

ANALYSIS OF THE FUNCTIONALITY OF *ALAYON* IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY AMONG UPLAND FARMERS IN REGION VIII*

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to 1) trace the early beginnings of the *alayon*, 2) determine the *alayon*'s role in the development and transfer of technology, 3) identify some needs and constraints to technology development and dissemination; and 4) identify and describe the common methods of technology transfer employed by the *alayon*.

A stratified multi-stage sampling was used to identify the respondents. A total of fifteen *alayons* with 167 members were studied using a focused-structured interview.

Access to agricultural technology was gained by most farmers in addition to the economic and social benefits. Financial constraint was the most common problem felt.

Common methods employed by the *alayon* in the transfer of technology included informal conversation, training/seminar/farmer's class and actual field observation/documentation.

KEY WORDS: *Alayon*. Technology development. Technology transfer. Constraints

**This is the first study regarding alayon system, hence, no literature can be cited*

INTRODUCTION

In cognizance of the fact that more than 70% of the people are in the rural areas and that they comprise the bulk of the country's poor, development efforts must commence with them. This calls for an understanding of the various sectors of the populace. Organizations are instrumental to a nation's development. The choice of a development strategy would be easy if a sound knowledge of rural organizations operating in the locality is obtained. Such organizations can be utilized in the development of an agricultural community through technology generation and dissemination.

This study was proposed in recognition of the important role the *alayon* had performed in the development and transfer of technology to accelerate upland development. Contrary to institutionalized farmers group and the computer-based information technology as exemplified by the Open Academy for Philippine Agriculture (OPAPA), which provides farmers access through network and the internet, the *alayon* as an indigenous rural organization had served most rural households in various farm and non-farm activities propelled by the culture of cooperation, unity or oneness in the midst of scarce financial resources. It does not fill the gap but had proven to withstand the test of time as an effective indigenous tool in bringing about development.

The study focused on the member, hence, non-members were not included as reflected in its objectives. Non-inclusion of non-members is one of the limitations of the study.

Objectives

1. To trace the early beginning of the *alayon* and its characteristics;
2. To determine the *alayon's* role in the development and transfer of appropriate technology;

3. To identify some needs and constraints encountered by the members in relation to technology development and dissemination; and
4. To identify and describe the appropriate and common methods of technology transfer effectively employed by the *alayan* groups.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedure

Stratified, multi-stage random sampling was done in Region VIII to identify respondents of the study in consonance with the Department of Agriculture's priority coverage. From the region, two provinces were selected with five municipalities each. From each municipality, one barangay was purposively chosen. Leyte and Samar provinces were given priority because they satisfy the following criteria:

1. Accessible by land transportation.
2. Majority of the households are engaged in farming, and
3. Based on a preliminary survey, farmers have practiced and adhered to the *alayan* system to a great extent.

A total of fifteen upland barangay *alayons* were critically studied and analyzed (Table 1).

Data Collection

Prior to data collection, field interviewers were oriented on the questionnaire and trained on how to gather data.

Data collection instruments or schedules were prepared, standardized in the English language and translated into Cebuano and Waray. The translated instruments were pretested to determine their completeness and understandability.

Table 1. Distribution of *alayan* members by province, municipality and barangay

Province/Municipality Alayon Group	Number Reporting	Percent (%)
A. Leyte	70	42
Baybay	19	27
Guadalupe	15	79
Patag	4	21
Hindang	20	29
Anolon 1	6	30
Anolon 2	6	30
Anolon 3	8	40
Villaba	31	44
Cagnocot	12	39
Tabunoc	19	61
B. Southern Leyte	6	4
Bontoc	6	100
San Vicente	6	100
C. Western Samar	76	45
Gandara	23	30
Diaz	10	43
San Agustin	13	56
Pinabacdao	53	70
Pahug	34	64.2
Madalunot	14	26.4
Bugho	5	9.4
D. Northern Samar	15	9
Pambujan	15	100
Doña Anecita	12	80
Cababto-an	3	20
Total	167	100

A complete enumeration of the members of fifteen *alayon* groups/organizations in Region VIII was done. A total of 167 *alayon* members were interviewed.

Methods of Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean/averages and ranges were employed in the analysis of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Study Area

Seven municipalities were identified as the study areas: three in Leyte (Baybay, Hindang and Villaba); one in Southern Leyte (Bontoc); two in Western Samar (Ganadara & Pinabacdao); and one in Northern Samar (Pambujan).

The *Alayon* Member-Respondents

A total of 167 *alayon* members served as respondents of the study. Table 1 reflects the *alayon* member-respondents by province, municipality and by barangay.

Early Beginnings of Local *Alayons*

The majority of the *alayon* member-respondents claimed that they have learned about *alayon* system at different times to start before the 1950's up to the 1990's. All of the Cagnocot *alayon* group member-respondents learned about the *alayon* system in 1980's, while a number said they have already known about the system in the late 1950's. In fact, half of the *alayon* member-respondents from Anolon 2 (50%) and almost 63 percent (62.5%) of Anolon 3 *alayon* member-respondents go farther in time to the years before the 1950's. In contrast, some *alayon* group

member have learned about the *alayon* system just lately in the 1990's (Table 2).

Word does get around in the respondent's communities. The *alayon* member respondents learned about *alayon* system from their grandparents, parents, brothers/sisters, neighbors/relatives/friends, co-farmers, technicians and others. Co-farmers was reported to be the source of knowledge/information by the majority of *alayon* member respondents of Guadalupe (60%), Anolon 1 (50%), Anolon 3 (62.5%), Cagnocot (83.3%) and Madalunot (50%). Likewise, neighbors/relatives/ friends were important sources of information about *alayon* system for the majority of the *alayon* group members of San Vicente (50%), Bugho (60%) and Diaz (70%). Meanwhile, all and half of the Tabunok and Cagnocot *alayon* respondents, respectively, obtained such information from the technician assigned in their area. Only one from Anolon 2 and another from Diaz claimed to have gotten information from their brothers/sisters. Grandparents and parents were reported also by several *alayon* group member-respondents as their source of information regarding *alayon* system, while a few learned from others (PTA president and Farmers' association).

Reasons for Involvement In *Alayon* Groups

A number of *alayon* member-respondents reported several reasons for the formation of *alayon* organizations. The reasons given are: in order to allow simultaneous cultivation of farms, enable them to cultivate a much greater farm area with a greater farm harvest in mind, to hasten completion of farm operation/work, to earn additional income/immediate income, to exchange labor and establish a spirit of cooperation, to save the money that could have been used to hire laborer, lessen or lighten the burden of farm work and others (uplift living condition, availment of loan, no draft animals to use and to become an officer of the organization).

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by *alayon* group according to the period around which they first learned about the *alayon* system

Alayon Group	CATEGORY										Total		
	Before 1950's		1950's		1960's		1970's		1980's			1990's	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		n	%
Guadalupe	3	20	1	6.7	6	40	4	26.7	-	-	1	6.7	15
Patag	1	25	-	-	3	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Anolon 1	1	16.7	2	33.3	1	16.7	2	33.3	-	-	-	-	6
Anolon 2	3	50	-	-	2	33.3	1	16.7	-	-	-	-	6
Anolon 3	5	62.5	3	37.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Cagnocot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	100	-	-	12
Tabunoc	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	100	19
San Vicente	-	-	-	-	1	16.7	4	66.6	1	16.7	-	-	6
Pahug	7	20.5	11	32.4	4	11.8	8	23.5	4	11.8	-	-	34
Madalunot	-	-	3	21.4	4	28.6	1	7.1	5	35.1	1	7.1	14
Bugho	1	10	1	20	1	20	2	40	-	-	-	-	5
Diaz	1	10	2	20	2	20	2	40	1	10	-	-	10
San Agustin	-	-	1	7.7	3	23.1	2	15.4	6	46.1	1	7.7	13
Dofia Anecita	-	-	1	8.3	-	-	1	8.3	10	83.3	-	-	12
Cababto-an	-	-	-	-	1	33.3	-	-	2	66.7	-	-	3
Total	22		25		28		29		41		22		167

Alayon in Technology Development and Transfer

Agricultural Technology/Information Learned or Acquired

Through the *alayon*, farmers have often gained access to agricultural technology/information. Most notable among these are the selection of planting materials/seed varieties, fertilizer/pesticide application (amount, kind, method, time), contour farming, intercropping and techniques in land preparation, which were reported by respondents from most of the *alayon* groups studied.

Dike making was especially learned by respondents in Cagnocot, San Agustin and Cababto-an. Specific technologies were specially learned by specific *alayan* groups.

The *alayan* member-respondents disseminated technology/information to help co farmers, let other farmers learn or try the technology on the farm, for better yield/production and in recognition of the technology's benefits.

Common Methods of Technology Transfer

The most common methods employed by *alayan* member on technology transfer are informal talk, training/seminars/farmers' classes and actual field observation/demonstration. Informal discussions were usually undertaken during off-farm activities, meetings called by technicians, farmer leaders, and farmers and house visitation wherein farmers could interact with each other and exchange ideas.

Other common methods of technology transfer employed by the *alayan* members was to try the technology on farmers' fields in order to let the farmers test the technology in his own farm. Farm and home visitation also enabled the farmers to learn technologies in interaction with all members of the family. Farmers also learned technologies through teaching by other farmers/parents. The radio was a good source of technology information as it can reach distant farmers. Pamphlets provide guides to the farmers on farming techniques. Giving farmers reading materials related to farming would be an important source of information for the farmers to learn.

IMPLICATIONS

As an indigenous rural organization, *alayon* has voluntary membership which is motivated by the member-respondents' desire to undertake simultaneous cultivation of farms with much greater area and harvest and to lessen the burden of farm work. An equivalent amount of services (in terms of number of hours per day) is advocated by group members in all farm activities following the principle of symbiosis.

Cost efficiency was the major economic benefit derived from joining the *alayon* organization as money is saved with the system of exchanging labor. Other forms of benefits perceived by the members included the temporary relief from domestic worries, lessened exposure to sunlight, availment of mutual assistance and the spirit of cooperativism.

Through the *alayon*, farmers have gained access to agricultural technology which are in turn disseminated to co-farmers by informal conversation, farm visits and demonstration. However, it is not without constraints and one major deterring factor is financial in nature.

It is implied that *alayon* as an informal, indigenous rural organization, is essential in any rural development program. Therefore, farmers and rural populace are encouraged to form such indigenous rural organization to speed up effective technology development and transfer with the least cost but of utmost effectiveness.