

## Gender Roles on Salt Farming Practices in Western Pangasinan



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**ABSTRACT:** Men and women have been compared and contrasted for years on many different topics and on different places. Today, regardless certain behaviors both can almost do the same activities. This study aimed to determine the gender roles on salt farming practices in Western Pangasinan, the benefits from salt farming and some problems encountered by the farmers. The study made use of the descriptive survey research design. Respondents were selected through simple random sampling technique employing questionnaires to collect the needed data. Frequency, percentage, average weighted mean and t-test were used for data analysis. A total of 132 respondents (73 males and 59 females) were interviewed from salt farms situated in Alaminos City, Dasol, Bani and Bolinao Pangasinan. Results showed that 34.84% of the respondents are working in the farm for almost 11 to 15 years now, that aside from salt farming 25.75% go for fishing during rainy season. Findings also revealed that male salt farmers (AWM=3.83) in Western Pangasinan conduct salt bed preparation more frequently than female (AWM=2.69) salt farmers. On the other hand, salt farming practices of the male (AWM=3.74) and female (AWM=2.89) salt farmers are not significantly different. Hence, male and female salt farmers in Western Pangasinan have similar salt farming practices. Most of the male and female salt farmers were benefited because they were able to send their children to their college/vocational education and they were able to deliver salt to other places and that some of them were able to put up a warehouse. It is therefore recommended that in order to have a continuous salt production a technology which help salt farmers will be created.

**KEYWORDS:** Gender roles, Salt, salt bed, practices, farmers

### INTRODUCTION

Ethnographical accounts reveal an egalitarian arrangement among pre-colonial Filipino women and men. According to these accounts, pre-colonial lifestyles support the equality of the sexes. Additionally, sexual taboos and practices were the same for both men and women (Chirino, 1903). Hence, the traditional gender roles existing today could be attributed to Western influence that has been embedded in our culture and practices.

In the Philippines, Gender and Development was developed in 1980's. It is not only concerned with women, but also on the way in which a society roles, responsibilities and expectations to both men and women. (<https://bmb.gov.ph/index.php/gender-and-development>). Anunuevo (2020) stated that gender situation in the Philippines is characterized by sharp contradictions. For it showcases samples of women's advancement in politics, academic and professional excellence, and even legislation. In contrast to images of prostituted women, battered wives, economically disadvantaged women and exploited migrant workers.

Moreover, gender role focus on social construction of identities within the household, it also reveals the expectations from 'maleness and femaleness' in their relative access to resources. Social relations analysis exposes the social dimensions of hierarchical power relations imbedded in social institutions; also it's determining influence on 'the relative position of men and women in society.

This paper examined the roles of both sexes in salt bed preparation, in salt farming practices, alternative work aside from salt farming which cannot be done during rainy season, the benefits received by both gender and the problems encountered by

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them. The output of this study will help salt farmers regarding on their concerns and problem during salt production. A total of 132 respondents participated in this study.

### METHODS

A total of 132 respondents (73 males and 59 females) were interviewed from salt producing towns of western Pangasinan namely Alaminos City, Dasol, Bani and Bolinao, Pangasinan. The men and women were interviewed separately in order to capture gender difference in their responses. Questionnaires were translated in Filipino in order for them to understand well. Moreover, during the conduct of survey, the researchers also translated the questions into Ilocano which is more easier for them to understand well.

Respondents were selected through purposive sampling technique employing questionnaires to collect the needed data.. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics employing as frequency counts, percentages and ranking.

The study was set to examine gender aggregates and manifestations of the possible gender differences on salt farming practices in Western Pangasinan. Also , it investigates on the benefits derived by the salt farmers and identify the problems concerning salt

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Gender Contribution on Salt Bed Preparation

Salt-making process involves a lot of steps before producing salt itself. According to Sullivan & Downey (2016), controlling the evaporation process requires considerable care, skill, and know-how on the part of the salt-makers that is why traditional techniques are still being used until today.

**Table 1. Gender Contribution on Salt Bed Preparation**

Gender Contributions	FEMALE(n <sub>1</sub> =59)		MALE(n <sub>2</sub> =73)	
	Weighted Mean	Rank	Weighted Mean	Rank
1. Construct salt beds	1.44	5	3.70	3
2. Cleaning the salt bed areas.	4.36	2	4.27	2
3. Placing black sand in salt beds.	2.10	4	3.85	4
4. Help flattening the salt beds.	4.08	3	4.86	1
5. Placing broken clay or <i>ladrillo</i> on salt beds.	4.81	1	3.32	7
6. Transferring salty water to the storage deposit area.	1.05	6	3.42	5
7. Transfer the stored sea water to into another storage after 15 days.	1.03	7	3.42	5
	<b>2.69 - Sometimes</b>		<b>3.83 - Often</b>	

Results showed that there are top three indicators in which most of the female respondents does during salt bed preparation as shown in table 1. This includes “Placing broken clay or *ladrillo* on salt beds” with an average weighted mean of 4.81 followed by “Cleaning Salt Bed Area” with a mean of 4.36 and “Help in flattening salt beds” with a weighted mean of 4.08. Meanwhile, male respondents answered and it ranks first in the indicator stating that “Help in flattening salt beds” with a mean of 4.86. This was seconded by an indicator “Cleaning Salt Bed Area” with a mean of 4.27 and “Constructing salt beds” having a weighted mean of 3.70. Common among gender roles is that they prepare salt beds by cleaning the area however, females dominantly are responsible in placing broken clay or *ladrillo*. Other activities such as transferring salt water to storage salt bed boxes for 15 days are commonly done my males.

#### Gender Roles on Salt Farming Practices

Salt farms in the areas chosen in this study use labor-intensive method for processing seawater into salt.

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Table 2. Gender Roles on Salt Farming Practices

SALT FARMING PRACTICES	FEMALE (n <sub>1</sub> =59)					WM	MALE (n <sub>2</sub> =73)					WM
	Always (5)	Often (4)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (2)	Never (1)		Always (5)	Often (4)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (2)	Never (1)	
1. I placed the stored water in salt beds for salt flaking.	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 3.4%	8 13.6%	49 83.1%	1.20 (N)	43 58.9%	12 16.4%	18 24.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4.34 (O)
2. I scraped the salt flakes from the bed .	11 18.6%	46 78.0%	2 3.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4.15 (O)	67 91.8%	6 8.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4.92 (A)
3. I transfer the salt flakes in a container called "tiklis".	39 66.1%	11 18.6%	9 15.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4.51 (A)	71 97.3%	2 2.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4.97 (A)
4. I bring salt flakes to the cooking area.	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	38 64.4%	21 35.6%	0 0.0%	2.64 (S)	21 28.8%	0 0.0%	5 6.8%	27 37.0%	20 27.4%	2.66 (S)
5. I cook salts .	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 5.1%	16 27.1%	40 67.8%	1.37 (N)	11 15.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	42 57.5%	20 27.4%	2.18 (R)
6. I turned the product into an iodize salt.	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	6 10.2%	53 89.8%	1.10 (N)	56 76.7%	18 24.7%	1 1.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4.86 (A)
7. I packed rock salts.	47 79.7%	12 2.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4.80 (A)	11 15.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	43 58.9%	19 26.0%	2.19 (R)
8. I transfer sacks of rock salts to warehouse.	0 0.0%	15 25.4%	28 47.5%	16 27.1%	0 0.0%	2.98 (S)	68 93.2%	5 6.8%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4.93 (A)
9. I took responsibility in selling the salts in the highways or in the market.	35 59.3%	0 0.0%	17 28.8%	7 11.9%	0 0.0%	4.07 (O)	0 0.0%	34 46.6%	18 24.7%	21 28.8%	0 0.0%	4.18 (O)
10. I promote salt products using social media.	0 0.05%	0 0.0%	15 25.4%	36 61.0%	8 13.6%	2.12 (R)	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	11 15.1%	53 72.6%	19 26.0%	2.16 (R)
<b>AWM</b>	<b>2.89 – Sometimes</b>						<b>3.74 – Often</b>					

Table 2 shows the data gathered regarding on salt farming practices of both female and male salt farmers. In placing the stored water in salt beds, male salt farmers tend to do it more compared to female salt farmers – with a mean of 4.34 for male, weighted mean of 1.20 for female. Additionally, scraping the salt flakes from the bed tend to be the task of most male (4.92) salt farmers than female (4.15). Yankoswki (2007), mentioned in his study that the simplest method of extracting salt from seawater – it is by natural evaporation by the sun. This process is mostly used in climates that have extended dry periods like the

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Philippines. The differences on salt farming practices and process could be attributed to environmental factors such as weather, resources, landscapes, and different culture and traditions from different regions.

Meanwhile, both female and male salt farmers are equally working on transferring the salt flakes in a container. On the other hand, more male salt farmers bring salt flakes to the cooking area (2.66) compared to female (2.64). As illustrated in table 2, female salt farmers tend to do the packaging of rock salts (4.80) than male salt farmers (2.19). It is also shown that male salt farmers are the ones in charge of transferring sacks of rock salts to warehouses. Salt farming in Western Pangasinan still uses labor-intensive methods that requires more male salt farmers to do the preparation and practices. Although female salt farmers are involved in the process, they have participated on minimal activities only such as packaging and placing broken clay in salt beds.

### Alternative Work of Salt Farmers/Producers

Salt farming has been considered as one of Pangasinan's major sources of livelihood for the last eight decades (Cardinoza, 2017). For many households, salt-making has been their source of income. In line with this, Table 3 shows that there are other more jobs of salt farmers aside from salt jobs to increase their income, erratic and uncertain climate, and threats of price instability of salt.

**Table 3. Alternative Work of Salt Farmers/Producers**

ALTERNATIVE WORK OF SALT FARMERS	FEMALE(n <sub>1</sub> =59)		MALE(n <sub>2</sub> =73)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Rice farming</i>	5	8.47%	19	26.03%
<i>Driving</i>	0	0	13	17.81%
<i>Fishing /fish dying</i>	6	10.17%	28	38.37%
<i>Welding</i>	0	0	4	5.48%
<i>House Keeping</i>	39	66.10%	0	0
<i>Selling</i>	7	11.86%	5	6.85%
<i>Construction</i>	0	0	1	1.37%
<i>Delivery man/woman</i>	0	0	2	2.53%
<i>Tailoring</i>	2	3.39%	1	1.37%

### Alternative Work of Salt Farmers/Producers

According to Prastiwi (2019), salt farm owners convert their salt farm to fishponds during the rainy season. This is the reason why fishing is one of the top occupations for salt farmers aside from salt farming. Also shown on table 3, Housekeeping has a frequency of 39 which leads to 29.54% of the sample population. This is followed by Fishing, with a frequency of 34 and Rice Farming with a frequency of 28. On the other hand, Welding occupation is at the bottom of the list with only 4 frequency or 3.03% of the whole sample population.

The presence of other work of salt farmers comes from the rationale that during rainy seasons, salt farms cannot successfully conduct the process of salt-making. The process of evaporation will not be completed without the presence of natural sunlight which means that salt-making process in Western Pangasinan is only feasible during the dry season. Furthermore, most of the female salt farmers spend lesser time in the farm for they have to take charge of household chores and teach their sons and daughters in their school assignment.

### Benefits Derived from Salt Farming

Table 4 shows the benefits derived by the farmers in salt farming. Based on the conducted survey, it shows that there were 15.15% farmers who were in salt farming for almost five years now; 46 or 34.84% of them are within 11 to 15 years now and 25.75% for 16 to 20 years in farming. With this length of experience and stay in the salt farm the various benefits were already received by them. Such that they were able to send their son or daughters to school as answered by 93.2% female while 94.5% of the male; have bought scooter according to 59.3% female and 69.9% male. This goes to show that with the length of stay in the farm some of them did even put up their own warehouse.

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Table 4. Salt Farming Benefits

BENEFITS ON SALT FARMING	FEMALE (n <sub>1</sub> =59)		MALE (n <sub>2</sub> =73)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1. I/we bought house and lot.	20	33.9%	30	41.1%
2. I/we Send son and daughter in College or TESDA Courses.	55	93.2%	69	94.5%
3. I/we Bought <i>Kuliglig</i> and other machines for farming.	19	32.20%	45	61.64.0%
4. I/we Bought tricycle/ scooter.	35	59.3%	51	69.9%
5. I/we Bought a car.	10	16.94%	28	38.35%%
6. I/we were able to put up salt store in the area.	26	44.06%	13	17.80%
7. I/we are delivering salt to other towns.	6	10.16%	11	15.06%
8. I/we were able to put up sari-sari store/carinderia/lugawan and street food area.	18	30.5%	30	41.1%
9. I /we were able to put up my small salt warehouse.	29	49.15%	33	45.20%

### Problem Encountered by Salt Farmers

Based on the survey conducted majority of the farmers answers that their problem is the no production during rainy season with a frequency of 52 or 39.39% . Unsold stocks is also another problem for them since some of the farmers have difficulty on disposing their salt.

Table 5. Problems Encountered by Salt Farmers/Owners

Problem Encountered by Salt Farmers	Frequency	Percentage
1.No production during raining season	52	39.39%
2. Unsold stocks	28	21.21%
3. Competition	21	15.90%
4. Lack of workers	11	8.33%

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study highlighted the major steps of salt bed preparation and practices of the genderroles of salt farmers . Results shows that both gender works for the salt bed preparation. However, construction of salt bed and flattening of salt beds are often done by males. During school days, females have lesser time in the salt farms for they often do household chores and teach their children. Moreover, male farmers have been found out that during rainy season, farmers go into fishing, farming, and housekeeping. This is due to the fact that salt-making process in Western Pangasinan still uses traditional and labor-intensive methods that are best suited during the dry season.

### CONCLUSION

In general, this study proves that salt farming in Western Pangasinan is one of the major sources of livelihood in Alaminos City, Bani, Bolinao, and Dasol. Both male and female salt farmers have been equally benefitted through the years because they were able to provide the needs of their household and improve their living. Meanwhile, some of the problems that the farmers faced include the inability to produce salt during rainy season, unsold salt rocks, and the wider customer reach of bigger salt farms.

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### RECOMMENDATION

With the findings of this study, the following are recommended.

- 1.) In order to have a continuous salt production, facilities with the aid of technology should be easily accessible to salt farms. It is time to use the advancement of modernity to escape from the traditional and labor-intensive methods that are still used until today. Through this way, small time farmers will have the opportunity in the open market to sell their product.
- 2.) A salt tourism farms should also be created in order to promote the Salt Industry of Western Pangasinan .
- 3.) For the other researcher to make a further study on the salt industry.

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