



“Wat Ta Iman Supsuplay (We Are But Supplied Farmers)”: Understanding the Practice of *Pasuplay* System on Vegetable Production in Madaymen, Kibungan, Benguet

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Abstract

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Supply system in the agriculture sector is a form of informal credit system where supplier or landowners fund their supplied farmers in terms of farm inputs and land and the supplied farmers work for the suppliers. Using case-based study guided by the theories of empowerment (Foucault, 1980; Melkote & Steeves, 2001) and the understanding of feudalistic relationships present in agricultural production systems, the study aimed to understand and document the practice of ‘*Pasuplay* System’ on vegetable production in Madaymen, Kibungan, Benguet. The Gumpic family is the pioneer of the *Pasuplay* System in the area which started in 1985. They also have one of the highest supplied farmers with 20 farmers and are well-known in the *Pasuplay* business. The *Pasuplay* System as practiced by the Gumpic family and its supplied farmers characterized the system as job opportunity, a form of an informal credit system and as a source of living. It includes five stages, namely *ngalatan* (agreement) stage, *panag-uubla* (cropping) stage, *panag-aapit* (harvesting) stage, *panaglalako* (marketing) stage, and *panagtototal* (computation) stage. Although the system is important to both the supplier and supplied farmers because it contributes to their social and economic development as farmers, the processes involved control the ways of life of the supplied farmers. The problems identified and solutions recommended by both sides do not solve each other’s problems because the supplier’s intent is to maintain and control the system while the supplied farmers push for their survival in the system and the inclusion of conditions to cater their own needs.

Introduction

Agriculture is said to be the backbone of the economic system of a country. The rich in agricultural

resources provide employment opportunities to very large percentage of the population and provides resources for food and raw material for industries.

Philippines is dependent on agriculture because 70% of the population directly rely on it. Also, most of the Filipinos get their source of living from agriculture. In fact, about 50% of the total labor force are involved in agricultural activities (Kwa, 2001). In Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), the increase in the number of agricultural farms as reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority in 2004 could be partly attributed to the characteristics of the region, which is well-known for its agricultural products.

In Kibungan, Benguet, farming is the main source of livelihood. Historically, the early settlers of Kibungan during the 18th century contended themselves in cultivating *camote* or sweet potato in their *nem-a* or upland swiddens. The root crop, which has many varieties, has been the staple food since then. They also tended other root crops such as *gabi* or yam, legumes, and rice as they raised chickens and other animals. They brought these animals along wherever they would transfer to look for the new swidden farms. Through this situation, it is believed that commerce and trading started during this time.

Also, agriculture plays a dominant role in Barangay Madaymen in Kibungan. Most of the families depend on farming as their main source of living. The crops produced by the farmers include potatoes, cabbage, carrot, radish, strawberries, and lettuce, most of which are commercially grown.

It was observed in Madaymen that despite farming as the main source of living for the people, there are still a significant number of farmers who do not own lands. They work for landlords who own hectares of lands. As observed, the community suffered continuously in this agricultural production system and remain in this state for years. In this sense, the landlord-tenant relationship still exists which is formed under the feudalistic agricultural system (Department of Agrarian Reform [DAR], 2010). This is a kind of agricultural stratification where landowners own the majority of the land and agricultural activities are not properly distributed among people.

In vegetable production in Madaymen, the landlord-tenant relationship is observed in the practice of the *Pasuplay* System which is generally known as the Supply System (Yubos, 2006). It was started when the number of migrants began to increase, which led to the establishment of more businesses (LGU Kibungan, 2017). In addition, some

farmers do not have enough cash to cultivate their land and there are farmers who were landless. Batani (2013) emphasized that the *Pasuplay* System is a version of an informal credit system that has evolved into several schemes, depending on the norm of the place and personal relationships between a supplier and the one being supplied. On the other hand, there are negotiations that occur in the landlord-tenant relationship, which may allow certain agreements that would benefit both the supplier and supplied farmers.

Madaymen has an estimated 20 dominant suppliers in agricultural production. Among these is the Gumpic family who is the pioneer of the *Pasuplay* System in the community. They also have one of the highest supplied farmers in the community with 20 farmers.

To understand the *Pasuplay* System in Madaymen, the study sought to: determine the profile of the Gumpic family, as the pioneer and supplied farmers in the *Pasuplay* System; characterize the *Pasuplay* System as practiced by the Gumpic family and supplied farmers in terms of meaning, process, and purpose; determine the implications of the *Pasuplay* System in the socio-economic status of the farmers; and determine the problems encountered by the supplier and supplied farmers in the *Pasuplay* System.

Methodology

The study is a qualitative case-based study that was guided by the theories of empowerment (Foucault, 1980; Melkote & Steeves, 2001) and the understanding of the feudalistic relationships present in agricultural production systems.

The study was conducted in Madaymen, which is located in the northern part of Kibungan, Benguet. It occupies 37% of the total municipalities land area where *Pasuplay* System on vegetable production is being practiced. Also, it is where the Gumpic family established their own *Pasuplay* System.

According to the Barangay Madaymen Profile (LGU-Kibungan, 2017), farmers in the area comprise 30% migrants, which include the families from other ethnic origins such as Ibaloy (15%), Ilocano (7%), Visaya (5%), Cebuano (2%), and Kankanaey (97%),



who comprise the highest number of individuals.

The key informants of the study were the members of the Gumpic family, the pioneer of the *Pasuplay* System in Madaymen, specifically Lilia Gumpic, Rosario Gumpic, and Emilio Gumpic, who has led the system up to the present. Moreover, the 20 supplied farmers of the family served as the second set of respondents whose names are withheld to protect their identities (Table 1).

The data were gathered through interview schedules and personal observations. In-depth interview was conducted to the respondents

individually using guide questions. Observations on the various farming activities of the farmers was done. As such, the research observed the actual situation of the system including the *alluyon*, a practice embedded in the *Pasuplay* System where the supplied farmers are required to help their co-supplied farmer in harvesting vegetables and others will do the same in return during their harvest time in December 2017. Also, the research observed the *panagtototal* (computation) stage that was conducted on December 28, 2017.

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis and discussed in a descriptive form.

Table 1

Profile of Respondents, Date of Interview, and Venue of Interview

| Respondent | Sex | Age | Home Address | Date of Interview | Venue of Interview |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Respondent 1 | F | 23 | Madaymen, Kibungan, Benguet | December 17, 2018 | Namul-acan, Madaymen |
| Respondent 2 | M | 21 | Sagpat, Kibungan, Benguet | December 13, 2017 | Namul-acan, Madaymen |
| Respondent 3 | F | 34 | Central, Kapangan, Benguet | December 17, 2017 | Namul-acan, Madaymen |
| Respondent 4 | F | 44 | Madaymen, Kibungan, Benguet | December 17, 2017 | Namul-acan, Madaymen |
| Respondent 5 | M | 36 | Burgos, La Union | December 13, 2017 | Namul-acan, Madaymen |
| Respondent 6 | M | 54 | Burgos, La Union | December 13, 2017 | Masala, Madaymen |
| Respondent 7 | M | 56 | Lubo, Kibungan, Benguet | December 20, 2017 | Masala, Madaymen |
| Respondent 8 | M | 27 | Madaymen, Kibungan, Benguet | December 20, 2017 | Namul-acan, Madaymen |
| Respondent 9 | M | 30 | Lubo, Kibungan, Benguet | December 21, 2017 | Nalcob, Madaymen |
| Respondent 10 | M | 34 | Calasipan, Atok, Benguet | December 23, 2017 | Daopyongo, Madaymen |
| Respondent 11 | F | 40 | Madaymen, Kibungan, Benguet | December 23, 2017 | Namul-acan, Madaymen |
| Respondent 12 | F | 25 | Sagpat, Kibungan, Benguet | December 23, 2017 | Nalicob, Madaymen |
| Respondent 13 | F | 24 | Naguey, Atok, Benguet | December 18, 2017 | Nalicob, Madaymen |
| Respondent 14 | M | 34 | Central, Kapangan, Benguet | December 18, 2017 | Masala, Madaymen |
| Respondent 15 | M | 24 | Central, Kapangan, Benguet | December 20, 2017 | Daopyongo, Madaymen |
| Respondent 16 | M | 19 | Central, Kapangan, Benguet | December 13, 2017 | Proper Madaymen |
| Respondent 17 | M | 26 | Sagpat, Kibungan, Benguet | December 28, 2017 | Masala, Madaymen |
| Respondent 18 | M | 49 | Naguey, Atok, Benguet | December 28, 2017 | Proper Madaymen |
| Respondent 19 | M | 59 | Lubo, Kibungan, Benguet | December 28, 2017 | Masala, Madaymen |
| Respondent 20 | M | 32 | Burgos, La Union | December 30, 2017 | Masala, Madaymen |



Results and Discussion

Socio-demographic Profile of the Gumpic Family and their Supplied Farmers

Gumpic family as the pioneer of the Pasuplay System. The Gumpic family has eight family members which include six males and two females. All males in the family are obliged to work in the farm where they need to prepare as early as 5 a.m.. When the head of the family, Baday Gumpic, died in 1998, Lilia Gumpic led the *Pasuplay* System by herself. She managed seven supplied farmers by providing their needs in farming at the same time mothering her five children.

As to formal education, all the Gumpic family's children are literate even though most of them did not finish their studies. All children are married. Most of the members of the Gumpic family have been into farming up to the present. The first child, Sario Gumpic, is also a supplier while the other children manage their own businesses in vegetable production.

As to their experience in farming, all members of the Gumpic family are into farming for not less than 20 years. The Gumpic family was the first to practice the *Pasuplay* System and because of this, they reaped the fame and fortune in the community.

Lilia Gumpic stated: "*Galden di panganan mi. Uray adi nan skwe-eskwelan anann-ak, nakaadaadal da abe nu su yat di galden gapu ngarud ta say nadakdak-an da abe* (Agriculture is where we get our food. Though our children did not finish their education, they were able to learn how to farm because it has been the practice they grew up to)."

Their extensive experience in farming influenced them to be more knowledgeable in farm activities. Also, the children are engaged in farming which led to the continuous flourishing of the business.

Milestones of the Gumpic family in farming. The *Pasuplay* System of the Gumpic family is a long history of hardwork.

Since the Gumpic family used to belonging to the landless families in Madaymen, Baday and his

parents depended on *purdiya* or paid labor per day in the 1940s. As laborers, the family members rendered service to the farm owners or the *kadangyan* or *baknang* (kankanaey term for rich or wealthy) from 6 a.m. until 5 p.m.. They planted various vegetables such as cabbage, carrots, and potatoes. They also cultivated their relatives' land to plant *gabi* or yam and others.

At the age of 15, Lilia Guilanda (Gumpic), a farmer from Sakaang, Sagpat, Kibungan went to Buguias, Benguet to earn money for her education. She then became Baday's wife in the 1950s. Just like Baday's situation, her family does not own land in their place. They also depended on *purdiya* from the *kadangyan*. They lived together as a couple and decided to stay in Madaymen, Kibungan. They both worked as laborers where they earned 2 centavos a day. After 28 years, Baday and Lilia established the *Pasuplay* System where they started with two supplied farmers. At first, they were having troubles in supplying the personal, garden, and financial needs of their supplied farmers. Accordingly, their first two farmers were single males who were from Madaymen and each of them cultivated two terraces of vegetable farmland of the Gumpics.

After five years, the first two male supplied farmers were married and recruited five other landless farmers from the community to join the *Pasuplay* System, increasing the workers to seven.

Baday died in 1998 because of illness and Lilia had to take over. She led the *Pasuplay* System by herself. She led the supplied farmers and from seven, the supplied farmers became 10. Aside from being landless farmers in the community, the ten supplied farmers were also migrants from Kapangan and Atok in Benguet and from La Union.

Within the 15 years, the family was able to gather 10 supplied farmers, which totaled to 20 in 2015.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the supplied farmers. Out of the 20 supplied farmers, majority (14) are males with only six females. This shows that the *Pasuplay* System of the Gumpic family is dominated by males because men are physically stronger than women in farming as stated by Burton (2012) and David (2016). However, the data shows that females are also active in the *Pasuplay* System. Moreover, most (14) of the farmers are engaged in the *Pasuplay* System from ages 19 to 39 while only



one is aged 59. Farmers chose to enter the system since they cannot afford to support their education and the system has become a way for them to earn money for their future education.

Most (14) of the respondents are from Kibungan and the rest are migrants from Atok and Kapangan in Benguet, and La Union Province. As to civil status, the data shows that there is a big difference on the numbers between the single farmers (5) and the married farmers (14). It implies that married farmers consist the majority because they have families to support with. Meanwhile, half of the respondents did not finish their primary and secondary education and only five of them graduated from elementary and high school. On the other hand, there are farmers who finished their college degrees (4) and one who finished a vocational degree but still opted to work in the *Pasuplay* System due to lack of job opportunities.

The time spent by the supplied farmers in the system is from two to six years while the oldest respondent spent 31 years under the *Pasuplay* System of the Gumpic family. This reflects that the farmers have been into farming for several years but they are still dependent and still availing the system until today.

Characteristics of the *Pasuplay* System

Meanings of the *Pasuplay* System to the supplier and supplied farmers. The *Pasuplay* System, according to the supplier, is a job opportunity to those people who want to do farming but do not own a land and cannot afford to buy the needed farm inputs. It is also a form of an informal credit system where Lilia Gumpic funds her supplied farmers in the form of farm fertilizers, seeds, and the land for the production of vegetables. This also includes shelter, food for consumption, and other kitchen needs that are consumed by the supplied farmers.

In the *Pasuplay* System, there is also comradeship or a give-and-take relationship between the supplier and supplied farmers. It is the responsibility of the Gumpic family to provide all the needed materials and inputs of her supplied farmers. In return, the 20 supplied farmers will produce commercial vegetables using the inputs that were provided by their supplier. The companionship between the supplier and the supplied farmers was also observed during the *alluyon* where they help each other in harvesting their crops or vegetables.

Respondent 1 said: “*Pasuplay kunada, ited da gamin amin nga mausar pati makan. Kasla ited da amin nga expenses mo ngem makigudua da metlang idyay apit. Pasuplay, ited da gamin amin. Kasla ngay makitrabaho ka lang (Pasuplay, as they say, is a system where all the needed supplies, even food are provided. They provide almost all the expenses but they take half of the harvest. It is the same as paid labor).*”

The finding supports that of Batani (2013) that the supplier or financier shoulders the input costs and of Balisacan (2010) that suppliers supply seeds to farmers.

On the other hand, most of the Gumpic family's supplied farmers acknowledged the *Pasuplay* System as their main source of livelihood because it is where they earn money to support their children's education. It is also where they get financial assistance for their basic needs such as food and clothing. This shows that the *Pasuplay* System is a valuable asset to farmers (Bamma, 1991) with little and limited capital that is necessary for the proper functioning of farm production.

Purpose of the *Pasuplay* Sytem. On the side of the supplier, Lilia elaborated that the main reason why she continues the *Pasuplay* System is that she is a widow and she needs sustenance because of her poor health condition. In addition, her children are all married and cannot help her constantly. Rosario, his son, stressed that the purpose of the *Pasuplay* System is to bring the farmers together to help their family to produce and yield commercial vegetables. In essence, it implied that the supplied farmers are employed for an intensive tasks, which contradicts Balisacan (2010) who stated that agricultural wage laborers in developing countries are employed for simple tasks but not care-intensive activities such as plowing, water, pest management, and fertilizer application.

Meanwhile, the purpose of the *Pasuplay* System, according to the supplied farmers, is also a source of living. According to the migrant supplied farmers, the reason why they avail of the said system is because they do not have any land to cultivate in their own places and do not have any job opportunity in their community due to lack of formal education. As Respondent 2 stated, “*Makisuplay ta adi tan awan met ti garden ta nga paggardenan kuma. Isu met pangalaan ti pagurnungan (We join the Pasuplay because we have no land to cultivate. It is where we earn money and save as well).*” The purpose of the *Pasuplay*



System for them is providing the landless farmers an opportunity to produce vegetables by nurturing other people's land.

The findings show that this kind of agricultural stratification (DAR, 2010) where landowners owned the majority of the land is characterized by serfdom or landlord-vassal relationship (Coronel, 2005).

Process of the Pasuplay System

There are five stages in the *Pasuplay* System: *ngalatan* (agreement), *panag-uubla* (cropping), *panag-aapit* (harvesting), *panaglalako* (marketing), and *panagtototal* (computation of share).

'Ngalatan/istoryaan' (agreement/face-to-face communication) stage. This stage involves the face-to-face communication or interpersonal communication between the land owner or the supplier and the supplied farmer. The farmer goes to the house of the supplier and tell his purpose of entering the *Pasuplay*. If the supplier agrees, they will proceed to the proper *ngalatan* stage which is where discussions are made. The *ngalatan* is usually done inside the house of the supplier. Here, they will make an agreement regarding the land tenancy, the different expenses that will be outlaid to the supplied farmer, the benefits of the farmers, the responsibilities of the farmers, and the rules and regulations of the supplier. This corroborates with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2008) that there is the assumption that parties who negotiate agree in at least one fundamental respect; they share a belief that their respective purposes will be better served by entering into negotiation with the other part.

Bagbaga or giving pieces of advice to the supplied farmer is done by the supplier especially if the supplied farmer is single who is, according to the past experiences of the supplier, sometimes irresponsible.

Agreement on the land tenancy. The supplier and the supplied farmer sit down and discuss on agreements of the *Pasuplay*. Although there are no papers involved in the discussion, they will make verbal agreements on the land tenancy of the farmland that will be cultivated by the supplied farmer. According to Lilia Gumpic, her basis in pricing the farmland is in accordance with the farmland size and the distance of the farm from the highway. The bigger the farmland size is, the higher the rent that

the supplied farmer has to pay. Also, the closer the farmland is to the highway, the higher the rent.

Agreement on the expenses. The Gumpic family's *Pasuplay* System includes three kinds of expenses that are being outlaid to their supplied farmer. These are: garden expenses; personal expenses; and personal cash advances. The garden expenses include the different farm inputs such as fertilizers, seeds, and spray chemicals. The personal expenses, on the other hand, are those expenditures that will be owned by the farmer and also for the personal consumption of the farmer. This includes the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), food specifically rice for consumption, and other farm tools and equipment such as hose, spray, drums, grab hoes, speeds, water pumps, and rain bursts. On the other hand, cash advances are asked by the supplied farmer from his/her supplier especially in emergency situations such as for hospitalization and *rigat* or hardships of the family. In this stage, the supplier explains that the *bingay* or the share of both parties (supplier and supplied farmer) is based on the profit of the sold crops of the supplied farmers. Also, the personal expenses and the cash advances of the supplied farmer will be deducted from the supplied farmer's *bingay* (share).

The agreement between the supplier and the supplied farmers supports FAO (2008) that negotiating parties have come to the conclusion, at least for a moment, that they may be able to satisfy their individual goals or concerns more favorably by coming to an agreed upon solution with the other side than by attempting to meet their goal.

Rules and regulations of the supplier. The supplier explains and enumerates all the said expenses. Lilia also sets her standards regarding the cash advance. She elaborated that the other suppliers in the community follow the motto: "*Nu magay apit, magay cash* (When there is no harvest, there is no cash)." This means that a supplied farmer can only acquire a cash advance if he or she has a harvest. In that sense, a supplier can only give a cash advance at the end of the cropping season. In Barangay Madaymen, the cropping season can be two to three times a year; therefore, the supplied farmer can only advance cash during those times.

The Gumpic family, however, gives cash advance to their supplied farmers in emergency situations regardless of the cropping season schedule. They



simply set the basis for giving them cash advances. When it comes to the use of vehicles for transporting crops to the market, the supplier stated that during the pre-harvest, the supplied farmers should set a schedule at least two days before the desired harvest date so that the vehicles to be used to transport the crops will be properly prepared.

From Steeves and Melkote's (2001) kinds of relational power, the idea of 'Power over' is implied in the *Pasuplay* System because the suppliers used their power to have access to formal decision-making process.

Responsibilities of the supplied farmer.

The supplier affirms that the supplied farmers are responsible for the security, cultivation, and nurturing of the farmland. Since the shelter provided by the supplier is free, the farmer is responsible in maintaining it and is obliged to help his or her co-supplied farmers during the harvesting time through *alluyon* so that he or she will also be helped by his or her co-farmers in return. Lilia added that the supplied farmers are responsible for the meals of his or her co-farmers during *alluyon*.

Introduction of the newcomer to his/her co-supplied farmer. Although this part of the *ngalatan* stage is not always conducted because most of the supplied farmers already know each other, the Gumpic family ensures that their supplied farmers are comfortable with each other. Lilia introduces her supplied farmers to newcomers. Through this, the newcomer can seek help from the co-supplied farmers whenever they have inquiries about the system.

Farm visitation. After all the conversations, Lilia and the rest of the family guide the supplied farmers to their designated farmland. During the farm visitation, the supplier also turns over the farm tools and equipment such as hose, spray, drums, grab hoes, speeds, and water pumps, and rain bursts, if necessary. According to Lilia, the *ngalatan* stage usually takes half a day starting from the agreement on the land tenancy up to the farm visitation.

'Panag-uubla' (cropping) stage. This is the longest stage because it covers the whole year, which is divided every four months. This stage is where the farmers cultivate and nurture the land where they plant seeds, fertilize the crops, and manure the crops.

During this stage, the supplier has no involvement

on how the farmer does his or her farming activity. The supplier just provides the needed farm inputs as requested by the farmer. Therefore, the whole activities of the *panag-uubla* stage are shouldered by the supplied farmer. On the other hand, he or she can also pay laborers to help him or her when he or she cannot do everything by himself or herself.

In terms of monitoring, according to the farmers, their supplier is not monitoring their farms to see if the plants are properly grown and cultivated. According to the supplier, she is too old to monitor her supplied farmer's farms. Aside from her weak physical body, she assumes that her farmers manage their farms properly.

Since the *bingay* or the sharing is based on the harvest of the supplied farmer, the supplier is confident that the supplied farmers will do their best. This is because, when the harvest is low, there is low profit and the supplied farmers might not have any share, instead, they might incur debts.

This finding corroborates what Sanchez (2016) said that landowners or suppliers' privilege is not to work but simply to enjoy the fruits of the land that is made productive by the supplied farmer.

'Panag-aapit' (harvesting) stage. Harvesting is usually done two to three times a year depending on the number of times a farmer planted.

Before the vegetables are harvested, the supplied farmers will set a schedule of the harvest. They will consult the supplier regarding the availability of the vehicle for transportation, which is owned by the supplier to haul their products with. Afterwards, if the vehicle is available on their desired schedule, they will verify from their co-supplied farmers if there are no overlapping scheduled harvest on the desired date. When there is no conflict, their desired date of harvest will be plotted on the schedule. The basis in setting the schedule in harvesting depends on the availability of the vehicle, the condition or the state of the crop, the price of the crop in the market, and the availability of the date of harvest. *Alluyon* is usually observed in this stage. The Gumpic family's supplied farmers gather together and help each other to harvest their co-supplied farmers' vegetables. In return, when they harvest their vegetables, the others do the same for each of them. As part of the *alluyon*, the supplied farmer host is responsible for the meals of his companions since all of the supplied



farmers are required to help in harvesting.

‘Panaglalako’ (marketing) stage. After harvesting the crops, the products will be sold in the market specifically at the La Trinidad Vegetable Trading Post. The Gumpic family’s disposer is in-charge of dealing with the middlemen who will buy the crops. These middlemen will then sell these crops in Manila and other places.

According to the farmers, if the vegetable’s price is PhP 30 per kilogram and above, the disposer will get PhP 3 per kilogram as his or her commission as a disposer. The farmer also helps in sorting and packing the vegetables to ensure security and safety of the products. It is the regulation of the Gumpic family’s *Pasuplay* System to keep the receipts of the products that have been sold until the day of computation arrives. According to the supplier, they only show to the supplied farmers the receipts during the *Panagtototal* Stage.

The situation resembles the ‘hacienda system’ (Telesur, 2009) which continues to loiter in the Philippines where families with strong connections to international capitalist markets and overseas interests continue to exploit farm workers in feudal or semi-feudal conditions on vast estates where they enjoy monopoly control.

‘Panagtototal’ (computation of share) stage. This stage is also called by the farmers as the ‘judgment stage’ because they will know if they have share from the crops. During the *panagtototal* stage, all the supplied farmers are required to participate and witness the computation. It is usually done every last month of the year after all crops are harvested. Usually, only the first and second harvests are computed since the third harvest is yet to be done. If in any case, another computation will be conducted to farmers who have third harvest, they will be done by the farmer and supplier only.

The farmers revealed that the *panagtototal* will pursue regardless if their crops are destroyed by typhoons. Together, they have to compute all the total profit of the harvested crop then deduct it from the total expenses consumed for raising the crops and the rent of the cultivated land.

The formulae of the computation according to the farmers is shown as:

$$1. \text{ Profit} = \text{Total sales from the crops}/2$$

$$2. \text{ Supplier's } \textit{bingay} = \text{Profit}$$

$$3. \text{ Supplied farmers } \textit{bingay} = \text{Profit} - (\text{personal expenses cash advances} + \text{farmland rent} + \text{garden expenses})$$

There are three formulae used by the Gumpic family and their supplied farmers in the *panagtototal* stage. The total sales of the crops is divided by half (50/50) and be given as shares of the supplier and the supplied farmers. From the supplied farmer’s *bingay* are deducted, the personal expenses, cash advances, the farmland rent, and the garden expenses. Only then the actual *bingay* will be given to the supplied farmers. This conform to the study of Yubos (2006) where net-income sharing arrangement is used by both traders/suppliers and the supplied farmers as 50/50 depending on how much was shared by the trader on the expenses.

The judgment of having *bingay* or share will depend upon the result of the computation. The supplied farmers will receive a *bingay* or share if their sales surpassed the garden expenses. However, if the garden expenses are higher than the sales, the supplied farmer will incur *utang* or debt to the supplier, which will be paid the next year or next cropping season. In this case, the supplied farmer is at the losing end because only the supplier will have share during the *panagtototal*. This is the result where the supplier profited from the *patong* or add-on price outlaid in the farm input. This validates what Agoncillo (1990) said that under the system of feudalism, a dominant ruler receives favors as payment or reward. In the agricultural system, the favor is work.

As an agreement, all supplied farmers should be present during the *panagtototal* with their lists so that if there will be queries, they will directly address this to their supplier. But on the side of the farmers, if they feel that they will not have a share, they choose not to go because they do not want to feel bad when their companions receive their share while they do not have any.

One of the supplied farmers confessed that his highest share was PhP 400,000 but it was divided into two so he shared PhP 200,000. However, most of the time, he ends up in debt because of bankruptcy. According to the supplied farmers, the high *patong* or interest of the farm inputs being outlaid by



their supplier burdens them and may affect the quality of their vegetables. The situation implies that discrepancy can arise from poor cost-sharing arrangements of the costs of inputs that directly affect yields are not shared in the same proportion as the income production.

Respondent 10 disclosed:

Naragsak kami pay adi nu panagtototal, no ammu mi ay way bingayem mi. Ngem no puro bagsak presyo, uray haanen. Wat ta et kaseseg-ang nu ilan pai eman gagait ay way bingayen da. Asi uway na adi kasin si esay tawen (We are happy during the *panagtototal* especially if we have a share but if we know that we will not get some shares, we feel bad. We pity ourselves especially if we witness our co-farmers with their share. But still, we hope to be blessed next year).

Implications of the Pasuplay System in the Socio-economic Status of the Farmers

The Gumpic family's lifestyle was upgraded and the *Pasuplay* System enhanced their economic status because they have the opportunity to save money and other resources for their future.

Since Lilia cannot cultivate the land by herself, the *Pasuplay* System helped her (through her supplied farmers) till the land. She gets her income from this which she uses to buy medicines, food and clothing, and to pay the taxes on her lands.

Lilia also stated that the system helps her to survive especially after her husband died from illness. Aside from her, other members of her family have benefited and are benefiting from the *Pasuplay* System. Her children were able to build their own houses from the income of the *Pasuplay*. They can send their children to school and even afford to travel abroad.

This shows that the family gets high profit from the *Pasuplay* System. With the profit these families are gaining, it shows that their supplied farmers contribute much to their economic status.

As to the supplied farmers, they developed the following values: sense of responsibility; friendship or kinship; and courage. From Rowlands' (1998)

overlapping dimensions, it was implied that the supplied farmers are personally empowered because they develop their individual consciousness and confidence to confront oppression.

On the other hand, some of the supplied farmers stated that while they are at the losing end of this kind of economic arrangement, they also think that it is better than nothing all.

"No manpersonal ka gamin, narigat ay manbudget si usar si garden isunga man Pasuplay et ta at least ay way manpautang (If we insist personal farming, it is hard for us to finance our needs. At least in the *Pasuplay* System because we can join the informal credit)," stated Respondent 5.

However, there is still a feudal relationship existing between the supplier and supplied farmers. Inside the *Pasuplay* System, there is still a winner and there is still a loser. The supplied farmers remain to be under the control of the supplier. In essence, they are not totally empowered. Also, the supplied farmers can never get out of the system because of the cycle of indebtedness.

"Uray sinoy layad ay kumaan ta mansarili ngem magay iyat tan wat tan supsuplay, aw wat ta eman supsuplay. Wat ta eman supsuplay kayman (Even if we like to get out of the system and have our own lands, we cannot do it because we are only supplied farmers. Yes, we are only the supplied farmers, only the supplied farmers)," said Respondent 6.

From that statement, it is implied that the supplied farmers can never get out of that system where the supplied farmers will remain to be supplied farmers. Only a few can become a supplier in the end because there is no opportunity to achieve this. As Foucault (1980) stated, empowerment is impossible if power cannot change. This also corroborates with the study of Rozario (1997) that empowerment is based on empowering the individual, not on encouraging collective social action by the oppressed where farmers are vulnerable to exploitations by dominant group like traders, manufacturers, and politicians.

The findings also support Maramba's (2009) that 80 % of the nation's wealth is firmly in the hands of a mere 20 % of the population while the rest have to make do with what is left for their survival and daily sustenance.



Problems Encountered by the Supplier and the Supplied Farmers in the *Pasuplay* System

The listed problems of the supplier in the *Pasuplay* System includes the following: low price of vegetables; poor and ineffective management of farmland; and some farmers are very dependent on the system. On the other hand, the supplied farmers encounter problems which include availability of equipment in the production of the crops, high transportation fee, high additional price in the farm inputs, the misuse of the *alluyon* in the *Pasuplay* System, high cost of farmland rent, untimely occurrence of typhoons and the effects of climate change, and lack of transparency of receipts.

Low price of vegetables. As a supplier, Lilia affirmed that the low vegetable prices in the market contribute to the bankruptcy of her supplied farmers. She added that her supplied farmers experienced the PhP 3 market price of cabbage in 2006 to 2009, which left them with debt to the supplier. She also admitted this situation affected her physically and emotionally.

She affirmed:

Ad-adoy nateng da eman ngem tinamaanay bagsak ay presyo, anya ngay garod, dakami ay supplier di mananos. Siyempre no mailak eman adi ay nabancrupt di suplay ko ket naupayak met abe ah, sayang di enka nanrigriagtan si pigay buan. Unina mo bumawi kas second crop et siya ay way kabalinan na (The farmers had tons of harvest but they hit the low price. As a result, we, suppliers had to adjust. Of course, I feel sad if the farmers will experience bankruptcy because their resources are wasted because of the low price. However, I am still hoping that he will settle his bankruptcy during the next cropping season).

Poor and ineffective management of the farmland. The supplier explained that farmers, specifically the single farmers, usually leave their farms uncultivated especially after harvesting. Also, the supplier emphasized how the supplied farmers do not manage their farm properly through the “one day billionaire” notion wherein they spend their money for good-for-nothing matters such as liquor and other vices. This usually occurs when the farmers hit

good prices in the market. The supplier added that they (supplied farmers) only go home when they have no more money to spend.

Some of the farmers are very dependent on the *Pasuplay* System. According to the supplier, some of the farmers are very dependent in the *Pasuplay* System for their needs. They have no other source of income except the *Pasuplay* System. Only few of the supplied farmers have some other sources of income such as cultivating flowers like astromelia and cactus, planting strawberries and pechay which they sell in churches and in schools. This shows that definition of empowerment as a multi-dimensional process (Foucault, 1980) because the supplier gained control over their own lives.

In relation to this, the findings support the statement of Miguel (2006) that farmers are so dependent on the trader-supplier that they do not strive to earn and save for their own capital because they cannot pay their credits or loans to the suppliers.

Availability of equipment in the production of the crops. The availability of trucks to haul the farmers’ yields is one of the existing problems in the *Pasuplay* System. The needed vehicles to haul vegetables are limited because the supplier has only two vehicles for the 20 supplied farmers. Consequently, the harvesting will be delayed and the quality of the vegetables will be sacrificed. This also sometimes results to misunderstanding among the farmers due to the scheduling during harvest time.

“Kurang nga talagay lugan karkaro no man-gigiddan kami ay mankolta et man inunaan si schedule gapo sin lugan. Asi bumayag paylang di driver et wat say man delay si nateng. Karkaro no enggay mabmabtak di repolyo kaspangarigan (The vehicle is not enough to haul our vegetables especially if we harvest at the same time due to the condition of our products. As a result, we have “first come, first serve” basis in the scheduling of our harvest time),” said Respondent 6.

High transportation fee. Most of the supplied farmers said that the transportation cost is too high. They revealed that the transportation fee costs PhP 2.50 per kilo, therefore, if the farmer harvested 3,000 kilograms of cabbage, PhP 7,500 will be deducted from the sales for the transportation fee.

“Talaga ay lugi di suplay. Mejo marigatan kami si plete. Karkaro no nababay nateng adi et, ay enggay



magay mabay-an en dakami adi. Ngem anyangay. Basta uway na adis di (We, the supplied farmers are really the losers. We are having trouble in the high cost of the transportation of our products especially if the market price is low, nothing will be left to us. However we cannot do anything. Come what may),” expressed Respondent 11.

High additional price in the farm inputs.

Another problem is the high interest of the farm inputs. For example, if the *similya* or the seedlings cost PhP 300 in the market, the supplier will put an additional price of PhP 150. The farmers cannot do anything but to avail of the input because they are not allowed to buy directly from the commercial farm supplies or in the market. It is the responsibility of the supplier to buy from the market and then the supplied farmer will get these from the stock room.

“Nadagsen paran dakami din patong si similya, maibomba, kamanadi. Angsan din hundred plus ay ipatong da. Siyempre marigatan kami adi tan siguarado ay bassit di mabigay mi nu sa ay i-deduct da sin panagtototal (The high interest on the farm inputs is a burden to us. It is, for sure, a trouble during the *Panagtototal* because we will not have a share if ever),” stated Respondent 12.

The problem encountered by the supplied farmers is similar to the findings of Yubos (2006) that high interest charged by the suppliers leave very little cash for their family use which then tends to tie the farmers to the suppliers, thus, they keep on depending on the suppliers.

The misuse of *alluyon* in the *Pasuplay* System.

Some of the farmers are not participative during the *alluyon* for some reasons. One reason is that there may be emergency situations such as accident, if one of the family members is sick and or hospitalized, and or a family member dies. This can affect the speed of finishing the work.

Respondent 1 revealed:

Nu panagkakarga et adam ladta maiwasan ay dindoy way maun unaa, way masingsingitan. Wada gamin ngay idi denge na ay nababan presyo yan syempre kababa yan awni kanana. Intuno ngumina, sidoy ya makocontest da abe ay ngumina yan awan aw sak en baw kanan da. Syempre imbista sik a

kumay mankortad niman, Kaman maob obertekan ka ngay (When hauling the vegetables, we cannot avoid that the farmers contest especially if they heard that the price of the vegetable is good but when the price descends on their harvest they will turn down and that causes reshuffling of the schedule. As a result, there will be misunderstanding among the farmers).

High cost of the farmland rent. Most of the supplied farmers affirmed that their rent is too high and the basis in pricing the land rent is not fair to the supplied farmers.

“No maipanggep si abang talaga ay nadagsen. Ngem an anusan adi hahaha. Basta et pumakan da eman (When it comes to the land rent, the cost is really high. However, we cannot do anything [laughing]. We just have to live with it. As long as we survive in it),” stated Respondent 13.

The situation shows that the supplier monopolizes the rent of the land. This strengthens the statement of Gonzales (2012) that the economic advantages and opportunities are automatically bestowed upon, enjoyed and, in most cases, monopolized by the feudal elites, invincible in their coats of mail of power. This condition is controlled by a cabal that manipulates a locale’s economic ambiance.

Untimely occurrence of typhoons or the effect of climate change and attacks of diseases to the crops.

Traditionally, the supplied farmers plant root crops such as carrots and potatoes from January to May because these crops can survive during dry or summer seasons. Leafy vegetables are also the best plants to produce for the second crop which is from June to September because these are considered the wet seasons. For the third crop, farmers can produce vegetables that are suitable for the dry or wet seasons. However, the unexpected occurrence of typhoons with strong winds and days of heavy rains destroy their vegetables.

The farmers have been delaying their harvest. They wait until the typhoon stops. Experts say that delays in harvesting will adversely affect the moisture content and purity of the crops thereby dropping the prices in the market.

Lack of transparency of receipts. The



transparency of the receipts is also observed as a problem in the system. As stated earlier, only the disposer and the supplier can only see the receipts of the sold products in the marketing stage. It was stated by the supplier that they will let the farmers see the receipt during the *panagtototal* but not during the marketing stage. However, on the supplied farmer's side, they know that they have the right to see the receipts of their sold products but they cannot do anything when this is not done by the suppliers because it is the regulations of their supplier.

Respondent 8 revealed, “*Nu sin udom met eman ay manpasuplay et ipaila day resibo ngem si boss et maga, wat adi sin panagtototal asi ilan. Wat et adin igegenek tan anyangay wat ta met eman suplay. Asi uway na adis di* (Other suppliers show receipts to their supplied farmers but in our case, we can only see it during the *panagtototal*. We just keep silent because we are just supplied farmers. Come what may).”

In this manner, the supplied farmers are not empowered because they are voiceless. Generally, the problems encountered by the supplied farmers support Bamma (1991) who explained that in terms of credit assistance, small farmers are considered as poor credit risks in the rural financial markets. Their capacity to repay agricultural loans incurred is heavily exposed to various uncontrollable factors like calamities, pests and diseases, market prices, and others.

Also, it shows that Gumpic family is very powerful that they have the ability to influence and control their supplied farmers. This supports Foucault's (1980) definition of power that is often related to the ability of a person to make others do what they want, regardless of their own wishes or interests, and the Asean Today (2017) where power is observed when families dominated the land.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: (1) the Gumpic family is famous in Madaymen, Kibungan when it comes to social and economic status; thus, considered one of the most influential suppliers in the community based on their experience in farming and how the family practices the *Pasuplay* System; (2) the processes involved in the *Pasuplay* System controls

the ways of life of the supplied farmers while; there are negotiations that occur in the system, the supplied farmers in the process is still at the losing end; (3) the *Pasuplay* System is both important to the supplier and supplied farmers because it contributes to their social and economic development as farmers; (4) though there are positive effects on the social and economic status of the farmers, the *Pasuplay* System incurs various problems that demotivate farmers to own their own lands; (5) the *bingay* is not fair because it is solely based on the apit or harvest which the only person who has control is the supplier, nevertheless, the supplier still gains regardless of the amount of apit in the *Pasuplay* System; and, (6) the *alluyon* is better than the *Pasuplay* System because it is not as oppressive as the *Pasuplay* System and it is an Indigenous practice that is based on values.

Recommendations

Since the Gumpic family is influential through the *Pasuplay* System, the community may strengthen the system to help other people to gain their own lands.

Farmers may consider other sources of income instead of just the *Pasuplay* so that they will not be so very dependent on this system.

In the operation of the vegetable production, the supplier may consider the recommendations of the supplied farmers especially on the problems of lack of transparency of receipts, the farmland rent, and the high interest in farm inputs. Further, the supplied farmers may continue to manage their farms properly as recommended by their supplier.

If the suppliers intend to generally help the supplied farmers, they should consider monitoring the farms and plants of the farmers so that they can share in solving problems that they may encounter during the stages of the *Pasuplay*.

Policy advocacy through the Local Government Unit may enter in the *Pasuplay* System especially in regulating ordinances so that the system will be both fair to the supplier and supplied farmer.

Finally, further studies is recommended especially in assessing the social impact of the *Pasuplay* System of different suppliers in Madaymen, Kibungan and also to some areas in the Cordillera where the same system is practiced.



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