

How does your upbringing influence how you make decisions?

Exploring the impact of socio-psychological development on farmers'

decision-making processes.

United States farmers are working to increase agricultural yield production to meet commodity demands while considering the environmental impacts of their management practices. To reduce agricultural environmental impacts, farmers can implement sustainable agricultural practices. While governmental programs can offer incentives to adopt such practices, they often do not provide sufficient financial security for implementation and management. Therefore, farmers might be motivated to adopt sustainable practices because of personal benefits. One source of motivation could be internal, such as values and beliefs an individual has about the environment. This exploratory qualitative study examined farmers' socio-psychological development, using an Ecological Systems Theory lens associated with their potential to adopt sustainable agriculture practices. This study focuses on interview data, collected from eight farmers in the Pacific Northwest, U.S. The data revealed overarching interview themes related to each of the respective Ecological Systems. Themes emerged regarding participants upbringing on a farm, their relationships with peer farmers, and how they make farm management decisions. Findings from this study can serve as a foundation for future research related to the impact that Ecological Systems has on the adoption of sustainable farming practices. By understanding these systems, we could instill positive environmental stewardship in the next generation of landowners, ultimately influencing agricultural commodity production and the environment.

Keywords:

Farming

Sustainable

Decision-making