

Food Dependency of Iligan City: A Case of Social Articulation

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Introduction

Urban areas are generally self-sufficient for having developed commercial, manufacturing, service and recreational establishments to meet the increasing needs of its populace. But while urbanized areas manufacture/process goods for local/national consumption, they heavily depend upon its surrounding agricultural areas to provide its populace with a steady supply of food.

In the process of supplying the needed agricultural provisions which are needed for the survival of the urban population, the commercialized farmers enter into a relationship with the city. What are the effects of the contact with the city? Do they benefit from the relationships? Does the link provide better access to the social network? Does it bring material benefits? and does it change the rural orientation into an urban or cosmopolite worldview? In other words, does the whole process bring about social articulation?

Objectives

The general objective of this study is to determine the extent of food dependency of Iligan City as well as the consequences of this. The specific objectives are: (1) to know the socioeconomic profile of market stallowners in Iligan City and farmer producers in various places in Lanao; (2) to identify which of the agricultural products come from within Iligan City and its immediate environs and

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from outside Lanao Norte and to ascertain the volume of these products; and (3) to know the effects of food dependency of Iligan on the sources of agricultural products.

The third study objective lends itself to hypothesis testing; thus, the main hypothesis is: As a consequence of Iligan's food dependency, the socio-economic characteristics of farmer-producers do not indicate social articulation.

Conceptualization

Basically, this research follows the conceptualization of Sanders (1977). As defined, articulation means the congruence, or the working together of parts of a social system. It describes "the process by which the rural society becomes incorporated more fully into the larger society while maintaining many of its rural institutions." The rural society does not become integrated to the point of losing its identity altogether; nor does it become integrated to the point of becoming an indistinguishable part of the whole. Rather, it becomes articulated so that its parts become meshed, linked, related to the social units external to it.

The three (3) indices of articulation that indicate the degree to which the rural society has become similar to the national society or the larger system are material achievements, attitudinal change, and social network linkages.

A schematic diagram shows the relationship of variables, where it is important to point out that the entirety of the diagram traces the logical relationships of variables, but only a part of it, namely that between "intervening variables" and "dependent variables" establishes statistical relationship.

Independent Variables	Intervening Variables	Dependent Variables
Food Dependency of Iligan	Age Sex Education Marital Status No. of Dependents Religion Ethnic affiliation Membership in org. Position in org. Length of stay Tenurial arrangement Size of farm Location of farm Where marketed Start of commercial farming Part of produce sold to Iligan Earnings per week	Index of effects/ results on source of agriculture products: A. Material Achievement <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. better housing sanitary facilities suitable clothing improved nutrition convenient household appliances 2. scientific practices like new types of seed, better storage sheds, new agricultural machinery or implements 3. farm to market roads, radio and television, newspaper/periodical distribution, personal travel B. Attitudinal Change <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. aspirations 2. expectations C. Social Network Linkage <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. marketing network 2. supply network 3. information network 4. credit network

Salient Findings of the Study

In the first phase of the study, the respondents for both the Old Market (OM) in Palao and New Market (NM) in the Old Baslayan Creek total 513. These two areas served as loci of research in Iligan City. On the other hand, the second phase of the research consists of 456 farmers from the two Lanao Areas, particularly the barangays of Luinab, Buruun, Linamon, Bunawan, Pugaan, Abuno, Kabaksanan, Pigsuotan of Iligan City; the municipalities of Lala, Kapatagan, Baroy and Baloi of Lanao del Norte; and Marawi and Lanao

del Sur.

The typical stall owners respondent is 26-28 years old, females, married with an average of 1 to 4 children, has high school as highest educational attainment, is a Roman Catholic and a Cebuano. Typical income ranges from P501-P1,500, and respondents make use of personal resources and usurious moneylenders as sources of capital. Most of the stallowners have spent 1 to 5 years in the trade.

The jeep is the most favored means of transport of agricultural products from point of origin to the OM or NM.

Spoilage occurs in the products in both markets and these are typically thrown away. Others are used as animal feeds or given to neighbors for whatever use they deem could put them.

Typically, NM and OM stallowners observed that during months of celebration like December (Christmas), January (New Year), September (Iligan City fiesta) and November (All Souls Day and All Saints Day), people of Iligan spend a lot on food. On the other hand, slow months are observed to be the "tuition months" when parents spend during the beginning or end of the school year or even during the summer classes of college students.

In both markets, majority follow the more than 8-hour per day syndrome, a typical day of which starts at 4:00 a.m. and ends at 7:00 p.m.

The two most-felt problems of the vendors are money-related and people-related problems.

As regards the socioeconomic profile of the source of agricultural products or farmer producers, the farmers have the following profile: majority are of the middle ages, males and married with five to six as the average number of dependents of children. High school is the average education attainment; Roman Catholic and Cebuano are the modes in religion and ethnic affiliation. Many of these farmer producers are also involved in organization and a few are officers.

The agricultural-related data portray the following characteristics: tenants in tenurial arrangement, staying in the farm for 15 years and above, tending to 1-2 hectares of farm land, engaged in commercial farming since 1971 and above, personal money as the source of capital, P500 and below income per week, use of traditional farm animals/implements like plow/bolos and carabaos, marketing of products thru land transport like jeepneys and the like. Majority bring their entire products to Iligan City.

The second major concern of the first phase of this research is the volume of delivered agricultural products as well as the source of these products. For uniformity, the researchers have converted the different units of measures to a common one, the kilo.

The totals achieved per product during the period are (see Table 1):

Table 1. *Volume of Delivered Agricultural Products in Old and New Markets in Iligan City, 1998*

Items	Total Kilos Per Month
Fried Fish	97,007 k
Processed Fish	5,304 k
Rice	258,888 k
Tomatoes	13,174 k
Onions	18,472 k
Garlic	3,247.76 k
Pechay	4,507.5 k
Cabbage	2,600 k
Carrots	2,868 k
Beans	11,028 k
Ampalaya	60 k
Kangkong	.225 k
Squash	5,681.25 k
Pipino	2,495 k
Alugbati	266.25 k
Malunggay	318.75 k
Eggplant	960 k
Okra	660 k
Camote Tops	322.5 k
Chayotes	3,636.25 k
Chili lvs	187.5 k
Sampaloc	1.5 k
Peanuts	2,420 k
Coconuts	100 k
Potato	301.66 k
Upo	3,807.4 k
Beef	6,282.85 k
Pork	17,119.08 k
Chicken	1,162.5 k
Goat	465 k
Grand Total	463,628.76 k

Fish (fresh and processed)	102,311	kilos
Rice	258,888	kilos
Meat and livestock	25,029.95	kilos
Vegetables and condiments	77,400.33	kilos
Grand Total	463,628.76	kilos

A grand total of 463,628.76 kilos have been delivered to 513 stallowners and assumed to be consumed by the people of Iligan. A question arises as to whether the products are really consumed by Iliganons alone. In this research, there is now way to tell with certainty by the data. We can only assume. Perhaps this is one of the study's limitations.

Extrapolating the data on hand to the total population of 932 stallowners, the results show that Iliganons consume a total of 842,304.1019 kilos per month, all of which come from NM and OM alone. Of course, consumption could be more as there are other sources of agricultural and fishery products other than the OM and NM in the city. Commercial establishments which have not been part of the sample as they are not within the vicinity of the OM and NM have gone direct to sources themselves.

Consumption could be more other than the grand total of 842,304.1019 kilos per month. Dividing the estimated 1988 population at 215,215.409 persons by 842,304.1019 gives us 3.913 kilos per person per month consumption of agricultural and fishery products bought from NM and OM. The quotients 3.913 kilos per person per month or .130 kilos or 130 grams per person per day underrates the capacity of people to fill themselves up (*IBON Fact and Figures*, Sept. 1993) cited that on the average, every Filipino consumes a total of 486 grams every day. It could be surmised that Iliganons other food needs are supplied by grocery stores and eating establishments within and outside Iligan City which have their own sources than the NM and OM; also, Iliganons could have developed a taste for food other than the generally fresh and pre-processed agricultural and fishery products available in the OM and NM. With media influence plus the coming in of foreign culinary practices, the Iliganons' taste could have shifted from parochial to cosmopolitan food preferences.

An accompanying table (see table 2) shows that Iligan City gets its agricultural and fishery supplies from its own environs, from towns and cities of neighboring provinces as well as from provinces, towns and cities outside of the island of Mindanao itself.

The third major concern of this research is to determine social articulation or the effects of food dependency on sources of agricultural products or farmer producers. The association of the three areas of social articulation, namely the total material achievement, total attitude, and total social network to the socioeconomic variables has shown that education, ethnic affilia-

Table 2. Sources of Agricultural Products in Iligan City, 1988

Sources	I t e m s					
	Meat	Livestock	Fresh Fish	Dried Fish	Fruits	Vegetables/ Condiments
Iligan City Barangays	x	x	x		x	x
Lanao del Norte	x	x	x	x	x	x
Lanao del Sur	x	x			x	
Misamis Oriental	x	x	x		x	x
Misamis Occidental			x		x	x
Zamboanga Provinces	x	x	x		x	x
Davao					x	
Cotabato						x
Bukidnon						x
Butuan						x
Siquijor	x	x				x
Negros			x			
Bohol			x			
Cebu						x
Manila						x

tion, membership in organization, position in organization, tenure, size of farm, location, where products are marketed and portion of products brought to Iligan, have consistent results; that is, each of the aforementioned variables has significant association with the three areas of social articulation.

The other variables, such as religion, length of stay in the farm and start of commercial farming show a different pattern where there is association in material achievement and social network but none in the level of attitude.

The variables age, civil status and weekly earnings each portray another pattern. There is a seeming association of age with total material achievement but not with attitude and social network. Meanwhile, civil status appears to be associated with attitude, total material achievement, and social network. Lastly, the variables weekly earnings show association with total material achievement and attitude but not with social network.

Sex and the number of dependents/children do not manifest any articulation. All the other variables show an erratic pattern which may be explained by the dissonance of some of our practices, Festinger, a leading theorist in social psychology, contends that there are times when our actions do not jibe with our ideas or thoughts in his "cognitive dissonance" theory. It is really far from reality for a human being to be consistent in all that he/she does.

Concluding Statements

This study apparently supports the established notion that urban centers are generally dependent on its surrounding agricultural areas to provide the food needs of its growing populace. As a supplier, the rural area comes in contact with the city. This being so, the city seems to have some stake in the development of the rural areas for these spell its very survival.

A future scenario of a city with overflowing population but with an inability to meet its needs may not be far behind unless the city, in its development plans, works closely with the officials of the provinces from where these food sources come from.

This research investigates the effects or consequences of the farmer contact with the urban area as he produces food for the city.

Using the three indices of social articulation, the findings of this study show that in the areas of material achievement and social network linkages, the level of articulation is low. It is only in attitudinal change that the level of social farmers manifest "modern" or urbanite attitudes as expressed by educational and occupational aspirations, openness to innovations, and ability to take risk.

Nagging questions remain: What does low level of social articulation

really mean? Does social articulation mean development? It is probable that in the process, some of those less articulated become marginalized and undeveloped in many aspects necessitating collaborative efforts to facilitate development. The strategy to achieve this is PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST - reordering thinking so that what before were seen as ends are now seen as means, means to the objective of enabling the poorest to demand and control more of what they want and need (Chambers, 1981).

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