

## **Effects of Fuel Crisis on Paddy Cultivation in Thoppur Area**

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Paddy cultivation is one of the most important sector in Sri Lanka. Now a day's cultivation needs various types of machineries to perform several kind of farming activities such as land preparation, harvesting and other crop production practices. Therefore, a huge amount of fuel is consumed every year by agricultural sector. Due to the fuel crisis, it brought scarcity and price increasement on fuel. Fuel scarcity effects to perform paddy farming activities in perfect level and appropriate period of time. Fuel price hike effects on the input cost of paddy farming. This focused on the fuel scarcity due to the crisis. The study analyses how people struggle to get fuel and how fuel price hike changed the input cost of paddy farming before and after fuel crisis. This study based on Thoppur division paddy cultivation which includes 12 GN divisions in Trincomalee district. Paddy farmer in Thoppur area was taken as the unit of analysis. Primary data were collected from 35 farmers using structured questionnaire and face to face interviews. Paired t test was performed to compare before and after effects of fuel crisis. The effect of fuel crisis on paddy cultivation in Thoppur division was tested and there are significant differences due to fuel crisis before and after, in the factors such as spending hours in fuel station, number of trips to fuel station, travel distance from home, received amount of fuel, paddy cultivated area and number of rice plot cultivated than the input prices on paddy cultivation due to fuel crisis. There is a significant relationship in land preparation cost and harvesting amount of paddy before and after fuel crisis but there is no such relationship in harvesting cost and labor cost. Finally, the coping strategies followed by farmers to overcome this fuel crisis were analyzed.

**Keywords:** Coping strategies, Fuel crisis, Harvesting cost, Labor cost, Land preparation cost, Paddy cultivation

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