



Socio-Demographic and Economic Profile of Vegetable Growers in Piat, Cagayan Valley

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Abstract

The study was conducted at Piat, Cagayan, Philippines from January 2021 to September 2021 to determine the socio-demographic profile, socio-economic profile and problems encountered by the vegetable growers. Descriptive research was adopted in the study. The researcher used the questionnaire as the main instrument in data gathering. It was observed that the vegetable growers are elementary graduates with an age bracket ranging from 31-40 years old. Based on the above findings, farmers should participate and be a member of such organizations to help them in marketing their products at a higher price. The vegetable growers' socio-economic status can be improved more by attending such training or seminars and looking into the possibility of adopting suitable technologies that will lessen the costs of their inputs to gain higher income.

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Introduction

The municipality of Piat is a landlocked municipality in the coastal province of Cagayan. The municipality has a land area of 181.81 square kilometers or 70.20 square miles, which constitutes 1.93% of Cagayan's total area. Its population, as determined by the 2020 census, was 24,805, where farming is one of the major sources of income of the people (Philippine Statistics Authority).

The Municipality of Piat is considered as one pilgrimage and tourists' destination. It is in this municipality where the Basilica Minore church is situated. Being a third-class municipality, the majority of the people are dependent on farming such a vegetables and corn as a source of their livelihood and income. The demand for vegetables is increasing as the number of people increases. Thus, vegetable production provides a promising economic opportunity for reducing rural poverty and unemployment in developing countries and is a key component of farm diversification strategies.

Vegetable cultivation has an increasingly important commercial role, especially for low-income households (Gockowski, 2004). It has great potentiality and scope for improving the socio-economic condition of small and marginal farmers since it provides higher yield and high economic return in a short time as compared to food grains. It has more income per unit area and employment generation in a short span of time and thereby has attracted the farmers.

It was, therefore, required to study the profile of vegetable growers in Piat, particularly Aquib and Macapil, who are known as producers and also to get some knowledge about the socio-economic profile of vegetable growers.

Research methodology

This chapter presents the methodology in the conduct of the study. It includes the research design, respondents of the study, data gathering procedure and statistical tools.

Research design

This study utilized the descriptive research design. The design describes the profile of the vegetable growers in Piat, Cagayan.

Locale of the study

The study was conducted in the Barangays of Macapil and Aquib for the month of August 2021 at Piat, Cagayan Valley.

Respondents and sampling procedures

Respondents of the study were the community residents. Seventy (70) respondents were picked at random from the list of the vegetable growers in the area.

Data gathering instruments

The main data gathering tool was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was pre-tested and validated before it was finally administered to the respondents. An interview was likewise conducted to implement the responses given in the questionnaire.

Data gathering procedures

Before the conduct of the study, a permission letter endorsed by the Director for Extension was sought from the Office of the Municipal Agriculturist and Barangay Captains of the barangays surveyed where the respondents reside. After the permission was approved, the researchers personally administered the questionnaire to ensure 100% retrieval.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed and tabulated using the frequency counts and percentages in the socio-demographic and socio-economic profiles. The ranking was also used in determining the problems encountered by the respondents.

Results and discussion

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents

The socio-demographic profile of the vegetable growers of Barangay Aquib and Macapil Piat, Cagayan was presented in Table 1. Among the seventy (70) vegetable growers, the study indicates that the

majority of the vegetable farmers were 31-40 years old (20 or 28.6%) were in the early middle age group, followed by 51-60 years old (14 or 20%), 21-30 years old (12 or 17.1%), 61-70 years old (10 or 14.3%), 81-90 years old (3 or 4.3%) while (1 or 1.4%) for the 11-20 years old and 71-80 years old respectively. This means that only a few younger generations

participated in farming activity; thus, they must be encouraged to promote and sustain food security. In terms of gender, most of the respondents were male, with 60%, while 40% were female. This means that women's participation in agricultural and non-agricultural self-employment, as well as paid employment, rose over time.

Table 1. Distribution of the respondents in terms of socio-demographic profile.

S. No.	Categories of attributes	Categories of respondents	
		Frequency (N=70)	Percentage (%)
1.	Age		
	11-20	1	1.4
	21-30	12	17.1
	31-40	20	28.6
	41-50	9	12.9
	51-60	14	20.0
	61-70	10	14.3
	71-80	1	1.4
2.	Gender		
	Male	42	60
	Female	28	40
3.	Religion		
	Iglesia ni Cristo	1	1.4
	Roman Catholic	69	98.6
4.	Ethnicity		
	Ilocano	69	98.6
	Tagalog	1	1.4
5.	Civil Status		
	Married	48	68.6
	Separated	5	7.1
	Single	10	14.3
	Widow/Widower	7	10.0
6.	Educational Attainment		
	College Level	4	5.7
	Elementary Graduate	27	38.6
	Elementary Level	23	32.9
	High School Graduate	9	12.9
	High School Level	7	10.0

These changes could indicate increased economic empowerment of women. On religion, most of the respondents were Roman Catholic with 98.6%, while 1.4% were Iglesia ni Cristo. This result shows that the presence of Our Lady of Piat in the area this one of the reasons why almost all respondents are Catholics. For their ethnicity, mostly the respondents are Ilocano with 69 or 98.6% while Tagalog with 1 or 1.4%. Ilocanos have a unique characteristic in terms of farming involvement where they are known as industrious people who are willing to work under the heat of the sun. This means that Ilocanos are fund of

eating vegetables most especially their favorite viand known as "dinengdeng and pinakbet". In terms of civil status, data shows that the respondents are mostly married with 48 or 68.6%, followed by a single with 10 or 14.3%, widow/widower with 7 or 10%, while the least are single with 5 or 7.1%, respectively. The results imply that those who were married formed the largest proportion than those who were singled or widowed. This result is in consonance with the study of Baba *et al.* (2010), who found that married farmers participated more in vegetable farming in order to support their families. With

regards to educational attainment, the majority are elementary graduates with 27 or 38.6%, followed by elementary level with 23 or 32.9%, high school graduate with 9 or 12.9%, high school level with 7 or

10% while college level were 4 or 5.7% in the same order. The result confirms the study of Welch (1970) that highly educated workers tend to adopt new technologies faster than those with less education.

Table 2. Distribution of vegetable farmers according to their various socio-economic characteristics.

S. No.	Categories of attributes	Categories of respondents	
		Frequency (N=70)	Percentage (%)
1.	Occupation		
	Vegetable and Corn Farmer	12	17.14
	Vegetable and rice farmer	2	2.86
	Vegetable, Rice and Corn Farmer	3	4.28
	Vegetable farmer	24	34.28
	Vegetable, Corn, and fruit bearing trees Farmer	10	14.28
	Vegetable, and other plantation crops Farmer	9	12.85
	Vegetable farmer and animal raiser	10	14.28
2.	Social Participation		
	Member	26	37.1
	Not a Member	44	62.9
3.	Home Ownership		
	Owned	70	100.0
4.	Home Condition		
	Combination of concrete and light materials	1	1.4
	Combination of concrete and wood	69	98.6
5.	Tenurial Status		
	Owner	69	98.6
	Tenant	1	1.4
	Owner/Tenant	0	0
6.	Highest Income Commodity?		
	Corn and Vegetables	10	14.28
	Rice and vegetables	2	2.86
	Fruit bearing trees	10	14.28
	Vegetables	28	40.0
	Animals and vegetables	20	28.57
7.	Reasons in Vegetable Growing?		
	Source of food and income	28	60.4
	Source of food	10	14.28
	Ease to sell	10	14.28
	Growing vegetable lesser food expenses	12	17.14
	High price of vegetable in the market	5	7.14
	It is prime commodity	2	2.86
	Gives sufficient food supply	3	4.28
8.	Why discouraged sometimes in vegetable production?		
	Drought	15	21.43
	High cost of inputs	43	61.42
	Climate change	5	7.14
	Attacked by rodents	2	2.86
	The soil is not suited to the crops	5	7.14

The socio-economic profile of the respondents

The table 2 shows the socio-economic profile of the respondents. It further shows that most of the respondent's occupations are in vegetable farming with 24 (34.28 %), followed by vegetable and corn

farmer (12 or 17.14%), vegetables, corn and fruit-bearing trees farmer (10 or 14.28%), vegetables and animal raiser (10 or 14.28%), vegetable and other plantation crops farmer (9 or 12.85%), vegetable, rice and corn farmer (3 or 4.28%) and the least vegetable

and rice farmer with 2 (2.86%). Geographically, Piat is sandy loam in its soil texture; this might be the reason why rice is the least produced because of plant suitability.

In terms of social participation, the majority of the growers are not a member of any organization with 62.9% while 37.1% were a member. This result confirms the study of Yadav (2009) reported that most of the beneficiaries (58%) were not members of any organization. It may be due to the fact that they may not be aware of the organizations or its benefits. On homeownership and home condition, 100% of the respondents owned their home while their home condition, 69 or 98.6% are made up of concrete and woods and only 1 or 1.4% are made up of concrete and

light materials. On the tenurial status, 69 or 98.6% have owned the land they till and only 1 or 1.4% is considered a tenant. The highest income among the commodity they are producing is on vegetables with 28 or 40% in all year round, followed by animals and vegetable production with 28.87% and the least is the production of rice and vegetables with 2.86%.

The respondents tend to go on vegetable farming is because it a source of their income and food with 60.4%, source of food (10 or 14.28%), easy to sell (10 or 14.28%), growing foods with the lesser expense (12 or 17.14%), the high price of vegetables in the market (5 or 7.14%), gives sufficient food supply (3 or 4.28%) and only 2 or 2.86% answered it is the prime commodity in the locality.

Table 3. Distribution of problems encountered by the respondents in farming activities.

Problems Encountered	Categories of respondents	
	Frequency	Rank
High cost of inputs	55	1
Very low price of the commodity	53	2
Drought	43	3
Typhoon	40	4
Pest Infestation	33	5
Flood	30	6
Insufficient government subsidies	28	7
High Labor cost	20	8
Scarcity of Labor	19	9
Low production due to organic farming	15	10
High cost of machine rentals	14	11
Young generations cannot withstand with hard labor of farming	5	12

The vegetable growers are sometimes discouraged from planting due to the high cost of inputs while their products can be sold at a minimum price.

Problems encountered by the respondents

Table 3 shows that most of the respondents encountered the following problems based on ranks; high cost of inputs, very low price of the commodity, drought, typhoon, pest infestation, flood, insufficient government subsidies, high cost of labor, low production due to organic farming, high cost of machine rentals and young generations cannot withstand with the hard labor of farming.

Conclusions

Based on the above findings, farmers should participate and be a member of such organizations to help them in marketing their products at a higher price. The vegetable growers' socio-economic status can be improved more by attending such training or seminars and looking into the possibility of adopting suitable technologies that will lessen the costs of their inputs and gain higher income.

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