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Article

# **Phenotypic Diversity of Farmers' Traditional Rice Varieties in the Philippines**

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Abstract: Traditional rice varieties maintained and cultivated by farmers are likely sources of germplasm for breeding new rice varieties. They possess traits potentially adaptable to a wide range of abiotic and biotic stresses. Characterization of these germplasms is essential in rice breeding and provides valued information on developing new rice cultivars. In this study, 307 traditional rice varieties newly conserved at the PhilRice genebank were characterized to assess their phenotypic diversity using 57 morphological traits. Using the standardized Shannon-Weaver diversity index, phenotypic diversity indices averaged at 0.73 and 0.45 for quantitative and qualitative traits, respectively. Correlation analyses among agro-morphological traits showed a high positive correlation in some traits such as culm number and panicle number, flag leaf width and leaf blade width, grain width and caryopsis width. Cluster analysis separated the different varieties into various groups. Principal component analysis (PCA) showed that seven independent principal components accounted for 74.95% of the total variation. Component loadings for each principal component showed morphological characters, such as culm number, panicle number and caryopsis ratio that were among the phenotypic traits contributing positive projections in three principal components that explained 48% of variation. Analyses of results showed high diversity in major traits assessed in farmers' rice varieties. Based on plant height and maturity, 11 accessions could be potential donor parents in a rice breeding

program. Future collection trips and characterization studies would further enrich diversity, in particular traits low in diversity, such as anthocyanin coloration, awn presence, awn color, culm habit, panicle type and panicle branching.

**Keywords:** rice germplasm; phenotypic diversity; traditional rice varieties; diversity index; germplasm conservation; morphological characterization

# 1. Introduction

Rice is a major crop in the Philippines with a production of 16.7 million MT ranking the Philippines eighth in the world [1]. It is a major calorie source for most Filipinos and a major income source for 12 million farmers and their families [2]. Rice production contributes 2.2% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country [3]. It is also a culturally important crop to Filipinos as rice is featured in many festivals and rituals [4,5]. The Executive Order No. 1061 in 1985 acknowledged the importance of rice to the country's economy and livelihood by creating the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) mandated to lead the country's rice research and development programs [6]. In the Philippines, the growth of the rice sector is highly dependent on yield improvements, which can be achieved through breeding new varieties and developing and promoting yield-enhancing technologies [2].

Rice breeders are constantly engaged in developing new rice varieties with higher yield potential to enhance the actual yield obtained by farmers in the field. One approach in plant breeding, proposed as early as 1968 is new ideotypes development [7]. This "plant-type concept of breeding" resulted from pioneering studies showing close associations between yield and certain morphological characters in response to nitrogen application [8,9]. In 1966, the selection for the semi-dwarf rice plant type led to the release of the first modern high yielding variety, IR8, which commenced the "green revolution" in Asia [8]. After 28 years of successful release of the IR8, a yield plateau was observed and prompted rice breeders to propose a new plant type (NPT) during the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) strategic planning workshop in 1993 [8,10]. As such, morphological characters rather than physiological traits were considered for NPT rice because they were easy to distinguish in a breeding program [11].

Rice genetic resources are key components to breeding programs, and farmers have played important roles in contributing to rice diversity by developing and nurturing thousands of rice varieties for several years [12]. This vast wealth of rice germplasm including landraces and traditional varieties is a good source of important alleles to develop new rice varieties. These germplasms serve as the foundation of any rice breeding program because they are the source of important traits necessary for improving and developing new breeds of rice varieties [13]. Several reports have shown the utilization of rice landraces in developing new varieties. IR8, dubbed a miracle rice [14], was the product from crosses between two landraces: a semi dwarf rice Dee-geo-woo-gen and tall, vigorous rice Peta [15]. The submergence tolerance SUB1 QTL was identified from submergence tolerant rice landrace FR13A. Its identification and characterization led to successful introgression of the QTL to rice mega-varieties [16]. Recently, the *NAL1* allele that was identified from tropical *Japonica* rice landrace Daringan significantly increased the yield of modern rice cultivars [17].

Characterization of rice germplasms increases its utility in any breeding program. The use of agro-morphological traits is the most common approach utilized to estimate relationships between genotypes [18]. This approach was employed to assess diversity on ancestral lines of improved rice varieties in the Philippines [13], the indigenous rice in Yunnan, China [19] and the rice landraces in Nepal [18]. The conservation and characterization of these genetic resources is a necessity not only for posterity, but also for utilization in different improvement programs such as breeding for improved yield and tolerance to various stresses. It is important to assess the diversity of these germplasms materials to provide insights in the diversity of these germplasms.

Thus, this study assessed the phenotypic diversity of new rice germplasm farmers' varieties conserved at the PhilRice genebank. Information generated from phenotyping these germplasms can be used as basis for future collection trips to augment diversity in the genebank collections as well as baseline information for utilization in rice breeding programs.

## 2. Results and Discussion

#### 2.1. Germplasm Characterization

#### 2.1.1. Diversity in Qualitative Traits

Phenotyping is an important activity to evaluate the utilization of the germplasm collection in a genebank. In this study, 307 traditional rice varieties recently conserved at the PhilRice genebank were scored and measured using 39 qualitative and 18 quantitative morphological characters. These germplasms were comprised of 215 Indica, 89 Javanica and three Japonica varieties (appendix Table A1). Among the qualitative characters scored, ligule shape and culm kneeling ability were observed invariants. All the germplasm characterized had a two-cleft ligule shape and the culms had no kneeling ability (Table 1). Twenty of the qualitative traits scored were dominated by one character in each trait with a distribution ranging between 76%–95%. As a result, these twenty agronomic traits had low diversity indices ranging between 0.12–0.45. These were mainly awn-related characters such as presence, color, distribution, and type. Awn color and panicle were the lowest calculated indices (H' = 0.12) because 95% of the varieties scored had no awn and 92% had a medium length panicle type. Most of the varieties had thick culms and an erect culm habit. Moderately diverse traits were observed for 15 descriptors with indices ranging between 0.46-0.74. Most of these traits were inflorescence-related traits such as panicle and spikelet characters. Diversity in caryopsis pericarp color (seed coat color) (Figure 1) was also evident with all states being represented in the rice varieties evaluated. White seed coat color was the predominant state (50.5%), followed by red seed coat color (30.0%), variable purple (5.9%), light brown (4.6%) and purple (4.2%).

Four of the 39 traits scored had a high diversity with an average index of 0.87. Two of these traits were culm-related which assessed rice sturdiness during maturity and harvest. Although the predominant character was intermediate lodging resistance, 37% of the rice varieties had strong to very strong lodging resistance at the mature stage. The endosperm type trait had the highest calculated diversity index of 0.99. The reason for this is that all the endosperm type descriptors (1 = non-glutinous, 2 = Intermediate, 3 = glutinous) were identified in the characterized germplasm.

Descriptor	<b>Predominant State</b>	%	States Observed	H' Index
Invariant				
Ligule Shape	2-cleft	100.00	1	0.00
Culm Kneeing Ability	Absent	100.00	1	0.00
Low diversity				
Awn Color (Late)	Awnless	95.11	4	0.12
Panicle Type	Medium (~25 cm)	91.86	3	0.12
Awn Color (Early)	Awnless	91.53	6	0.18
Awn Distribution	Awnless	91.53	5	0.20
Culm Diameter Type	Thick	96.42	2	0.22
Awn Type	Awnless	91.21	5	0.22
Panicle Secondary Branching	Sparse	89.58	3	0.25
Culm Habit/Angle	Erect (<15°)	85.67	4	0.26
Sterile Lemma Type	Medium	62.54	3	0.27
Culm Anthocyanin Coloration on Nodes	Absent	90.55	4	0.28
Awn Presence	Absent	91.53	3	0.29
Leaf Blade Pubescence	Intermediate	91.86	3	0.29
Flag Leaf Attitude/Angle	Erect	83.71	4	0.30
Leaf Blade Attitude	Erect	89.90	3	0.31
Sterile Lemma Color	Straw	88.27	4	0.32
Panicle Attitude	Drooping	84.36	5	0.37
Stigma Color	White	77.85	4	0.41
Auricle Color	Whitish	75.90	6	0.45
Moderate diversity				
Lemma & Palea Color (Late Observation)	Straw	66.45	8	0.46
Panicle Attitude of Main Axis	Slightly drooping	70.03	3	0.49
Leaf Blade Length Type	Intermediate (~50 cm)	60.59	3	0.54
Culm Underlying Node Color	Green	73.29	3	0.56
Leaf Blade Width Type	Intermediate	65.15	2	0.59
Flag Leaf Attitude (Late Measurement)	Descending	71.01	4	0.63
Culm Length Type	Intermediate to long	36.81	6	0.63
Culm Number Type	Intermediate (~15 culms)	75.24	3	0.65
Late Lemma Apiculus Color	Straw	47.56	9	0.65
Lemma & Palea Pubescence	Short hairs	60.91	5	0.66
Panicle Exsertion	Well exerted	55.37	5	0.67
Caryopsis Pericarp Color (Seed Coat Color)	White	50.49	7	0.68
Caryopsis Shape	Long spindle-shaped	43.97	5	0.71
Productivity	Intermediate	70.03	3	0.71
Apiculus Shape	Curved	78.83	2	0.74
High diversity				
Early Lemma Apiculus Color	Straw	26.71	8	0.79
Culm Lodging Resistance	Intermediate	42.02	5	0.84
Culm Strength	Intermediate	41.04	5	0.84
Endosperm Type	Non-glutinous	41.37	3	0.99
Average diver			2	0.45

**Table 1.** Qualitative traits showing the predominant state observed, distribution (%) and the calculated Shannon diversity indices (H') for each descriptor scored.

Overall, the diversity in qualitative traits was low with an average index of 0.45. Several traits that were classified as low diversity might be prioritized in future collection trips to enhance their diversity in our genebank. Although not all these traits are linked to yield, some traits such as panicle and culm diameter types are useful parameters for improving yield. Wu *et al.*, have shown that large culm rice varieties have a higher number of grains per panicle and a longer spike length [20].

**Figure 1.** Diversity in grain color and caryopsis pericarp color of the different traditional rice varieties screened. Numbers in parenthesis are the collection numbers of the rice germplasm.



# 2.1.2. Diversity in Quantitative Traits

The 307 varieties showed diverse phenotypes in terms of plant height, leaf blade, flag leaf culm number and panicle number, among others. Table 2 sums up the quantitative morphological characters showing the highest and lowest values measured for each character. Most of the traits had moderate (5) to high (12) diversity indices. Awn length was the only trait that showed low diversity (H' = 0.02). This could be attributed to only 14 varieties exhibiting awns in their grains. Traits with moderate diversity included caryopsis (length, width and ratio) and culm descriptors (diameter and number). Culm number could be associated with yield if all tillers produced inflorescence. Culm strength and culm lodging resistance had diversity indices of 0.84. Maturity of characterized germplasm ranged from 71 to 154 days. Rice variety Inuway (CollNo. 10869) had the shortest maturity. This variety was collected in an upland ecosystem in the Aurora province. Plant height varied from 68 cm to 161 cm, observed in Kinakaw (CollNo. 10857) and Dinorado (CollNo. 11049), respectively. Dinorado is an upland variety popular in the Arakan Valley of North Cotabato known for its sweet aroma, pinkish grain and good eating quality [4]. Additionally, the majority of the farmers' varieties (82%) were >100 cm tall with an average height of 116 cm and a median of 117 cm contradicting breeders' preference of 90-100 cm tall rice varieties among other characteristics to serve as potential donor for NPT breeding program [6].

Descriptors	H′	Min Trait Value	Variety	Max Trait Value	Variety	Mean Trait Value (± Standard Deviation)
			Low Diversity			
Awn Length (mm)	0.02	1.98	Puchagwan (11241)	69.64	Burdagol (11083)	0.80~(6.01)
			Moderate Diversity	ity		
Caryopsis Length (mm)	0.64	4.37	Milagrosa (11102)	13.72	Binaka (10838)	(6.49 (1.04))
Caryopsis Width (mm)	0.70	4.15	Kaimpas (11315)	1.28	Doriat Pula (10934)	2.23 (0.37)
Culm Diameter at Basal Internode (mm)	0.72	0.58	Fancy-1 (11105)	12.40	Speaker (11080)	8.06 (1.92)
Culm Number	0.73	5.20	Lubang (11341)	34.80	Rc 18 (Pula) (11312)	16.30~(4.48)
Caryopsis Length/Width Ratio Score	0.74	1.42	Kaimpas (11315)	5.12	Binaka (10838)	2.98 (0.60)
			High Diversity			
Panicle Length (cm)	0.77	20.90	Pinarompong (10932)	38.80	Unoy (Umangan) (11245)	27.27 (2.67)
Maturity (day)	0.77	71.00	Inuway (10869)	154.00	18-Pula (11061); Galo (11205)	106.84 (35.69)
Grain Width (mm)	0.78	1.51	Duriat (10943)	6.56	Kipil (10837)	2.58 (0.53)
Panicle Number Per Plant	0.78	5.20	Lubang (11341)	34.80	Rc 18 (Pula) (11312)	16.26 (4.46)
Flag Leaf Length (cm)	0.79	23.80	Bolinao (11256)	72.80	Kinakaw (10857)	38.57 (7.56)
Leaf Blade Length (cm)	0.80	34.80	C-4 Dinorado (11317)	88.40	Lubang (11356)	58.36 (9.13)
Sterile Lemma Length (mm)	0.81	1.56	M10-2 (11086)	3.86	Minindoro (Pula) (10844)	2.47 (0.39)
100 Grain Weight (g)	0.81	1.10	Kinakaw (10857)	5.50	Binaka (10810)	2.45 (0.54)
Culm Length (cm)	0.82	67.80	Kinakaw (10857)	160.60	Dinorado (11049)	116.03 (15.67)
Grain Length (mm)	0.84	5.29	Dinorado (10860)	10.76	Binaka (10810)	8.48 (1.05)
Flag Leaf Width (cm)	0.85	1.10	Elon-Peta (11346)	2.60	Binisaya (10826)	1.95 (0.32)
Leaf Blade Width (cm)	0.85	0.96	Rc 18 (Pula) (11312)	2.48	Binisaya (10826)	1.64(0.30)
A wers the Diversity	0 72					

Table 2. Quantitative descriptors and calculated Shannon-Weaver index (H') of evaluated rice varieties, and calculated numbers enclosed in pare

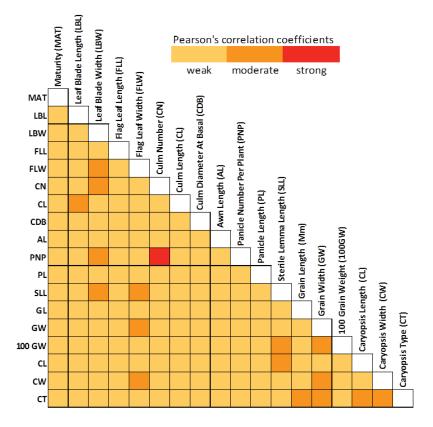
Grain trait diversity was also observed in the germplasm (Figure 1). Of the 307 accessions, only 14 rice varieties had awns present on the grains with their lengths ranging from 2 mm to 70 mm with the variety Burdagol (CollNo. 11083) having the longest awn. The presence of awns is considered an important trait in rice domestication. Grains of wild rice have long awns that protect the grains from animal pilfering. Some reports suggest that the presence of awns in grains aids bird resistance in agricultural crops [21,22]. Early studies in sorghum breeding have shown that varieties with long awns or that are strongly awned are more resistant to bird attacks than varieties with no awns [23]. Awned grains along those with few tillers and long panicles were found to be the characteristics of the bulu or Javanica group within the tropical Japonica varieties [24]. On the other hand, cultivated rice varieties have short awns allowing for easier harvesting than varieties with long awns [25]. Low tillering capability (three to four tillers) was one of the criteria used by IRRI rice breeders in selecting donor parents to be used in developing NPTs of rice [8]. Tillering ability among the 307 farmers' rice varieties ranged from five to 35 tillers. Rc 18-Pula (CollNo. 11312) showed the highest tillering ability among the farmers' varieties. It is a red-coated rice variety collected in the Bohol province and considered one of the popular varieties in the area based on Bertuso's survey [26]. This variety is a rice farmer's selection in 1997 [26] from his field planted with PSB Rc 18 (has a white seed coat), a modern rice variety released in 1994 for irrigated rice ecosystem [2]. Sturdy culm was another criterion used for donor parent selection for NPTs. The majority of the germplasms characterized (96%) had thick culms with a  $\geq 5$  mm culm diameter. However, when rice varieties were assessed for lodging resistance, only 37% showed strong or very strong lodging resistance. This could be attributed to the plant height, a major factor in lodging resistance in rice [27]. Having a short plant structure is currently the preferred trait for improving lodging resistance in rice [28].

In general, diversity in quantitative traits was moderate with an average index of 0.73. Nearly all the traits measured showed moderate to high diversity.

# 2.2. Correlation among Traits

Using Pearson's product-moment correlation, an analysis was done to assess the relationship among the morphological traits. It is useful to determine the relationship among the morphological traits since this information will be useful in the utilization of the germplasm as well in the collection of the germplasm based on the target traits. Several traits showed significant correlations (r = 0.195; p < 0.05) among each other. A heat map (Figure 2) was constructed to visualize the traits that had weak ( $r \le 0.35$ ), moderate (r = 0.36-0.67) and strong (r = 0.68-1.00) correlations [29]. An analysis showed that 89% of the trait combinations had weak correlations while 10% had moderate correlations. Only the correlation between the panicle number per plant and the culm number (r = 0.998) was strong. This showed that all tillers were productive tillers and able to bear inflorescence. The panicle number per plant ranged from five to 35. Sterile lemma length and 100-grain weight showed a moderate correlation (r = 0.50). This was expected since any increase in sterile lemma length would positively affect the grain weight. A high correlation was also observed between the flag leaf width and leaf blade width (r = 0.59) indicating that an increase in leaf blade width might also result in an increase of flag leaf width. A positive correlation was also observed between flag leaf width and grain width (r = 0.40). Flag leaves are important in grain filling, as 80% of the total carbohydrate stored in the grains is produced by the top two leaves in rice [30].

**Figure 2.** Heat map showing calculated Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients among morphological traits measured in all germplasms screened. Correlation coefficients were classified as weak ( $r \le 0.35$ ), moderate ( $r \ge 0.36$ ) and strong (r > 0.68) [29].



These characteristics are essential to rice breeders as it has been demonstrated that the flag leaf area increased grain yield by increasing the number of spikelets per panicle [31]. Flag leaves were reported to be the major source of phloem-delivered photoassimilates during the grain-filling stage in rice [32]. Previous studies have shown that cutting of flag leaves could result to up to 45% grain yield loss [33]. A recent review by Biswal and Kohli outlined the importance of flag leaf traits in cereal breeding for drought tolerance [34]. Flag leaf sheath is one of the main sources of carbohydrate for rice grain filling under drought condition [35].

Although the correlation analyses showed only one combination trait that had a strong correlation, there were 16 combination traits that had moderate correlations. These traits that had moderate to high correlations could be used as a basis for the utilization of these sets of germplasm for breeding purposes as well as for planning future collection trips targeting specific traits. Trait correlations can be used by breeders either to simultaneously improve correlated traits or reduce undesirable side effects when trying to improve only one of the correlated traits [36].

# 2.3. Cluster and Principal Component Analyses of Rice Germplasm

The relationship among the 307 farmers' rice varieties as revealed by Unweighted Pair Group Method with Arithmetic Mean (UPGMA) cluster analysis is shown in Figure 3. Truncating the tree at

the Euclidean distance of 1.13 resulted in 24 clusters. In the truncated tree, 10 clusters had single accession, another 10 clusters had two to ten accessions; three clusters had 23-50 accessions and one big cluster had 137 accessions. The fact that 83% of the clusters formed contained one to a few accessions implied a diversity in the collection. Among the single-accession clusters, most accessions were collected from the Palawan and Kalinga provinces. The majority of these germplasms were of the Indica type while two accessions belonged to Javanica. These single-accession clusters were considered distinct from each other and the rest of the clusters. Cluster 3 (variety C-4 Dinorado; CollNo. 11317), for example, had similar traits to the accessions in Cluster 2 for most traits, such as leaf blade width type, flag leaf width, type, and erect flag leaf attitude at early stage, but differed by having very short leaf blades and horizontal flag leaf attitude at a late stage. Similarly, the variety Kinakaw (CollNo. 10857, Cluster 24) was distinct from the rest of the clusters because it had a short plant stature, the longest flag leaf length and the lightest 100-grain weight. Other single-accession clusters such as Cluster 21 (Burdagol CollNo. 11083), Cluster 22 (variety Chay-ot; CollNo. 11246) and Cluster 23 (variety Ifo; CollNo. 11255) were peculiar because of their long awns (30-70 mm). Most of the accessions (90%) had no awns while the rest had short awns (2–16 mm). Variety Benangkar (CollNo. 10923) was another single-accession cluster, which was characterized by the presence of purple lines in its culm nodes, which is a trait not very common among the rest of the accessions screened. Cluster 1, one of the four big clusters, was characterized as having a short plant stature (average height of 94.8 cm) compared to Clusters 2 (110.53 cm) and 4 (121.03 cm). Most of the accessions in Cluster 2 belonged to the Indica type (90%).

Overall, cluster analysis provided an insight into the diversity of the collections as shown by the number of clusters formed with one to 10 members when the dendrogram was truncated at 1.13 distance. A distinct variety was separated from the rest of the germplasm pool as exemplified by the single-accession clusters.

Principal component analysis (PCA) was employed to reduce the complexity of the data set while retaining the variation within the data set as far as possible [37]. The PCA resulted in 18 independent principal components that had a cumulative explained variance of 100% (Table 3). Following the Proportion of Variance Criterion [38], seven principal components (PCs) were retained that had a cumulative variance of 75%. The first component accounted for 22.5% of the total variation in the data set while the second and third principal components contributed 14.5% and 10.6%, respectively. Together, these three components could explain 47.6% of the total variation in the characterized rice germplasm. Analysis of the factor loadings of the characters in the retained PCs showed that phenotypic traits that contributed to yield showed high positive loadings in PC 1 (Table 4). These traits were culm number, panicle number per plant and caryopsis ratio score with factor loadings of 0.649, 0.651 and 0.529, respectively. These three morphological characters could have contributed to the maximum variability in PC 1 which explained 22.5% of the total variation in the data set. Among these three traits, only panicle number per plant was classified as high diversity while the other traits had moderate diversity indices. In PC 2, leaf blade length presented the highest factor loading of 0.482. This showed that leaf blade length was the major morphological character that contributed to the variation in PC 2 which explained 14.5% of the variation. In PC 3, plant height (culm length) showed a high loading of 0.454.

**Figure 3.** Dendrogram generated by cluster analysis of morphological characters using Unweighted Pair Group Method with Arithmetic Mean (UPGMA).

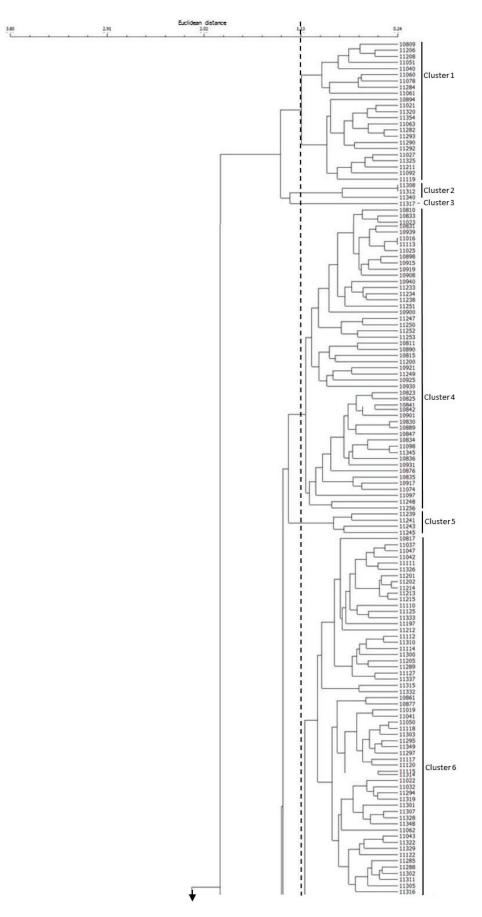


Figure 3. Cont.



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C	F	Explaine	d Variance
Components	Eigenvalue -	Percent	Cumulative
1	4.04	22.46	22.46
2	2.61	14.52	36.98
3	1.91	10.61	47.59
4	1.61	8.97	56.56
5	1.26	7.01	63.58
6	1.05	5.84	69.41
7	1.00	5.53	74.95
8	0.82	4.57	79.52
9	0.71	3.96	83.48
10	0.64	3.53	87.01
11	0.57	3.19	90.21
12	0.49	2.75	92.95
13	0.41	2.30	95.26
14	0.33	1.85	97.11
15	0.29	1.61	98.72
16	0.21	1.16	99.87
17	0.02	0.12	99.99
18	0.00	0.01	>100%

**Table 3.** Computed eigenvalues of the different principal components with corresponding proportion and cumulative explained variance.

**Table 4.** Factor loadings (eigenvectors) for the different morphological characters for the principal components retained.

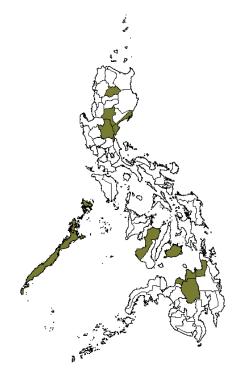
			Princi	ipal Compo	nents		
Descriptors	PC 1	PC 2	PC 3	PC 4	PC 5	PC 6	<b>PC 7</b>
Maturity (day)	0.33	0.29	0.34	0.10	0.40	0.23	0.23
Leaf Blade Length (mm)	-0.11	0.48	0.53	0.14	0.12	-0.08	-0.31
Leaf Blade Width (mm)	-0.67	-0.21	-0.04	-0.26	-0.25	0.25	0.04
Flag Leaf Length (mm)	-0.17	0.21	0.43	0.46	-0.11	0.13	-0.26
Flag Leaf Width (mm)	-0.73	-0.12	-0.01	0.00	-0.14	0.21	0.21
Culm Number	0.65	-0.28	-0.36	0.52	-0.08	0.17	-0.09
Culm Length (cm)	-0.34	0.37	0.45	0.11	-0.14	0.33	0.02
Basal Culm Diameter (mm)	-0.33	-0.33	-0.01	0.15	-0.32	0.54	0.17
Awn Length (mm)	-0.11	-0.01	0.06	0.22	-0.54	-0.57	0.41
Panicle Number/plant	0.65	-0.28	-0.36	0.51	-0.08	0.18	-0.10
Panicle Length (cm)	-0.27	0.01	0.33	0.59	-0.27	-0.20	0.01
Sterile Lemma Length (mm)	-0.51	-0.67	0.10	-0.12	0.18	-0.03	-0.08
Grain Length (mm)	0.06	-0.47	0.37	0.26	0.46	-0.06	0.46
Grain Width (mm)	-0.66	0.13	-0.29	0.34	0.39	-0.09	0.10
100-Grain Weight (g)	-0.51	-0.46	-0.03	0.28	0.29	-0.06	-0.02
Caryopsis Length (mm)	-0.10	-0.73	0.31	-0.08	-0.05	-0.14	-0.43
Caryopsis Width (mm)	-0.72	0.08	-0.38	0.18	0.10	-0.13	-0.33
Caryopsis Length/Width Ratio Score	0.53	-0.60	0.52	-0.18	-0.10	-0.02	-0.05

#### 3. Experimental Section

#### 3.1. Germplasm Characterization

A total of 307 rice germplasms conserved at the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) genebank which were collected from different parts of the country (Figure 4) were used to evaluate the genetic diversity of farmers' traditional rice varieties and landraces. Characterization of the collected rice germplasms was done at the at the PhilRice Central Experimental Station, Maligaya, Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija ( $15^{\circ}40'$  N,  $120^{\circ}53'$  E, 57.6 masl) during the wet cropping season (WS) in 2009. Prior to sowing, seeds were incubated in the oven set at 37 °C for 12 h to break inherent seed dormancy. Seeds were sown in a raised seedbed in the greenhouse and covered with coconut coir dust. Seven-day-old seedlings were transplanted into the field following a planting distance of 25 cm × 25 cm. A total of 20 plants per accession in three replicates were planted in the field for characterization. Agronomic characters were measured and scored following the Rice Descriptors [39]. A total of 18 quantitative and 39 qualitative characters were selected to score the germplasm collections.

**Figure 4.** Philippine map showing the provinces (areas in green) where the rice germplasm were collected. The map was generated using DIVA-GIS ver.7.5.0 [40].



#### *3.2. Data Analyses*

Descriptive statistics was done using PROC UNIVARIATE procedure in SAS ver. 9.3 (SAS Institute, Cary, NC, USA [41]). Correlations among morphological traits measured were analyzed using PROC CORR procedure in SAS. Shannon-Weaver diversity index (H') was used to calculate the phenotypic diversity of the characterized farmers' varieties following the protocol used by Sotto and Rabara [42]. An arbitrary scale was adapted from Jamago and Cortes [43] to categorize the computed indices into maximum (H' = 1.00), high (H' = 0.76–0.99), moderate (H' = 0.46–0.75) and

low diversity (0.01–0.45). Diversity indices of collected germplasm were calculated based on phenotypic frequency using standardized Shannon-Weaver Diversity index formula:

 $H' = -\Sigma pi(log_2 pi)/log_2 N$ 

wherein

pi = frequency proportion of the descriptor state

#### N = number of states

The standardized Shannon-Weaver provided a constrained index between zero and one with the highest value indicating maximum abundance [44,45]. Multivariate statistical analyses of characterization data were conducted using principal component (PCA) and cluster (CA) analyses. PCA was employed to identify the different morphological characters that contributed to the most variance in the measured variables. In PCA, the raw data were standardized and the distance matrix using the variance-covariance coefficients was computed. The Proportion of Variance criterion was used to identify the different principal components that contributed to the total variance in the dataset [23]. PCA and CA were done using NTSYSpc version 2.1 software [46]. The distance matrix was generated using the Euclidean Distance Coefficients and was used as input for clustering using the unweighted pair group of arithmetic means (UPGMA) method.

#### 4. Conclusions

Phenotyping of germplasm materials is an important undertaking in genetic resource conservation to ensure efficient conservation management as well as its effective utilization especially in breeding programs. In this study, 307 rice varieties were characterized to assess their phenotypic diversity. Diversity analyses showed that 46% of the qualitative traits scored had low diversity indices compared to only 5% in quantitative traits. Overall, the rice germplasm showed moderate diversity based on quantitative characters (average index of 0.73). In contrast, the qualitative characters had a low diversity indices collections, the diversity in qualitative traits of our germplasm was higher than what Bajracharya *et al.*, observed in the landraces from Nepal [18]. The complete qualitative data set of our collection is available in appendix Table A1.

In order to enrich the diversity of qualitative traits in our collection at the PhilRice genebank exploration trips may be conducted. Collection gaps should be identified in the genebank's germplasm collection and should be prioritized in future collection trips. An emphasis on farmers' varieties that have been planted in a community for several generations should be considered when planning for collection trips. It should also considered to look for diversity in qualitative characters that have shown low diversity indices such as presence of awns, panicle type, and culm habit type among other characters. Other factors that can be considered during collection of these rice germplasms are the characters that have high correlations with other characters. Collecting diversity for certain traits or characters could also lead to a high diversity if the characters are highly correlated.

The success of any conservation program could also be measured by the amount of which these genetic resources are being utilized. Data generated from characterization of these 307 rice varieties can be utilized as baseline information for the utilization of these germplasms for any rice breeding

program such as breeding for ideoypes. For example, 37 accessions meets the plant height criterion (90–100 cm) for NPT among which 11 accessions also meets the maturity requirement (110–120 days). Short stature variety was one of the criteria to select a variety for use in a breeding program to address lodging. The optimal growth duration to achieve maximum yield is about 120 days [8]. A linear increase in total biomass had been observed when the growth duration was increased from 95 days to 135 days [47]. Efforts should be invested in promoting various stakeholders in rice production to utilize these germplasms. Effective utilization of these germplasms can be enhanced if these materials are fully characterized and evaluated for their potential use in breeding programs. Evaluation of these germplasms should be conducted to assess their potential as donor parents for the breeding of new varieties with improved responses to various abiotic and biotic stresses. Broadening of the genetic base through utilization of diverse germplasms in breeding for new rice varieties may be able to break the yield barrier that rice breeders are currently trying to address.

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#### **Author Contributions**

Roel C. Rabara designed the experiment, analyzed the data and written the manuscript. Marilyn C. Ferrer conducted the phenotyping experiments, assisted in data analysis and contributed in writing the manuscript. Celia L. Diaz contributed in phenotyping the germplasm. Ma. Cristina V. Newingham contributed in data encoding and database management. Gabriel O. Romero contributed in writing the manuscript.

# **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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#### Appendix

**Collection Number Cultivar Name Province Eco-geographic Race** 10809 Galo Indica Aurora 10810 Binaka (Malagkit) Aurora Indica 10811 Palawan Aurora Indica Indica 10813 Galo (Malagkit) Aurora 10815 Galo Aurora Indica 10816 Galo (Malagkit) Indica Aurora 10817 Brilyante Aurora Indica 10818 Galo Aurora Indica 10819 Malagkit Indica Aurora 10821 Inuway Aurora Indica 10822 Lubag/Galo Aurora Indica 10823 Palawan Javanica Aurora 10824 Lubag (With Awn) Aurora Indica 10825 Palawan Aurora Javanica 10826 Binisaya Aurora Indica 10827 Galo (Malagkit) Aurora Indica 10828 Gayanggang Indica Aurora 10829 Lubag Aurora Indica 10830 Malagkit (Puti) Javanica Aurora 10831 Inuhay Indica Aurora 10832 Palawan Javanica Aurora 10833 Inuhay Indica Aurora 10834 Galo Aurora Javanica 10835 Galo (Malagkit) Javanica Aurora 10836 Galo (Haba) Indica Aurora Japonica 10837 Kipil Aurora 10838 Binaka (Malagkit) Aurora Javanica

Table A1. Ecogeographic race of the different traditional rice varieties.

<b>Collection Number</b>	Cultivar Name	Province	Eco-geographic Race
10839	Gayanggang	Aurora	Indica
10840	Palawan	Aurora	Javanica
10841	Sinagat	Aurora	Javanica
10842	Minindoro (Puti)	Aurora	Indica
10844	Minindoro (Pula)	Aurora	Indica
10847	Malagkit-Itim	Aurora	Javanica
10848	Palawan	Aurora	Javanica
10850	Lubag (Malagkit)	Aurora	Javanica
10852	Binernal	Aurora	Javanica
10854	Francis Rice	Aurora	Javanica
10855	Inuway	Aurora	Indica
10856	Galo	Aurora	Indica
10857	Kinakaw	Aurora	Indica
10859	Binisaya	Aurora	Javanica
10860	Dinorado	Aurora	Javanica
10861	Sinabado	Aurora	Indica
10862	Galo	Aurora	Indica
10864	Binisaya	Aurora	Indica
10865	Kinamalig	Aurora	Javanica
10866	Galo	Aurora	Indica
10869	Inuway	Aurora	Indica
10870	Galo	Aurora	Indica
10874	Azucena	Aurora	Indica
10876	Pirurutong (Malagkit)	Aurora	Javanica
10877	Kapirit	Aurora	Indica
10880	Milagrosa (Pilit)	Palawan	Indica
10882	Minantika	Palawan	Indica
10884	Pinutyukan	Palawan	Indica
10885	Milagrosa (Pula)	Palawan	Indica
10886	Doryat	Palawan	Indica
10887	Blandi	Palawan	Indica
10888	Doryat	Palawan	Indica
10889	Tipak	Palawan	Indica
10890	Rambo	Palawan	Indica
10891	Kinadoy	Palawan	Indica
10892	Kinadoy	Palawan	Indica
10893	Malagkit	Palawan	Indica
10894	Unknown	Palawan	Indica
10898	Tipak	Palawan	Javanica
10899	Dinorado	Palawan	Indica
10900	Malagkit (Pula)	Palawan	Javanica
10901	Dinorado	Palawan	Indica
10902	Dinorado	Palawan	Indica

Table A1. Cont.

<b>Collection Number</b>	Cultivar Name	Province	Eco-geographic Race
10903	Buringan	Palawan	Indica
10905	Mating	Palawan	Indica
10906	Lawang	Palawan	Indica
10908	Muring-Oring	Palawan	Javanica
10909	Kinoron	Palawan	Indica
10910	Pinangpang	Palawan	Indica
10911	Red Rice	Palawan	Indica
10912	<b>Binoring-Boring</b>	Palawan	Javanica
10914	Sagang (Malagkit Puti)	Palawan	Javanica
10915	Fortuna	Palawan	Indica
10916	Calubid	Palawan	Indica
10917	Black Rice	Palawan	Javanica
10918	Milagrosa	Palawan	Indica
10919	Benareng	Palawan	Indica
10921	Minaola	Palawan	Javanica
10923	Benangkar	Palawan	Javanica
10924	Mangatas	Palawan	Indica
10925	Dinayudo	Palawan	Indica
10926	Dinamit	Palawan	Indica
10927	Tipak	Palawan	Indica
10928	Inamoy	Palawan	Indica
10929	Laok-Laok	Palawan	Indica
10930	Pinarongpong	Palawan	Javanica
10931	Kalinayin	Palawan	Indica
10932	Pinarompong	Palawan	Javanica
10933	Pinalawan	Palawan	Indica
10934	Doriat Pula	Palawan	Indica
10939	Pangpang	Palawan	Indica
10940	Inantote	Palawan	Indica
10943	Duriat	Palawan	Indica
11015	Metao	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11016	Kutsiam	Negros Occidental	Indica
11017	Aowot	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11019	Milagrosa	Negros Occidental	Indica
11020	Dinorado	Negros Occidental	Indica
11021	Vietnam Rice	Negros Occidental	Indica
11022	Pilit	Negros Occidental	Indica
11023	Azucena	Negros Occidental	Indica
11025	Unknown 2	Negros Occidental	Indica
11026	Kasolid	Negros Occidental	Indica
11027	Pilit	Negros Occidental	Indica
11032	M-45	Negros Occidental	Indica

Table A1. Cont.

<b>Collection Number</b>	Cultivar Name	Province	Eco-geographic Race
11035	Malagaya	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11036	Dinorado	Negros Occidental	Indica
11037	Jao Dam Khi Kwai	Negros Occidental	Indica
11038	Ngacheik	Negros Occidental	Indica
11040	Tapol	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11041	Kapakra	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11042	Pilit-Tapol	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11043	Señorita	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11044	Red Cotabato	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11045	Mimis	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11046	Mal-Os	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11047	Kutong	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11049	Dinorado	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11050	Kayatan	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11051	Unknown	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11052	Kabuyog	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11053	Gakit	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11055	Dinorado	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11056	Speaker	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11057	Dinorado	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11058	Gakit	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11059	Unknown	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11060	Mabango	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11061	18 (Pula)	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11062	Ir-9	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11063	18 (Puti)	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11064	Unknown	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11065	Dinorado	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11066	Speaker	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11067	Kabuyok	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11068	Pilit	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11069	Kabuyok	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11070	Mixture from Kabuyok	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11070	Dinorado	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11072	Speaker	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11072	Kabuyok	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11074	Gakit	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11075	Dinorado	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11070	Speaker	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11077	Kayatan	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11078	Pilit-Tapol	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11079	Speaker	Misamis Oriental	Javanica

Table A1. Cont.

<b>Collection Number</b>	Cultivar Name	Province	Eco-geographic Race
11081	Dinorado	Misamis Oriental	Indica
11082	Unknown	Misamis Oriental	Javanica
11083	Burdagol	Negros Occidental	Indica
11086	M10-2	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11089	M45	Negros Occidental	Indica
11091	M119-N1	Negros Occidental	Indica
11092	A-G-17	Negros Occidental	Indica
11094	Mb-4	Negros Occidental	Indica
11096	Inday	Negros Occidental	Indica
11097	Pangasinan	Negros Occidental	Indica
11098	M108	Negros Occidental	Indica
11100	M11-6-1	Negros Occidental	Indica
11101	Tape	Negros Occidental	Indica
11102	Milagrosa	Negros Occidental	Indica
11105	Fancy-1	Negros Occidental	Indica
11106	Galicia F-1	Negros Occidental	Indica
11107	Elon-Elon	Negros Occidental	Indica
11108	Manabang	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11109	Solig	Negros Occidental	Indica
11110	Kabagte	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11111	Azucena	Negros Occidental	Indica
11112	Ebod	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11113	Kotsiam	Negros Occidental	Indica
11114	Kalisan	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11115	Katipak	Negros Occidental	Indica
11116	Palawan	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11117	Bonlaw	Negros Occidental	Javanica
11118	Mangasa	Negros Occidental	Indica
11119	Pula	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11120	Denorado	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11121	Unknown	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11122	M-23	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11123	Dinorado	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11124	Dinorado	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11125	Dinurado	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11127	Tapul-Pilit	Agusan Del Norte	Indica
11183	Farasang	Kalinga	Indica
11197	Palawan	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11198	Binaka	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11199	Inuway	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11200	Galo	Nueva Ecija	Indica

Table A1. Cont.

<b>Collection Number</b>	Cultivar Name	Province	Eco-geographic Race
11201	Palawan	Nueva Ecija	Javanica
11202	Ginobyerno	Nueva Ecija	Javanica
11203	Sinumay	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11204	Dinorado	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11205	Galo	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11206	Palawan	Nueva Ecija	Javanica
11207	Inuway	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11208	Galo	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11209	Palawan	Nueva Ecija	Javanica
11210	Palawan	Nueva Ecija	Javanica
11211	Dinorado	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11212	Inuway	Nueva Ecija	Indica
11213	Palawan	Nueva Ecija	Javanica
11214	Minindoro	Nueva Vizcaya	Javanica
11215	Palawan	Nueva Vizcaya	Javanica
11216	Brilyante	Nueva Vizcaya	Indica
11217	Galo	Nueva Vizcaya	Indica
11231	White Intan	Kalinga	Indica
11232	Intan (Red)	Kalinga	Indica
11233	Waray	Kalinga	Indica
11234	Red Intan	Kalinga	Indica
11236	Ummunoy	Kalinga	Javanica
11237	Kintuman	Kalinga	Javanica
11238	Ingtan (Red)	Kalinga	Indica
11239	Tuhuwan	Kalinga	Javanica
11240	Gwayay (Chay-Ot)	Kalinga	Javanica
11241	Puchagwan	Kalinga	Javanica
11242	Unoy (Ummunoy)	Kalinga	Javanica
11243	Unoy (Tu-Par)	Kalinga	Javanica
11244	Chay-Ot (Ojak)	Kalinga	Javanica
11245	Unoy (Umangan)	Kalinga	Javanica
11246	Chay-Ot (Ifuwan)	Kalinga	Javanica
11247	Chomalingan	Kalinga	Javanica
11248	Chinannay	Kalinga	Indica
11249	Inasotiyan	Kalinga	Javanica
11250	Finongod 2	Kalinga	Indica
11251	Finongod	Kalinga	Javanica
11252	Innoway	Kalinga	Javanica
11253	Innoyan	Kalinga	Indica
11254	Mingol	Kalinga	Indica
11255	Ifo	Kalinga	Indica
11256	Bolinao	Kalinga	Javanica

Table A1. Cont.

Collection Number	Cultivar Name	Province	Eco-geographic Race
11282	7 Tonner	Bukidnon	Indica
11283	Red Rice	Bukidnon	Indica
11284	Red Tonner	Bukidnon	Indica
11285	Barako	Bukidnon	Indica
11286	Red Rice	Bukidnon	Indica
11287	Burdagol (Pilit)	Bukidnon	Indica
11288	Pilit	Bukidnon	Indica
11289	Pilit	Bukidnon	Indica
11290	Red Tonner	Bukidnon	Indica
11291	Red Rice	Bukidnon	Javanica
11292	Brown Rice	Bukidnon	Indica
11293	Dwarf Variety	Bukidnon	Indica
11294	M-3	Bukidnon	Indica
11295	Elon-Elon	Bukidnon	Indica
11296	Red Tonner	Bukidnon	Indica
11297	Baknap	Bukidnon	Indica
11298	Azucena	Bukidnon	Indica
11299	Bakiki	Bukidnon	Indica
11300	Lubang	Bohol	Indica
11301	Lubang	Bohol	Indica
11302	Unknown	Bohol	Indica
11303	Muddy Rice	Bohol	Indica
11304	Kaimpas	Bohol	Indica
11305	Milagrosa	Bohol	Javanica
11306	Milagrosa	Bohol	Indica
11307	Inibi (Red)	Bohol	Indica
11308	Kaliga	Bohol	Indica
11309	Muddy Rice	Bohol	Indica
11310	Malagkit (Puti)	Bohol	Indica
11311	Kaliga (Red)	Bohol	Indica
11312	Rc 18 (Pula)	Bohol	Indica
11313	Kaliso	Bohol	Javanica
11314	Muddy Rice	Bohol	Indica
11315	Kaimpas	Bohol	Japonica
11316	Malagkit	Bohol	Indica
11317	C-4 Dinorado	Bohol	Indica
11318	Kabus-Ok	Bohol	Indica
11319	Rc 10 (Pula)	Bohol	Indica
11320	Ir 36	Bohol	Indica
11321	Ping Rice	Bohol	Indica
11322	Pilit	Bohol	Indica
11323	Kabus-Ok	Bohol	Indica
11324	Kabus-Ok	Bohol	Indica

Table A1. Cont.

<b>Collection Number</b>	Cultivar Name	Province	<b>Eco-geographic Race</b>
11325	75 (Pula)	Bohol	Indica
11326	Unknown	Bohol	Indica
11327	Kabus-Ok	Bohol	Indica
11328	Unknown	Bohol	Indica
11329	Japan Red	Bohol	Indica
11330	G1-2	Bohol	Indica
11332	Rmp/Kaimpas	Bohol	Indica
11333	Bilar Red	Bohol	Indica
11334	Kananoy	Bohol	Indica
11337	Pilit Tapol	Bohol	Indica
11338	Miracle Pilit	Bohol	Javanica
11339	7-7 Red	Bohol	Indica
11340	Red Rice	Bohol	Indica
11341	Lubang (M)	Bohol	Indica
11342	Hubahib	Bohol	Javanica
11343	Bares	Bohol	Japonica
11345	Mal-Us	Bohol	Indica
11346	Elon-Peta	Bohol	Indica
11347	Pungko	Bohol	Indica
11348	Melobina	Bohol	Indica
11349	Inabaka	Bohol	Indica
11350	Kayupo	Bohol	Indica
11351	Sulig	Bohol	Indica
11352	Ceres	Bohol	Javanica
11354	Torboho Red	Bohol	Javanica
11355	Pilit Taba	Bohol	Indica
11356	Lubang	Bohol	Javanica

Table A1. Cont.

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