

**INNOVATION ADOPTION IN THE AGRI-FOOD SYSTEM: THE INFLUENCE OF
EXTERNAL VARIABLES AND INTERNAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ORGANIZATIONS**

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Introdução

The agri-food system plays an important role in the economies of countries and has unique characteristics. Organizations in this sector face changes in market and consumer demand, as well as environmental challenges. Previous studies have shown that the adoption of innovations allows organizations to remain competitive and sustainable over time.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

Innovation adoption is influenced by external and internal variables of the organization, which may vary from one sector to another. In the agri-food system, this is even more particular. Therefore, the main objective of this paper is to analyze the influence of external variables and internal characteristics on the adoption of innovation in the agri-food system.

Fundamentação Teórica

Over the years, many innovation adoption models have been developed and proposed to analyze the dimensions that influence adoption. From the literature, six dimensions that are related to the agri-food system and are interrelated have been identified and divided into two groups: external variables (Network Externalities, Competitive Environment and Legislation) and internal characteristics (Innovativeness, Business Relationship and Key Individuals).

Metodologia

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty-nine managers involved in the adoption of innovation in the agri-food system, and the content analysis technique was used to analyze the data, divided into two types: frequency and theme.

Análise dos Resultados

It was discovered that external variables, such as Network Externalities, Competitive Environment and Legislation, do not receive adequate attention from agri-food organizations. Among the internal characteristics, the Innovativeness dimension receives great attention, and the Business Relationships and Key Individuals dimensions have some well-researched aspects, but others still require attention.

Conclusão

The analysis of the dimensions allowed us to identify those that need to be better explored by companies and those that are already well explored, thus promoting the adoption of innovations. For future studies, we suggest increasing the number of interviewees and also conducting the study in other sectors, in a comparative manner. It is also suggested that other stakeholders be involved in addition to the managers of the organizations, such as suppliers and partners, who could add new insights to the process of adopting innovation.

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