THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON AGRICULTURE: THE CASE OF SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCY OF ORGANIC FARMING IN ILOILO PROVINCE

JAMES B. CAMISORA
WINSTON L. GARINO

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in global food systems and prompted a focus on resilient supply chains. Organic agriculture, with its emphasis on local production and sustainable practices, offers an alternative model that might be less susceptible to disruptions. However, the pandemic also presented unique challenges for organic farmers and their supply chains. This study investigated the impact of government interventions during the COVID-19 pandemic on the resilience of the organic agriculture supply chain in Iloilo Province. The research employed an exploratory research design and utilized qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. It mapped out policies related to organic agriculture and its supply chain through data from interview with smallholder farmers and personnels from Department of Agriculture Regional Office 6 and various Municipal Agriculture Offices. The findings revealed that the Department of Agriculture (DA) and local governments provide support programs for smallholder organic farmers. The DA Regional Office focuses on broader regional program implementation, while local governments provide more direct support based on local needs. Farmer organizations play a crucial role in linking farmers to government support programs and in providing a marketing network for smallholder farmers. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the vulnerability of the existing organic vegetable supply chain, but both government and farmers adapted their interventions and strategies. After the pandemic, the government shifted its support towards PGS certification and local governments took a larger role in providing marketing support and promotion.