



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**AN ASSESSMENT OF FARMERS' ASSOCIATIONS IN  
WESTERN LEYTE, PHILIPPINES**

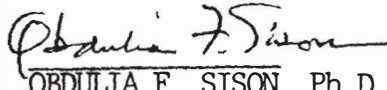
**SALVADOR C. DAGOY**

**FBMK 1985 1**

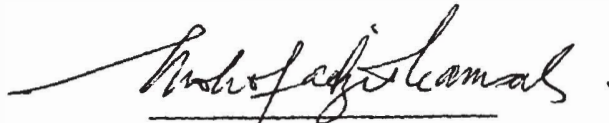
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by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
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An abstract of the thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Pertanian Malaysia in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree Master of Science.

AN ASSESSMENT OF FARMERS ASSOCIATIONS IN  
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by

Salvador C. Dagoy

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Supervisor: Dr. Rahim Md. Sail

Faculty : Center for Extension and Continuing Education

The main purpose of this study was to assess Farmers' Associations in Western Leyte, Philippines in terms of six viability indicators and six membership behavior factors. The specific objectives were: (1) to assess Farmers' Associations, in terms of six viability indicators, (2) to ascertain differences among Farmers' Associations in terms of six membership behavior factors, and (3) to determine problems of the Farmers' Associations as perceived by the members.

Data collected from 120 members of the eight Farmers' Associations were analyzed using the following SPSS subprograms: FREQUENCIES, CROSSTABS, RELIABILITY, and T-TEST.

The findings of the study are:

1. Based on the selected criteria, none of the sampled Farmers' Associations could be considered as "viable."
2. "Less viable" Farmers' Associations were found to be significantly different from "non-viable" Farmers'



Associations in four membership behavior factors, namely; (1) congruency of association functions to members' needs, (2) members' perception on association leadership effectiveness, (3) members' perception on extension workers' commitment to the association, and (4) members' perception on extension workers' competencies.

3. No significant difference was found between "less viable" and "non-viable" Farmers' Associations in terms of members commitment to the association and members' participation in association activities.
4. The problems of the Farmers' Associations as perceived by the members were: lack of plans in the association, poor members' cooperation, extension workers' were good only at the start, poor leadership, lack of benefits from the association, lack of extension workers' support, unclear objectives of the organization, existence of similar organization in the barangay, poor record keeping, lack of municipal officials support, poor reporting, and lack of barangay officials support.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Pertanian Malaysia sebagai memenuhi sebahagian daripada keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sains

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oleh

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Tujuan utama kajian ini ialah untuk menilai Persatuan Peladang di Kawasan Leyte Barat, Filipina di dalam enam perkara penunjuk viabiliti dan enam perkara penunjuk faktor-faktor perlakuan keahlian. Objektif-objektif khusus ini adalah: (1) untuk menilai Persatuan-Persatuan Peladang di dalam enam perkara penunjuk viabiliti, (2) untuk memastikan perbezaan di antara Persatuan Peladang di dalam enam perkara faktor perlakuan keahlian, dan (3) untuk menentukan masalah-masalah Persatuan Peladang sebagaimana yang dikemukakan oleh ahli-ahli.

Data yang diambil daripada 120 orang ahli yang menganggotai lapan Persatuan Peladang dianalisis menggunakan subprogram SPSS berikut: kekerapan, jadual bersilang, peratusan dan ujian-t.

Hasil kajian adalah seperti berikut:

1. Tiada satu Persatuan Peladang pun yang boleh dianggap sebagai "viable" mengikut kriteria pemilihan.
2. Persatuan Peladang yang "kurang viable" didapati

mempunyai perbezaan nyata jika dibandingkan dengan Persatuan Peladang "tidak viable" di dalam empat faktor perlakuan keahlian, iaitu: (1) kesesuaian fungsi persatuan dengan keperluan ahli, (2) tanggapan ahli terhadap keberkesanan pemimpin persatuan, (3) tanggapan ahli ke atas komitmen agen pembangunan terhadap persatuan, dan (4) tanggapan ahli terhadap kecekapan agen pembangunan.

3. Tiada perbezaan nyata yang didapati di antara Persatuan Peladang yang "kurang viable" dengan yang "tidak viable" di dalam hal komitmen ahli-ahli terhadap persatuan dan penglibatan ahli-ahli di dalam aktiviti-aktiviti persatuan.
4. Mengikut ahli Persatuan Peladang masalah yang dihadapi oleh Persatuan Peladang adalah kekurangan perancangan dalam organisasi, kekurangan kerjasama daripada ahli-ahli, pekerja-pekerja pembangunan hanya baik pada peringkat permulaan sahaja, kepimpinan lemah, kekurangan faedah daripada persatuan, kekurangan sokongan daripada pekerja pembangunan, objektif-objektif organisasi yang kurang jelas, terdapat organisasi yang serupa di kampung, simpanan rekod kurang baik, kekurangan sokongan memberi laporan dan kekurangan sokongan daripada pegawai-pegawai kampung.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The improvement of the overall well-being of the individual person is now widely accepted as the ultimate goal of development (Leupolt, 1975:34). In the Philippines, President Ferdinand E. Marcos has stressed this goal of development when he said, "progress shall not be measured merely by the cold and impersonal statistics of Gross National Product, but by the individually meaningful and tangible improvement in everyone's well-being" (as cited in Malinao, 1978:4). Many development policy makers are sold to this concept of measuring development because sustained increase in Gross National Product (GNP) does not necessarily lead to increased welfare of the people.

The Philippine government, in its Five-Year Development Plan (1983-1987), stresses "total human development" and "more equitable distribution of the fruits of development" as corollary national government concerns (as cited in Lamberte, 1983:23). These thrusts are part of the government's effort of alleviating the worsening living conditions of a great proportion of the Filipinos—especially those living in the rural areas. The National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) has reported that the rural area is where the bulk of the Philippine poor is found (1977:4-7). Estimates based on poverty line, defined according to food threshold levels, depict the Philippine poor to comprise 64 percent of the total population (Bowring, 1981:125). The





"Poverty Report" of the World Bank states that the number of families living below the poverty line increased from 47.8 percent in 1971 to 54.8 percent in 1975, and the trend had continued during the second half of the decade (as cited in Bello, Kinley and Elinson, 1982:97).

The Philippine rural area is predominantly agricultural. It is inhabited by 70 percent of the Philippine population (Castillo, 1979:22). In 1979, it was reported that 62 percent of the economically active population were engaged in agriculture (Americana Corporation, 1979:757). These statistics clearly reflect the dominance of the poor among the farmers. It appears, therefore, that developing the farming sector of the Philippine society merits a serious attention from the government.

One of the measures of the government's efforts for alleviating the conditions of the rural poor is by its massive infusion of funds for rural development. Apart from its public fund allocations, the government borrowed about US\$ 1 billion from the World Bank for rural development in 1973 to 1981 (Bello, Kinley and Elinson, 1982:7).

Rural development is carried out on the premise that poverty cannot be solved by a single solution. This premise has led to the proliferation of rural development agencies established by the government. One of these agencies is the Bureau of Agricultural Extension (BAEX) under the Ministry of Agriculture (MA). BAEX has been charged with the responsibility of increasing agricultural productivity and in improving the quality of rural family and community life through extension education (Medina and Ancheta, 1978:99). The focus of its extension efforts is the family. To adequately serve the farm families,



BAEx has adopted a three-pronged extension service--agricultural, home economics, and rural youth development--aimed at the farmers, housewives, and rural youths, respectively. BAEx adopts the operating philosophy of organizing clientele into associations<sup>1</sup> for greater and effective grassroot participation in development undertakings. In other words, BAEx believes that development could be meaningfully attained with people--through their organizations--as partners in all development efforts.

The use of appropriate institutions, organizations, and services has been identified by Asian Development Bank as one of the requisites for successful implementation of rural development programs (1978:13). In the same view Arnon, (1981:443) emphasizes that:

Local formal organizations are necessary to make wishes and needs of the rural sector known to the local authorities for community-level planning to mobilize local resources, to perform certain services for themselves and serve as an effective framework for the transfer of certain government services to their members.

A case of exemplary farmers' organization which has effectively served farmers' interests and has significantly contributed to the country's impressive agricultural achievement is Taiwan's Farmers' Associations. According to Tjiu (1978:135-145), Taiwan's Farmers' Associations for three decades have operated very efficiently and have made a great contribution to the rural reconstruction in Taiwan, both in improving agricultural production, marketing and credit system, and also the improvement of farmers' education and raising their standard

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<sup>1</sup>

The organizations promoted by BAEx are Farmers' Associations (FA) for the farmers, Rural Improvement Clubs (RIC) for the housewives, Anakbukid (Youth) Organizations for the rural youths.



of living.

The concern for farmers' organization was emphasized by President Ferdinand E. Marcos, when he said, "unorganized farmers are impotent, organized, they are a real force . . . ." (as cited in Acierto, 1980:1). The Farmers' Associations (FAs) in the Philippines are basically organized to facilitate dissemination and adoption of recommended farm technologies. In short, they are socio-educational institutions. This function of the FAs was reflected in the statement of Rufino D. Ayaso (1982:24), the Regional Director of the Ministry of Agriculture (Region VIII), when he said:

Through rural organizations and extension classes, dissemination of improved technology to the rural clientele was enhanced, field technicians were able to reach more clients. Sharing of ideas among the members and MA technicians promoted closer relationship. Hence, motivating rural clientele to adopt improved farming practices was made easier.

Some changes in the rural organizations under BAEx came in May 1980 when the cooperatives program of the Department of Local Government and Community Development (now Ministry of Local Government) was transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture (Gonzales, 1981:190). This transfer made the Samahang Nayan<sup>1</sup> (SN) an additional barangay-based organization to be assisted by the extension workers of BAEx. The Farm Management Technicians (FMTs) or agricultural extension workers in charge of the FAs were also assigned to assist the SNs. Since the objectives of the FA and SN overlapped in many respects, BAEx fused FA to SN in barangays or villages where both associations

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<sup>1</sup>

Samahang Nayan (SN) is a pre-cooperative farmers' organization primarily composed of farmers residing and/or farming within the geographical limits of the barangay for the purpose of improving quality of life of the barangay people.



existed to avoid possible conflict of interests. However, in barangays where FA existed with a problematic SN, extension workers concentrated their efforts to FA rather than fusing them into the SN. People's interest and enthusiasm to SN waned tremendously because of some questionable policies handed down from the top, and unsolved malpractices in the association such as fund mishandling and poor members' participation in the savings program. SN's unattractive image was vividly reflected in the statement of Ayaso (1981:16-17) when he said, "I know in some places there were so many failures, so much frustrations among our people in the SN that many of them don't like to hear that name anymore."

Since FAs had lesser problems compared to SNs, it appeared that FAs could offer greater potentials as instrument for farmers' development. FAs could rectify the deficiencies of the SN if given the appropriate redirections in their goals and functions to adapt to the changing realities, especially the interests of farmers.

#### Statement of the Problem

FAs could be a potent medium for farmers' development.

Arnon (1981:153) points this out in his statement:

In some countries, the government has been successful in encouraging the formation of farmers' associations which play a significant role in agricultural development. As these organizations are responsive for the allocation and distribution of inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides and credit among their members, as well as marketing of their produce, they are in excellent position to know the nature of their problems and approved practices they wish to recommend for adoption . . . However, the number of developing countries in which such farmers' associations are active is still restricted.

In 1971, Flores (pp. 373-374) wrote about the Philippine FAs as follows:

These associations play an important part in the Philippine agricultural development. It has been observed that wherever the association has been created, the demand for fertilizers, pesticides and selected seeds, machinery, irrigation pumps, sprayers and so on is much higher than elsewhere, while local farming improves.

With massive and intensive organization of the SNs throughout the country in 1973, farmers' interest related to the FA was diverted to the SN. Just like the FA, SN was also designed to serve as a channel for government services, including agricultural extension. Some of the reasons for farmers' attraction to the SN were reported by Wurfel (1977:123); these are:

Samahang Nasyon began to be formed in 1973 under great pressure from the top. Though they are "voluntary organizations," threats which held some potency in the early days of Martial Law were often used to bring in new members to the time consuming training programmes. There were also false promises, for example, "only those who join the SN will receive Masagana 99 loans."

Consequently, in 1975, as reported by the Agrarian Reform Department of USAID in the Philippines, a large number of more than 3,000 FAs recorded in the country were largely either inactive or defunct (p. 93).

In a forthright assessment, one World Bank consultant asserted that:

Officially sponsored organizations like the Samahang Nasyon have never genuinely served the rural poor because they have never meant to empower them in the first place . . . as much as their real functions and capabilities are limited by the purposes for which they were organized. Most of them not surprisingly, exist only in paper (as cited in Bello, Kinley, and Elinson, 1982:76).

The effectiveness of FAs as instrument for farmers'



development is dependent on the viability of these associations. Viability arises from two interrelated sources: internal sources and external sources. The internal sources of viability stem basically from the individual members. The only resource an organization cannot exist without is people. The individual behavior is the basic building block or the most important element in the functioning of an organization. The external sources of association's viability are many, some of which are political, regulatory, resource, economic, and technological in nature (Szilagyi and Wallace, 1983:23). Because of the interrelationship between internal and external sources of association viability, individual behavior pattern or the mode of conduct of an individual in carrying out his/her roles in the association is the resultant of many complex factors. Nevertheless, it is obvious that understanding membership behavior is relatively more important than understanding the other factors.

Readings on the factors attributing to the success or failure of the FA are very scarce. The scarcity in literature has been recognized by the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Resources Research and Development (PCARRD) in its "State of Art: Farmers' Organization Research," which says that available reports suggest little, if any explanations as to why some organizations are successful and others failed (1981:21). PCARRD (1981:19) identified negative attitudes of farmer members toward their obligations and non-support to the organization as one of the factors hindering operations of farmers'

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Formerly known as the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Resources Research (PCARR).



organizations. Recognizing the need for FAs to be viable and the lack of adequate explanation on members' passive response to the association, several questions have become apparent: (1) How is the performance of FAs in terms of some selected viability indicators? (2) Are there differences among FAs in terms of membership behavior factors? (3) What are the problems of the FAs as perceived by the members? These questions led to the conceptualization of this study, which primarily assessed FAs of Western Leyte, Philippines using some selected viability indicators and some selected membership behavior factors as measures.

Viability or the capacity of the organization to survive has been a phenomenon of interest and concern among promoters of rural organizations. It is only in viable FAs that farmers could effectively promote their interests related to their welfare. Additionally, viability of FAs could be a meaningful index in the success of government's efforts in fostering clientele organizations. In this study, viability was examined in terms of frequency of organizational business meetings (general assembly and officers' meetings), number of educational activities initiated, number of projects undertaken, number of plans, and association financial network.

Another aspect of the problem of this study dealt on the membership behavior factors of FAs. These factors were: (1) congruency of association functions to members' needs, (2) members' commitment to the association, (3) members' participation in association activities, (4) members' perception on association leadership effectiveness, (5) members' perception on extension workers' commitment to the association, and (6)



members' perception on extension workers' competencies (see Figure 1 for the research conceptual framework).

### Objectives of the Study

The focus of this study was to assess FAs in Western Leyte, using two sets of measures: viability indicators and membership behavior factors. The specific objectives were:

1. To assess the FAs in Western Leyte in terms of six viability indicators, namely; number of general assembly meetings, officers' meetings, educational activities, projects, plans and financial networth;
2. To ascertain differences among FAs of Western Leyte, with regard to the following membership behavior factors:
  - 2.1 Congruency of association functions to members' needs;
  - 2.2 Members' commitment to the association;
  - 2.3 Members' participation in association activities;
  - 2.4 Members' perception on association leadership effectiveness;
  - 2.5 Members' perception on extension workers' commitment to the association; and
  - 2.6 Members' perception on extension workers' competencies.
3. To determine the problems of the FAs in Western Leyte, as perceived by the members.



Membership Behavior Factors

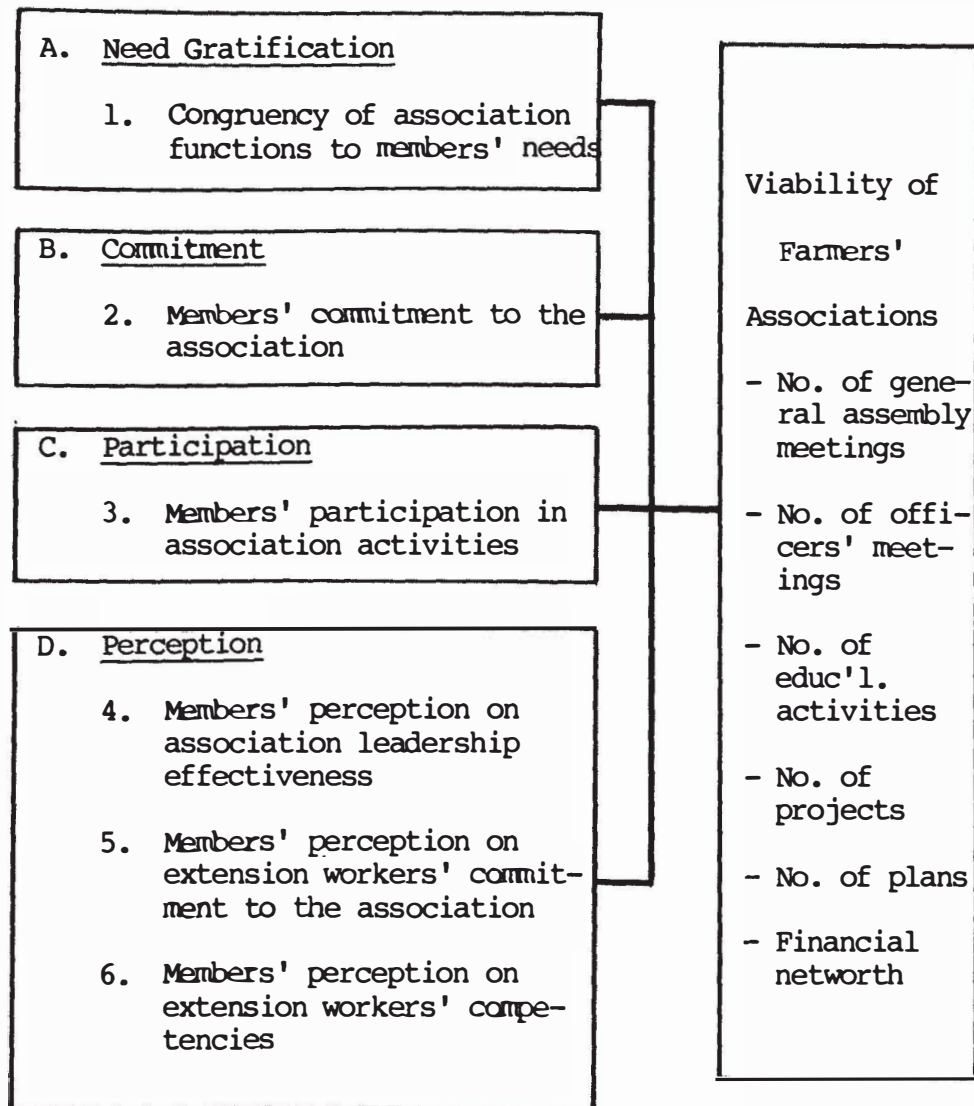


FIGURE 1

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF FARMERS' ASSOCIATIONS  
USING SELECTED VIABILITY INDICATORS AND SELECTED  
MEMBERSHIP BEHAVIOR FACTORS AS MEASURES