

Partida: A Collaborative Rice Planting and Harvesting Technique of Farmers in One Municipality of Northern Cagayan, Philippines

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Abstract - *This study explored and documented the practice of partida as rice planting and harvesting technique among farmer folks of the Municipality of Lasam, Cagayan. Ethnographic research methods such as fieldwork, ethnographic interviews and case analysis were used to elicit information on partida. Data collection was organized around qualitative research strategy consisting of extensive research interviews from the thirty-seven (37) farmer folks of the eight (8) farming barangays of the municipality. It was uncovered that the practice of partida is a reflection of Lasameno values and character which can pave way to a more cohesive community through fellowship, practice of tradition, industriousness and spirituality, but also threatened due to the presence of farm mechanization. The study also revealed that the primary reason of the informants to engage in Partida is to have a source of livelihood in order to sustain their need for money for the provisions of their families, but experienced loss of livelihood due to the effect of the use of combine rice harvester. Results of the study may provide a point of reference for policy directions and interventions to balance the preservation of culture and traditions amidst the presence of agricultural development.*

Keywords - *Partida, rice planting, farmers, Northern Cagayan*

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is the world's eighth-largest rice producer. Having produced 19.832 million metric tons of rice in 2015 and with production concentrated mainly in Central Luzon, Cagayan Valley and Mindanao. Its arable land totals 5.4 million hectares. Rice area harvested has expanded from nearly 3.8 million hectares in 1995 to about 4.4 million hectares in 2010 [1].

Rice (*Oryza Sativa* Linn) is a staple food for most Filipinos across the country. It is the food for the soul. Its spiritual and cultural dimensions in people's lives underscore the continuity of the human race. This staple dictates economic and political stability. Within the basic unit of the society- family – a steaming plate of rice on the table ensures harmony and well-being. Mother Nature provides for those who find happiness romancing the soil of the vast playing field called rice fields [2].

Rice production practices and techniques either directly increase yield or affect production costs. In the

Philippines, rice production practices have been continually changing over time mainly due to technologies and government programs envisioned to respond to the dynamic challenges and needs of Filipinos.

The Municipality of Lasam, Cagayan, Philippines is an agricultural community, and rice is the primary food crop grown in the place. Rice is raised on a large scale for it is the staple food of the populace and also as feeds to fowls and livestock. Rice farming dominates the land area cultivated with 6,534 hectares of which 2,441.9 hectares are irrigated and 4,092.1 hectares are rain-fed. Such areas have twice cropping intensities. Having rice as the primary crop, most of its populace are farmers tilling the largest portion of land.

Gayao [3] asserted that farming, especially rice, revolves around cultural traditions and practices. He stressed that there are traditional rice farming methods and practices/activities involved in this cycle. This also includes the traditional tools used and the cultural

rites/rituals practiced before, during, between and after the harvest among the farmers.

Farmers of Lasam, Cagayan are people who are God-fearing, family-oriented, altruistic and united people tilling the rice paddies. Traditionally, Lasameño farmers are seen in the rice fields in a group working together wearing straw hats clad in worn clothes during the rice planting or harvesting seasons. This description concretized how Lasameño farmers were able to showcase their traditional practice of Partida. This practice of rice farming is deeply rooted in Bayanihan (cooperative endeavor) practice in the locality.

Due to the advancement of technology in rice production, the practice of Partida is now seldom observed by the farmers of the municipality. Documenting this practice of the farmers is one way to preserve the cultural heritage of Lasameños. Partida as Lasameños' practice of pakikipagkapwa-tao (shared person-hood) in rice farming reflects the moral theory of selfhood clarifying the ethical significance as reflective of Lasameño farmers' values and their communal nature.

Agriculture is both an art and science of cultivating the soil for the production [4]. It is a repository of local beliefs, religions, and traditions. According to De Vries [5], farming practice always had roles and functions that are interrelated to each other, between economic, environmental, and social/cultural aspect. Since at present, the social and cultural aspect was giving a contribution to sustainable agriculture, and both were multifunctionality aspects of agriculture. These social and cultural functions will give the influence to empower the farming communities.

As observed by Duxbury and Gillette [6], there has been comparatively limited researches conducted about cultural capital in farming. This study ventures on the description of Partida as a traditional rice farming practice of a community. Since social cohesion is required for rice production, the cohesion among the Lasameño farmers has an important socio-cultural function which can be used as a model reference to empowering them towards sustainable agriculture. Their engagement in Partida is viewed as an important asset which is a form of capital at par with physical, financial, human and political capital, and a potential instrument for building the other forms of capital. Hence, within the community development field, socio-cultural considerations in rice farming practice emerge as a way to improve community well-being in social, economic, and environmental.

It is somewhat lamenting that at the present times, accounts on the social and cultural practices of towns and provinces in the Philippines are still inadequate. Recording and documenting the ways of life and culture of Lasameños at different times is still very rare. It is hoped that this study will serve as an important reference on the traditional rice farming and harvesting practice of Lasameño farmers as it aimed to document partida as a collaborative rice planting and harvesting technique of Lasameño farmers in Lasam, Cagayan, Philippines. How Partida is formed, what are the procedures observed by the farmers and how the people involved perceived the importance of Partida, are the core concepts of the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Generally, this study aimed to record Partida as a participatory planting and harvesting technique of Lasameño farmers as it specifically aimed to capture the: personal characteristics of the informants engaged in Partida; practices of farmers to form a Partida; practice of Partida as a collaborative rice planting technique; practice of Partida as a collaborative rice harvesting technique; reasons of the informants in engaging in Partida; values reflected in the practice of Partida by the Lasameño farmers and lastly, threats in the practice of Partida.

METHODS

Research Designs

This study employed ethnographic research methods such as fieldwork, ethnographic interviews and case analysis to elicit information on Partida as collaborative rice planting and harvesting technique. The standard participant observer method was employed, and unstructured interview techniques were utilized to gather the data for the study. These are necessary for as much as the study is qualitative. An interview was the primary tool and the camera was used to capture the events needed in the study.

Since this study is qualitative in nature, employing the participation observer technique was used as the researchers sought information from the informants. Field notes were used, by listening to the narratives of the informants. Upon writing the facts gathered from the informants, the researchers compared their statements with what they have in field notes. Pictures were printed to coincide with the narratives of the farmer folks. Field notes during the conversation were written to achieve the most comprehensive and accurate description of the practice of Partida.

Location of the study

The study was conducted in the Municipality of Lasam, a third-class municipality of the province of Cagayan. The Municipality of Lasam is an agricultural community located in the northwestern part of Cagayan province. It is bounded on the northwest by the Municipality of Allacapan, Cagayan and Flora, Apayao; on the east by the Cagayan River and Gattaran, Cagayan; on the northeast by the municipality of Lal-lo; on the south by Sto. Nino, Cagayan; and on the southwest by the municipality of Rizal, Cagayan.

The municipality of Lasam has an aggregate land area of approximately 23,400 or 234 square kilometers. This is evenly distributed among its 30 barangays. Among the barangays, Sicalao has the largest land area with its vast forest area and Tagao is the smallest. The municipality of Lasam belongs to the 2nd Congressional District of the Province of Cagayan, Philippines.

Figure 1. below shows the map of the province of Cagayan presenting an arrow pointing to the map of the municipality of Lasam.



<https://www.google.com.ph/search?q=map+of+north+western+cagayan+philippines>

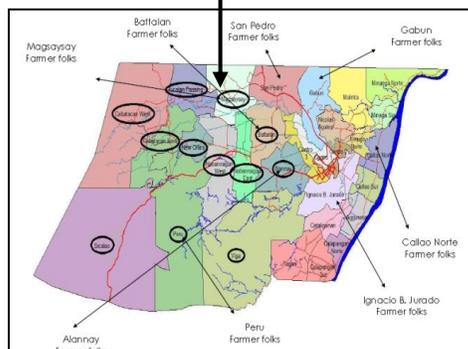


Figure 1. Map of the Municipality of Lasam, Cagayan

Participants

The informants of the study were the thirty-seven (37) farmer folks who were engaged in Partida from the eight identified farming barangays of the Municipality of Lasam, Cagayan namely: Battalan, Gabun, Finugo Norte, Callao Norte, Alannay, San Pedro, Nabannagan West, and Calapangan Sur.

Purposive sampling of the respondents using the site selection approach was utilized guided by these set criteria: 1) the respondents must be at least 20 years of age; 2) the respondents must be a resident of the barangay for more than five years; 3) and the respondents must have been engaged in Partida for at least three years.

Participation of the informants was voluntary. They responded based on the nature of their experiences and willingness to participate. Further, as ethical considerations of the study, the informants were informed that the interviews conducted were recorded. Autonomy, confidentiality anonymity, and reciprocity were observed.

Instruments and Procedures

This study confined its investigation on the description and documentation of Partida as collaborative rice planting and harvesting technique. The researchers used the Structured Interview Guide (SIG) as the primary instrument in gathering the data which included open-ended questions. The instrument also contained the items eliciting the personal characteristics of the informants. The researchers constructed the questions in English and were translated into Ilokano during the actual interview. The Structured Interview Guide was used as the basis for the grand tour questions during group discussion. With the aid of the tape recorder and camera, the interviews were accurately captured.

Validation of the instrument was also conducted in order to identify the flaws of the questions and will allow necessary alterations before its actual usage to the field. The participants during the pre-testing activity were not the informants of the study.

Further, the group interviews were conducted to ensure comprehensive and detailed collection of data particularly on the practice of Partida as collaborative rice planting and harvesting technique among the respondents. The interviews were conducted from October to February 2017 and the duration varied from 40 to 90 minutes. Additional probes were used by the researchers to illuminate further understanding of the narratives of the informants.

After ensuring the conversation with the informants, data redundancy or saturation was identified since there is no new information forthcoming. The use of saturation which, refers to the repetition of discovered information and confirmation of previously collected data and that no additional data can be found that would add to the categories being developed or examined [7].

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data of the study were analyzed to uncover and understand the experience and perspective of the informants. Content analysis of the qualitative responses of the informants to classify, identify and synthesize their responses. The data gathered from the informants were framed within their phenomenological perspectives analysis of their experiences guided by Colaizzi’s [8] procedural steps to reveal the phenomena being studied: first, describe the phenomenon of interest; second, collect participants description of the phenomenon; third, read the participants description of the phenomenon; fourth, return to the original transcripts; fifth, extract significant statements; sixth, organize the gathered formalized meanings into the clusters of themes; seventh, write exhaustive description.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personal characteristics of the informants

Table 1. presents the personal characteristics of the informants engaged in Partida. It reveals that majority of them were male (70%), ages 31-40 years old (35%), married (78%), with below ten years of farming experience (57%), Roman Catholic (81%), elementary undergraduates (30%), and with a household size of 1-3 members (57%).

Perusing the table shows that there are more males engaged in Partida (70%) compared to females (11). This implies that in the Municipality of Lasam, Cagayan, rice farming is still considered a male-dominated activity. This still explains that men typically are considered to be the farmers and women to be only their helpers in charge of taking care of children and responsible for household chores. It is in services where male and female workers are at parity or slightly favoring females.

Relative to age, majority are 31-40 years old (35%), followed by 20-30 years old (24%), over those who are 41-50 years old (14%), 51-60 years old (19%), and the 61 and above (8%) who are the smallest contributors of the study. It can be inferred that most of the informants

engaged in Partida in the municipality belonged to early adulthood. This indicates that this age bracket requires the informants the experience and energy in farming. This still confirms that workers in Philippine agriculture tend to be older and on average age faster than other workers [9]. Further, the aging of farmers is common to developing countries, where younger workers to opt for nonfarm occupations [10].

Table 1. Personal characteristics of the informants

Profile Variables		Frequency (n=36)	%
Gender	Male	26	70
	Female	11	30
Age	20 – 30 years old	9	24
	31-40 years old	13	35
	41-50 years old	5	14
	51-60 years old	7	19
	61 and above	3	8
Civil Status	Single	8	22
	Married	29	78
Farming Experience	Below 10 years	21	57
	11-20 years	12	32
	21-30 years	2	5
	31- 40 years	2	5
Educational Attainment	Elem.		
	Undergraduate	11	30
	Elem Grad	5	14
	HS Undergrad	7	19
	HS Grad	8	22
	TechVoc Diploma	3	8
Household size	College Undergrad	3	8
	1-3 members	21	57
	4-6 members	12	35
	7-9 members	3	8

The table also reveals that the majority of the informants are married (78%) over those who are single (22%). This reveals that married informants engaged more in Partida than those who are single since having a family will require them to have a livelihood to sustain the needs of the family members.

Educational attainment of the informants revealed that most of them are elementary undergraduate (30%), followed by high school graduate (22%), high school undergraduate (19%), over those who are elementary graduates (14%), TechVoc graduates (8%) and college undergraduate (8%) respectively. This shows that most of the informants engaged in Partida were literate and have low educational attainment. This also suggests

that in the employment profile in the Philippines, most of the young generation opted to pursue courses which are not agriculture courses making farming as an inferior source of living. Likewise, agriculture tends to have the last educated workforce among the basic sectors. About 70 percent of the rural poor are farmers and fishermen.

Finally, the number of household size reveals that majority of them have 1-3 family members (57%), compared to those who have 4-6 members (35%) and having 7-9 members (8%). This suggests that most of the respondents have a small-family size.

Practices of farmers to form a Partida

This study presents the qualitative results derived from the in-depth interview with the informants on their practices in forming a Partida. This portion attempts to describe how Partida as a group rice planting and harvesting activity is organized.

In the province of Cagayan, planting, and cropping take place in two seasons termed as bayag (long term cropping) and biit (short term cropping). Bayag has the months of November and December for panagsikka (seed pulling) and panagraep (transplanting) and months of April to May for panaggapas (harvesting); while biit has May and June for seed pulling and transplanting and October and November for harvesting. These are the seasons when partida is put to practice by the farmers.

As a practice, to form partida, membership is voluntary. The head of the partida is the one in charge to make contract and receive payment in advance (vale) from the rice field owners in the Municipality of Lasam. The sharing scheme is called agbibingay (getting an equal portion of the payment). The head of the Partida sees to it that members are all present for him to be assured that every member is included in the sharing of money.

Each member of the Partida is aware that when they do the planting or harvesting, they need to perform the ragup (group work). When asked if they are happy with the process, they said “Naragsak nu agraragup kami nga agubra, uray nu nasakit ti likud mi nga aggapas ket agkakatawa kada ag iisem kami met aglalu nu adda dagitay is istorya dagita kakadwa mi nga nakalinglingay a dinggen” (It is fun when we all work together. Backaches and back pains may be felt due to the discomfort of the position while harvesting, but we still manage to laugh and smile especially when others would share heart-warming stories).

They also admitted that through the practice in forming Partida, the members acknowledged themselves that most of them have the low level of education and they are poor but, in this activity, educational attainment is not a qualification to become a member. One informant remarked “Nu kayat mu iti sumurut iti partidaan, uray nababa iti nalpas mu, saan a dayta iti pagbasaran tapnu agbalin ka nga miyembro” (Should you wish to join the partida, educational attainment is not an issue, even if you have a low level of education, this is not a qualification for you to join the partida). One informant also said “Awan iti kinnangatwan iti nalpas dituy nu di ket iti kinagaget ken kina alibtak iti kasapulan” (There is no such thing as a highest degree obtained in the Partida, what matters is industriousness and the skill in doing the work).

Basing on the documentation, partida is formed in two practices by Lasameño farmers. First, a partida is called after the panagsikka (seed pulling) when bunubun (rice seedlings) are ready for the panagraep (transplanting) into the rice paddies and second, during the harvesting season or panaggapas.

Panagraep as the initial grand tour of partida is done after the panagsikka of the farmer folks. When the rice seedlings are now ready for transplanting, partida for panagraep is already formed. Figure 1 shows the group of farmer folks in a farming community in the municipality of Lasam, Cagayan while doing the panagsikka (seed pulling).



Figure 2. Group of farmers doing the traditional sikka (seed pulling).

Figure 2. shows that the farmers will bind the bunubun using the pan-aw (cogon leaf) with the quantity of a ker-ker (palm-hand measurement). Every ker-ker is paid five pesos (Php 5.00) by the owner and

the wage for every farmer doing the sikka is based on the number of ker-ker he can do.

Partida as a collaborative rice planting technique

After the process of panagsikka, partida as a rice planting scheme of the farmers is now formed. From the interview, the practice of the farmers to form a partida starts when the owner of the rice farm makes a schedule to the identified head or leader of the partidaan to receive the payment.



Figure 3. Farmers engage in partida during panagraep (rice planting).

Figure 3. shows the actual partida of panagraep in one farming community of the municipality of Lasam.

The informants affirmed that for everyone hectare contracted for partida is amounting to ten thousand pesos (Php 10,000.00). The group leader invites members to form the group. Informants said that members may come from the immediate member of the family or relatives, neighbors, barkadas and friends, or anybody who is willing to get a share from the payment in advance. In this context, it can be seen that in the formation of Partida, a sense of volunteerism and accountability are present. This postulates the intrepid truth that living together makes life lighter and bearable.

Probing deeper into the practice of Partida during panagaraep, the informants said that they can just easily finish transplanting rice seedling provided that they have a good number of members to do the activity. They affirmed that they can do the panagraep for a half day where each member has its identified silung (area) to finish.

In the process of panagraep, the informants use their bare hands to transplant the rice seedlings. The use of manual transplanting by bare hands by the farmer folks as a group is collaborative in nature which demonstrates the value of cooperation where working with others will make the completion of a work easier and it guarantees higher success than working individually. Partida as a collaborative practice by Lasameño farmers captures the social principle of life that in unity there is the strength.

Partida as a collaborative rice harvesting technique

After four months of planting rice, the harvesting season follows. Based on the interview, the same mechanics of making the contract of partidaan is observed where the owner will make schedule and payment to the head of partidaan but this time is for rice harvesting.

Figure 4. illustrates the farmers of a farming barangay in the Municipality of Lasam engaged in Partida as a collaborative rice harvesting technique of the Lasameños. The informants affirmed that they must have their equal sharing of the area to do the manual reaping of palay stalks.

The only difference in the process of doing the partida for rice harvesting is the use of kumpay (sickle), payabyab (straw hat) and gwantes (clothe gloves).



Figure 4. The farmers engaged in partida doing the panagapas (rice harvesting).

Figure 5. shows the materials used by the farmers during rice harvesting activity.

The kumpay or sickle is a slightly hooked-knife with serrations at the inside and fitted with a short straight handle. The payabyab or the straw hat serves

as the protection of the farmers from the heat of the sun or from the pouring rain while doing the panaggapas. The open labba (basket) serves as the container of their materials. Traditionally, the process of manual harvesting is done by the farmers through the use of hand sickles to cut the panicles. The panicles are made into bundles which are usually stacked in the field until the farmer finished harvesting.



Figure 5. The materials used by the farmers in panaggapas.

Reasons to engage in partida

Informants were also asked of their reasons for engaging in Partida. The primary reason for the informants in joining the Partida is the need for money for the provisions of family needs which make them engage in partidaan for a daily basis during rice planting and harvesting seasons.

An informant said, “Mapmapan kami agpartida tapnu adda met igatang mi iti bagas ken dadduma pay nga kasapulan iti balbalay mi” (We joined the partida to earn money to buy rice and other basic needs at home).

Another reason for them to engage in partida is for their children’s allowance in going to school. As the informant said, “Makiparpartida nak tapnu adda balunen dagitay annak ku nga mapan diay eskwelaan ken para diay kasapulan da nga igatang iti project da” (I joined the partida to earn for my children’s allowance and for their other needs in school).

An informant having an ailing wife remarked, “Mapmapan nak makipartida ta adda igatang ku agas ni baket ku. Aglalu ket nakaru iti sakit na” (I joined the partida to earn for my wife’s medication, especially that she’s ailing severely).

From the narratives of the informants, it can be clearly seen that partida as a collaborative rice planting

and harvesting technique among the Lasameño farmers is also a mechanism for them to have a daily wage to provide the needs of the family members. In this context, partida is a source of livelihood of the Lasameño farmers during harvesting season. Duff [11] pointed out that harvesting season is advantageous to rice tenants for they gain profits from paid labor.

Lasameno Values reflected in the Practice of Partida

The perceived value of partida among the informants resulted in four (4) themes: 1) pannakikadua (fellowship); 2) kannawidan (part of traditional practice); 3) display of kinagaget (industriousness); and 4) pammati iti Diyos (spirituality). These themes captured the narratives of the farmers who were interviewed in the context of their involvement and experience as members of the partidaan.

Pannakikaddua (fellowship)

Partida as a technique among Lasameño farmers is considered by the informants as a system of pannakikaddua (fellowship). It manifests the action of panagtulong (helping others) as one of the informants affirmed: “Daytuy iti banag nga ar aramidem mi tapnu matulungan mi iti pada mi nga mannalun” (This is what we do in order to help our fellow farmers). Other informant said: “Aggu ummong kami nga mapan diay talon. Uray adda da met dagiti kakadwa mi nga adda mabalin na umay da met nukwa latta maki-ummung” (We gather and we would go to the farm altogether. We also have fellows who are quite well-off but for the sake of fellowship, they also join us in the partida).

In the past, the relationship of the farmers is cohesive with the way they practice partida. It displays that helplessness in times of difficulties can be overcome if others are involved. With the way the farmers practice partida, it basically promotes the sense of unity and mutuality among the Lasameño farmers.

As sense of caring among the Lasameño farmers is also reflected in the practice of partida, the informants adhered to the value of showing mercy and compassion to fellowmen. An informant said “Uray nu narigat iti mapan mi partidaan, mapan kami latta ta ammu mi nga makatulung kami iti pada mi nga mannalon” (Though it is quite hard and tiring at times, we still go because it is also our desire to help our fellow farmers).

They also said that “Adda dagiti taltalun nga narigat partidaan aglalu nu nalubo, wennu nu kalkalpas iti panagbabagyu wennu panagtutudu ket nakadeppes nukwa amin dagiti pagay. Marigatan kami nukwa ngem

gapu iti asi mi met ken tay nakinkukua, kasapulan nga partidaen mi lattan” (At times, there are rice fields which do not yield good harvest due to heavy rainfall or typhoons, there are those which are muddy and these make harvesting hard for us, but sympathy and concern for fellow farmers always drive us to help even at any cost).

As a sign of gratitude of the owner who contracted to partida, the informants said that they were also given a favor after planting or harvesting in the form of “lamusa” where the owner will give the farmers free snacks or wine.

Kannawidan (tradition)

Kannawidan (tradition) emerged as a practice of partida among the informants. Such value reflects the practice of partida which depicts the rich culture of the farmer folks. An informant said “Sipud pay adda puot kun, daydi tatang ku ket makiparpartidan, ta isu met tay namulagatak nga kannawidan mi” (Since my childhood days, my father has been into partida practice. This has been a tradition).

Other informant also said “Iti barangays, nabayag nga makitkitak nga adu agpartpartidan nu panawen ti panagraraep ken panaggagapas, daytuy ket natawid mi nga kannawidan kadagiti nagkakauna nga lallakay kada babbaket” (In our barangay, partida is already a common scenario during planting and cropping seasons. We inherited this tradition from the elderly).

Since partida is embedded as part of the practice of the farmer folks, an informant said “Iti pamilya mi, ni tatang ku ken nanang ku idi ket makipartpartida da ken naibaga da met kanyak nga uray dagidiay nagannak da idi met” (In our family, my father and my mother are also joining the partida, according to them, this was also practiced by their parents).

Kinagaget (Industriousness)

Industriousness is also seen by the informants as a value being promoted through Partida. Form the interview, it was stressed by one of the informants that “Nu sumali ka iti partida, kasapulan nga nagaget ken naalibtak ka ta awan nukwa mangayab kenka nga grupo nu nakudag ka” (If you wish to join the partida, you should be industrious and at the same time alert, or else, nobody will ask for your service in the partida if you are a slow foot).

An informant also said “Aagriing kami nga nasapa iti parbangun ta mapan mi sinyalan tay partidaan mi sa min tu gapasen” (We wake up early at daybreak and would start marking the location then we would go on

harvesting). They also affirmed “Nu nasapa kami nga manguri, saan pay nukwa nga napudut, naal alsitu mi nga malpas tay partidaen mi” (It is better if we start harvesting early, that way, it would not be too hot for us and it will be done faster).

An informant also recounted “Nu mapanak makipartida, nariwet pa laeng ket nakaring nakun ta madik kayat iti papauray kadagiti kagrupok ta kasapula nga aggigiddan kami nga mapan agpartida” (Whenever I go to a partida, I see to it that I wake up early because I do not want that my fellows will wait for me since we need to go there early as one group).

It was also emphasized that through partida, there is a display of diligence among parents, as one informant affirmed “Gapu ta adu ti kasapulan dagiti an annak mi iti pagadalan, kasapulan nga agpartida kami tapnu adda iti balunen da nga mapan agbasa” (It is because our children have needs in school and so we need to join the partida so we could earn money for their allowances and other fees to be paid).

Pammati iti Diyos (spirituality)

The informants were also asked if there are rituals they do before they conduct the partida. Faith in God also emerged as a value in the practice of partida. The informants said that before they do the planting or harvesting, they need to say a prayer. On the affirmations of the the informant, “Nu mangrugi kami nga agpartida awagan nakami tay lider mi ta agi giddan kami nukwa nga agkararag ta dawaten mi it bendisyon ti Namarsua” (Before we start harvesting, our leader would gather us all and we would all pray and ask for God’s blessing).

An informant also said “Nu panawen iti panagraraep, ikarkarag mi nukwa nga saan nga dumteng dagiti kalamidad nga mangdadael kadagituy nga imula mi ta mamati kami nga babaen iti asi iti Diyos, maaddaan kamin tu iti napintas nga apit” (During planting season, we also pray that the crops will not be harmed by any calamity for we deeply believe that with God’s grace, we will soon have a bountiful harvest).

They also said “Parte iti ritual mi iti kan kanayun kami nga agkarkarag tapnu ikkan nakami pay ti Namarsua iti naan anay nga pigsa ken bendisyon tapnu makapartida kami” (Part of our ritual is we always pray that God will always grant us with good health so we will always have the strength to do the partida). Taray [12] noted that sense of solidarity and mutuality in the community is enhanced and affirmed through ritual.

Threats in the practice of partida

With the advent of modernization in agriculture in the Municipality of Lasam, Cagayan, partida is not spared from particular threats. From the interview, the sentiments of the farmers as threat of partida is the use of combine rice harvester.

The presence of combine rice harvester in the field causes the loss of livelihood among the informants. They said, "Gapu ta adda met iti reaper nga kunkunadan, saan kami nga mapmapan agparpartidan" (We do not do partida that often anymore because of the presence of the combine rice harvester now). It is evident that the farmers have unfavourable expression towards the replacement of their traditional manual harvesting technique. An informant said, "Nu panawen iti panaggagapas, awan ti sabali nga panggedan min, saan kami nga makapartidan" (Unfortunately, during harvest times nowadays, we hardly can have other means of earning money because partida is not needed anymore). Rice combine harvester has a negative effect on the livelihood of rice field tenants. Such latest mechanized harvester cause unemployment and migration of the participants which dwindles their sense of solidarity and camaraderie.



Figure 6. Combine rice harvester

Figure 6. presents the picture of a combine rice harvester in one farming community of the Municipality of Lasam.

The informants also believed that rice planting in Partida will not also be spared since there are now agriculture machines being introduced to replace the manual rice planting activity. As one farmer said, "Uray nu panagraep payen, addan tu aldaw nga saan

kamin tu makapartidan ta ammu mi nga addan dagiti agrap nga makinarya nga naaramid" (Even in planting rice, we are aware that someday, we will not do the partida anymore because rice planters have been invented). The expression of the farmers of being hopeless is seen in their words.

The finding affirms what Sutton [13] asserted that the technological integration in rural communities completely changed how people interact. In the same manner, Duff [14] asserted that the introduction of new technology in farming tends to disrupt agreements and new systems of sharing emerge to replace older forms.

The informants were also asked if they were invited to form a Partida at present despite the presence of rice combine harvester, they narrated "Kadagituy nga panawen, agparpartida kami met nukwa ngem sagpaminsan laengen".

Another informant recounted "Iti daytoy nga tawen, nagpartida kami iti naminsan idi nagdeppes amin nga pagay idi nagbagyu iti Lawin ta saan met nukwa nga kaya nga gapasen tay makina dagiti nakadeppes nga pagay"

Many of them admitted that with the absence of partida as source of their livelihood, many of their members already left their community to seek other ways of livelihood. Choun-udom [15] cites that with the advent of industrialization, there has been a migration of labor from the agriculture sector to the industrial sector to do labor-intensive farming activities like harvesting.

CONCLUSIONS

Partida as a collaborative rice planting and harvesting technique among the Lasameño farmers can pave the way to a cohesive community but threatened with the presence of farm mechanization.

This study also showed that the majority of the informants who are engaged in Partida were male, belonging to young adulthood, Roman Catholic, elementary undergraduates, married with a household size of 1-3 members. The primary reason for the informants in engaging in Partida is the need for money for the provisions of family needs which made them engage for a daily basis during rice planting and harvesting seasons. As a practice to form Partida, membership is voluntary. The head of the Partida is the one in charge to make a contract and receive payment in advance (vale) from the rice field owners in the Municipality of Lasam.

In the practice of Partida, four themes emerged as values, these are pannakikadua (fellowship);

kannawidan (part of traditional practice); display of kinagaget (industriousness); and pammati iti Diyos (spirituality). This study also uncovered that the biggest threat in the practice of partida in the Municipality of Lasam, Cagayan is the effect of agricultural mechanization which is the presence of combine rice harvester causing the loss of livelihood among the informants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Basing on the conclusion, this study recommends that the Local Government Unit of the Municipality of Lasam should come up and implement cultural development strategy preserving the culture of Partida amidst agricultural modernization in the present times since Partida is seen as a practice of farmer to promote local cohesion. Also, aspects of cultural development initiatives may include: 1) creation of cultural farming center in the Municipality; 2) increase awareness of Lasameños in the importance of Partida particularly the young generations by putting up farming exhibits and museums; 3) provision of safety nets for those farmers engaged in Partida who were already displaced due to farm mechanization; 4) as an educational implication of the study, the concept of Partida may be integrated into the teaching of social studies subjects among the different schools in the municipality.

Government institutions such as the Department of Agriculture, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Science and Technology, and other cultural organizations may come up with interface dialogue regarding the integration of technology in farming and the preservation of cultural practices.

Future studies should be conducted with a larger scope in other municipalities of the Province of Cagayan, Philippines to have wider documentation of the traditional practices of Cagayan farmers which are dwindling due to agricultural mechanization.

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