Craft Producer

Number of Years as an Abaca Craft Producer	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
None	8	5.97%	5 th

Less than a Year	55	41.04%	1 st
1-3 Years	36	26.87%	2 nd
4-10 Years	20	14.93%	3 rd
11-20 Years	15	11.19%	4 th

Source: Own authorship.

As shown in the table, most abaca craft producers have less than a year of experience as an abaca craft producer, with 41.04%, while there are only 5.97% who have no experience in abaca craft production. This implies that most abaca craft producers in the municipality of Marihatag have stopped practicing abaca craft production due to recent pandemics and natural disasters that have affected the production of abaca fibers in the municipality. The agricultural industry has undergone several changes over the past 25 years and has been identified as one of the potential stressors. The increased usage of automated technology, the growth of organic farming, a decline in the price of agricultural products, and new, complex regulations have all increased the stress in farmers' lives.

Table 7.

Socio-demographic Profile: Number of Training attended on Abaca Craft Production and Farming

Number of Training/s Attended on Abaca Craft Production and Farming	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
None	67	50%	1 st
1-3	62	46.27%	2 nd
4-6	2	1.49%	4 th
7 and above	3	2.24%	3 rd

Source: Own authorship.

As shown in the table, most abaca craft producers in the municipality have not participated in any trainings related to abaca craft production and farming, taking 50% of the total, while there are only 1.49% who have been to 4-6 trainings, seminars, or workshops. There

is a lack of training offered for this specific field since there are only a few areas that practice abaca craft production. It is evident based on the data that the recent pandemic has affected the progress of abaca craft practice in the municipality of Marihatag. Six factors can be used to summarize the effects of training on abaca craft producers: improved work quality, higher output, cost and time savings, improved income, and improved networking. This is supported by the study by Noor and Dola (2011).

Table 8.

Knowledge Indicator

Knowledge Indicator			
Item	Core Description	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
	Factual Knowledge		
1	I am able to categorize the quality of abaca fibers used for abaca craft production	3.53	Often
2	I can understand clearly requests from customers who demand custom-made abaca craft products	3.46	Often
3	I am able to understand local and foreign terms used in abaca craft production	3.77	Often
Total Mean		3.59	Often
Procedural Knowledge			
4	I am able to develop new products based on modified designs	3.36	Sometimes
5	I use different type of techniques and methods in producing abaca crafts	3.25	Sometimes

6	I am able to evaluate the quality of the abaca product and can execute revision during and after execution	3.28	Sometimes
Total Mean		3.3	Sometimes
Metacognitive Knowledge			
7	I am aware of the limitations and opportunities in abaca craft production	3.69	Often
8	I am aware of the cultural differences of my clients and am able to design my abaca craft products from their culture belief	3.17	Sometimes
9	I am aware of my capabilities and potentials as an abaca craft producer	3.63	Often
Total Mean		3.5	Often
Total Overall Mean		3.46	Often

Source: Own authorship.

The factual knowledge has a mean of 3.59. For procedural knowledge, it has a mean of 3.3. Lastly, for metacognitive knowledge, it has a mean of 3.5. The total overall mean for knowledge is 3.46. This implies that abaca craft producers have good factual knowledge but still need improvement as to knowledge, particularly on the use of modern technology since they are most often using outdated equipment.. Park et al. 2015 reported that those who had good factual knowledge generally reported a high level of technological efficiency. The concept of "knowing about knowing," or metacognition, is used to characterize a learner's understanding of his or her own knowledge gaps and strengths. It guides a learner's decisions on what to study, when to study it, how much to study, and when to stop.

Table 9.

Attitude Indicator

Attitude Indicator			
Item	Core Description	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Affective Component			
1	I am aware of my capabilities and potentials as an abaca craft producer	3.54	Often
2	I only purchase good quality abaca fibers for my abaca craft products	3.79	Often
3	I personally knot individual abaca threads together and tie dye them myself	3.25	Sometimes
Total Mean		3.53	Often
Behavioral Component			
4	I perform personal customization on my abaca crafts upon the request/order of my customers	3.04	Sometimes
5	I am keen in selecting the quality of raw materials for my abaca craft products	3.53	Often
6	I can handle the work pressure amidst increasing outputs expected	3.49	Often
Total Mean		3.35	Sometimes
Cognitive Component			
7	I believe the price of an abaca craft and aesthetic is based on its quality	3.88	Often

8	I believe establishing good relationship with the suppliers ensure good quality raw materials for abaca craft production	3.98	Often
9	I believe my abaca craft products are well-designed and are good quality	4.09	Often
Total Mean		3.98	Often
Total Overall Mean		3.62	Often

Source: Own authorship.

Based on the data, it revealed that affective component has a mean of 3.53. For behavioral component, it has a mean of 3.35. Lastly, for cognitive component, it has a mean of 3.98. The total overall mean for knowledge is 3.62. This implies that the respondents are good in terms of attitude but that it can still be improved with the help of the experts, who would help with work ethics for the most suitable one. The cognitive component is an evaluation of the entity that constitutes an individual's opinion (belief or disbelief) about the object. Cognitive refers to the thoughts and beliefs an individual has about an attitude object (Jain 2014). Information a person has about an object—information that directly connects an object and attribute—is what the study of expressed theta belief is. The cognitive component is the part of the brain that stores and organizes information.

Table 10.

Practice Indicator

Practice Indicator			
Ite m	Core Description	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Purchasing Practices			
1	I make sure that there are enough available raw materials for my abaca craft production	3.96	Often
2	I compare the quality of raw materials for my abaca craft production from one supplier to another	3.54	Often

3	I purchase affordable yet good quality materials for my abaca craft production	3.89	Often
Total Mean		3.80	Often
Crafting Practices			
4	I attend every available workshop concerning abaca craft production	3.78	Often
5	I always ensure that the materials I use for abaca crafting are environmentally friendly	3.90	Often
6	I set accurate timeline for my customers' order/ demand	3.44	Often
Total Mean		3.71	Often
Marketing Practices			
7	My store/establishment is strategically located and accessible to my target customers	3.50	Often
8	I am capable of delivering the finished abaca craft products upon the request of my customers	3.62	Often
9	I offer competitive price to increase sales	3.63	Often
Total Mean		3.58	Often
Total Overall Mean		3.70	Often

Source: Own authorship.

Base on the data gathered, it revealed that purchasing practices has a mean of 3.80. For crafting practices, it has a mean of 3.44. Lastly, for marketing practices, it has a mean of 3.58. The total overall mean for knowledge is 3.70. This implies that respondents need improvement in this aspect of the practice indicator due to the need to enhance their purchasing risk-taking skills. The results of the study show that purchasing risk-taking affects purchasing knowledge and skills and that strategic purchasing affects knowledge and abilities in purchasing. Additionally, the study discovers that high-performing organizations have better associations than low-performing ones with risk taking, purchasing knowledge and skills, and strategic purchasing (Carr 2000).

Table 11.

Focus Group Discussion

No	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	NARRATIVE ANALYSIS
1	What are the problems encountered during abaca craft production?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The problem with the working time is when it rains because the abaca is wet and there is no market for us to sell. 2. A disease of the abaca called "ugpong." <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Storm, flood, and landslide. 3. Problems with regards to capital and product expenses 	The respondents listed mostly natural events or disasters that are uncontrollable. They also shared their thoughts with regards to the market and the lack of financial support.
2	What do you think are the skills and knowledge that you lack and want to know or learn in terms of abaca craft production?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Make other designs of abaca craft. New techniques for making abaca. 5. How to make it more polished and sturdy. 6. Terms are used both locally and abroad. 7. For me, I still want to learn more about other equipment or machines. 	The local producers in Marihatag lack sufficient knowledge of modern-day abaca craft production in terms of techniques and equipment.
3	Are you confident that you could meet any demands of your customers?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. No, because of a lack of equipment for making abaca crafts. 9. Not sure, because there might be some requests that I am not accustomed to. 10. No, because sometimes it rains, and the result is never good. 	In general, most of the respondents expressed similar opinions regarding their confidence in delivering personal demands from their buyers. Abaca craft takes time to create, and environmental factors play a huge role in the duration of time. The lack of training affects production as

		11. No, because my knowledge of making different types of abaca crafts is still lacking.	well, since modern designs require modern methods.
4	What are the practices that you apply when dealing with customer complaints regarding your abaca crafts?	12. Patience, humility, understanding, and kindness 13. We immediately replaced the damaged abacas. 14. I explain it well to the customer, and I'll change the product if necessary. 15. Listening to their suggestions and recommendations, and respecting their opinions.	The abaca farmers turned abaca craft producers of these selected areas have a lot of experience dealing with complicated customers. The individuals who have undergone proper training are willing to replace or modify their crafts if deemed necessary.
5	Do you think your location is a factor in producing abaca crafts?	16. Yes, because our livelihood revolves around abaca. 17. Yes, because we have been practicing abaca crafting ever since we were young. 18. Yes, because of the difficulty of the road.	The upland areas of Marihatag, Surigao del Sur have difficult roads that make them less accessible. This also results in limited delivery of their products, especially during bad weather. However, these barangays are abundant in abaca fiber since most abaca farms are located in these areas.

Source: Own authorship.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it has been identified that abaca craft producers in Marihatag, Surigao del Sur, need product development training and marketing support due to the limited market area and the need to adapt to modern marketing methods. It is also identified as a lack of funding for equipment and transportation vehicles, where the need to

collaborate with local government units and other agencies is recommended. A proposal for a Product Development Project for Abaca Craft Producers is hereby recommended.

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