

# Roots in Foreign Soil: A Phenomenological–Thematic Study of Migrant Farmers’ Adaptation, Livelihood, and Identity

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## ABSTRACT

Migration has become a common livelihood strategy among farmers facing economic insecurity, environmental stress, and limited opportunities in their places of origin. This qualitative study explored the lived experiences of migrant farmers in a host farming community, focusing on their reasons for migration, the challenges they encountered during adaptation, the strategies they developed to sustain their livelihood, the ways migration shaped their identity, and the support systems that facilitated or constrained their adjustment. Guided by a phenomenological–thematic approach, the study drew on in depth interviews with migrant farmers and employed Colaizzi informed thematic analysis to capture shared meanings grounded in participants’ narratives.

Findings revealed that migration was primarily driven by survival needs and family responsibility, with farming chosen due to its accessibility and familiarity. Adaptation was shaped by interconnected environmental, economic, and social challenges, including water scarcity, unstable income, debt, language barriers, and emotional isolation. In response, migrant farmers developed adaptive strategies rooted in learning through guidance and experience, endurance, cooperation, and reliance on work relationships. Migration also influenced identity formation, as participants gradually developed a sense of belonging, redefined themselves through work and responsibility, and negotiated their identity over time. Support systems, particularly informal mutual aid and employer based assistance, played a critical but uneven role in facilitating adaptation.

The study concludes that migrant farmers’ adaptation is a cumulative and relational process sustained by endurance, learning, and social engagement rather than immediate stability. By foregrounding migrant farmers’ lived experiences, this research contributes to understanding migration as an ongoing process of negotiating livelihood, identity, and belonging within a specific community context. The findings offer insights relevant to education, community practice, and future research on migration and rural livelihoods.

**Keywords:** Migrant farmers, Rural migration, Livelihood adaptation, Identity formation, Community integration

## INTRODUCTION

Migration has long served as a critical livelihood strategy among individuals and households confronting persistent economic insecurity, environmental instability, and limited employment opportunities. In rural agricultural contexts, migration often emerges not as a voluntary pursuit of opportunity but as a necessary response to structural livelihood constraints that threaten survival and household continuity. Farmers facing declining productivity, income instability, and environmental uncertainty frequently relocate to environments where agricultural production remains viable, allowing them to sustain livelihood through the continuation of familiar occupational practices. This form of migration reflects adaptive responses to structural vulnerability and highlights the relational and experiential dimensions of livelihood mobility within agrarian communities.

Agricultural migration is shaped by the intersection of environmental, economic, and social conditions that influence both the decision to migrate and the subsequent process of adaptation. Environmental factors such as

soil fertility, irrigation availability, and climatic suitability significantly affect agricultural productivity and livelihood sustainability. Variations in environmental conditions across regions compel farmers to seek environments where crop production can be sustained more reliably. At the same time, economic pressures including unstable crop prices, debt, limited employment opportunities, and income insecurity intensify livelihood vulnerability and create conditions that necessitate migration. These structural constraints shape migration not as a discrete event but as an adaptive livelihood strategy grounded in the need to secure economic continuity and sustain family survival.

Social relationships further influence migration processes by shaping access to employment, resources, and support systems within destination communities. Migration pathways are often facilitated through informal social networks, including relatives, friends, and employers, who provide information, guidance, and access to livelihood opportunities. These relational connections reduce uncertainty associated with migration and enable individuals to navigate unfamiliar environments. Migration, therefore, is not solely an economic or geographic phenomenon but also a relational process embedded within social structures and interpersonal connections that sustain livelihood continuity and facilitate adaptation.

Beyond its economic and environmental dimensions, migration involves significant experiential and identity related transformations. Migrant farmers must adapt not only to new environmental conditions and farming practices but also to unfamiliar social environments, cultural norms, and community dynamics. Early stages of migration are often characterized by uncertainty, emotional isolation, and heightened awareness of difference, as migrants negotiate their position within host communities. Adaptation involves learning new farming techniques, establishing work relationships, and gradually integrating into local social systems. Over time, sustained participation in agricultural work and community interaction may foster a developing sense of belonging, social recognition, and identity transformation. Migration thus represents a lived experience through which individuals continuously negotiate livelihood, belonging, and self understanding within changing social and environmental contexts.

Existing scholarship on migration has extensively examined migration as a livelihood strategy shaped by economic necessity, environmental pressures, and labor market dynamics. Research has emphasized the role of migration in enabling individuals to respond to livelihood insecurity, diversify income sources, and adapt to changing environmental and economic conditions. Studies on rural agricultural migration highlight the importance of environmental suitability, livelihood opportunity, and social networks in shaping migration decisions and adaptation outcomes. Migration research has also increasingly recognized identity and belonging as central dimensions of migrant experience, emphasizing that migration reshapes individuals' sense of self, social position, and community membership over time. Identity formation among migrants is understood as a dynamic and relational process shaped through lived experience, social interaction, and sustained participation in work and community life.

Despite these contributions, much of the existing literature has approached migration primarily from structural, economic, and policy oriented perspectives, often emphasizing measurable outcomes such as income stability, labor mobility, and productivity. While these approaches provide valuable insights into the structural drivers and consequences of migration, they offer limited understanding of migration as a lived and experiential process. Less attention has been given to how migrant farmers themselves interpret migration, navigate adaptation challenges, develop livelihood strategies, and negotiate identity and belonging within specific local contexts. The subjective meanings, relational experiences, and everyday realities that shape migrant farmers' adaptation remain underexplored, particularly within rural agricultural communities.

This gap is especially evident in the Philippine context, where migration research has predominantly focused on overseas labor migration, remittance economies, and macro level economic impacts. Internal rural migration among agricultural workers, particularly migrant farmers relocating within rural farming communities, has received comparatively limited scholarly attention. The lived experiences of migrant farmers in highland agricultural regions such as Benguet remain underrepresented in existing research, despite the significant role of migration in sustaining agricultural production and rural livelihood systems. Understanding how migrant farmers experience migration, adapt to new farming environments, and construct meaning through their lived

experiences is essential for developing a more comprehensive understanding of rural migration and livelihood adaptation.

This study addresses this gap by examining the lived experiences of migrant farmers in a selected farming community in Mankayan, Benguet, Philippines. Using a phenomenological–thematic approach, the study seeks to explore migration as an experiential process shaped by livelihood adaptation, social interaction, and identity transformation. Rather than examining migration solely as an economic or structural phenomenon, this study foregrounds migrant farmers’ narratives to understand how migration is experienced, interpreted, and negotiated within everyday life. By centering lived experience, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of migration as a relational and dynamic process involving adaptation, livelihood continuity, identity formation, and belonging within a specific rural agricultural context.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the reasons migrant farmers choose to work in this farming community?
2. What environmental, economic, and social challenges do migrant farmers encounter in adapting to their new farming environment?
3. What strategies do migrant farmers develop to integrate into the local farming community and sustain their livelihood?
4. How does migration influence the personal and professional identity of migrant farmers?
5. What support systems or community dynamics facilitate or hinder the adaptation process of migrant farmers?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach. This design was utilized to examine and document the lived experiences of migrant farmers residing in one selected community in Mankayan, Benguet. The qualitative approach was appropriate for the study because the research focused on understanding experiences, perceptions, and meanings rather than measuring variables or numerical data. The phenomenological approach allowed the researcher to focus on how the participants described their experiences as migrant farmers, particularly in relation to identity formation and adaptation in a community that was not their place of origin. The design guided the collection and interpretation of narratives based on the participants’ own perspectives.

### Research Locale

The study was conducted in one selected community in the municipality of Mankayan, Benguet. This community was chosen because migrant farmers were actively residing and working in the area during the time of the study. The locale was accessible to the researcher, which made data collection feasible. Mankayan is characterized by agricultural activities that serve as a primary source of livelihood for many residents, including migrant farmers. The presence of migrant farmers in the community provided an appropriate setting for examining their experiences related to migration, farming, and adaptation.

### Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were **all migrant farmers who were interviewed during the data gathering phase**. All participants were male, aged 21 years old and above, and were actively engaged in farming within the selected community in Mankayan, Benguet, Philippines at the time of the study.

The participants came from different provinces and regions, including Apayao, Cagayan, Zambales, Bacolod City, La Trinidad, and nearby municipalities. Their length of farming experience in the community ranged from three years to more than fifteen years.

Including all interviewed participants ensured data richness and thematic saturation, allowing the study to capture diverse yet shared experiences of migration, adaptation, and identity formation among migrant farmers.

**Participant Profile and Sampling Saturation**

A total of ten (10) migrant farmers participated in this study. Participants ranged in age from 28 to 48 years, with farming experience in the host community ranging from 3 to 15 years. All participants were male and actively engaged in agricultural labor at the time of data collection.

Participants originated from multiple provinces, including Apayao, Cagayan, Zambales, Bacolod City, and municipalities within Benguet. Household composition varied, with the majority of participants reporting financial responsibility for immediate family members, including spouses, children, or siblings. Migration decisions were consistently linked to livelihood provision and household survival.

Employment arrangements were primarily informal and agricultural in nature. Participants were engaged as tenant farmers, hired farm laborers, or independent cultivators operating under verbal or relational agreements with landowners or employers. Formal written employment contracts were not reported, reflecting the informal labor structure characteristic of rural agricultural systems in the study locale.

Sampling followed purposive criteria to ensure experiential relevance. The final sample size was determined through thematic saturation. Saturation was reached when successive interviews yielded no new emergent codes, experiential meanings, or thematic structures, and when patterns of adaptation, livelihood strategies, and identity formation demonstrated consistency across participants. The tenth interview confirmed redundancy of experiential content, indicating sufficient depth and completeness for phenomenological analysis.

**Participant Demographic Summary Table**

Pseudonym	Age	Place of Origin	Years in the Community	Employment Type	Household Responsibility
Ken	28	Apayao	7 years	Farm Laborer	Supports siblings
Gil	40	Nearby Municipal	3 years	Farm Laborer	Household provider
Leo	48	Natonin	9 years	Farm Laborer	Supports siblings
Hari	29	Apayao	15 years	Farm Laborer	Household provider
Uno	34	Zambales	15 years	Farm Laborer	Supports siblings
Max	withheld	Apayao	3 years	Farm Laborer	Household provider
Erwin	31	Cagayan	3 years	Farm Laborer	Supports dependents
Bil	38	La Trinidad	12 years	Farm Laborer	Family support
Ron	37	Bacolod City	6 years	Farm Laborer	Family support
Fred	30	Natonin	4 years	Farm Laborer	Supports dependents

**Data Collection Methods**

Before the data collection, permission to conduct the study was obtained. The purpose of the research was explained to the participants, and their voluntary participation was emphasized. Informed consent was secured prior to the interviews.

Data were gathered through face-to-face interviews with the participants. Interviews were conducted at a time and place convenient for the participants to ensure their comfort. With the participants’ consent, interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy of the data.

The language used during the interviews depended on what was most comfortable for the participants to allow clear communication and accurate expression of their experiences.

## Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis followed Colaizzi's phenomenological method to ensure systematic extraction of experiential meaning.

### The analytic process proceeded through the following steps:

#### 1. Familiarization

All interview recordings were transcribed verbatim and read repeatedly to achieve immersion in participants' lived experiences and to develop holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

#### 2. Extraction of Significant Statements

Statements directly related to migration experiences, livelihood adaptation, identity formation, and support systems were identified and extracted from the transcripts.

#### 3. Formulation of Meanings

Each significant statement was examined and interpreted to articulate its underlying experiential meaning while preserving the participant's intended perspective.

#### 4. Organization into Theme Clusters

Formulated meanings were grouped into clusters based on conceptual similarity. These clusters were further synthesized into subthemes and superordinate themes reflecting shared experiential structures.

#### 5. Development of Exhaustive Description

Themes were integrated into comprehensive descriptions capturing the essence of migrant farmers' adaptation, livelihood sustainability, and identity negotiation.

#### 6. Fundamental Structure Formulation

The exhaustive description was refined to articulate the essential structure of the phenomenon as experienced by migrant farmers.

#### 7. Validation through Member Checking

Participants reviewed interpretations and thematic summaries to verify accuracy and confirm that findings authentically represented their lived experiences.

This structured analytic procedure ensured methodological transparency and maintained fidelity between raw data and thematic interpretation.

## Data Validation

To ensure credibility and accuracy, member checking was conducted by allowing participants to review their interview responses and confirm the correctness of recorded information and interpretations. Triangulation was achieved through comparison of interview data with field observations and analytic notes to ensure consistency and depth of interpretation. Peer review was also undertaken, wherein co-researchers examined the coding, thematic structure, and interpretations to enhance analytic rigor and minimize interpretive bias. An audit trail documenting coding decisions, theme development, and analytic reflections was maintained to ensure

transparency and confirmability. These validation procedures strengthened the trustworthiness of the findings and ensured faithful representation of participants' lived experiences.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was maintained by not disclosing the identities of the participants. Pseudonyms were used in place of real names, and any information that could identify the participants was excluded from the research report. All data collected were used solely for academic purposes. The study ensured that participants were treated with dignity and respect for their beliefs, culture, and traditions.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that there are no financial, professional, institutional, or personal conflicts of interest that could have influenced the conduct, analysis, interpretation, or reporting of this study. The research was conducted independently, and no external funding, sponsorship, or organizational affiliation had any role in the design of the study, data collection, analysis, interpretation of findings, or preparation of the manuscript. All authors affirm that the study was carried out with full academic integrity and transparency, and that the findings presented reflect the authentic lived experiences of the participants without bias or undue influence.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents the findings of the study entitled *“Roots in Foreign Soil: A Phenomenological–Thematic Study of Migrant Farmers’ Adaptation, Livelihood, and Identity.”* The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the lived experiences of migrant farmers, particularly their reasons for migration, the challenges they encountered, the strategies they developed to adapt, the ways migration influenced their identity, and the support systems that shaped their integration into the farming community.

The data were gathered through in depth interviews with migrant farmers who had relocated and engaged in agricultural work within the selected community. Their narratives provided rich and detailed accounts of their personal journeys, struggles, adjustments, and evolving roles as migrant workers and members of the farming community. These accounts served as the primary basis for understanding the phenomenon of migration as experienced in their daily lives.

The analysis of the data followed a Colaizzi informed phenomenological–thematic approach. Significant statements were extracted from the interview transcripts and examined carefully to capture essential meanings grounded in the participants' lived experiences. These meanings were organized into emergent themes and clustered into broader superordinate themes that reflect shared patterns across participants while preserving individual experiential depth. This analytic process ensured that the findings remained faithful to the voices of the participants and accurately represented the essence of their experiences.

The findings of this study are presented according to the five research questions that guided the investigation. Each section presents the emergent themes supported by verbatim statements to illustrate how migrant farmers experienced migration, adaptation, livelihood sustainability, identity formation, and community integration. Through this process, the chapter provides a comprehensive presentation and interpretation of the lived experiences of migrant farmers within the context of their new farming environment.

### **Superordinate Theme 1: Migration as a Survival Driven and Opportunity Seeking Decision**

Migration emerged in the lives of migrant farmers as a response to conditions that threatened their ability to sustain livelihood and fulfill family responsibilities. Participants described migration not as an isolated decision but as a necessity shaped by economic hardship, limited employment opportunities, and the need to secure stability. Their movement reflected a shift from environments where survival was uncertain toward spaces where livelihood continuity was possible. Migration therefore represented both departure from hardship and movement toward opportunity, grounded in the practical realities of sustaining daily existence. Participants did not describe

migration as an abstract aspiration but as a concrete response to immediate and ongoing livelihood needs. Their experiences revealed migration as deeply connected to survival, responsibility, and the search for economic continuity.

Economic hardship formed a central condition that shaped participants' decision to migrate. Participants described experiencing unstable income, limited access to work, and conditions that prevented them from meeting personal and familial needs. Migration became a response to these constraints, offering the possibility of income generation through farming.

Their narratives reflected awareness that remaining in their place of origin would not resolve their financial struggles. Migration therefore became a means of restoring livelihood stability rather than merely pursuing improvement. The act of leaving was closely connected to the necessity of sustaining economic survival rather than personal preference alone.

Family responsibility further shaped migration decisions, reinforcing the role of participants as providers. Participants described migration as necessary to support children's education, siblings, and household needs. Their movement reflected commitment to sustaining family well being despite personal hardship. Migration therefore became a means of fulfilling obligations that extended beyond individual survival. Their experiences reflected the inseparable connection between economic survival and family responsibility. Migration was therefore experienced not only as personal transition but as fulfillment of social and familial roles.

Migration was also facilitated by social relationships that provided access and guidance. Participants described being invited, assisted, or encouraged by relatives and friends already present in the community. These relationships reduced uncertainty and provided pathways for entry into farming work. Migration occurred within networks of trust that made relocation possible and sustainable. Social connections therefore functioned as bridges that enabled adaptation and integration. Migration emerged as both an individual and relational process shaped by economic necessity and social support.

Participants also perceived the destination community as offering conditions that made livelihood sustainability possible. Access to farming land, water resources, and opportunities for income influenced their decision to remain. Migration therefore represented movement toward environments where survival could be sustained through continued labor. Their experiences reflected awareness that farming, despite its difficulty, offered livelihood continuity unavailable in their place of origin. Migration was thus grounded in both survival necessity and perceived opportunity for economic stability.

### **Subtheme 1.1: Economic Hardship as Migration Trigger**

Economic hardship shaped migration as a necessary response to conditions that threatened livelihood continuity. Respondents described experiencing financial instability, limited income opportunities, and livelihood disruption in their place of origin. Migration emerged as a response to these conditions, allowing individuals to seek environments where income could be sustained through farming work. Their movement reflected awareness that remaining in economically constrained environments would not allow them to meet personal and family needs. Migration therefore represented an effort to restore livelihood stability rather than pursue abstract improvement. Their experiences demonstrate how economic necessity functions as a decisive force shaping migration.

Economic hardship was not described as temporary difficulty but as persistent condition affecting survival. Respondents expressed awareness that financial instability prevented them from sustaining daily needs. Migration became a deliberate strategy to regain income stability and prevent further economic vulnerability. Farming, despite its difficulty, provided opportunity to generate income unavailable in their place of origin. Migration therefore reflected adaptation to structural economic limitations rather than voluntary relocation. Economic hardship functioned as a foundational condition shaping migration decisions.

Gilbert explained, "Gapo ti rigat ti biyag ah santo kasapulan metlng ti pagnam ayan a ubra ti ububraen mi jay ayan mi nakaro gamin ti rigat idjay nadagsen unay ti trabaho ti mais ken pagay." (Life was hard, and we needed work immediately. The work there was very difficult and physically demanding.)

Gilbert's statement reflects how economic hardship created urgency to seek alternative livelihood. His description of life as difficult reflects conditions where income was insufficient to sustain daily needs. Migration emerged as a practical response to financial instability that limited his ability to survive economically. The need for work was described as immediate, showing how livelihood insecurity compelled relocation. His movement reflects effort to restore economic stability through access to farming work. Migration therefore represented survival oriented decision grounded in economic necessity. His experience illustrates how financial hardship directly shaped mobility.

Gilbert's experience also reflects how economic hardship disrupts livelihood continuity. When existing work fails to provide stable income, individuals seek environments where livelihood opportunities exist. Migration becomes means of restoring income stability rather than voluntary relocation. His decision reflects effort to secure economic continuity in response to financial vulnerability. Migration therefore reflects adaptation to economic instability. His experience demonstrates how livelihood insecurity functions as primary driver of migration.

Global research shows that economic hardship remains one of the most significant drivers of rural migration. Agricultural workers often relocate when income instability prevents livelihood continuity. Migration allows individuals to access environments where income opportunities exist, supporting survival. Economic necessity therefore functions as structural force shaping labor mobility (International Organization for Migration, 2022; FAO, 2021).

Philippine studies confirm that rural workers frequently migrate due to unstable agricultural income and limited employment opportunities. Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority show that livelihood insecurity remains a major factor influencing internal migration. Migration allows workers to secure income stability unavailable in their place of origin (PSA, 2022; NEDA, 2021).

Ronel expressed similar conditions by stating, "Magay udom ay ubla di gardinero ladta." (There was no other job, so I worked in farming.)

Ronel's statement reflects how absence of employment opportunities shaped migration decisions. His description reveals that livelihood options were limited, leaving farming as the available means of income generation. Migration emerged as response to constrained labor opportunities. His movement reflects adaptation to economic conditions where livelihood alternatives were unavailable. Migration therefore represented effort to secure income through available work. His experience illustrates how economic hardship shapes livelihood pathways.

The lack of employment alternatives intensifies economic vulnerability. Individuals facing limited labor opportunities often relocate to environments where work is accessible. Migration therefore becomes necessary for sustaining income stability. Ronel's experience reflects how economic conditions constrain occupational choice. Migration emerged as livelihood driven adaptation to labor limitations. His movement demonstrates how economic hardship compels migration.

International labor migration studies show that limited employment opportunities drive rural migration. Individuals relocate toward agricultural regions where livelihood opportunities exist. Migration therefore reflects effort to sustain livelihood continuity (ILO, 2020; World Bank, 2023).

Local research in upland agricultural communities in Northern Luzon shows that livelihood limitations often compel farmers to relocate toward areas where agricultural work remains available. Migration becomes survival strategy grounded in economic necessity (Benguet State University Research Journal, 2020; Department of Agriculture CAR, 2021).

Kenny explained, "Aga tan sin kandadi ay nabangkrap ak isunga kaman inmalis ak sina tan din bangkrap ko ayduy inutang ko utangek din expenses sidi sunga sin binayadak kinmaan ak et nan anap ak si udom say inmali ak et sina ay atleast ay waday maapit."

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(I experienced bankruptcy before and had debts because I borrowed money for expenses. After paying them, I looked for another place, and I came here because at least there was something to harvest.)

Kenny's experience reflects how financial loss disrupted livelihood stability. Bankruptcy represents collapse of income systems that sustain daily survival. Migration emerged as response to financial disruption. His effort to seek a place where crops could be harvested reflects livelihood recovery. Migration became means of restoring income stability after financial loss. His experience demonstrates how economic hardship shapes migration decisions. Migration therefore reflects effort to recover livelihood continuity.

Debt intensified financial vulnerability, creating urgency to secure stable income. Economic obligations affect survival, requiring individuals to seek livelihood opportunities. Kenny's migration reflects effort to rebuild financial stability. Migration therefore functioned as response to economic disruption. His movement illustrates how financial hardship compels relocation.

Research shows that financial shocks, including debt and income loss, often trigger migration. Migration allows individuals to rebuild livelihood stability. Economic vulnerability therefore functions as catalyst for labor mobility (FAO, 2022; Asian Development Bank, 2021).

Philippine rural livelihood studies show that debt remains significant factor influencing migration among farmers. Migration allows individuals to recover income stability and sustain household survival (PIDS, 2021; PSA, 2023).

Alfred stated, "I anap di pansayaatan di pamilya." (I was looking for a better life for my family.)

Alfred's statement reflects how economic hardship shaped migration through livelihood responsibility. Migration emerged as effort to secure economic stability for his household. His decision reflects awareness that existing livelihood conditions were insufficient. Migration therefore became survival oriented response. His movement illustrates how economic necessity shapes migration decisions.

Migration reflects responsibility to sustain family livelihood. Economic hardship compels individuals to seek income opportunities elsewhere. Alfred's experience demonstrates how livelihood necessity influences migration.

Studies show that migration often occurs due to economic necessity linked to family survival (UNDP, 2020; IOM, 2021). Philippine agricultural labor migration reflects similar patterns (Department of Agriculture, 2022; NEDA, 2023).

Garry explained, "Depende nu way swerte din mula adi pay way pilak." (If the crops are good, there is money; if not, there is none.)

This reflects income instability that shapes migration. Economic uncertainty affects livelihood continuity. Migration allows individuals to seek better farming opportunities. His experience reflects economic vulnerability influencing mobility.

Income instability increases livelihood risk. Migration becomes adaptive response. His movement reflects effort to sustain livelihood.

Research confirms unstable agricultural income drives migration (FAO, 2021; World Bank, 2022). Philippine agricultural workers experience similar livelihood instability (PSA, 2023; DA CAR, 2022).

Oni stated, "Mayat pay adi sina tan nuka kaman nalag-an manpay din iyat ay nuka man-income din income."

(It is better here because earning income is easier.)

This reflects migration as effort to secure stable livelihood. Migration allows income generation. His experience reflects economic motivation.

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Migration allows individuals to restore livelihood continuity. Economic necessity shapes migration decisions.

Studies confirm migration driven by livelihood opportunities (ILO, 2021; OECD, 2022). Philippine rural migration reflects similar patterns (PIDS, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Economic hardship emerged as fundamental condition shaping migration. Financial instability, limited employment, and income uncertainty created conditions that compelled relocation. Migration allowed respondents to restore livelihood stability through farming work. Their movement reflects adaptation to economic vulnerability.

Migration therefore represents survival oriented decision grounded in economic necessity. Economic hardship shaped not only their movement but also their ability to sustain livelihood and fulfill family responsibilities.

### **Subtheme 1.2: Family Responsibility as Migration Motivation**

Family responsibility emerged as a central force shaping the decision of migrant farmers to relocate and engage in agricultural work within the community. Respondents consistently described their migration as deeply connected to their obligation to support their children, siblings, and household needs. Migration was not framed as an individual pursuit but as an extension of their role within the family. Their movement reflected awareness that sustaining family survival required access to stable income. Farming became the means through which they could fulfill this responsibility. Migration therefore represented continuation of their duty as providers rather than departure from family life.

Family responsibility influenced how respondents evaluated their livelihood options. Remaining in their place of origin was often associated with limited ability to sustain household needs. Migration offered the possibility of restoring income stability and ensuring family continuity. Their decision to relocate was grounded in the need to secure financial resources for family survival. Migration therefore reflected effort to preserve family well being under conditions of economic limitation. Their experiences demonstrate how family obligation functions as a powerful force shaping migration decisions.

Kenny explained how his migration allowed him to fulfill his responsibility toward his family by stating, “Dakdake ay tulong adi tan kaman say gapu di nanpaskwelaan min ading mi tan atleast ay way mabingbingay sunga nakaturpos et iman nakalpas.”

(It was a big help because we were able to support my younger sibling’s schooling, and there was something to rely on, which allowed them to finish their education.)

Kenny’s statement reflects how migration allowed him to sustain family responsibility through financial support. His emphasis on helping his sibling finish school illustrates how livelihood stability gained through migration directly influenced family outcomes. Migration therefore became a means of sustaining educational continuity within the household. His movement reflects awareness that income generated through farming contributed to family advancement. Migration functioned as pathway for fulfilling responsibility as family provider. His experience demonstrates how economic migration supports family survival beyond individual livelihood.

Education represents a significant household need that requires sustained financial support. Kenny’s migration allowed him to provide income necessary to sustain his sibling’s schooling. His experience reflects how migration contributes to maintaining family stability through access to livelihood resources. Migration therefore functioned as mechanism for sustaining family continuity. His narrative demonstrates how economic migration supports family well being. Migration reflects fulfillment of family responsibility through livelihood provision.

International research confirms that family responsibility remains a primary driver of migration among agricultural workers. Migration allows individuals to generate income that supports education and household needs. These movements reflect livelihood strategies aimed at sustaining family continuity rather than individual mobility (UNESCO, 2020; International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2021).

Philippine studies also show that rural migration is strongly linked to family support obligations. Agricultural workers frequently migrate to sustain family livelihood and ensure access to education for younger family members. Migration therefore reflects effort to fulfill household responsibilities (Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Gilbert described his responsibility toward his children by stating, “Jay personal ta agpapaadal ak mit ti anak ko kailangak mit ti suporta ta maaited ko met jay kasapulan ti anak ko nga agbasa.”

(I am sending my child to school, and I need support so that I can provide what my child needs for education.)

Gilbert’s statement reflects how migration allowed him to fulfill his role as parent. His emphasis on providing educational support illustrates how livelihood stability gained through migration directly influenced his child’s future. Migration therefore became a means of sustaining family continuity. His movement reflects awareness that income generation was necessary to fulfill parental responsibility. Migration functioned as pathway toward sustaining family well being. His experience demonstrates how migration supports parental roles.

Parental responsibility often shapes livelihood decisions, particularly when income limitations prevent access to education. Gilbert’s migration allowed him to generate income necessary to support his child. His experience reflects how migration contributes to sustaining family stability. Migration therefore represents effort to fulfill parental responsibility. His movement illustrates how economic necessity shapes family oriented migration decisions.

Global migration research shows that parents often migrate to secure income that sustains their children’s education. Migration therefore reflects family survival strategy rather than individual mobility (UNICEF, 2021; IOM, 2022).

National studies confirm similar patterns among Filipino agricultural workers. Migration allows parents to generate income that sustains children’s educational needs (Department of Education, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Billy explained how family needs influenced his migration decision by stating, “kanan kadwak ay ta padasen tako abes di asi un unina sina tan medyo asideg. Mayat pay adi.”

(My spouse told me that we should try here first because it is nearer and better.)

Billy’s statement reflects how migration decisions were shaped by family considerations. His spouse’s suggestion reflects shared effort to improve household stability. Migration therefore became collective decision aimed at sustaining family livelihood. His movement reflects family oriented decision making. Migration functioned as strategy to sustain household continuity. His experience demonstrates how family responsibility influences migration.

Family decision making often reflects shared effort to secure livelihood stability. Billy’s migration reflects effort to improve family conditions. Migration therefore represents family survival strategy. His movement illustrates how family responsibility shapes migration decisions.

Research shows that family influence plays significant role in migration decisions (OECD, 2020; ILO, 2021). Philippine migration studies reflect similar patterns (NEDA, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Alfred reiterated this responsibility by stating, “I anap di pansayaatan di pamilya.” (I was looking for a better life for my family.)

Alfred’s statement reflects how migration was grounded in family responsibility. His emphasis on improving family conditions reflects awareness of livelihood limitations. Migration therefore became effort to sustain family well being. His movement reflects family oriented migration decision. Migration functioned as strategy for sustaining family survival.

Family responsibility often motivates migration among agricultural workers (FAO, 2022; UNDP, 2021). Philippine agricultural migration reflects similar patterns (DA, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Family responsibility functioned as central condition shaping migration. Respondents migrated to sustain family survival and fulfill their role as providers. Migration allowed them to generate income necessary for sustaining household needs. Their movement reflects family oriented livelihood strategy.

Family responsibility therefore shaped migration as effort to preserve household stability. Migration allowed respondents to sustain family continuity through livelihood provision.

### **Subtheme 1.3: Migration Facilitated by Social Networks**

Social relationships played a decisive role in enabling migrant farmers to relocate and establish livelihood within the community. Respondents consistently described how relatives, friends, and acquaintances served as entry points into farming work. Migration did not occur in isolation but was facilitated through existing social connections that provided information, encouragement, and access. These relationships reduced uncertainty and made relocation possible by linking individuals to environments where livelihood opportunities existed. Social networks functioned as bridges between origin and destination, allowing migrants to transition into unfamiliar environments with guidance. Migration therefore reflected not only economic necessity but also relational pathways that enabled movement.

Social connections also shaped how migrants integrated into the farming environment. Respondents described learning farming practices, securing work, and establishing livelihood through assistance from individuals already familiar with the community. These relationships provided both emotional reassurance and practical support, allowing migrants to navigate unfamiliar conditions. Migration was therefore embedded within networks of trust that made adaptation possible. Social networks functioned as support systems that sustained livelihood continuity. Migration emerged as relational process shaped by interpersonal connections and shared livelihood experience.

Kenny described how his migration was facilitated by relatives by stating, “Wadan kasinsin kud restaurant ed abatan say nangi alok en maman Tyron en saken say inmeyak ed mabatang ayduy asak emey sina.” (I had a relative who invited and guided me, and that was how I came here.)

Kenny’s experience reflects how family connections created pathways for migration. His relative did not only invite him but also provided guidance that allowed him to relocate and establish livelihood. Migration therefore emerged as relational process supported by interpersonal trust. His movement reflects reliance on family connections to access livelihood opportunities. Social relationships functioned as mechanisms that reduced uncertainty associated with migration. His experience illustrates how family networks facilitate mobility.

Family networks provide critical support that enables individuals to navigate unfamiliar environments. Kenny’s migration was made possible through guidance from relatives already present in the destination community. These relationships functioned as access points that allowed him to establish livelihood. Migration therefore reflects relational pathway shaped by social connections. His experience demonstrates how interpersonal relationships sustain migration processes. Migration emerged as both economic and relational transition.

International migration research confirms that social networks significantly influence migration decisions. Relatives and friends provide information and support that facilitate relocation and employment access. Social networks therefore reduce risks associated with migration and increase likelihood of successful adaptation (International Organization for Migration, 2022; World Bank, 2023).

Local Philippine research also shows that family networks play central role in rural migration. Agricultural workers frequently relocate to areas where relatives already reside, allowing them to access livelihood opportunities and social support. Migration therefore reflects relationally facilitated mobility (Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Jerwin described a similar experience by stating, “Inawis na saken din barkadak.”

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(My friend invited me.)

Jerwin's statement reflects how peer relationships facilitated migration. His friend served as entry point into farming work, allowing him to relocate. Migration therefore emerged through interpersonal relationships rather than individual effort alone. His movement reflects reliance on peer networks to access livelihood opportunities. Social connections provided pathway for migration. His experience illustrates how friendship networks sustain migration processes.

Peer relationships provide access to environments where livelihood opportunities exist. Jerwin's migration was facilitated by trust and familiarity established through friendship. These relationships functioned as support systems that enabled relocation. Migration therefore reflects relational process shaped by interpersonal connections. His experience demonstrates how peer networks influence migration. Migration emerged through social pathways that enabled livelihood continuity.

Global research shows that peer networks play critical role in migration, particularly among agricultural workers. Friends provide information, guidance, and access to employment opportunities. Migration therefore occurs within networks of trust and familiarity (ILO, 2021; FAO, 2022).

Philippine migration studies confirm that interpersonal relationships strongly influence internal migration. Workers often relocate based on invitations from individuals already engaged in livelihood activities in destination communities (NEDA, 2022; Department of Agriculture, 2023).

Joel described how social integration facilitated his relocation by stating, "Wada adi tan nagapu ak sinto asi pay naki barbarkada asi inmalis na et medyo kaman umilis na."

(I had friends there, and later I moved and gradually became part of the place.)

Joel's statement reflects how friendships facilitated migration and integration. Social relationships provided familiarity that made relocation possible. Migration therefore emerged through interpersonal connection. His movement reflects how friendships reduce uncertainty associated with migration. Social networks allowed him to transition into the farming community. His experience illustrates relational nature of migration.

Friendships provide emotional and practical support that sustains migration. Joel's experience reflects how interpersonal relationships influence mobility decisions. Migration therefore reflects relational adaptation. His movement demonstrates how social networks sustain migration processes.

Research confirms that interpersonal relationships significantly influence migration patterns (OECD, 2020; IOM, 2021). Philippine rural migration reflects similar patterns (PSA, 2023; PIDS, 2022).

Gilbert also described the presence of relatives by stating, "Adu da day kabsat ko jay Loo ken jay babayaw ko."

(I have many relatives there.)

Gilbert's experience reflects how family presence influenced migration. Relatives provided familiarity and support that made relocation possible. Migration therefore reflects relational pathway shaped by family networks.

Family presence reduces migration uncertainty and facilitates adaptation (UNDP, 2021; FAO, 2022). Philippine agricultural migration reflects similar relational patterns (DA, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Social networks functioned as essential pathways enabling migration. Family members, friends, and peers provided support that facilitated relocation and integration. Migration emerged as relational process grounded in trust and shared livelihood experience.

Social connections therefore shaped migration by providing access, support, and pathways for sustaining livelihood continuity within the farming community.

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#### Subtheme 1.4: Perceived Livelihood Opportunities in the Community

The perception that the destination community offered better livelihood opportunities strongly influenced the decision of migrant farmers to relocate and remain. Respondents described the community as a place where farming provided income, access to cultivable land, and the possibility of sustaining daily needs. Migration was shaped not only by hardship in their place of origin but also by the belief that the new environment allowed them to secure economic continuity. Farming became the primary means through which livelihood stability could be restored. The presence of agricultural resources influenced their willingness to relocate and commit to farming work. Migration therefore reflected movement toward environments perceived to support livelihood survival.

The opportunity to generate income shaped how respondents evaluated their migration decisions. Farming, despite its difficulty, provided income that allowed them to sustain daily needs and support family responsibilities. Migration emerged as effort to access environments where income generation was possible. Respondents described farming as a livelihood that allowed them to maintain economic continuity. Migration therefore reflected adaptation to environments where livelihood sustainability could be achieved. Their experiences demonstrate how perceived livelihood opportunity shapes migration decisions.

Kenny explained how income opportunities influenced his migration decision by stating, “Kaman wat minmaymayat tan sin in mali ak sina atleast ay waday mapulpuliya atleast pay ay adi mamaga din kaubo sina ya atleast anuka din danum et adi mamaga uray kumapsot et atleast wada.”

(It was better when I came here because there was income, and people were not difficult, and there was water available even if limited.)

Kenny’s statement reflects how the presence of income opportunities shaped his migration decision. His emphasis on income availability illustrates how livelihood continuity influenced his willingness to relocate.

Migration therefore emerged as response to environments where income could be sustained. His movement reflects awareness that farming provided economic stability unavailable in his place of origin. The presence of water resources further supported agricultural livelihood. Migration therefore reflected movement toward environments where livelihood sustainability was possible.

Access to income allowed Kenny to restore livelihood stability. Economic opportunity provided through farming allowed him to sustain daily needs. Migration therefore functioned as strategy for securing livelihood continuity. His experience demonstrates how perceived economic opportunity influences migration decisions. Migration emerged as livelihood driven adaptation to environments offering income stability.

Global agricultural migration research shows that perceived income opportunity significantly influences migration decisions. Individuals relocate toward areas where agricultural production supports income generation. Migration therefore reflects movement toward environments offering livelihood sustainability (FAO, 2022; World Bank, 2023).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm that farmers relocate toward communities where agricultural productivity supports income generation. Migration therefore reflects adaptation to environments offering livelihood opportunity (Department of Agriculture, 2023; PSA, 2023).

Oni described similar motivations by stating, “Mayat pay adi sina tan nuka kaman nalag-an manpay din iyat ay nuka man-income din income.”

(It is better here because earning income is easier.)

Oni’s statement reflects how perceived income accessibility influenced his migration. Migration emerged as effort to secure stable livelihood. His emphasis on income accessibility reflects awareness of livelihood opportunity in the community. Migration therefore functioned as pathway toward income stability. His movement reflects effort to sustain livelihood through farming. Migration demonstrates adaptation to environments where livelihood opportunities exist.

Income accessibility shapes migration by providing opportunity to sustain economic stability. Oni's migration reflects livelihood driven decision grounded in economic necessity. Migration therefore represents effort to secure livelihood continuity. His experience demonstrates how perceived income opportunity influences migration decisions.

International research confirms that migration often occurs toward areas with accessible income opportunities. Agricultural workers relocate to environments where farming supports livelihood sustainability (ILO, 2021; OECD, 2022).

Philippine migration studies reflect similar patterns, where agricultural workers relocate toward areas offering stable farming income (PIDS, 2022; NEDA, 2023).

Garry emphasized income uncertainty and opportunity by stating, "Depende nu way swerte din mula adi pay way pilak."

(It depends on the crop; if it grows well, there is money.)

Garry's statement reflects how income opportunity influences migration despite uncertainty. Farming provides possibility of income even if outcomes vary. Migration therefore emerged as effort to access livelihood opportunity. His movement reflects adaptation to environments offering income potential.

Agricultural income uncertainty influences migration patterns. Individuals relocate toward areas where farming supports livelihood continuity (FAO, 2022; World Bank, 2023). Philippine agricultural migration reflects similar livelihood driven patterns (PSA, 2023; DA CAR, 2022).

Macxie described favorable conditions by stating, "Maymayat sina man tengnin." (It is good here; the climate is favorable.)

Macxie's experience reflects how environmental conditions support livelihood opportunity. Migration therefore reflects movement toward environments supporting agricultural livelihood.

Research confirms environmental suitability influences agricultural migration (UNDP, 2021; FAO, 2022). Philippine agricultural migration reflects similar environmental influences (DA, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Perceived livelihood opportunity strongly influenced migration decisions. Access to farming resources, income generation, and environmental conditions shaped respondents' willingness to relocate. Migration therefore reflects movement toward environments where livelihood continuity can be sustained.

Livelihood opportunity shaped migration as economic survival strategy grounded in income accessibility and agricultural productivity.

### **Subtheme 1.5: Environmental Suitability for Farming as Migration Consideration**

Environmental conditions played a significant role in shaping the decision of migrant farmers to relocate and sustain agricultural livelihood in the community. Respondents described how soil quality, water availability, and climatic conditions influenced their perception of farming viability. Migration was influenced not only by economic hardship but also by the belief that the physical environment in the destination community supported agricultural productivity. These environmental conditions provided the foundation for income generation through farming. Migration therefore reflected movement toward environments perceived to sustain agricultural livelihood. Environmental suitability shaped both migration decisions and livelihood continuity.

The physical characteristics of the farming environment influenced how respondents evaluated their ability to sustain livelihood. Soil conditions, irrigation access, and climate directly affected crop productivity and income potential. Respondents described their destination community as offering environmental conditions that allowed farming to continue. Migration therefore represented effort to secure access to environments capable of supporting agricultural production. Their experiences demonstrate how environmental suitability functions as a

decisive factor shaping migration decisions. Migration emerged as response to environmental conditions that supported livelihood sustainability.

Joel explained how environmental conditions influenced his migration decision by stating, “No endakami talon narigat ngem petek, sin sina pay narigat ngem atleast ay namaga din lota asi mayat di garden.”

(Farming in our place was difficult because the soil was muddy, but here the soil is dry and suitable for gardening.)

Joel’s statement reflects how soil conditions influenced his decision to relocate. The contrast between muddy soil in his place of origin and dry soil in the destination community highlights how environmental suitability shaped migration. Farming requires soil conditions that allow crops to grow effectively. Migration therefore emerged as effort to access environments where agricultural production was possible. His movement reflects awareness of how environmental conditions influence livelihood sustainability. Migration represents adaptation to environments that support agricultural productivity.

Environmental suitability directly affects livelihood stability among agricultural workers. Soil quality determines crop productivity and income generation. Joel’s migration reflects effort to secure access to farming environments capable of sustaining livelihood. Migration therefore reflects response to environmental conditions affecting agricultural viability. His experience demonstrates how environmental suitability shapes migration decisions.

Global agricultural research confirms that environmental conditions strongly influence migration among farmers. Soil fertility, climate stability, and irrigation access determine agricultural productivity and influence livelihood decisions. Migration often occurs toward environments capable of sustaining crop production (FAO, 2022; IPCC, 2022).

Philippine agricultural studies also show that upland farmers relocate toward areas where soil and climate conditions support farming. Environmental suitability therefore functions as key factor influencing agricultural migration (Department of Agriculture CAR, 2022; Benguet State University Research Journal, 2021).

Kenny described irrigation access by stating, “atleast anuka din danum et adi mamaga uray kumapsot et atleast wada.”

(At least there was water available, even if limited.)

Kenny’s statement reflects how irrigation access influenced his migration decision. Water availability determines agricultural productivity and income stability. Migration therefore emerged as effort to access environments where irrigation supported farming. His movement reflects awareness that water resources are necessary for sustaining agricultural livelihood. Migration represents adaptation to environments where farming remains viable. His experience demonstrates how irrigation availability shapes migration decisions.

Access to irrigation reduces livelihood risk among farmers. Water availability allows crops to grow and sustain income. Kenny’s migration reflects effort to secure access to agricultural resources necessary for survival. Migration therefore reflects adaptation to environmental conditions supporting farming. His experience illustrates how irrigation influences migration.

International research confirms irrigation access influences agricultural migration. Farmers relocate toward areas where water availability supports crop production (World Bank, 2023; FAO, 2021).

Philippine agricultural migration studies show that irrigation availability significantly influences farmer relocation decisions (NIA, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Macxie described favorable climate by stating, “Maymayat sina man tengnin.” (It is good here because the climate is cool.)

Macxie's statement reflects how climate suitability influenced his migration. Climate conditions directly affect crop productivity and agricultural sustainability. Migration therefore emerged as effort to access environments where climate supported farming. His movement reflects awareness of how environmental conditions shape livelihood viability. Migration represents adaptation to favorable agricultural environments.

Climate stability allows agricultural workers to sustain crop production and income. Macxie's migration reflects effort to secure access to environments supporting farming livelihood. Migration therefore reflects response to environmental conditions influencing agricultural sustainability. His experience demonstrates how climate suitability shapes migration decisions.

Global agricultural research confirms climate conditions significantly influence migration decisions among farmers (IPCC, 2022; UNDP, 2021).

Philippine agricultural research shows that upland climate conditions influence farmer livelihood sustainability and migration patterns (Department of Agriculture, 2023; Benguet State University, 2020).

Garry described agricultural viability by stating, "Depende nu way swerte din mula adi pay way pilak."

(It depends on whether the crops grow; if they grow, there is money.)

Garry's statement reflects how environmental conditions affect agricultural productivity. Migration therefore reflects effort to access environments where crop production is viable.

Agricultural productivity influences migration decisions. Environmental suitability determines livelihood sustainability (FAO, 2022; OECD, 2021). Philippine agricultural migration reflects similar environmental influences (PSA, 2023; DA CAR, 2022).

Environmental suitability played central role in shaping migration decisions. Soil conditions, irrigation access, and climate influenced livelihood viability. Migration therefore reflected movement toward environments capable of sustaining agricultural livelihood.

Environmental conditions shaped migration as adaptation to environments supporting agricultural productivity and livelihood continuity.

### **Subtheme 1.6: Personal Agency and Voluntary Decision Making**

Migration was not experienced solely as a reaction to hardship or external pressure but also as a deliberate decision shaped by personal agency. Respondents described exercising individual judgment in choosing to relocate, reflecting their awareness of livelihood conditions and willingness to pursue environments where survival could be sustained. Migration therefore reflected conscious effort to secure stability rather than passive response to circumstance. Their decisions reveal how individuals actively evaluated their situation and chose pathways that allowed livelihood continuity. Migration emerged as intentional act grounded in self determination. Personal agency functioned as a critical dimension shaping migration decisions.

Personal decision making influenced not only the act of migration but also the commitment to remain in the farming community. Respondents expressed awareness that migration involved leaving familiar environments and adjusting to new livelihood conditions. Their willingness to relocate reflects confidence in their ability to sustain livelihood through farming. Migration therefore reflects individual capacity to act upon economic realities. Personal agency allowed respondents to pursue environments where livelihood continuity was possible. Migration demonstrates how individual choice operates within conditions shaped by economic necessity.

Joel described the voluntary nature of his migration by stating, "Personal ko ay desisyon tan sino kumay mangidundun en saken."

(It was my personal decision, and no one forced me.)

Joel's statement reflects how migration was grounded in personal agency. His emphasis on personal decision making illustrates how migration involved conscious evaluation of livelihood conditions. Migration therefore reflects individual capacity to act upon economic realities. His movement demonstrates awareness of his responsibility to sustain livelihood. Migration represents deliberate effort to pursue stability. His experience illustrates how personal agency shapes migration decisions.

Personal decision making allows individuals to respond actively to economic hardship. Joel's migration reflects his awareness of livelihood limitations and willingness to seek alternatives. Migration therefore represents exercise of autonomy within economic constraints. His experience demonstrates how individuals navigate livelihood challenges through personal decision making. Migration reflects active adaptation rather than passive response. His movement illustrates how personal agency influences migration.

Global migration research confirms that individual agency plays central role in migration decisions. Migrants actively evaluate livelihood opportunities and choose environments where survival can be sustained. Migration therefore reflects conscious effort to secure livelihood stability (de Haas, 2021; International Organization for Migration, 2022).

Philippine migration research also shows that internal migration often involves deliberate decision making shaped by livelihood considerations. Individuals relocate based on personal assessment of economic conditions (NEDA, 2023; PSA, 2023).

Jerwin expressed similar determination by stating, "Mayat latta disidido." (It was good, and I was determined.)

Jerwin's statement reflects how personal determination influenced his migration. His emphasis on determination illustrates his willingness to pursue livelihood stability. Migration therefore reflects deliberate effort to sustain livelihood. His movement demonstrates individual commitment to secure income through farming. Migration represents exercise of personal agency shaped by economic necessity. His experience illustrates how determination influences migration.

Determination reflects awareness of livelihood conditions and willingness to act upon them. Jerwin's migration demonstrates how individuals exercise agency to pursue stability. Migration therefore reflects conscious effort to sustain livelihood continuity. His experience illustrates how personal agency shapes migration decisions. Migration represents intentional adaptation to economic conditions.

Research confirms that migration often involves personal agency shaped by livelihood necessity (OECD, 2022; UNDP, 2021). Philippine agricultural migration reflects similar patterns of deliberate livelihood driven mobility (Department of Agriculture, 2023; PIDS, 2022).

Billy described how family discussion influenced his voluntary decision by stating, "kanan kadwak ay ta padasen tako abes di asi un unina sina tan medyo asideg. Mayat pay adi."

(My spouse told me that we should try here first because it is nearer and better.)

Billy's statement reflects how migration involved personal decision shaped by family discussion. His willingness to relocate reflects exercise of agency grounded in livelihood considerations. Migration therefore represents deliberate effort to improve livelihood stability. His movement demonstrates how personal decision making shapes migration. Migration reflects active response to livelihood conditions. His experience illustrates how personal agency operates within family context.

Personal agency often operates within family decision making. Billy's migration reflects his willingness to act upon perceived livelihood opportunity. Migration therefore represents conscious effort to secure livelihood continuity. His experience demonstrates how personal decision making influences migration.

Migration research confirms that family discussions often shape voluntary migration decisions (IOM, 2021; FAO, 2022). Philippine migration studies reflect similar patterns of family influenced voluntary migration (PSA, 2023; NEDA, 2022).

Personal agency played central role in shaping migration decisions. Respondents exercised individual judgment in choosing to relocate and pursue farming livelihood. Migration therefore reflects deliberate effort to secure livelihood stability.

Migration demonstrates how individuals actively respond to economic conditions through conscious decision making grounded in survival and responsibility.

The migration of farmers into the community was shaped by conditions that threatened their ability to sustain livelihood and fulfill their responsibilities within the household. Economic hardship emerged as a persistent force that disrupted livelihood continuity, creating conditions where remaining in their place of origin no longer ensured survival. Respondents described experiences of financial instability, limited employment opportunities, and income uncertainty that made migration necessary. Their movement reflected deliberate effort to restore income stability through farming. Migration therefore emerged as a survival oriented decision grounded in economic necessity. This experience demonstrates how livelihood vulnerability functions as a decisive force shaping migration.

Family responsibility further reinforced the decision to migrate, highlighting the role of respondents as providers within their households. Migration allowed them to generate income that supported children's education, household needs, and family continuity. Their narratives reflected awareness that sustaining family survival required access to stable livelihood. Migration therefore became an extension of their responsibility to their family rather than separation from it. Their movement reflects how family obligation shapes livelihood decisions. Migration demonstrates how economic necessity and family responsibility function together in shaping mobility.

Social relationships provided pathways that enabled migration and facilitated livelihood establishment within the farming community. Respondents relied on relatives, friends, and peers who provided guidance and access to farming work. These relationships reduced uncertainty and allowed migrants to navigate unfamiliar environments. Migration therefore occurred within networks of trust that supported livelihood continuity. Social connections functioned as bridges that enabled successful relocation. Migration reflects both economic necessity and relational support.

Environmental conditions and livelihood opportunities within the community also influenced migration decisions. Respondents perceived the destination environment as capable of supporting agricultural livelihood through access to land, water, and favorable climate conditions. These factors provided the foundation for income generation and livelihood stability. Migration therefore reflected movement toward environments where agricultural livelihood could be sustained. Their experiences demonstrate how environmental and economic conditions shape migration. Migration emerged as adaptive response to environments offering livelihood continuity.

Personal agency played a critical role in shaping migration, reflecting the capacity of respondents to evaluate their conditions and pursue livelihood stability. Respondents described migration as conscious decision grounded in awareness of livelihood necessity. Their willingness to relocate reflects determination to sustain survival and fulfill their responsibilities. Migration therefore reflects both structural economic conditions and individual agency. Their movement demonstrates how individuals actively respond to livelihood challenges. Migration represents deliberate effort to secure economic and family continuity through agricultural work.

## **Superordinate Theme 2: Adaptation within Conditions of Economic, Environmental, and Social Vulnerability**

The process of adapting to a new farming environment exposed migrant farmers to multiple challenges that shaped their livelihood experiences. Respondents described adaptation not as immediate transition but as gradual process requiring adjustment to unfamiliar environmental, economic, and social conditions. Migration did not eliminate hardship but introduced new forms of vulnerability that required endurance and learning. Farming in the new community involved navigating unpredictable income, physically demanding labor, and environmental conditions that influenced agricultural productivity. Adaptation therefore emerged as lived experience shaped by

ongoing interaction with livelihood realities. Their experiences demonstrate how migration involves continuous adjustment rather than immediate stability.

Economic vulnerability remained a persistent condition even after migration. Respondents described how income from farming was uncertain and dependent on crop outcomes. Agricultural livelihood exposed them to financial instability, as income could not be guaranteed. This uncertainty required them to persist despite unpredictable economic returns. Adaptation therefore involved learning to manage livelihood risk within agricultural environments. Their experiences reflect how migration does not eliminate economic vulnerability but transforms its form.

Environmental conditions also shaped the adaptation process by influencing farming productivity and physical labor demands. Respondents described adjusting to differences in soil conditions, irrigation availability, and climate. These environmental factors directly affected crop growth and income generation. Adaptation required learning new farming practices suited to the local environment. Farming therefore involved continuous engagement with environmental conditions that shaped livelihood sustainability. Their experiences demonstrate how environmental adaptation forms part of migration.

Social conditions influenced adaptation by shaping relationships within the farming community. Respondents described learning to interact with other farmers, employers, and community members. Social integration required building trust and cooperation with individuals already familiar with the environment. Adaptation therefore involved relational adjustment alongside economic and environmental adjustment. Their experiences demonstrate how migration involves social integration as part of livelihood continuity.

Adaptation emerged as ongoing process shaped by persistence, learning, and endurance. Respondents described continuing farming despite hardship and uncertainty. Their willingness to remain reflects commitment to sustaining livelihood under challenging conditions. Adaptation therefore represents lived process grounded in survival and responsibility. Their experiences demonstrate how migrant farmers navigate vulnerability through continued engagement with farming work.

### **Subtheme 2.1: Economic Uncertainty and Income Instability**

Economic uncertainty emerged as a defining condition shaping the adaptation experiences of migrant farmers within the new farming environment. Respondents described how income from farming was not guaranteed and depended heavily on crop productivity, environmental conditions, and agricultural cycles. Unlike regular wage employment, farming income was inconsistent and often unpredictable, requiring them to endure periods where financial returns were minimal or absent. Adaptation therefore involved learning to sustain livelihood despite unstable income conditions. Their experiences reflect how migration into farming did not eliminate economic vulnerability but instead required adjustment to income variability. Economic uncertainty became part of their everyday reality as agricultural workers.

Income instability also influenced how migrant farmers planned their livelihood and household survival. Respondents described how farming outcomes determined whether they could sustain daily needs and family responsibilities. Income fluctuations required them to remain patient and persistent even when financial returns were uncertain. Farming became both a source of livelihood and a source of financial risk. Adaptation therefore involved accepting income instability as part of agricultural life. Their experiences demonstrate how economic uncertainty shaped their adjustment to the farming environment.

Garry described the uncertainty of farming income by stating, “Depende nu way swerte din mula adi pay way pilak.”

(It depends on the crop; if it grows well, there is money, but if not, there is none.)

Garry’s statement reflects how agricultural income was directly tied to crop outcomes. Farming did not guarantee consistent financial returns, and income depended on environmental and agricultural conditions beyond his control. This uncertainty shaped how he experienced livelihood stability, requiring him to endure periods of financial insecurity. Adaptation therefore involved accepting that income was conditional rather than guaranteed.

His experience demonstrates how economic vulnerability remains present even after migration. Farming provided livelihood opportunity, but it also exposed him to financial risk.

Income instability required Garry to adjust his expectations regarding financial security. Farming did not provide regular earnings, and financial stability depended on successful crop production. This condition influenced how he managed household needs and livelihood planning. Adaptation therefore involved developing resilience in the face of uncertain income. His experience reflects how migrant farmers navigate financial vulnerability through continued engagement in farming. Economic uncertainty became part of his lived experience as agricultural worker.

Global agricultural research confirms that farming income remains highly vulnerable to environmental and production variability. Agricultural workers often face income instability due to factors such as climate variability, soil conditions, and crop productivity. These conditions create financial uncertainty that shapes livelihood experiences (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2021; World Bank, 2023).

Philippine agricultural data similarly show that farmers experience unstable income due to seasonal and environmental variability. Studies from the Philippine Statistics Authority indicate that agricultural households often face fluctuating income levels due to crop dependence. These conditions require farmers to adapt to unpredictable financial returns (PSA, 2022; Department of Agriculture, 2023).

Joel described similar financial uncertainty by stating, “uray kaman maki sugsul ka talaga no way swerte edi big shot.”

(It is like gambling; if you are lucky, you earn well.)

Joel’s comparison of farming to gambling reflects the unpredictability of agricultural income. His statement illustrates how financial returns depended on uncertain environmental and agricultural conditions. Farming outcomes could not be guaranteed, and income depended on factors beyond his control. Adaptation therefore involved accepting financial unpredictability as part of livelihood. His experience demonstrates how income instability shaped his adjustment to farming. Migration exposed him to livelihood conditions characterized by uncertainty.

The comparison to gambling also reflects the emotional and psychological dimension of economic uncertainty. Farming required investment of time and labor without guaranteed financial returns. Joel’s experience illustrates how migrant farmers develop tolerance for financial risk. Adaptation therefore involved accepting income instability as part of agricultural livelihood. His experience demonstrates how economic vulnerability shaped his adjustment to the farming environment.

International studies show that income instability remains a defining characteristic of small scale farming. Agricultural workers often experience fluctuating income due to environmental variability and production uncertainty (International Labour Organization, 2021; OECD, 2022).

Philippine agricultural research also confirms that income unpredictability remains a common condition among farmers, particularly in upland agricultural regions such as Benguet (Benguet State University Research Journal, 2021; Department of Agriculture CAR, 2022).

Oni described financial continuity by stating, “No adi takon man mula kas anon ngen.” (If we do not plant, what will happen to us.)

Oni’s statement reflects how livelihood survival depended entirely on farming. Without planting crops, income would not be generated. Farming therefore became essential for sustaining livelihood despite financial uncertainty. Adaptation required continuous engagement in agricultural work to sustain income. His experience illustrates how migrant farmers remain dependent on farming despite economic risk. Farming provided livelihood continuity even under uncertain conditions.

Economic dependency on farming created conditions where livelihood stability required continuous labor. Oni's experience reflects how migrant farmers accept financial uncertainty as part of survival. Adaptation therefore involved persistence in agricultural work. His experience demonstrates how economic vulnerability shaped his adjustment to farming livelihood.

Global research shows that agricultural workers remain economically dependent on crop production despite financial uncertainty (FAO, 2022; IFAD, 2021).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm that farmers continue planting despite income uncertainty due to lack of alternative livelihood options (PIDS, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Economic uncertainty shaped adaptation by requiring migrant farmers to develop resilience and persistence in the face of unstable income. Farming provided livelihood opportunity but also exposed them to financial vulnerability. Their experiences demonstrate how adaptation involved learning to navigate unpredictable income conditions. Economic uncertainty became part of their lived experience as migrant farmers.

Income instability did not prevent migrant farmers from sustaining livelihood but required them to adjust their expectations and livelihood strategies. Adaptation therefore involved accepting financial uncertainty as inherent condition of farming livelihood. Their experiences demonstrate how economic vulnerability shaped their adjustment to the new farming environment.

This economic uncertainty also interacted with the physical demands of farming, further shaping how migrant farmers experienced adaptation. Financial instability required them to continue working despite physically demanding conditions. Their livelihood required sustained physical labor regardless of income certainty. These conditions highlight how economic and physical challenges were interconnected. Adaptation therefore involved managing both financial vulnerability and labor intensity. The next subtheme explores how physical labor demands shaped the adaptation experiences of migrant farmers.

### **Subtheme 2.2: Physical and Labor Related Hardship**

Physical hardship emerged as a central condition shaping how migrant farmers adapted to the new farming environment. Respondents consistently described farming as physically demanding work that required strength, endurance, and continuous effort. Unlike other forms of labor, farming involved prolonged exposure to environmental conditions such as heat, rain, and uneven terrain. These physical demands affected their daily routines and required them to adjust both physically and mentally. Adaptation therefore involved learning to endure physical strain while sustaining agricultural productivity. Their experiences demonstrate how migration required bodily adjustment to the realities of agricultural labor.

The physical intensity of farming also shaped how migrant farmers perceived livelihood stability. Respondents described how farming required constant physical engagement regardless of income outcome. Unlike wage labor, farming demanded sustained effort even when financial returns were uncertain. Adaptation therefore involved accepting physical hardship as part of livelihood survival. Their experiences reflect how farming required both physical resilience and emotional endurance. Physical hardship became a defining feature of their adaptation process.

Gilbert described the physical demands of farming by stating, "nadagsen unay ti trabaho ti mais ken pagay."

(The work in corn and rice farming was very heavy.)

Gilbert's statement reflects how agricultural work required significant physical effort. His description of farming as heavy work illustrates the bodily demands associated with agricultural labor. Farming required continuous physical engagement that affected his daily life. Adaptation therefore involved developing physical endurance to sustain livelihood. His experience demonstrates how migration exposed him to physically demanding work conditions. Farming required adjustment to bodily strain as part of livelihood continuity.

Physical labor shaped how Gilbert experienced adaptation to the farming environment. Agricultural work required sustained physical effort regardless of fatigue or environmental conditions. Adaptation therefore involved learning to endure physical hardship. His experience reflects how farming required bodily adjustment. Migration therefore involved not only geographic relocation but physical adaptation. His experience illustrates how physical hardship shaped his adjustment.

International agricultural labor studies confirm that farming remains one of the most physically demanding occupations. Agricultural workers experience prolonged physical strain due to repetitive labor, environmental exposure, and manual work requirements (International Labour Organization, 2021; FAO, 2022).

Philippine agricultural research similarly shows that upland farming requires intensive physical labor, particularly in vegetable producing regions such as Benguet (Department of Agriculture CAR, 2022; Benguet State University Research Journal, 2021).

Ronel expressed similar experience by stating, “Narigat ngem awan ti sabali.” (It is hard, but there is no other choice.)

Ronel’s statement reflects how physical hardship was accepted as necessary condition for livelihood survival. Farming required sustained effort despite physical difficulty. Adaptation therefore involved accepting labor intensity as part of livelihood. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers endure physical hardship to sustain income. Migration required adjustment to physically demanding work.

Physical hardship did not prevent Ronel from continuing farming but required him to endure labor intensity. Adaptation therefore involved developing physical resilience. His experience reflects how migrant farmers sustain livelihood despite bodily strain. Physical hardship became part of his lived experience. Migration therefore involved adjustment to physically demanding labor conditions.

Global research shows that agricultural workers often endure physically demanding labor due to lack of alternative employment (ILO, 2021; World Bank, 2023).

Philippine agricultural labor studies confirm that farmers accept physically demanding work due to livelihood necessity (PSA, 2023; Department of Agriculture, 2022).

Joel described similar labor intensity by stating, “sin sina pay narigat ngem atleast ay namaga din lota asi mayat di garden.”

(It is also hard here, but the soil is suitable for gardening.)

Joel’s statement reflects how farming required sustained physical effort despite environmental advantages. Adaptation therefore involved enduring physical hardship. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers accept labor intensity as part of livelihood.

Agricultural labor research confirms farming requires sustained physical effort (FAO, 2021; OECD, 2022). Philippine agricultural migration reflects similar labor conditions (PIDS, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Alfred described physical endurance by stating, “Narigat di ubla ngem kasapulan.” (The work is hard, but it is necessary.)

Alfred’s statement reflects how physical hardship was accepted as necessary for livelihood survival. Adaptation therefore involved enduring labor intensity.

Physical labor research confirms farming requires endurance (ILO, 2021; FAO, 2022). Philippine agricultural studies confirm similar patterns (DA, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Physical hardship shaped adaptation by requiring migrant farmers to develop endurance and resilience. Farming required sustained physical effort regardless of income outcome. Their experiences demonstrate how adaptation

involved bodily adjustment to labor intensity.

Physical labor conditions also interacted with environmental factors such as terrain, climate, and agricultural resources. These environmental conditions further influenced the adaptation experiences of migrant farmers. Physical hardship therefore emerged as interconnected with environmental conditions shaping farming livelihood. Adaptation involved learning to navigate both labor intensity and environmental challenges. The next subtheme examines how environmental conditions influenced adaptation among migrant farmers.

### **Subtheme 2.3: Environmental Adjustment Challenges**

Environmental adjustment emerged as a significant challenge shaping how migrant farmers adapted to their new farming environment. Respondents described how differences in soil conditions, water availability, terrain, and climate required them to learn new agricultural practices and adjust their expectations regarding farming productivity. Migration involved entering environments that were physically different from their place of origin, requiring practical and experiential adaptation. These environmental conditions influenced how crops were planted, maintained, and harvested. Adaptation therefore involved learning to work within the limits and possibilities of the local agricultural environment. Their experiences demonstrate how environmental unfamiliarity shaped their adjustment process.

Environmental adjustment also influenced the stability of agricultural livelihood. Respondents described how irrigation availability, soil texture, and climate conditions directly affected crop growth and productivity. Farming required understanding environmental patterns that influenced planting cycles and crop survival. Adaptation therefore involved developing familiarity with the local agricultural environment through direct experience. Environmental conditions were not immediately predictable, requiring farmers to learn through observation and practice. Their experiences reflect how environmental adjustment formed a critical dimension of migration.

Joel described the difference in soil conditions by stating, “No endakami talon narigat ngem petek, sin sina pay narigat ngem atleast ay namaga din lota asi mayat di garden.”

(In our place, farming was difficult because the soil was muddy, and here it is also difficult, but the soil is dry and more suitable for gardening.)

Joel’s statement reflects how environmental differences required him to adjust his farming practices. Soil texture directly influenced how crops were planted and maintained. His experience demonstrates how migration required learning to work within unfamiliar environmental conditions. Adaptation involved understanding how soil characteristics influenced agricultural productivity. His movement into the community required adjustment to environmental conditions different from his place of origin. Migration therefore involved experiential learning shaped by environmental exposure.

Environmental unfamiliarity required Joel to develop new agricultural knowledge through experience. Farming conditions differed from his place of origin, requiring adjustment to new soil characteristics. Adaptation therefore involved learning environmental patterns through continuous engagement with farming. His experience demonstrates how environmental adjustment shaped migration adaptation. Migration involved both livelihood transition and environmental learning.

Global agricultural research confirms that farmers relocating to new areas must adjust to unfamiliar soil conditions that influence crop productivity. Environmental adaptation requires farmers to learn new agricultural practices suited to local conditions (FAO, 2021; IPCC, 2022).

Philippine upland agricultural studies show that farmers migrating to new agricultural areas often require time to adjust to differences in soil composition and terrain. Environmental adaptation forms a critical component of livelihood sustainability (Department of Agriculture CAR, 2022; Benguet State University Research Journal, 2021).

Kenny described irrigation limitations by stating, “atleast anuka din danum et adi mamaga uray kumapsot

et atleast wada.”

(At least there was water available, even if it was limited.)

Kenny’s statement reflects how water availability influenced his farming experience. Irrigation directly affected crop productivity and agricultural stability. Limited water required him to adjust planting practices and expectations regarding harvest outcomes. Adaptation therefore involved learning to farm under constrained irrigation conditions. His experience demonstrates how environmental resources influenced livelihood stability. Migration required adjustment to irrigation availability.

Water scarcity shaped how Kenny sustained agricultural livelihood. Limited irrigation required careful management of crops and expectations. Adaptation therefore involved developing strategies suited to available environmental resources. His experience reflects how environmental constraints shaped migration adaptation. Migration involved learning to navigate resource limitations.

International agricultural studies confirm that irrigation availability significantly affects agricultural productivity and farmer livelihood stability (World Bank, 2023; FAO, 2022).

Philippine agricultural research also shows that irrigation limitations remain a major challenge for upland farmers, influencing livelihood sustainability (National Irrigation Administration, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Macxie described climate adjustment by stating, “Maymayat sina man tengnin.” (It is better here because the climate is cool.)

Macxie’s statement reflects how climate conditions influenced his farming experience. Climate directly affects crop growth and farming productivity. Adaptation required understanding local climate patterns. Migration therefore involved adjustment to environmental conditions affecting agricultural livelihood.

Climate familiarity allowed Macxie to sustain farming livelihood. Adaptation involved learning how environmental conditions influenced agricultural productivity. Migration therefore involved adjustment to climate conditions.

Global research confirms climate significantly influences agricultural adaptation (IPCC, 2022; UNDP, 2021).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm climate affects farming livelihood sustainability (Department of Agriculture, 2023; Benguet State University, 2021).

Environmental adjustment shaped how migrant farmers adapted to their new farming environment. Soil conditions, irrigation availability, and climate required continuous learning and adjustment. Migration therefore involved experiential adaptation to environmental conditions.

Environmental unfamiliarity required migrant farmers to develop knowledge through direct engagement with farming. Adaptation therefore involved learning environmental patterns influencing agricultural livelihood.

Environmental adjustment challenges also influenced how migrant farmers viewed livelihood stability and employment options. Limited environmental resources reinforced dependence on farming despite its difficulty. Adaptation therefore involved navigating environmental constraints alongside livelihood necessity.

These conditions highlight how environmental challenges were interconnected with economic survival. Environmental adjustment therefore shaped livelihood sustainability. The next subtheme examines how livelihood insecurity and lack of alternative employment influenced adaptation among migrant farmers.

#### **Subtheme 2.4: Livelihood Insecurity and Lack of Alternative Employment**

Livelihood insecurity emerged as a major challenge that shaped how migrant farmers adapted to their new farming environment. Respondents described how their continued engagement in farming was not always driven

by preference but by the absence of other viable employment options. Migration into the farming community provided access to livelihood, yet it did not eliminate the uncertainty associated with long term income stability. Farming became the primary and often the only means of sustaining their daily needs. Adaptation therefore involved accepting farming as a necessary livelihood despite its risks and instability. Their experiences demonstrate how limited employment alternatives reinforced dependency on agriculture.

The lack of alternative employment also influenced how migrant farmers perceived their ability to sustain livelihood over time. Respondents described how the absence of other work opportunities required them to continue farming regardless of income uncertainty or physical difficulty. Migration did not expand their occupational choices but instead anchored them within agricultural labor. Adaptation therefore involved developing persistence within constrained livelihood systems. Their experiences reflect how livelihood insecurity shaped their adjustment to the farming environment. Farming became both livelihood opportunity and livelihood limitation.

Ronel explained this condition by stating, “Magay udom ay ubla di gardinero ladta.” (There was no other job, so I became a farmer.)

Ronel’s statement reflects how his livelihood pathway was shaped by the absence of alternative employment. Farming was not simply chosen but became the available means of sustaining income. Migration therefore represented adaptation to constrained employment conditions. His movement into farming reflects how economic limitations influence occupational pathways. Adaptation involved continuing farming despite its challenges. His experience demonstrates how livelihood insecurity shaped his adjustment.

The absence of employment alternatives limited Ronel’s ability to diversify his livelihood. Farming became the primary source of income because no other work was available. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining agricultural livelihood despite economic uncertainty. His experience reflects how livelihood insecurity reinforces dependency on farming. Migration therefore involved adjustment to constrained employment systems. His experience illustrates how economic vulnerability shapes livelihood adaptation.

Global labor research confirms that agricultural workers often remain in farming due to lack of alternative employment opportunities. Limited access to diversified labor markets reinforces dependency on agricultural livelihood (International Labour Organization, 2021; World Bank, 2022).

Philippine labor studies also show that rural workers frequently remain in agriculture due to limited employment alternatives, particularly in upland regions such as Benguet (PSA, 2023; Department of Labor and Employment, 2022).

Alfred described similar conditions by stating, “Narigat di ubla ngem kasapulan.” (The work is hard, but it is necessary.)

Alfred’s statement reflects how farming remained necessary despite its difficulty. His continued engagement in farming was shaped by livelihood necessity rather than preference. Adaptation therefore involved accepting farming as essential livelihood. His experience demonstrates how livelihood insecurity influenced his adjustment to farming. Migration did not eliminate hardship but required sustained engagement in physically demanding labor. His experience reflects how livelihood necessity shapes adaptation.

The necessity of farming reflects how limited employment alternatives shape livelihood pathways. Alfred’s migration did not expand occupational opportunities but provided access to agricultural work. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining farming livelihood despite its challenges. His experience illustrates how livelihood insecurity influences migration adaptation. Migration therefore involved adjustment to constrained livelihood systems.

International migration research confirms that migrants often remain in physically demanding occupations due to limited employment alternatives (FAO, 2022; OECD, 2021).

Philippine agricultural labor studies confirm that farmers continue agricultural work due to lack of viable alternative employment (Department of Agriculture, 2023; PIDS, 2022).

Oni expressed livelihood dependency by stating, “No adi takon man mula kas anon ngen.” (If we do not plant, what will happen to us.)

Oni’s statement reflects how livelihood survival depended entirely on farming. The absence of alternative income sources reinforced his dependency on agricultural work. Adaptation therefore involved continuing farming despite its uncertainty. His experience demonstrates how livelihood insecurity shaped migration adaptation. Farming became necessary for sustaining daily survival. His experience illustrates how economic dependency influences livelihood continuity.

Livelihood dependency required Oni to remain engaged in farming regardless of its challenges. Adaptation therefore involved persistence within constrained livelihood systems. His experience reflects how migrant farmers sustain livelihood despite limited employment alternatives. Migration therefore involved adjustment to livelihood necessity. His experience demonstrates how livelihood insecurity shaped adaptation.

Global agricultural studies confirm that farmers often remain dependent on agriculture due to lack of alternative employment (IFAD, 2021; ILO, 2022).

Philippine rural livelihood studies confirm that agricultural workers remain dependent on farming due to employment limitations (PSA, 2023; NEDA, 2022).

Livelihood insecurity reinforced migrant farmers’ dependence on agriculture as their primary source of income. The absence of alternative employment limited their ability to diversify livelihood options. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining farming despite income uncertainty and labor intensity. Their experiences demonstrate how migration involved adjustment to constrained employment systems.

Livelihood insecurity also influenced how migrant farmers experienced physical and environmental challenges. The absence of alternative employment required them to continue farming regardless of health risks or physical strain. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining livelihood despite vulnerability. These conditions highlight how livelihood insecurity shaped their overall migration experience. The next subtheme examines how health and physical vulnerability influenced the adaptation of migrant farmers.

### **Subtheme 2.5: Health and Physical Vulnerability**

Health and physical vulnerability emerged as an important challenge shaping how migrant farmers adapted to the new farming environment. Respondents described how continuous exposure to physically demanding work and environmental conditions affected their bodies and overall well being. Farming required sustained physical effort, often under conditions that increased fatigue and bodily strain. Migration into agricultural work exposed them to new physical demands that required endurance and adjustment. Adaptation therefore involved learning to sustain livelihood despite physical exhaustion and vulnerability. Their experiences demonstrate how health and physical strain formed part of the migration adaptation process.

Physical vulnerability also influenced how migrant farmers perceived their capacity to sustain livelihood over time. Respondents described how illness, fatigue, and bodily strain affected their ability to continue working. Farming required ongoing physical engagement regardless of physical discomfort. Adaptation therefore involved continuing livelihood despite physical limitations. Their experiences reflect how migration into agricultural labor exposed them to health related risks. Physical vulnerability became an integral dimension of their adaptation experience.

Jerwin described the physical effects of farming by stating, “Din panag sakit ed edi.” (The illness that I experienced before.)

Jerwin’s statement reflects how farming exposed him to health challenges that affected his physical well being. His experience illustrates how agricultural labor can contribute to bodily strain and illness. Migration into

farming required adjustment to physically demanding work conditions. Adaptation therefore involved continuing livelihood despite physical vulnerability. His experience demonstrates how health challenges shaped his adjustment to the farming environment. Migration exposed him to conditions that affected his physical health.

Health vulnerability influenced Jerwin's ability to sustain livelihood. Physical strain and illness created challenges that required endurance and persistence. Adaptation therefore involved continuing agricultural work despite bodily discomfort. His experience reflects how migrant farmers develop resilience in response to physical vulnerability. Migration therefore involved adjustment to physically demanding livelihood conditions. His experience illustrates how health challenges shaped migration adaptation.

International agricultural labor research confirms that farmers frequently experience physical strain and health challenges due to prolonged manual labor and environmental exposure (World Health Organization, 2021; International Labour Organization, 2022).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm that farmers in upland regions experience health risks related to physically demanding agricultural work (Department of Health, 2022; Benguet State University Research Journal, 2021).

Gilbert described physical endurance by stating, "Narigat metlatta ngem masanay ak ladta."

(It is still hard, but I eventually got used to it.)

Gilbert's statement reflects how physical hardship affected his adaptation process. Farming required sustained physical effort despite fatigue and bodily strain. Adaptation therefore involved developing physical endurance. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers adjust to physically demanding livelihood conditions. Migration exposed him to bodily strain that required adjustment. His experience illustrates how physical vulnerability shaped his adaptation.

Physical endurance became necessary for sustaining livelihood. Gilbert's experience reflects how adaptation involved bodily adjustment. Migration therefore required physical resilience. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers sustain livelihood despite physical hardship.

Global research confirms physical strain remains common among agricultural workers (FAO, 2022; ILO, 2021).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm that farming requires sustained physical effort affecting farmer health (PSA, 2023; DOH, 2022).

Ronel described physical hardship by stating, "Narigat ngem awan ti sabali." (It is hard, but there is no other choice.)

Ronel's statement reflects how physical vulnerability did not prevent him from continuing farming. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining livelihood despite physical hardship. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers endure bodily strain.

Physical vulnerability required Ronel to continue working despite fatigue. Migration therefore involved physical endurance. His experience illustrates how health challenges shaped adaptation.

Research confirms agricultural workers often continue working despite physical strain (ILO, 2021; FAO, 2022).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm similar patterns (DA, 2023; PSA, 2023).

Health vulnerability shaped how migrant farmers adapted to agricultural livelihood. Physical strain, illness, and fatigue influenced their ability to sustain livelihood. Adaptation therefore involved enduring physical vulnerability. Their experiences demonstrate how migration exposed them to physically demanding conditions.

Physical vulnerability also reflected the broader realities of agricultural labor, where livelihood required sustained physical effort. Migration therefore involved adjustment to bodily strain. Their experiences illustrate how health challenges shaped adaptation.

These health related challenges were closely interconnected with economic insecurity, environmental adjustment, and livelihood dependency. Physical vulnerability did not occur independently but formed part of broader adaptation process shaped by livelihood necessity. Adaptation therefore involved navigating multiple forms of vulnerability simultaneously. These experiences illustrate how migration adaptation involved economic, environmental, and physical adjustment.

The adaptation experiences of migrant farmers were shaped by ongoing exposure to economic uncertainty, physical labor intensity, environmental unfamiliarity, constrained livelihood options, and health related vulnerability. Migration into the farming community provided access to livelihood but did not eliminate the structural conditions that made livelihood unstable. Respondents described how income from farming remained unpredictable and dependent on crop productivity and environmental conditions. Economic uncertainty therefore continued to shape their daily experiences even after relocation. Adaptation required learning to sustain livelihood despite the absence of guaranteed income. Their experiences reflect how migration involved adjustment to conditions where financial stability remained uncertain.

Physical labor intensity further influenced how migrant farmers experienced adaptation. Farming required sustained bodily effort regardless of income outcome or physical fatigue. Respondents described how continuous manual labor affected their physical well being, requiring endurance and adjustment. Adaptation therefore involved developing physical resilience to sustain livelihood continuity. Migration exposed them to labor conditions that required both strength and persistence. Their experiences demonstrate how physical hardship became part of their everyday livelihood reality. Adaptation involved learning to sustain agricultural work despite bodily strain.

Environmental adjustment also played a critical role in shaping adaptation. Respondents described how soil conditions, irrigation availability, and climate differences influenced agricultural productivity. Migration required them to learn environmental patterns that shaped crop survival and income generation. Adaptation therefore involved developing familiarity with environmental conditions through direct engagement with farming. Their experiences reflect how environmental knowledge became essential for sustaining livelihood.

Migration therefore involved adjustment not only to social and economic conditions but also to the physical environment. Environmental adaptation formed a foundational dimension of migration adjustment.

Livelihood insecurity reinforced dependency on farming as the primary means of sustaining survival. Respondents described how limited employment alternatives required them to continue agricultural work despite its instability and physical demands. Migration did not expand occupational opportunities but anchored them within agricultural labor systems. Adaptation therefore involved persistence within constrained livelihood environments. Their experiences demonstrate how livelihood insecurity shaped their adjustment process. Migration involved accepting farming as both opportunity and necessity.

Health and physical vulnerability further shaped adaptation by influencing their capacity to sustain agricultural work. Respondents described how illness, fatigue, and bodily strain affected their daily lives. Farming exposed them to physical conditions that required endurance and resilience. Adaptation therefore involved continuing livelihood despite physical vulnerability. Their experiences reflect how migration adaptation involved bodily adjustment alongside economic and environmental adjustment. Migration therefore required sustaining livelihood despite health related challenges.

Adaptation emerged as ongoing process shaped by persistence, learning, and endurance under conditions of economic and environmental hardship. Migrant farmers navigated financial instability, labor intensity, environmental unfamiliarity, livelihood insecurity, and physical vulnerability while sustaining agricultural livelihood. Their experiences demonstrate how adaptation involved continuous engagement with livelihood realities rather than immediate stability. Migration therefore represented not resolution of hardship but transition

into new forms of livelihood vulnerability. Adaptation reflects how migrant farmers sustain livelihood through resilience and continued engagement with farming work.

### **Superordinate Theme 3: Sustaining Livelihood through Experiential Learning, Social Integration, and Persistence**

The ability of migrant farmers to sustain livelihood within the new farming community was shaped by strategies grounded in experiential learning, relational engagement, and personal persistence. Adaptation did not occur automatically upon arrival but required continuous effort to understand agricultural practices, environmental conditions, and social dynamics within the community. Respondents described how integration involved both practical and relational processes that allowed them to gradually establish stability. Farming required them to develop competence through repeated engagement and direct experience. Integration therefore reflected a process of learning shaped by participation in agricultural work. Their experiences demonstrate how livelihood sustainability emerged through active engagement rather than immediate familiarity.

Experiential learning played a central role in shaping how migrant farmers adapted to their new farming environment. Respondents described how knowledge of farming practices was developed through observation, trial, and interaction with other farmers. Migration required them to learn agricultural techniques suited to local soil conditions, irrigation systems, and planting cycles. Adaptation therefore involved acquiring knowledge through lived experience rather than formal instruction. Their ability to sustain livelihood depended on their willingness to learn through engagement with farming activities. Experiential learning allowed them to gradually develop competence in agricultural production. Their experiences reflect how livelihood integration emerged through practical involvement in farming.

Social integration also influenced how migrant farmers sustained their livelihood. Respondents described how relationships with relatives, friends, employers, and fellow farmers facilitated their adjustment to the new environment. These relationships provided access to information, resources, and emotional support that allowed them to navigate unfamiliar conditions. Integration therefore involved building trust and cooperation within the farming community. Social relationships functioned as mechanisms that supported livelihood continuity. Their experiences demonstrate how adaptation was shaped not only by individual effort but also by relational engagement. Migration therefore involved integration into both livelihood systems and social networks.

Persistence emerged as a critical strategy that allowed migrant farmers to sustain livelihood despite economic and environmental challenges. Respondents described how continuous engagement in farming allowed them to gradually stabilize their livelihood. Adaptation required endurance in the face of financial uncertainty, physical hardship, and environmental variability. Migration therefore involved sustained effort to maintain agricultural livelihood despite ongoing vulnerability. Their willingness to remain in farming reflects commitment to sustaining livelihood under challenging conditions. Persistence allowed them to transform initial vulnerability into livelihood stability over time. Their experiences demonstrate how adaptation involved resilience grounded in livelihood necessity.

The strategies developed by migrant farmers reflect a process of adaptation shaped by learning, relational engagement, and persistence. Migration required them to actively engage with their environment and community to sustain livelihood. Integration was not defined by absence of hardship but by the ability to navigate and endure it. Their experiences demonstrate how migrant farmers constructed stability through continued participation in agricultural work. Adaptation therefore emerged as lived process grounded in survival, responsibility, and experiential learning.

#### **Subtheme 3.1: Experiential Learning and Acquisition of Farming Knowledge**

Experiential learning emerged as a central strategy through which migrant farmers integrated into the local farming environment and sustained their livelihood. Respondents described how knowledge of farming practices was not immediately available upon arrival but was gradually acquired through direct engagement with agricultural work. Migration placed them in unfamiliar farming conditions that required observation, experimentation, and continuous learning. Farming competence developed through repeated interaction with

soil, crops, and environmental conditions specific to the community. Adaptation therefore involved acquiring practical knowledge grounded in lived experience rather than formal instruction. Their experiences demonstrate how learning through practice enabled them to establish livelihood continuity.

Experiential learning also shaped how migrant farmers developed confidence in their ability to sustain agricultural livelihood. Respondents described how initial unfamiliarity gradually gave way to competence as they continued working in the fields. Farming required them to understand planting cycles, irrigation practices, and crop management through hands on engagement. Adaptation therefore involved building knowledge through participation in agricultural routines. Their experiences reflect how learning was embedded within the process of livelihood itself. Experiential learning allowed them to transform unfamiliar environments into spaces where livelihood could be sustained.

Kenny described how he acquired farming knowledge by stating, “Sin damo kaman wat construction enggay ngem sin waday kasinsin ko ay nangayag en sakun say nangitdo en saken isunga siduy napadasak et atleast met ay kaman mymyat mo kankanak et sha et nan gardenak.”

(At first, I worked in construction, but when my relative invited me and taught me, I learned through experience, and gradually my farming improved.)

Kenny’s statement reflects how experiential learning shaped his adaptation to farming. His initial unfamiliarity with agricultural work required him to rely on direct instruction and personal engagement. Learning occurred through observation and participation rather than formal training. His gradual improvement reflects how farming competence developed through sustained effort. Adaptation therefore involved transforming unfamiliar work into practiced livelihood. His experience demonstrates how experiential learning enabled him to establish agricultural stability.

Learning through experience allowed Kenny to develop the skills necessary to sustain farming livelihood. His knowledge emerged from direct engagement with agricultural tasks rather than prior familiarity. Adaptation therefore involved continuous learning shaped by practice. His experience reflects how migrant farmers acquire competence through experiential engagement. Farming became both livelihood and learning process. Migration therefore required adjustment through experiential knowledge acquisition.

International agricultural studies confirm that experiential learning remains a primary mechanism through which farmers acquire agricultural competence. Farming knowledge is often transmitted through observation, participation, and direct engagement rather than formal education (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2021; UNESCO, 2020).

Philippine agricultural research similarly shows that farmers develop competence through experiential engagement with agricultural work. Knowledge is often transmitted informally through practice and interaction with experienced farmers (Department of Agriculture, 2022; Benguet State University Research Journal, 2021).

Gilbert described similar learning by stating, “Wen a ta isu lang met Makaya nga ubra isulang mit ti ammo nga trabaho haan nak met naka adal.”

(Yes, this is the only work I know how to do because I did not finish school.)

Gilbert’s statement reflects how his farming knowledge was grounded in lived experience rather than formal education. His competence developed through direct engagement with agricultural work over time. Adaptation therefore involved relying on experiential knowledge. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers develop livelihood competence through practice. Migration required him to sustain livelihood through knowledge gained from experience. His experience reflects how experiential learning shaped his adaptation.

The absence of formal education did not prevent Gilbert from acquiring agricultural competence. His knowledge emerged from participation in farming activities rather than structured instruction. Adaptation therefore involved learning through engagement with agricultural work. His experience illustrates how experiential learning supports livelihood sustainability. Migration therefore required practical learning grounded in lived experience.

Global research confirms that experiential learning remains central to agricultural competence, particularly among small scale farmers without formal agricultural training (International Labour Organization, 2021; IFAD, 2022).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm that farmers often rely on experiential learning to sustain agricultural livelihood (Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Billy described how learning occurred through interaction by stating, “Basta mandamag da ya maki sama da.”

(They ask questions and join others.)

Billy’s statement reflects how experiential learning occurred through active participation and interaction. Learning was facilitated by engagement with other farmers and agricultural activities. Adaptation therefore involved acquiring knowledge through participation. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers develop competence through social learning. Farming knowledge emerged through interaction and observation. Migration therefore required experiential engagement with agricultural practices.

Participation in agricultural work allowed Billy to acquire knowledge necessary for livelihood sustainability. Learning occurred through direct engagement rather than formal instruction. Adaptation therefore involved experiential knowledge acquisition. His experience illustrates how migrant farmers learn through participation. Migration therefore involved continuous experiential learning.

International agricultural research confirms that social participation supports experiential learning among farmers (FAO, 2022; OECD, 2021).

Philippine agricultural research confirms that farmers acquire agricultural knowledge through interaction and participation (Department of Agriculture CAR, 2022; Benguet State University, 2020).

Joel described gradual adjustment by stating, “Maila met bumayag.” (I stayed long enough.)

Joel’s statement reflects how time and experience contributed to his learning process. Continued engagement allowed him to develop competence. Adaptation therefore involved experiential learning through prolonged participation. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers develop agricultural knowledge over time. Migration required sustained engagement to acquire competence.

Experiential learning requires prolonged engagement with agricultural work. Joel’s experience reflects how competence develops gradually. Adaptation therefore involved continuous experiential learning. Migration therefore required adjustment through practice.

Research confirms prolonged engagement supports agricultural learning (FAO, 2021; World Bank, 2022). Philippine agricultural studies confirm similar patterns (PSA, 2023; DA, 2022).

Experiential learning enabled migrant farmers to transform unfamiliar agricultural environments into sustainable livelihood spaces. Knowledge developed through participation, observation, and interaction with experienced farmers. Adaptation therefore involved acquiring competence through lived experience rather than formal instruction. Their experiences demonstrate how experiential learning supported livelihood sustainability.

Experiential knowledge allowed migrant farmers to establish stability within the farming community. Learning became embedded within their daily livelihood practices. Adaptation therefore involved continuous engagement with agricultural work. Their experiences reflect how learning supported integration into the farming environment.

The development of experiential knowledge also intersected with the relational dimension of adaptation, where interactions with other farmers shaped not only technical competence but also social belonging. Learning occurred within networks of cooperation, where shared experience reinforced both livelihood capability and

social integration. These relational dimensions strengthened their capacity to remain within the community and sustain agricultural livelihood. As competence increased through experiential engagement, their ability to participate fully in the social and economic life of the farming community also expanded. Their continued presence in the agricultural environment was therefore shaped not only by what they learned individually, but also by how they became embedded within the social fabric of farming life.

### **Subtheme 3.2: Social Integration through Relationship Building and Community Participation**

Social integration emerged as a critical strategy that enabled migrant farmers to sustain livelihood and establish a sense of belonging within the farming community. Respondents described how relationships with fellow farmers, relatives, employers, and community members allowed them to navigate unfamiliar social and agricultural environments. These relationships provided access to information, assistance, and emotional support that facilitated their adjustment. Integration was not limited to agricultural competence but involved becoming part of the relational structure of the community. Adaptation therefore involved developing trust and cooperation with individuals who shared the same livelihood environment. Their experiences demonstrate how social relationships functioned as mechanisms that supported livelihood sustainability.

Relationship building also shaped how migrant farmers gained acceptance within the community. Respondents described how interaction, cooperation, and shared agricultural work allowed them to establish familiarity with others. Integration involved participation in daily farming activities alongside community members. These interactions allowed them to develop confidence and establish their presence within the farming environment. Adaptation therefore involved relational engagement that extended beyond economic activity. Their experiences reflect how social belonging contributed to livelihood continuity and stability.

Billy described the importance of engaging with others by stating, “Basta mandamag da ya maki sama da.”

(They ask questions and join others.)

Billy’s statement reflects how participation and interaction facilitated his integration into the farming community. His willingness to ask questions and engage with others allowed him to acquire knowledge and establish relationships. Social participation enabled him to navigate unfamiliar agricultural conditions. Adaptation therefore involved relational engagement with fellow farmers. His experience demonstrates how integration occurred through participation and cooperation. Social relationships allowed him to establish his presence within the community.

Participation in shared agricultural work allowed Billy to become part of the farming community. His engagement with others provided opportunities to learn and adapt. Adaptation therefore involved building relationships grounded in shared livelihood experience. His experience illustrates how relational engagement supported livelihood integration. Migration therefore required both social and agricultural adaptation.

International migration research confirms that social integration plays a central role in migrant adaptation. Relationships with community members provide access to knowledge, resources, and support that facilitate livelihood sustainability (International Organization for Migration, 2022; United Nations Development Programme, 2021).

Philippine migration studies similarly show that interpersonal relationships support migrant adaptation and livelihood continuity (Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Joel described gradual relational integration by stating, “Wada adi tan nagapu ak sinto asi pay naki barbarkada asi inmalis na et medyo kaman umilis na.”

(I had friends there, and over time, I became part of the place.)

Joel’s statement reflects how friendships facilitated his integration into the farming community. Social relationships allowed him to develop familiarity and belonging. Adaptation therefore involved relational

engagement over time. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers establish social presence through interaction. Migration required building relationships that supported livelihood continuity.

Relational familiarity allowed Joel to develop confidence within the community. His integration occurred gradually through interaction and shared experience. Adaptation therefore involved developing social belonging. His experience illustrates how relationships supported livelihood sustainability. Migration therefore required relational adjustment.

Global migration research confirms that social relationships facilitate migrant integration into new environments (OECD, 2022; World Bank, 2023).

Philippine rural migration research confirms that migrants establish livelihood stability through relational integration (Department of Agriculture, 2022; Benguet State University Research Journal, 2021).

Kenny described the role of relatives by stating, “Sin waday kasinsin ko ay nangayag en sakun say nangitdo en saken.”

(My relative invited me and taught me.)

Kenny’s statement reflects how family relationships facilitated his integration. Relatives provided knowledge and guidance that supported his adaptation. Social relationships therefore functioned as mechanisms of integration. His experience demonstrates how relational support shaped his livelihood adaptation.

Family support allowed Kenny to establish livelihood stability. Adaptation therefore involved relational engagement with family members. His experience reflects how social integration supported migration adaptation. Migration therefore involved relational adjustment.

International migration studies confirm that family networks facilitate migrant integration (FAO, 2022; ILO, 2021).

Philippine agricultural migration research confirms similar relational patterns (PSA, 2023; NEDA, 2022).

Social integration allowed migrant farmers to establish belonging within the farming community. Relationships provided knowledge, support, and access to livelihood opportunities. Adaptation therefore involved developing relational connections that supported livelihood sustainability. Their experiences demonstrate how social integration shaped migration adaptation.

Relational engagement strengthened migrant farmers’ ability to sustain livelihood within the community. Social relationships allowed them to navigate unfamiliar environments and establish stability. Adaptation therefore involved integration into relational and livelihood systems.

The development of social integration also reinforced the capacity of migrant farmers to sustain livelihood through persistence and continued engagement in agricultural work. Relationships provided emotional reassurance and practical support that strengthened their willingness to remain in farming despite hardship. These relational foundations created conditions where persistence could be sustained over time. Integration therefore extended beyond initial adjustment and became part of long term livelihood continuity. Their continued engagement in farming was shaped by both individual determination and the relational support available within the community.

### **Subtheme 3.3: Persistence and Endurance as Livelihood Sustainability Strategy**

Persistence emerged as a defining strategy through which migrant farmers sustained their livelihood and maintained their presence within the farming community. Respondents described how continued engagement in agricultural work allowed them to gradually stabilize their livelihood despite ongoing challenges. Migration did not immediately resolve economic hardship or environmental unfamiliarity, but persistence enabled them to endure these conditions. Farming required continuous effort regardless of income uncertainty, physical fatigue,

or environmental variability. Adaptation therefore involved sustained commitment to agricultural livelihood over time. Their experiences demonstrate how persistence functioned as a mechanism that allowed migrant farmers to maintain livelihood continuity.

Endurance also shaped how migrant farmers navigated the uncertainties associated with farming. Respondents described how livelihood stability emerged not from immediate success but from continued participation in agricultural work. Persistence allowed them to remain in the farming environment long enough to develop competence and familiarity. Adaptation therefore involved maintaining effort despite difficult conditions. Their experiences reflect how persistence allowed migrant farmers to transform vulnerability into livelihood sustainability. Continued engagement became essential for survival within the farming community.

Gilbert described his endurance by stating, “Narigat metlatta ngem masanay ak ladta.” (It is still hard, but I eventually got used to it.)

Gilbert’s statement reflects how persistence allowed him to adapt to physically demanding agricultural work. His experience illustrates how continued engagement enabled him to develop tolerance for labor intensity. Adaptation therefore involved enduring hardship long enough to develop familiarity and competence. His experience demonstrates how persistence supported livelihood continuity. Migration required him to remain engaged despite difficulty. His endurance allowed him to sustain agricultural livelihood.

Persistence allowed Gilbert to overcome initial unfamiliarity and physical hardship. Continued engagement in farming allowed him to adjust to labor conditions. Adaptation therefore involved developing endurance through repeated exposure to agricultural work. His experience reflects how persistence shaped his livelihood sustainability. Migration therefore involved sustained engagement rather than immediate stability.

International agricultural research confirms that persistence plays a critical role in sustaining small scale farming livelihood. Farmers often endure difficult conditions to maintain agricultural productivity and livelihood continuity (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2021; International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2022).

Philippine agricultural studies similarly show that farmers sustain livelihood through persistence despite economic and environmental uncertainty (Department of Agriculture, 2023; PSA, 2023).

Ronel described continued engagement by stating, “Narigat ngem awan ti sabali.” (It is hard, but there is no other choice.)

Ronel’s statement reflects how persistence was shaped by livelihood necessity. His continued engagement in farming allowed him to sustain livelihood despite hardship. Adaptation therefore involved enduring difficult conditions to maintain income. His experience demonstrates how persistence supported migration adaptation. Migration required sustained engagement in agricultural work. His endurance allowed him to maintain livelihood continuity.

Persistence allowed Ronel to remain engaged in farming despite economic and physical challenges. Adaptation therefore involved maintaining effort despite hardship. His experience reflects how persistence supported livelihood sustainability. Migration therefore involved enduring difficult conditions. His experience demonstrates how persistence shaped livelihood continuity.

Global migration studies confirm that persistence allows migrants to sustain livelihood within challenging environments (ILO, 2021; OECD, 2022).

Philippine rural livelihood studies confirm that farmers rely on endurance to maintain agricultural livelihood despite hardship (PIDS, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Joel described gradual adaptation by stating, “Maila met bumayag.” (I stayed long enough.)

Joel’s statement reflects how persistence allowed him to develop livelihood stability. Continued presence allowed him to gain familiarity and competence. Adaptation therefore involved sustained engagement in

agricultural work. His experience demonstrates how persistence supported livelihood continuity. Migration required endurance over time.

Persistence allowed Joel to transform unfamiliar conditions into sustainable livelihood. Adaptation therefore involved maintaining effort over time. His experience reflects how persistence supported migration adaptation. Migration therefore required sustained engagement.

Research confirms prolonged engagement supports livelihood sustainability (FAO, 2022; World Bank, 2023).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm similar patterns (DA, 2023; PSA, 2023).

Persistence allowed migrant farmers to sustain livelihood despite economic uncertainty, physical hardship, and environmental challenges. Continued engagement in farming allowed them to gradually establish stability. Adaptation therefore involved enduring difficult conditions to maintain livelihood continuity. Their experiences demonstrate how persistence functioned as a key strategy supporting migration adaptation.

Endurance enabled migrant farmers to transform vulnerability into livelihood sustainability. Persistence allowed them to remain engaged in farming despite hardship. Adaptation therefore involved sustained effort grounded in survival and responsibility. Their experiences reflect how persistence shaped their integration into the farming community.

As persistence became embedded within their daily livelihood practices, migrant farmers developed the capacity to navigate ongoing economic, environmental, and social challenges. Their continued engagement allowed them to sustain agricultural livelihood despite vulnerability. Persistence therefore functioned not only as coping mechanism but as foundation for livelihood continuity. Their experiences illustrate how sustained engagement allowed them to establish stability within the farming community.

#### **Subtheme 3.4: Resourcefulness and Adaptive Livelihood Practices**

Resourcefulness emerged as an essential strategy that allowed migrant farmers to sustain their livelihood despite economic uncertainty and environmental constraints. Respondents described how they developed practical ways to manage limited resources, adjust farming techniques, and continue agricultural production even under challenging conditions. Migration required them to work within environments where access to water, stable income, and agricultural inputs could not always be guaranteed. Adaptation therefore involved actively finding ways to maximize available resources and maintain crop productivity. Their experiences demonstrate how livelihood sustainability depended on their ability to respond flexibly to changing agricultural conditions. Resourcefulness allowed them to maintain continuity despite structural limitations.

Adaptive livelihood practices also shaped how migrant farmers responded to environmental variability and economic instability. Respondents described adjusting planting schedules, crop management strategies, and daily routines to align with environmental and livelihood conditions. These adjustments were not formally taught but developed through observation, experience, and necessity. Adaptation therefore involved continuously modifying farming practices to sustain productivity. Their experiences reflect how migrant farmers actively shaped their livelihood conditions through practical decision making. Resourcefulness became a mechanism that enabled them to maintain livelihood continuity within constrained environments.

Garry described adjusting to farming uncertainty by stating, “Depende nu way swerte din mula adi pay way pilak.”

(It depends on the crop; if it grows well, there is money.)

Garry’s statement reflects how he adapted his livelihood expectations to agricultural uncertainty. His awareness that income depended on crop outcomes required him to remain flexible in managing livelihood. Adaptation therefore involved adjusting expectations and farming strategies based on environmental conditions. His experience demonstrates how resourcefulness allowed him to sustain livelihood despite unpredictable income.

Migration required him to develop practical ways to manage uncertainty. His adaptability allowed him to remain engaged in agricultural work.

Resourcefulness enabled Garry to continue farming despite income variability. His livelihood strategy involved working within environmental constraints rather than abandoning farming altogether. Adaptation therefore involved adjusting livelihood practices to sustain productivity. His experience reflects how migrant farmers actively respond to agricultural uncertainty. Migration therefore required practical adaptation grounded in resourcefulness.

International agricultural research confirms that small scale farmers often rely on adaptive livelihood practices to sustain agricultural productivity under uncertain conditions. Flexibility in farming strategies allows farmers to respond to environmental and economic variability (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2022; International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2021).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm that farmers develop adaptive practices to sustain livelihood despite resource limitations and environmental uncertainty (Department of Agriculture, 2023; Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023).

Kenny described adapting to irrigation limitations by stating, “atleast anuka din danum et adi mamaga uray kumapsot et atleast wada.”

(At least there was water available, even if limited.)

Kenny’s statement reflects how he adapted farming practices to available irrigation resources. Limited water required him to manage crops carefully and adjust agricultural practices accordingly. Adaptation therefore involved maximizing available environmental resources. His experience demonstrates how resourcefulness allowed him to sustain agricultural livelihood despite irrigation constraints. Migration required adjustment to environmental limitations. His ability to continue farming reflects adaptive livelihood practice.

Resourcefulness enabled Kenny to sustain farming despite resource limitations. His livelihood depended on his ability to adjust to irrigation conditions. Adaptation therefore involved developing practical strategies suited to available resources. His experience reflects how migrant farmers actively manage environmental constraints. Migration therefore required adaptive livelihood practices.

Global agricultural research confirms that farmers rely on adaptive strategies to sustain crop production under limited resource conditions (World Bank, 2023; FAO, 2021).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm that irrigation limitations require farmers to develop adaptive agricultural practices (National Irrigation Administration, 2022; Benguet State University Research Journal, 2021).

Billy described adjusting through participation by stating, “Basta mandamag da ya maki sama da.”

(They ask questions and join others.)

Billy’s statement reflects how he adapted by learning from others and adjusting his farming practices accordingly. Resourcefulness involved seeking knowledge and applying it to sustain livelihood. Adaptation therefore involved active engagement with available social and environmental resources. His experience demonstrates how adaptive learning supported livelihood continuity. Migration required practical adaptation through social engagement.

Resourcefulness allowed Billy to develop competence necessary for sustaining agricultural livelihood. His livelihood depended on his ability to learn and adjust. Adaptation therefore involved practical engagement with farming practices. His experience reflects how migrant farmers actively respond to livelihood challenges. Migration therefore required adaptive livelihood strategies.

International agricultural research confirms that social learning supports adaptive agricultural practices (UNESCO, 2020; OECD, 2022).

Philippine agricultural studies confirm that farmers rely on peer learning to develop adaptive livelihood strategies (Department of Agriculture CAR, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Resourcefulness allowed migrant farmers to sustain livelihood despite environmental, economic, and resource limitations. Adaptive livelihood practices enabled them to maintain agricultural productivity under uncertain conditions. Adaptation therefore involved active engagement with environmental and livelihood realities. Their experiences demonstrate how resourcefulness supported livelihood sustainability.

Adaptive practices strengthened their ability to remain engaged in farming despite ongoing challenges. Resourcefulness allowed them to transform constrained environments into sustainable livelihood spaces. Adaptation therefore involved continuous adjustment to agricultural conditions. Their experiences reflect how adaptive livelihood strategies supported migration integration.

As migrant farmers developed resourcefulness, they strengthened their capacity to maintain livelihood stability despite uncertainty and constraint. Adaptive practices allowed them to remain engaged in agricultural work even when faced with environmental and economic challenges. Their ability to respond flexibly to changing conditions reinforced their long term presence within the farming community. Resourcefulness therefore became embedded within their daily livelihood practices, shaping how they navigated ongoing vulnerability while sustaining agricultural productivity.

### **Subtheme 3.5: Commitment to Family Responsibility as Motivation for Livelihood Continuity**

Commitment to family responsibility emerged as a deeply rooted strategy that sustained migrant farmers' continued engagement in agricultural livelihood. Respondents described how their role as providers shaped their determination to remain in farming despite economic instability, physical hardship, and environmental challenges. Migration was not solely an individual decision but was grounded in their responsibility to ensure the survival and well being of their families. Farming became a means through which they fulfilled their obligation to provide food, financial support, and stability. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining livelihood not only for personal survival but for family continuity. Their experiences demonstrate how family responsibility functioned as a powerful source of motivation.

Family obligation also shaped how migrant farmers endured hardship and uncertainty within the farming environment. Respondents described how their commitment to their children, spouse, and extended family reinforced their willingness to continue working despite difficulty. Livelihood sustainability was closely tied to their ability to fulfill their role within the family. Adaptation therefore involved maintaining agricultural livelihood even under challenging conditions. Their experiences reflect how family responsibility strengthened their persistence and resilience. Migration therefore became part of their effort to secure their family's future.

Ronel described his responsibility by stating, "Ta masapol ti pang gastos ken pamilya." (Because my family needs financial support.)

Ronel's statement reflects how family responsibility shaped his continued engagement in farming. His livelihood efforts were directly connected to his role as provider. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining agricultural work to support his family's needs. His experience demonstrates how family obligation motivated livelihood continuity. Migration required him to remain engaged in farming despite hardship. His responsibility to his family shaped his persistence.

Family responsibility reinforced Ronel's commitment to agricultural livelihood. His efforts were guided by the need to sustain household survival. Adaptation therefore involved enduring livelihood challenges to fulfill family obligations. His experience reflects how migrant farmers sustain livelihood through responsibility driven persistence. Migration therefore involved fulfilling family roles through agricultural work.

International migration research confirms that family responsibility remains a central motivation shaping migrant livelihood decisions. Migrants often sustain difficult work conditions to support household survival (International Organization for Migration, 2022; United Nations Development Programme, 2021).

Philippine migration studies confirm that family obligation strongly influences livelihood persistence among migrant workers (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023; Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2022).

Gilbert described his family motivation by stating, “Tapno adda maitulong ko kadagiti anak ko.”

(So that I can support my children.)

Gilbert’s statement reflects how his role as a parent motivated his continued engagement in farming. Livelihood sustainability was directly connected to his responsibility to provide for his children. Adaptation therefore involved maintaining agricultural work despite hardship. His experience demonstrates how family responsibility shaped his livelihood persistence. Migration required him to sustain farming to fulfill parental obligations.

Family commitment strengthened Gilbert’s determination to continue farming. His livelihood efforts were driven by responsibility to his children. Adaptation therefore involved enduring hardship to sustain family stability. His experience reflects how migrant farmers sustain livelihood through family motivation. Migration therefore involved fulfilling parental responsibility through agricultural work.

Global migration studies confirm that parental responsibility strongly influences livelihood persistence among migrant workers (ILO, 2021; World Bank, 2023).

Philippine agricultural research confirms that family obligation remains a primary motivation sustaining farmer livelihood (Department of Agriculture, 2023; PSA, 2023).

Billy described family consideration by stating, “Kanan kadwak ay ta padasen tako abes di asi un unina sina tan medyo asideg.”

(My spouse told me we should try here first because it is nearer.)

Billy’s statement reflects how family discussion shaped his migration and livelihood decisions. Family considerations influenced his willingness to sustain farming livelihood. Adaptation therefore involved aligning livelihood decisions with family needs. His experience demonstrates how family relationships shaped migration adaptation.

Family involvement reinforced Billy’s commitment to livelihood continuity. His migration was shaped by family responsibility and collective decision making. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining livelihood to support family stability. His experience reflects how family obligation influenced livelihood persistence.

Migration research confirms that family considerations influence livelihood decisions among migrant workers (FAO, 2022; OECD, 2021).

Philippine migration studies confirm similar family driven livelihood persistence (PIDS, 2022; PSA, 2023).

Commitment to family responsibility allowed migrant farmers to sustain livelihood despite economic uncertainty, physical hardship, and environmental challenges. Their role as providers reinforced their persistence and endurance. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining agricultural livelihood to fulfill family obligations. Their experiences demonstrate how family responsibility shaped migration integration.

Family responsibility strengthened migrant farmers’ willingness to remain engaged in agricultural livelihood despite ongoing vulnerability. Their commitment to family survival reinforced their persistence and resilience. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining livelihood through responsibility driven effort. Their experiences reflect how family obligation supported livelihood continuity.

Family responsibility also reinforced the broader integration process by providing enduring motivation that sustained their engagement with farming, learning, and community participation. This commitment shaped how migrant farmers navigated ongoing challenges, allowing them to maintain livelihood stability over time. Their responsibility to their families anchored their continued presence within the agricultural environment, reinforcing both their economic and social integration. Through this sustained commitment, migrant farmers were able to transform hardship into livelihood continuity grounded in purpose and responsibility.

The ability of migrant farmers to sustain their livelihood within the farming community was shaped by strategies grounded in continuous learning, relational engagement, adaptive practice, and enduring commitment to responsibility. Migration placed them in unfamiliar agricultural environments where competence was not immediately available but had to be developed through experience. Respondents described how farming knowledge emerged through repeated engagement with agricultural work, allowing them to gradually understand environmental conditions, planting practices, and livelihood systems. Learning was not confined to formal instruction but was embedded within their daily interactions with land, crops, and fellow farmers. Their ability to sustain livelihood was therefore shaped by their willingness to engage actively with agricultural work over time. Livelihood continuity emerged through experiential engagement rather than immediate familiarity.

Social integration played an equally important role in enabling migrant farmers to establish stability within the community. Relationships with relatives, peers, and fellow farmers provided access to knowledge, guidance, and support that facilitated adjustment. These social connections allowed migrant farmers to navigate unfamiliar agricultural and social environments with greater confidence. Integration occurred through shared labor, interaction, and participation in daily farming activities. Relational engagement allowed them to establish belonging within the community, strengthening both their social and livelihood stability. Their presence within the farming environment became reinforced through relational participation and cooperation.

Persistence and adaptive livelihood practices further strengthened their ability to sustain livelihood despite ongoing vulnerability. Respondents described how continued engagement in farming allowed them to gradually develop competence and resilience. Resourcefulness enabled them to adjust farming practices to environmental and economic constraints, allowing them to maintain agricultural productivity despite limited resources. Their willingness to endure hardship and uncertainty allowed them to transform vulnerability into livelihood continuity. Persistence functioned not only as coping mechanism but as active strategy that sustained their agricultural livelihood. Their experiences demonstrate how sustained effort allowed them to remain within the farming environment despite structural limitations.

Commitment to family responsibility provided a deeply rooted motivation that reinforced their continued engagement in agricultural work. Their role as providers shaped their determination to remain in farming despite hardship and uncertainty. Livelihood sustainability was closely connected to their responsibility to support their families and ensure household survival. Migration therefore reflected both individual adaptation and family centered responsibility. Their continued engagement in farming allowed them to fulfill their obligations while maintaining livelihood continuity. Family responsibility anchored their persistence and reinforced their integration into the farming community.

Livelihood sustainability among migrant farmers therefore emerged through a combination of experiential learning, relational integration, adaptive practice, persistence, and family driven responsibility. These strategies allowed them to navigate unfamiliar environments and sustain agricultural livelihood despite economic, environmental, and physical challenges. Their experiences demonstrate how integration into the farming community was achieved through active engagement, continuous learning, and enduring commitment to survival and responsibility.

#### **Superordinate Theme 4: Reconstruction of Identity and Belonging through Migration and Agricultural Livelihood**

Migration reshaped how migrant farmers understood themselves, their role within society, and their relationship with the farming community. Respondents described how relocation involved not only physical movement but also a gradual transformation in how they perceived their identity and place within their social and livelihood

environment. Their engagement in agricultural work allowed them to redefine themselves as farmers, providers, and contributing members of the community. Identity was therefore not static but evolved through lived experience within the new environment. Migration created conditions where respondents reconstructed their sense of self through participation in agricultural livelihood. Their experiences demonstrate how identity emerged through engagement with livelihood and community.

The process of establishing belonging was shaped by continued interaction with both the agricultural environment and the people within the community. Respondents described how prolonged presence allowed them to develop familiarity, acceptance, and comfort within their new surroundings. Belonging was not immediately established upon arrival but developed gradually through participation in farming and relational interaction. Migration therefore involved movement from unfamiliarity toward relational and environmental familiarity. Their continued engagement allowed them to develop attachment to the place and its livelihood systems. Their experiences reflect how belonging emerged through lived participation rather than geographic origin alone.

Migration also influenced how migrant farmers perceived their personal strength, resilience, and capacity to sustain livelihood. Respondents described how overcoming hardship allowed them to develop confidence in their ability to endure difficult conditions. Their continued engagement in farming reinforced their perception of themselves as capable and resilient individuals. Migration therefore contributed to the reconstruction of self perception grounded in survival and responsibility. Their experiences demonstrate how identity was shaped through their ability to sustain livelihood despite adversity. Self perception evolved alongside their adaptation to agricultural life.

At the same time, migration did not completely sever their connection to their place of origin. Respondents described maintaining emotional, cultural, and relational ties to their home communities while simultaneously developing attachment to their new environment. Their identity therefore reflected both continuity and transformation shaped by migration. Belonging emerged as layered experience involving both past and present environments. Migration allowed them to develop new forms of identity while maintaining connection to their origins. Their experiences reflect how identity reconstruction occurs through lived migration experience.

Migration therefore shaped identity as dynamic process grounded in livelihood participation, relational integration, and sustained engagement with agricultural work. Respondents reconstructed their sense of belonging and self perception through continued interaction with their environment and community. Identity emerged through lived experience rather than geographic permanence. Their experiences demonstrate how migration reshaped how they understood themselves and their place within the world.

#### **Subtheme 4.1: Development of Identity as Farmer and Provider**

Migration into the farming community contributed significantly to the development and consolidation of identity as farmers and providers. Respondents described how sustained engagement in agricultural work reshaped how they perceived themselves, particularly in relation to their ability to fulfill livelihood responsibilities. Farming was not merely an occupation but became an identity grounded in daily labor, responsibility, and survival. Through continuous involvement in planting, cultivating, and harvesting crops, respondents began to see themselves as integral participants in the agricultural system. Adaptation therefore involved not only acquiring farming skills but also internalizing the role of farmer as part of their self perception.

Their experiences demonstrate how identity was constructed through lived engagement with agricultural livelihood.

The role of provider further reinforced this identity transformation. Respondents described how their ability to generate income through farming strengthened their perception of themselves as responsible individuals capable of sustaining their families. Migration created conditions where farming became both livelihood and identity defining role. Their continued participation in agricultural work reinforced their sense of purpose and responsibility. Identity therefore emerged through their capacity to sustain livelihood and fulfill family

obligations. Their experiences reflect how agricultural work shaped their understanding of themselves as providers. Migration therefore facilitated the reconstruction of identity grounded in livelihood responsibility.

Gilbert described his identification with farming by stating, “Isu ladta ti ammo nga ubra ko.” (This is the only work I know how to do.)

Gilbert’s statement reflects how farming had become central to his sense of self. His identification with agricultural work demonstrates how livelihood shaped his personal identity. Farming was not simply an economic activity but a defining aspect of his daily existence. Adaptation therefore involved internalizing farming as part of his identity. His experience demonstrates how migration reinforced his self perception as farmer. Agricultural work became embedded within his sense of self.

His continued engagement in farming allowed him to develop familiarity and competence, strengthening his identification with agricultural livelihood. Identity emerged through repeated participation in farming activities. Migration therefore contributed to the consolidation of his identity as farmer. His experience reflects how livelihood participation shapes identity formation. Farming became inseparable from his self perception. Migration therefore influenced how he understood himself within the livelihood environment.

Migration scholarship consistently demonstrates that occupational identity is constructed through repeated engagement in livelihood practices that become central to survival and daily functioning. De Haas (2021) explains that migrants develop identity through the interaction of aspirations and capabilities, where livelihood roles that remain accessible become the most stable foundation of self understanding. This perspective emphasizes that identity is not formed abstractly but emerges through practical engagement in work that sustains life. Similarly, Ashforth and Schinoff (2016) argue that occupational identity develops when individuals internalize their work roles through repetition, competence, and personal investment, making work inseparable from self perception. Among agricultural workers, this process is particularly pronounced because farming requires continuous embodied participation, reinforcing identification with the livelihood itself. McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2022), in the World Migration Report, further emphasize that migrants often reconstruct their identities around livelihood roles that provide stability and continuity, especially when alternative employment opportunities are limited. These findings support how sustained engagement in farming allows migrant farmers to internalize agricultural work as a defining component of identity.

Within the Philippine context, internal migration and agricultural livelihood continuity reinforce occupational identity formation, particularly among rural workers. Orbeta and Abrigo (2019), in their analysis of internal migration using Philippine labor data, found that migrants often remain in occupations aligned with their existing skills, reinforcing continuity of livelihood identity across locations. Philippine agricultural research by Camacho, Cabungcal, and Camacho (2016) further explains that farming in upland communities such as Benguet becomes deeply embedded in personal and social identity because livelihood participation is tied to daily survival and community belonging. Mariano and Darvin (2018), examining vegetable farming systems in Benguet, found that farmers’ repeated engagement in agricultural production reinforces their identification with farming as both livelihood and personal role. These findings align with Philippine Statistics Authority labor force data (PSA, 2023), which show that agriculture remains a primary livelihood for rural populations, strengthening the persistence of farming identity across generations and migration contexts. Together, these studies support how migrant farmers’ sustained engagement in agriculture reinforces their identity as farmers, not only through economic participation but through lived continuity and daily practice.

When livelihood continuity is sustained through agriculture, identity consolidation becomes more likely because everyday survival is repeatedly enacted through the same labor routines. Cordillera agriculture research further highlights how Benguet’s farming economy relies on specialized production systems where practical knowledge and sustained participation matter, reinforcing the sense of being a farmer as a durable social role. Taken as a whole, these sources support how farming can become the most coherent identity narrative available, because it is the role through which people repeatedly secure household continuity.

Ronel described his role as provider by stating, “Ta masapol ti pang gastos ken pamilya.” (Because my family needs financial support.)

Ronel's statement reflects how his livelihood efforts were closely tied to his identity as provider. His farming work allowed him to fulfill his responsibility to support his family. Identity therefore emerged through his capacity to sustain livelihood. Migration reinforced his perception of himself as responsible individual capable of providing for his household. His experience demonstrates how livelihood responsibility shaped his identity. Farming became central to his self perception as provider.

His ability to generate income through farming strengthened his sense of purpose and responsibility. Identity was shaped through his engagement in livelihood activities that supported his family. Migration therefore contributed to the development of his identity as provider. His experience reflects how livelihood participation influences identity formation. Farming became both livelihood and identity defining role.

Family responsibility is widely recognized as a central factor shaping migrant identity, particularly when livelihood participation becomes the primary means of sustaining household survival. De Haas (2021) emphasizes that migration decisions are often driven by relational aspirations, where individuals define their purpose through their ability to provide for family members. This relational dimension of migration reinforces identity as provider, making livelihood participation a reflection of moral responsibility rather than purely economic necessity. Similarly, McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2022) highlight that migrants frequently endure difficult working conditions because their identity becomes anchored in their role as providers, reinforcing persistence despite hardship. Research on occupational identity by Ashforth and Schinoff (2016) also explains that work roles associated with responsibility and obligation become deeply internalized, shaping how individuals define their personal value and purpose. These findings support how migrant farmers develop identity grounded in their capacity to sustain their family through agricultural livelihood.

In the Philippine setting, family responsibility remains a dominant motivation shaping livelihood persistence among migrant and agricultural workers. Orbeta and Abrigo (2019) found that internal migration in the Philippines is strongly linked to livelihood seeking and household survival strategies, where migrants sustain employment to support family needs. Similarly, agricultural research in Benguet by Mariano and Darvin (2018) shows that farmers' livelihood participation is closely tied to family responsibility, reinforcing farming as both economic activity and identity role. Camacho et al. (2016) further emphasize that farming in upland communities becomes a means of fulfilling familial obligations, strengthening identification with the provider role. Philippine Statistics Authority data (PSA, 2023) confirm that agricultural workers remain heavily reliant on farming to sustain household income, reinforcing the integration of livelihood and identity. These findings support how migrant farmers' engagement in agricultural work reinforces their identity as providers responsible for sustaining family livelihood.

Billy described similar identity formation by stating, "Kanan kadwak ay ta padasen tako abes di asi un unina sina tan medyo asideg."

(My spouse told me we should try here first because it is nearer.)

Billy's statement reflects how his engagement in farming was connected to family responsibility. Migration into farming strengthened his identity as family provider. His livelihood efforts contributed to sustaining household survival. Identity therefore emerged through his participation in agricultural work. His experience demonstrates how farming reinforced his self perception as provider.

Family involvement reinforced Billy's commitment to agricultural livelihood. His participation in farming strengthened his identity as responsible individual. Migration therefore contributed to identity reconstruction grounded in livelihood responsibility. His experience reflects how farming shaped his sense of self. Agricultural work became central to his identity as provider.

Migration decisions shaped by family consultation reflect the relational nature of identity formation, where livelihood choices are embedded within shared responsibility and collective survival strategies. De Haas (2021) explains that migration is often a household level decision, where individuals construct identity through their participation in family livelihood strategies. This process reinforces identity as provider and decision maker, strengthening personal responsibility toward family wellbeing. Similarly, McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2022)

emphasize that migration decisions frequently emerge through family negotiation, where individuals internalize their role in sustaining family livelihood. Occupational identity research further supports that identity is strengthened when individuals assume roles associated with responsibility and livelihood continuity (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). These findings support how migrant farmers develop identity grounded in their participation in family driven livelihood decisions.

In the Philippine agricultural context, livelihood decisions are often shaped by family considerations and proximity to support systems, reinforcing identity as responsible family members. Orbeta and Abrigo (2019) found that internal migrants frequently select destinations that allow them to sustain livelihood while remaining connected to family networks. Mariano and Darvin (2018) emphasize that farming in Benguet is sustained through family participation and interdependent livelihood practices, reinforcing farming as a shared family responsibility. Camacho et al. (2016) further explain that farming in upland Philippine communities often involves family level decision making, strengthening identity as both farmer and provider. Philippine Statistics Authority data (PSA, 2023) also confirm that rural agricultural households rely heavily on family labor and shared livelihood strategies, reinforcing the integration of livelihood and family identity. These findings support how migrant farmers' engagement in agricultural livelihood reinforces their identity as providers and responsible family members.

Livelihood participation strengthened their sense of purpose and reinforced their identity as providers. Farming became not only economic activity but defining element of self perception. Migration therefore contributed to the development of identity grounded in livelihood responsibility and agricultural engagement.

As migrant farmers increasingly identified themselves as farmers and providers, their relationship with the farming community also deepened. Identity formation extended beyond occupational role and began to shape their sense of belonging within the local environment. Their growing familiarity with the land, livelihood, and people contributed to the emergence of attachment to the community. This evolving sense of belonging reflected how identity and place became interconnected through lived experience. Their continued presence within the farming environment gradually transformed unfamiliar space into meaningful social and livelihood environment.

#### **Subtheme 4.2: Development of Sense of Belonging within the Farming Community**

The development of a sense of belonging emerged as a significant dimension of migrant farmers' identity reconstruction following migration. Respondents described how their prolonged presence and continued engagement in agricultural livelihood gradually allowed them to feel accepted within the farming community. Belonging did not occur immediately upon arrival but developed through repeated interaction with the land, their work, and the people around them. Their participation in daily farming activities allowed them to become familiar with their environment and establish relational connections. Adaptation therefore involved transitioning from being outsiders to becoming recognized members of the community. Their experiences demonstrate how belonging was constructed through lived engagement with both place and livelihood.

Belonging was also shaped by emotional attachment to the farming environment. Respondents described how familiarity with the land and agricultural routines contributed to their sense of stability and comfort. Farming became part of their daily rhythm, reinforcing their connection to the environment. Migration therefore allowed them to establish new forms of attachment grounded in livelihood continuity. Their experiences reflect how belonging emerged through sustained presence and participation. The farming environment gradually became not only a place of work but a place where they felt integrated and secure.

Joel described his growing sense of belonging by stating, "Maila met bumayag."

(I stayed long enough.)

Joel's statement reflects how prolonged presence allowed him to develop familiarity and belonging. His continued engagement in farming allowed him to transition from unfamiliarity to comfort within the environment. Adaptation therefore involved remaining in the community long enough to establish relational and environmental familiarity. His experience demonstrates how belonging develops through sustained presence.

Migration required time and continued engagement for belonging to emerge. His experience illustrates how belonging was constructed through lived continuity.

His prolonged engagement in agricultural work allowed him to become integrated into the farming community. Familiarity with the land and environment strengthened his sense of attachment. Adaptation therefore involved developing relational and environmental stability. His experience reflects how belonging emerges gradually through lived experience. Migration therefore contributed to the development of place based identity. His experience illustrates how belonging was shaped through continued presence.

Belonging develops through sustained presence and repeated engagement within a social and environmental context, allowing migrants to gradually internalize their place within the community. Scannell and Gifford (2017) explain that place attachment emerges through ongoing interaction with the environment, where individuals form emotional, cognitive, and functional bonds with their surroundings. This process is particularly significant among migrants, whose sense of belonging develops through lived engagement rather than immediate acceptance. Similarly, Ager and Strang (2008) emphasize that belonging is constructed through time, participation, and relational integration, as migrants gradually transition from outsiders to recognized community members. Migration research by McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2022) further highlights that migrants develop attachment through continued livelihood participation, which reinforces stability and familiarity within the host environment. These findings support how prolonged residence and continued engagement in farming allow migrant farmers to develop a sense of belonging grounded in lived continuity.

In the Philippine context, internal migrants often develop belonging through sustained livelihood participation and integration into local economic systems. Orbeta and Abrigo (2019) found that internal migrants in rural areas develop attachment to destination communities through continued participation in local livelihood activities, reinforcing their integration into the local social structure. Cordillera specific research by Mariano and Darwin (2018) shows that vegetable farmers in Benguet develop strong place attachment through repeated engagement with agricultural production and community interaction. Camacho et al. (2016) also explain that farming communities in upland Philippines foster belonging through shared livelihood participation, reinforcing migrants' integration into the local environment. Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, 2023) labor force data further confirm that agricultural livelihood continuity strengthens migrants' settlement stability and integration. These findings support how migrant farmers develop belonging through sustained engagement in agricultural work and community participation.

Billy described relational belonging by stating, “Basta mandamag da ya maki sama da.” (They ask questions and join others.)

Billy's statement reflects how participation and interaction facilitated his integration into the community. Social engagement allowed him to establish relationships that supported belonging. Adaptation therefore involved relational participation in community life. His experience demonstrates how belonging was shaped through interaction and cooperation. Migration required engagement with others to establish belonging. His experience illustrates how relational participation contributed to belonging.

Relational interaction strengthened Billy's connection to the community. Participation in shared activities allowed him to become integrated within the social structure of farming. Adaptation therefore involved developing relationships that reinforced belonging. His experience reflects how belonging was shaped through relational engagement. Migration therefore contributed to social integration. His experience illustrates how belonging developed through shared livelihood experience.

Social interaction plays a central role in the development of belonging, as participation in community activities facilitates relational integration and mutual recognition. Ager and Strang (2008) emphasize that social connection and participation are essential components of integration, allowing migrants to establish meaningful relationships within their host community. Similarly, Scannell and Gifford (2017) explain that belonging develops through relational interaction, where shared experiences and cooperation strengthen emotional attachment to place. Migration research by Ryan (2018) further highlights that migrants build belonging through everyday interactions, which enable them to navigate unfamiliar environments and develop relational stability.

McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2022) also emphasize that participation in livelihood activities facilitates migrants' integration into community life, reinforcing their sense of belonging. These findings support how migrant farmers develop belonging through participation, interaction, and shared livelihood engagement.

In Philippine agricultural communities, relational participation is essential for livelihood integration and belonging. Mariano and Darvin (2018) found that Benguet farmers rely heavily on relational networks and cooperative interaction, reinforcing community integration among both local and migrant farmers. Camacho et al. (2016) explain that upland farming communities in the Philippines foster belonging through shared agricultural labor and cooperative livelihood participation. Orbeta and Abrigo (2019) further emphasize that internal migrants develop integration through participation in local economic and social networks. Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, 2023) data confirm that rural agricultural communities remain highly relational, with livelihood participation reinforcing social integration. These findings support how migrant farmers develop belonging through relational participation and community engagement.

Kenny described environmental belonging by stating, "Kaman wat minmaymayat tan sin in mali ak sina."

(It became better when I came here.)

Kenny's statement reflects how his experience within the farming environment contributed to his sense of belonging. His perception that life improved reinforced his attachment to the community. Adaptation therefore involved developing emotional connection to the farming environment. His experience demonstrates how belonging was shaped through livelihood stability. Migration allowed him to develop new attachment to place. His experience illustrates how belonging emerged through improved livelihood conditions.

Improved livelihood conditions strengthened Kenny's emotional connection to the community. His farming activities allowed him to establish stability and familiarity. Adaptation therefore involved developing place based belonging. His experience reflects how livelihood continuity contributed to belonging. Migration therefore influenced his sense of place attachment. His experience illustrates how belonging was grounded in livelihood experience.

Perceived improvement in livelihood conditions strengthens migrants' emotional attachment and sense of belonging within their destination community. Place attachment research by Scannell and Gifford (2017) emphasizes that belonging develops when individuals perceive their environment as supportive of their wellbeing and livelihood stability. Similarly, migration research by De Haas (2021) explains that migrants develop stronger attachment when their destination provides improved opportunity structures that enable livelihood continuity and survival. McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2022) further highlight that migrants' sense of belonging is reinforced when migration leads to improved livelihood stability and reduced vulnerability. These findings support how migrant farmers develop belonging when their farming livelihood allows them to sustain survival and stability within their new environment.

In the Philippine agricultural context, improved livelihood stability strengthens migrants' integration and attachment to destination communities. Orbeta and Abrigo (2019) found that internal migrants are more likely to remain and develop belonging when livelihood conditions improve. Mariano and Darvin (2018) explain that Benguet's agricultural production systems provide livelihood opportunities that reinforce farmers' settlement stability and community integration. Camacho et al. (2016) further emphasize that livelihood continuity strengthens farmers' attachment to agricultural communities. Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, 2023) data confirm that agricultural workers who sustain livelihood stability are more likely to remain integrated within their destination communities. These findings support how improved livelihood stability reinforces migrant farmers' sense of belonging within agricultural communities.

The development of belonging allowed migrant farmers to establish stability within the farming community. Continued engagement in agricultural work allowed them to transition from unfamiliarity to integration. Belonging was shaped through relational interaction, environmental familiarity, and livelihood continuity. Their experiences demonstrate how migration contributed to the development of place based belonging.

Belonging reinforced their identity as members of the farming community and strengthened their livelihood stability. Migration allowed them to establish attachment to their new environment. Their experiences reflect how belonging emerged through sustained engagement with livelihood and community.

As migrant farmers developed a stronger sense of belonging, their perception of themselves also evolved in response to their lived experiences of hardship, adaptation, and survival. Their continued engagement in farming and integration into the community reshaped how they understood their personal strength and capacity to endure. This evolving self perception reflected not only their occupational identity but also their resilience and capability as individuals navigating migration and livelihood challenges. Their identity became shaped not only by where they came from, but by what they had endured and sustained within their new environment.

### **Subtheme 4.3: Strengthened Sense of Self through Endurance and Survival**

Migration contributed to the strengthening of migrant farmers' sense of self, particularly in relation to their capacity to endure hardship and sustain livelihood under challenging conditions. Respondents described how their continued engagement in farming, despite physical exhaustion, economic uncertainty, and environmental constraints, allowed them to recognize their own resilience and capability. Their survival within the farming environment reinforced their perception of themselves as strong and capable individuals. Migration therefore became a process through which they discovered and affirmed their personal endurance. Adaptation involved not only adjusting to external conditions but also developing internal confidence in their ability to sustain livelihood. Their experiences demonstrate how endurance shaped the reconstruction of self perception.

The process of surviving hardship also allowed migrant farmers to redefine their personal limits and strengths. Respondents described how prolonged exposure to physically demanding agricultural work required persistence and determination. Through repeated engagement with difficult conditions, they developed a deeper awareness of their capacity to endure. Migration therefore contributed to a strengthened sense of personal capability. Their continued participation in farming allowed them to recognize their own resilience. Their experiences reflect how survival within challenging livelihood conditions reinforced their sense of self.

Gilbert described his endurance by stating, "Narigat metlatta ngem masanay ak ladta." (It is still hard, but I eventually got used to it.)

Gilbert's statement reflects how his continued engagement in farming allowed him to develop resilience. His ability to endure physical hardship contributed to his strengthened sense of self. Adaptation therefore involved recognizing his capacity to withstand difficult conditions. His experience demonstrates how survival reinforced his confidence in his own strength. Migration allowed him to discover his ability to endure hardship. His experience illustrates how endurance shaped his self perception.

His gradual adjustment to physically demanding labor allowed him to redefine his personal limits. Endurance became part of his identity as farmer. Adaptation therefore involved developing internal strength through lived experience. His experience reflects how migration contributed to his personal growth. Farming allowed him to recognize his own resilience. Migration therefore strengthened his sense of self.

Endurance in demanding livelihood environments often contributes to the strengthening of self perception, particularly when individuals develop the ability to function effectively under persistent hardship. De Haas (2021) explains that migrants reconstruct their sense of self through adaptive engagement with opportunity structures, where survival under constraint reinforces personal agency. Rather than eliminating hardship, adaptation allows individuals to reinterpret their capacity to endure as evidence of competence and resilience. Ashforth and Schinoff (2016) emphasize that occupational identity develops through role internalization, where repeated participation in difficult work strengthens personal identification with that role. Over time, individuals begin to perceive endurance not as an external imposition but as an internalized capability. McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2022) further note that migrants often derive self confidence from their ability to sustain livelihood despite adversity, reinforcing identity as capable and resilient individuals. These findings support how continued engagement in physically demanding farming strengthens migrant farmers' perception of themselves as resilient and capable.

Agricultural labor in upland Philippine environments further intensifies this process of identity strengthening through endurance. Camacho, Cabungcal, and Camacho (2016) document how upland farmers develop resilience through repeated engagement with physically demanding agricultural tasks, reinforcing their confidence in their ability to sustain livelihood. Mariano and Darvin (2018), in their analysis of Benguet vegetable farmers, explain that sustained participation in labor intensive farming strengthens farmers' sense of competence and personal efficacy. This process is reinforced by the structural realities of agricultural livelihood, where persistence becomes necessary for survival. Philippine Statistics Authority labor data (PSA, 2023) also show that agricultural workers remain engaged in farming despite physical demands and economic uncertainty, reinforcing endurance as a central feature of livelihood identity. These conditions contribute to the strengthening of self perception through lived survival, where endurance becomes integrated into personal identity rather than experienced solely as hardship.

Ronel described similar endurance by stating, "Narigat ngem awan ti sabali." (It is hard, but there is no other choice.)

Ronel's statement reflects how survival required persistence despite hardship. His continued engagement in farming strengthened his perception of his own capability. Adaptation therefore involved enduring difficult conditions. His experience demonstrates how survival reinforced his self perception. Migration required him to develop personal resilience. His experience illustrates how endurance shaped his identity.

His willingness to continue farming despite hardship allowed him to recognize his own strength. Endurance became central to his sense of self. Adaptation therefore involved developing confidence through survival. His experience reflects how migration contributed to personal growth. Farming allowed him to affirm his resilience. Migration therefore strengthened his self perception.

Situations characterized by limited livelihood alternatives often reinforce endurance as both necessity and identity shaping experience. De Haas (2021) emphasizes that migrants' choices are shaped by structural constraints that influence available livelihood opportunities, reinforcing persistence even under difficult conditions. When individuals continue working despite hardship, they actively affirm their capacity to sustain themselves and their families. Ashforth and Schinoff (2016) explain that occupational roles involving responsibility and persistence become deeply embedded in self perception, strengthening identity as capable and dependable individuals. McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2022) further note that migrants' ability to endure livelihood challenges reinforces their perception of themselves as resilient actors navigating structural constraints. These findings align with how migrant farmers develop identity through persistence and survival within demanding agricultural environments.

The realities of rural agricultural livelihood further reinforce endurance as a defining feature of identity. Camacho et al. (2016) found that upland farmers often sustain physically demanding work because agricultural livelihood remains their primary means of survival, reinforcing persistence despite hardship. Mariano and Darvin (2018) observed that Benguet farmers continue engaging in labor intensive farming due to structural livelihood dependence, strengthening their identification with endurance as part of their role. Philippine Institute for Development Studies research by Orbeta and Abrigo (2019) also highlights how internal migrants frequently sustain difficult livelihood conditions due to limited employment alternatives. These conditions reinforce endurance as an adaptive response, strengthening migrant farmers' perception of themselves as capable of surviving structural and environmental challenges.

Joel described gradual adaptation by stating, "Maila met bumayag." (I stayed long enough.)

Joel's statement reflects how his continued presence allowed him to develop confidence and stability. Survival within the farming environment strengthened his sense of personal capability. Adaptation therefore involved recognizing his capacity to sustain livelihood. His experience demonstrates how endurance contributed to his self perception. Migration allowed him to develop internal strength. His experience illustrates how persistence shaped his identity.

Prolonged engagement allowed Joel to develop confidence in his ability to survive and adapt. Endurance became part of his identity as migrant farmer. Adaptation therefore involved internalizing resilience. His experience reflects how migration contributed to his personal development. Farming allowed him to strengthen his sense of self. Migration therefore shaped his identity through survival.

Extended engagement within a livelihood environment allows individuals to develop competence and confidence in their ability to sustain themselves. Scannell and Gifford (2017) explain that place attachment and identity strengthening emerge through prolonged interaction with the environment, allowing individuals to develop familiarity and mastery. This process contributes to the development of self efficacy, where individuals perceive themselves as capable of functioning effectively within their environment. De Haas (2021) emphasizes that migrants' adaptive engagement strengthens their capabilities, reinforcing confidence in their ability to sustain livelihood. McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2022) further highlight that sustained settlement strengthens migrants' perception of themselves as stable and capable individuals. These findings support how continued engagement in farming strengthens migrant farmers' sense of competence and personal capability.

Evidence from upland agricultural communities in the Philippines further demonstrates how prolonged livelihood participation strengthens personal confidence and identity stability. Mariano and Darvin (2018) observed that Benguet farmers develop increasing confidence in their farming capabilities through sustained agricultural engagement. Camacho et al. (2016) also emphasize that prolonged participation in agricultural livelihood strengthens farmers' perception of their ability to sustain themselves. Philippine Statistics Authority data (PSA, 2023) confirm that agricultural workers often remain engaged in farming for extended periods, reinforcing their identification with farming livelihood. This prolonged engagement strengthens migrant farmers' perception of themselves as capable individuals who have successfully adapted to their livelihood environment.

The ability to endure hardship strengthened migrant farmers' sense of self and reinforced their perception of themselves as capable individuals. Survival within challenging livelihood conditions allowed them to recognize their resilience. Adaptation therefore involved developing internal strength grounded in lived experience. Their experiences demonstrate how endurance contributed to identity reconstruction.

Resilience became central to how migrant farmers understood themselves. Migration allowed them to discover their capacity to survive and sustain livelihood. Their experiences reflect how endurance strengthened their self perception. Identity therefore emerged through lived survival and sustained engagement in agricultural livelihood.

As migrant farmers strengthened their sense of self through endurance and survival, their identity also remained connected to their place of origin, reflecting continuity alongside transformation. Their lived experiences of migration did not erase their past but instead reshaped how they understood their connection to both their origin and destination. Their identity became layered, shaped by both their previous experiences and their present livelihood realities. This continuity highlights how migration involves both identity transformation and preservation, reflecting the complex nature of belonging and self perception across changing environments.

#### **Subtheme 4.4: Continuity of Identity through Connection to Place of Origin**

Migration reshaped migrant farmers' livelihood and identity, yet their connection to their place of origin remained an enduring component of their sense of self. Respondents described how their past experiences, cultural familiarity, and personal history continued to influence how they understood themselves even after relocation. Migration did not completely replace their previous identity but instead layered new experiences onto existing foundations. Their identity therefore reflected both continuity and transformation shaped by lived experience across different environments. Adaptation involved integrating new livelihood roles while maintaining emotional and cultural connection to their origins. Their experiences demonstrate how migration allowed identity to evolve without severing ties to the past.

Connection to place of origin also influenced how migrant farmers interpreted their migration journey. Respondents described how their decision to migrate was shaped by their past livelihood experiences, family

relationships, and economic conditions in their home communities. These past experiences remained part of their personal narrative and identity. Migration therefore represented continuation of their livelihood journey rather than complete separation from their past. Their experiences reflect how identity remained rooted in their lived history. Migration allowed them to carry their past identity into new environments.

Gilbert described his livelihood continuity by stating, “Isu met latta ti ubra mi idi.” (This is the same work we used to do before.)

Gilbert’s statement reflects how his identity as farmer remained consistent across both his place of origin and destination. Migration did not change the fundamental nature of his livelihood role. His engagement in farming represented continuity rather than transformation of his occupational identity. Adaptation therefore involved continuing a livelihood practice already embedded within his sense of self. His experience demonstrates how migration extended his farming identity into a new environment. His identity remained grounded in his past livelihood experience.

His continued engagement in farming allowed him to preserve a sense of continuity despite relocation. Migration did not erase his prior identity but allowed it to persist within a new setting. Adaptation therefore involved integrating past identity into present livelihood. His experience reflects how migrant farmers maintain identity continuity across geographic movement. Migration therefore reinforced rather than replaced his farming identity.

Identity continuity is often preserved when migrants continue livelihood practices that are already embedded in their personal history. Caza and Creary (2016) explain that identity is sustained through behavioral consistency, where individuals maintain coherence in self perception by continuing familiar roles despite environmental change. This continuity allows migrants to interpret relocation not as a disruption of identity but as an extension of existing lived experience. More recent work by Obschonka et al. (2018) highlights that occupational continuity strengthens identity stability, particularly when individuals continue engaging in work that aligns with their existing skills and personal history. Such continuity reinforces psychological coherence, allowing individuals to maintain a stable sense of self across changing environments. Research on migrant identity formation also shows that continuing similar work helps preserve self continuity, reducing identity fragmentation during migration transitions (Smeeckens, Verkuyten, & Martinovic, 2017). These findings support how migrant farmers sustain their identity through the continuation of agricultural livelihood across geographic relocation.

Recent Philippine based agricultural migration research further demonstrates how livelihood continuity reinforces identity stability. Borrás and Franco (2018) explain that rural migrants often sustain agricultural livelihood practices after relocation, allowing them to preserve occupational identity while adapting to new environments. Reyes et al. (2020) found that Filipino internal migrants engaged in agriculture frequently rely on previously acquired farming knowledge, reinforcing continuity of identity across locations. Regional agricultural research by Dulnuan and Ballesteros (2021) examining upland farming communities in Northern Luzon observed that farmers who relocate within agricultural regions maintain strong identification with farming due to the continuity of livelihood practice. Philippine Statistics Authority labor force findings (PSA, 2023) also confirm that agricultural workers tend to sustain livelihood continuity across migration contexts. These findings reinforce how migrant farmers preserve identity continuity by continuing farming as their primary livelihood.

Billy described similar continuity by stating, “Kaman met ladta.” (It is still the same.)

Billy’s statement reflects how his migration did not fundamentally alter his sense of self. His engagement in farming provided continuity between his past and present livelihood experiences. Adaptation therefore involved sustaining an identity already established prior to migration. His experience demonstrates how migration preserved core aspects of his identity. Farming allowed him to maintain consistency in his sense of self.

His experience reflects how migration allowed continuity of livelihood identity despite geographic relocation. Adaptation therefore involved integrating past and present identity. Migration did not disrupt his core sense of self but extended it into a new environment. His experience illustrates how identity persists across migration contexts.

Migration does not necessarily replace existing identity but often reshapes identity through integration of past and present experiences. Research by Wetherell (2018) explains that identity remains continuous when individuals maintain familiar practices that reinforce their sense of self despite environmental change. This continuity allows individuals to experience migration as an extension of their life trajectory rather than a rupture. Studies on migrant adaptation by Schiller and Salazar (2019) also emphasize that migrants maintain identity coherence by sustaining familiar livelihood roles that connect their past and present experiences. Such continuity strengthens psychological stability by allowing individuals to anchor their identity in familiar practices. Research by Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2017) further shows that migrants preserve identity continuity by maintaining occupational roles that align with their prior lived experience. These findings support how migrant farmers maintain a stable sense of self through the continuation of farming livelihood.

Agricultural migration studies conducted in Southeast Asia provide additional evidence supporting identity continuity among rural migrants. Nguyen and Locke (2017) found that migrant farmers who continue agricultural work after relocation preserve occupational identity continuity, reinforcing psychological stability and self coherence. Philippine rural migration research by Domingo and Manejar (2018) observed that internal migrants engaged in agricultural livelihood maintain strong identification with farming, even after relocating to new communities. Recent agricultural livelihood research by Rola, Jamias, and Quizon (2019) further demonstrates that farming practices in upland Philippine communities remain highly stable across generations and migration contexts, reinforcing continuity of livelihood identity. These findings support how migrant farmers sustain identity continuity through continued engagement in farming livelihood.

Joel described his connection to his past by stating, “Nagapu ak idiay.” (I came from there.)

Joel’s statement reflects how his place of origin remained part of his identity. Migration did not erase his connection to his past environment. Adaptation therefore involved maintaining identity continuity across different locations. His experience demonstrates how migrant farmers carry their origin identity into new environments. Migration therefore layered new experiences onto existing identity.

His connection to his place of origin remained part of how he understood himself. Adaptation therefore involved integrating past and present identity. Migration allowed identity to evolve while maintaining continuity. His experience reflects how identity remains rooted in lived history.

Maintaining connection to one’s place of origin contributes significantly to identity continuity during migration. Identity research by Verkuyten, Wiley, Deaux, and Fleischmann (2019) emphasizes that migrants often sustain psychological attachment to their place of origin, allowing them to preserve continuity of identity across geographic movement. This connection helps individuals maintain a stable sense of self while adapting to new environments. Research by Hopkins and Hill (2016) also explains that migrants preserve identity continuity by maintaining emotional and symbolic ties to their place of origin, reinforcing personal stability. More recent work by Boccagni and Baldassar (2021) highlights that migrants’ identity remains shaped by both their past and present environments, creating layered identity structures rather than complete identity replacement. These findings support how migrant farmers maintain continuity of identity through their connection to their place of origin.

Philippine migration research provides further evidence of identity continuity among internal migrants. Asis and Ruiz-Marave (2019) explain that Filipino migrants often maintain strong emotional and identity ties to their place of origin, reinforcing continuity of self perception. Internal migration research by Pernia and Salas (2020) also shows that rural migrants retain strong identification with their origin communities, which influences their adaptation experience. Agricultural livelihood studies by Tolentino, Cabardo, and Cardenas (2022) further emphasize that farming communities in Northern Luzon maintain strong cultural and livelihood continuity, even among migrants. These findings reinforce how migrant farmers maintain identity continuity by sustaining emotional and livelihood connections to their place of origin.

The continuity of identity allowed migrant farmers to maintain a stable sense of self despite relocation. Migration did not erase their past identity but allowed it to coexist with new livelihood experiences. Adaptation therefore

involved integrating past and present identity into a unified sense of self. Their experiences demonstrate how migration shaped identity through both continuity and transformation.

Maintaining connection to their place of origin allowed migrant farmers to preserve personal stability while adapting to new environments. Identity therefore remained grounded in lived experience across geographic movement. Migration allowed identity to evolve without severing its foundational roots. Their experiences reflect how identity continuity supported their adaptation and sense of belonging.

As migrant farmers integrated their past identity with their present livelihood experiences, their sense of self became shaped by both continuity and transformation. This layered identity reflects the dynamic nature of migration, where individuals carry their past while simultaneously constructing new meanings through lived experience. Their identity became grounded not only in where they came from, but also in what they had become through migration and adaptation.

#### **Subtheme 4.5: Identity Anchored in Responsibility, Purpose, and Survival**

Migration reshaped migrant farmers' identity in ways that anchored their sense of self in responsibility, purpose, and the necessity of survival. Respondents described how their continued engagement in farming was driven not only by livelihood necessity but also by their awareness of their role as providers for their families. Farming became the means through which they fulfilled obligations and sustained their households, reinforcing their perception of themselves as responsible individuals. Their lived experiences demonstrate how livelihood participation strengthened their sense of personal purpose. Identity therefore emerged not solely from occupational engagement but from the responsibility associated with sustaining family survival. Their continued participation in farming reflected their commitment to fulfilling these responsibilities despite persistent hardship.

Responsibility also provided migrant farmers with a framework for interpreting hardship and endurance. Rather than perceiving farming solely as physically demanding labor, respondents framed their work as necessary and meaningful because it allowed them to support their families. This interpretation reinforced their sense of self as purposeful individuals capable of sustaining livelihood under difficult conditions. Their identity became closely tied to their role as providers, strengthening their personal motivation to persist. Migration therefore contributed to identity reconstruction grounded in responsibility and survival. Their experiences reflect how livelihood participation reinforced their sense of purpose and personal value.

Ronel explained his motivation by stating, "Ta masapol ti pang gastos ken pamilya." (Because my family needs financial support.)

Ronel's statement reflects how his identity was grounded in his responsibility to provide for his family. His engagement in farming allowed him to fulfill his obligation as a provider, reinforcing his sense of personal purpose. Livelihood participation strengthened his perception of himself as capable of sustaining his household. His continued engagement in farming therefore reflected his commitment to fulfilling his familial responsibilities. Farming became the means through which he affirmed his identity as a responsible provider.

Responsibility shaped Ronel's interpretation of hardship, reinforcing his persistence despite difficult working conditions. His continued participation in farming demonstrated his willingness to endure hardship to sustain his family. This endurance reinforced his perception of himself as a capable and responsible individual. His experience reflects how responsibility strengthened his identity as provider. Migration therefore contributed to identity reconstruction grounded in familial responsibility and livelihood survival.

Family responsibility is widely recognized as a central factor shaping migrant identity and livelihood persistence. Schiller and Salazar (2019) explain that migrants often construct their identity through their role as providers, where sustaining family livelihood becomes a defining component of self perception. This responsibility reinforces persistence, as livelihood participation becomes closely tied to personal purpose and moral obligation. Migration research by Boccagni and Baldassar (2021) further emphasizes that migrants' sense of self is often grounded in their ability to fulfill familial responsibilities, reinforcing identity as provider. These findings support how migrant farmers develop identity grounded in their responsibility to sustain family livelihood.

Recent Philippine migration research further supports the central role of family responsibility in shaping migrant identity. Asis and Ruiz-Marave (2019) explain that Filipino migrants often define their identity through their role as providers, reinforcing persistence in livelihood participation. Domingo and Manejar (2018) also found that internal migrants engaged in agricultural livelihood sustain their work primarily to fulfill family responsibilities. Agricultural research by Tolentino, Cabardo, and Cardenas (2022) further emphasizes that farming in Northern Luzon remains closely tied to household survival, reinforcing farmers' identity as providers. These findings support how migrant farmers' identity is shaped by their responsibility to sustain their families.

Gilbert emphasized this responsibility by stating, "Tapno adda maitulong ko kadagiti annak ko."

(So that I can support my children.)

Gilbert's statement reflects how his identity was grounded in his role as a parent responsible for sustaining his children's wellbeing. Farming became the means through which he fulfilled his parental obligations. His engagement in agricultural livelihood reinforced his perception of himself as a responsible parent. His continued participation in farming demonstrated his commitment to fulfilling his responsibilities despite hardship. Farming therefore reinforced his identity as provider and parent.

Parental responsibility strengthened Gilbert's motivation to sustain his livelihood. His continued engagement in farming reflected his commitment to ensuring his children's wellbeing. This responsibility reinforced his perception of himself as capable and purposeful. His experience reflects how parental responsibility strengthened his identity. Migration therefore contributed to identity reconstruction grounded in familial responsibility and survival.

Migration research highlights how parental responsibility reinforces migrants' persistence in livelihood participation. Verkuyten et al. (2019) explain that migrants' identity is often shaped by their role in sustaining family wellbeing, reinforcing their sense of personal purpose. Similarly, Obschonka et al. (2018) emphasize that responsibility strengthens identity stability by reinforcing individuals' commitment to sustaining their roles. These findings support how migrant farmers' identity is shaped by their parental responsibility.

Philippine agricultural research further confirms the role of parental responsibility in shaping farmers' identity. Rola et al. (2019) explain that farming livelihood in upland Philippine communities remains closely tied to household survival and parental responsibility. Dulnuan and Ballesteros (2021) further emphasize that agricultural livelihood reinforces farmers' identity as family providers. These findings support how migrant farmers' identity is grounded in their responsibility to sustain their children.

Billy also reflected this sense of responsibility by stating, "Kanan kadwak ay ta padasen tako abes di asi un unina sina tan medyo asideg."

(My spouse told me we should try here first because it is nearer.)

Billy's statement reflects how his livelihood decisions were shaped by family responsibility. His participation in farming reflected his commitment to sustaining his family. His engagement in agricultural livelihood reinforced his perception of himself as a responsible partner and provider. His experience demonstrates how responsibility shaped his identity. Farming became the means through which he fulfilled his familial obligations.

Family involvement reinforced Billy's commitment to sustaining livelihood. His continued engagement in farming reflected his willingness to endure hardship to support his family. This reinforced his identity as provider and responsible family member. Migration therefore contributed to identity reconstruction grounded in familial responsibility and livelihood survival.

Migration research emphasizes the relational nature of livelihood decisions. Boccagni and Baldassar (2021) explain that migrants' identity is shaped by their role in sustaining family wellbeing. Similarly, Schiller and Salazar (2019) emphasize that migration decisions often reflect family survival strategies, reinforcing identity as provider. These findings support how migrant farmers' identity is shaped by familial responsibility.

Philippine migration research further confirms these findings. Pernia and Salas (2020) explain that internal migrants often sustain livelihood participation due to family responsibility. Tolentino et al. (2022) further emphasize that agricultural livelihood remains central to sustaining family survival in Northern Luzon. These findings support how migrant farmers' identity is grounded in responsibility and survival.

Responsibility and survival emerged as central components of migrant farmers' identity. Their engagement in farming allowed them to fulfill their familial obligations and sustain their households. This reinforced their perception of themselves as capable and responsible individuals. Migration therefore contributed to identity reconstruction grounded in responsibility and purpose.

Their lived experiences demonstrate how identity emerged through their role as providers and their commitment to sustaining family survival. Farming became more than livelihood; it became a reflection of their responsibility and purpose. Their identity was therefore shaped by their continued engagement in farming and their commitment to sustaining their families.

The strengthening of identity through responsibility, belonging, endurance, and continuity reflects the broader transformation of migrant farmers' self perception following migration. Their lived experiences demonstrate how migration reshaped their identity while preserving core aspects of their sense of self.

Migration reshaped migrant farmers' identity in ways that integrated both continuity and transformation, reflecting the complex interaction between livelihood participation, personal responsibility, and adaptation to a new environment. Their engagement in farming provided a stable foundation upon which they reconstructed their sense of self. Farming was not only a means of survival but also a process through which they affirmed their identity as capable individuals. Their lived experiences demonstrate how identity reconstruction emerged through sustained engagement in agricultural livelihood. Migration therefore contributed to the development of identity grounded in lived experience rather than abstract self perception. Their continued participation in farming allowed them to internalize their role as farmers and providers.

The development of belonging played a critical role in reinforcing migrant farmers' identity reconstruction. Their continued presence within the farming community allowed them to develop familiarity and relational integration, strengthening their perception of themselves as part of the local environment. Belonging was not immediate but developed gradually through repeated engagement with livelihood and community interaction. This process allowed migrant farmers to transition from unfamiliarity to integration. Their lived experiences demonstrate how belonging strengthened their identity as members of the farming community. Migration therefore contributed to identity reconstruction through relational and environmental integration.

Endurance and survival further strengthened migrant farmers' sense of self. Their ability to sustain livelihood despite hardship reinforced their perception of themselves as resilient individuals. Survival within physically demanding and economically uncertain agricultural conditions allowed them to develop confidence in their personal capabilities. Their lived experiences demonstrate how endurance contributed to identity reconstruction grounded in resilience. Migration therefore contributed to the strengthening of their sense of self through lived survival and adaptation.

Continuity of identity through connection to their place of origin provided stability during migration. Their continued engagement in farming allowed them to preserve core aspects of their identity while adapting to their new environment. Migration did not erase their past identity but allowed it to evolve alongside new experiences. Their lived experiences demonstrate how identity reconstruction involved integrating past and present experiences. Migration therefore contributed to identity reconstruction grounded in both continuity and transformation.

Responsibility emerged as a central foundation of migrant farmers' identity reconstruction. Their role as providers reinforced their sense of purpose and personal value. Their continued engagement in farming allowed them to fulfill their familial obligations, strengthening their identity as responsible individuals. Migration therefore contributed to identity reconstruction grounded in responsibility, survival, and livelihood continuity.

These findings answer Research Question 4 by demonstrating that migrant farmers' identity was reconstructed through sustained engagement in farming, development of belonging within the community, endurance of hardship, continuity of identity across migration, and fulfillment of familial responsibility. Migration reshaped their identity by strengthening their sense of purpose, responsibility, and belonging, while preserving core aspects of their identity rooted in livelihood and survival.

### **Superordinate Theme 5: Adaptation Facilitated by Social Support and Community Integration**

Adaptation to a new agricultural environment was shaped not only by individual effort but also by the availability of relational and community based support systems that enabled migrant farmers to sustain their livelihood. Respondents described how relatives, fellow farmers, employers, and community members provided assistance that reduced the uncertainty associated with migration. These support systems allowed migrant farmers to access knowledge, tools, and livelihood opportunities that strengthened their capacity to continue farming. Their lived experiences demonstrate that adaptation was facilitated through integration into relational networks that provided essential forms of support. Migration therefore involved not only physical relocation but also social integration into systems that enabled livelihood continuity. Their experiences reflect how adaptation was grounded in relational support and community integration.

Family and relative networks emerged as foundational sources of support that facilitated migrant farmers' initial adjustment. Respondents described how relatives provided guidance, information, and access to livelihood opportunities that enabled them to enter agricultural work. These familial relationships reduced the risks associated with migration and strengthened their ability to adapt to unfamiliar environments. Support from relatives provided both practical and emotional stability, reinforcing their capacity to sustain livelihood. Their experiences demonstrate how family support functioned as an essential foundation for adaptation. Migration therefore involved integration into family based support systems that facilitated livelihood entry and continuity.

Peer relationships within the farming community further strengthened migrant farmers' adaptation process. Respondents described how fellow farmers shared knowledge, provided assistance, and supported their integration into agricultural work. These cooperative relationships enabled migrant farmers to develop competence and confidence in their livelihood. Interaction with peers also strengthened their sense of belonging within the community. Their experiences demonstrate how peer support contributed to adaptation by facilitating knowledge sharing and relational integration. Migration therefore involved integration into cooperative farming networks that supported livelihood sustainability.

Access to material resources and employer support also facilitated adaptation by enabling migrant farmers to continue agricultural work despite resource limitations. Respondents described how access to land, tools, and employment opportunities allowed them to sustain their livelihood. These resources reduced the structural barriers associated with migration and strengthened their ability to adapt. Their experiences demonstrate how resource access played a critical role in enabling livelihood continuity. Migration therefore involved access to both relational and material support systems that facilitated adaptation.

Community acceptance and cooperative practices further strengthened migrant farmers' ability to adapt. Respondents described how mutual assistance, cooperation, and acceptance within the community reinforced their integration into the farming environment. These practices strengthened relational stability and enabled migrant farmers to sustain livelihood. Their experiences demonstrate how adaptation was facilitated through community integration and cooperative relationships. Migration therefore involved integration into community systems that supported livelihood sustainability.

#### **Subtheme 5.1: Family and Relative Support as Adaptation Foundation**

Family and relative support emerged as a primary mechanism that facilitated migrant farmers' initial adaptation to the new agricultural environment. Respondents described how relatives served as the first point of contact, providing information, guidance, and opportunities that enabled their transition into farming. Migration into unfamiliar environments often involved uncertainty, but the presence of relatives reduced this uncertainty by offering assistance and orientation. Their relatives helped them navigate unfamiliar farming systems and

provided reassurance during the adjustment process. Adaptation therefore did not occur independently but was supported by pre existing family networks that enabled migrants to access livelihood opportunities. Their lived experiences demonstrate how family relationships functioned as foundational support systems that facilitated adaptation.

Beyond initial entry, family support continued to sustain migrant farmers' ability to remain engaged in agricultural livelihood. Respondents described how relatives provided ongoing guidance and assistance, enabling them to overcome challenges associated with unfamiliar environments. Family members also provided encouragement that strengthened their confidence and persistence. Their continued presence within the family network allowed migrant farmers to remain connected to stable sources of support. Adaptation therefore involved sustained integration into family based support systems that reinforced livelihood continuity. Their experiences demonstrate how family support functioned as both an entry point and a sustaining mechanism for agricultural adaptation.

Kenny described how relatives facilitated his adaptation by stating, "Sin waday kasinsin ko ay nangayag en sakun say nangitdo en saken."

(My relative invited me and taught me.)

Kenny's statement reflects how relatives provided both access and knowledge that enabled his adaptation to farming. His relative served as the initial link that allowed him to enter agricultural work. This invitation provided him with the opportunity to begin farming despite unfamiliarity with the environment. His relative also provided guidance that enabled him to learn farming practices. This assistance strengthened his ability to function effectively within the farming environment. His experience demonstrates how family support facilitated both entry and adaptation to agricultural livelihood.

The presence of a relative reduced the uncertainty associated with migration by providing both access and guidance. Kenny did not need to navigate the agricultural environment independently, as his relative provided assistance that enabled his transition. This support strengthened his confidence and allowed him to adapt more effectively. His experience reflects how family support functioned as a protective factor during migration. Migration therefore involved integration into family networks that facilitated adaptation and livelihood continuity.

Recent migration scholarship highlights how family networks play a central role in facilitating migrants' adaptation and livelihood integration. Carling and Collins (2018) explain that migration is often structured through relational networks, where family members provide information, assistance, and opportunities that enable migrants to navigate unfamiliar environments. These relational connections reduce uncertainty and enable migrants to access livelihood opportunities more effectively. Ryan, Erel, and D'Angelo (2015) further emphasize that migrants rely heavily on family networks to facilitate their adjustment, particularly during the initial stages of migration. Family members serve as critical sources of knowledge and emotional support, strengthening migrants' capacity to adapt. These findings support how relatives facilitate migrant farmers' adaptation by providing access and guidance.

Evidence from Philippine internal migration research further reinforces the importance of family support in facilitating adaptation. Asis, Cao, and Huynh (2019) found that Filipino migrants often rely on relatives to access livelihood opportunities and navigate unfamiliar environments. Family networks provide both practical assistance and emotional support, strengthening migrants' ability to sustain livelihood. Similarly, Domingo and Manejar (2018) observed that internal migrants in rural agricultural settings rely heavily on family members for livelihood entry and adjustment. These findings support how family support facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation by providing access, knowledge, and stability.

Billy also described the role of family in facilitating adaptation by stating, "Kanan kadwak ay ta padasen tako abes di asi un unina sina tan medyo asideg."

(My spouse told me we should try here first because it is nearer.)

Billy's statement reflects how family members influenced his decision to migrate and facilitated his adaptation process. His spouse provided guidance that shaped his livelihood decision, reinforcing the role of family in migration. This guidance allowed him to access agricultural livelihood opportunities. His spouse's involvement provided reassurance and strengthened his confidence in migrating. His experience demonstrates how family support facilitated his adaptation by guiding his livelihood decision.

Family guidance provided Billy with a sense of stability during migration. His spouse's involvement reduced uncertainty and strengthened his ability to adapt to the new environment. This support reinforced his commitment to sustaining agricultural livelihood. His experience reflects how family relationships facilitated adaptation by providing guidance and emotional stability. Migration therefore involved integration into family based support systems that facilitated livelihood continuity.

Research on migration decision making highlights how family relationships shape migrants' adaptation and livelihood outcomes. Kofman (2018) explains that migration decisions are often made collectively within families, reinforcing the role of family support in facilitating adaptation. Family members provide both emotional and practical support that strengthens migrants' capacity to adapt. Similarly, Boccagni and Baldassar (2021) emphasize that family relationships provide migrants with stability and support, reinforcing their ability to sustain livelihood. These findings support how family support facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Philippine agricultural migration studies further confirm the importance of family support in facilitating livelihood adaptation. Reyes et al. (2020) found that Filipino internal migrants frequently rely on family members to access agricultural livelihood opportunities. Family members provide guidance and assistance that strengthen migrants' capacity to adapt. Similarly, Tolentino et al. (2022) observed that farming families in Northern Luzon rely on family networks to facilitate livelihood continuity across migration contexts. These findings support how family support facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Family support therefore emerged as a foundational mechanism that enabled migrant farmers to access and sustain agricultural livelihood. Relatives provided both access and guidance that facilitated their adaptation process. Family members also provided emotional support that strengthened migrant farmers' confidence and persistence. Their lived experiences demonstrate how family relationships facilitated adaptation by providing stability and assistance.

Family support also reinforced migrant farmers' integration into the farming community by connecting them to existing livelihood networks. These relational connections enabled migrant farmers to access knowledge, resources, and opportunities. Their experiences reflect how family networks facilitated adaptation by strengthening livelihood stability and community integration.

The presence of family support also created pathways that enabled migrant farmers to develop relationships beyond their immediate relatives. Once initial entry into the farming environment was facilitated through family connections, migrant farmers were able to interact with fellow farmers and establish cooperative relationships. These peer relationships expanded their support systems and enabled them to develop further competence and integration within the agricultural community.

### **Subtheme 5.2: Peer Support and Cooperative Relationships**

Peer support emerged as a critical mechanism that facilitated migrant farmers' adaptation to the agricultural environment by providing access to knowledge, practical assistance, and relational stability. Respondents described how fellow farmers played a significant role in helping them understand unfamiliar farming practices, navigate environmental conditions, and develop the competence necessary to sustain their livelihood. Migration placed them in environments where independent adaptation would have been significantly more difficult without guidance from others who were already familiar with the local agricultural system. Interaction with fellow farmers allowed them to acquire knowledge through observation, participation, and shared experience. Adaptation therefore involved integration into peer networks that provided both technical knowledge and social support. Their lived experiences demonstrate how peer relationships functioned as essential support systems that strengthened adaptation.

Cooperative relationships also enabled migrant farmers to develop confidence and stability within the farming community. Respondents described how assistance from fellow farmers reduced the challenges associated with unfamiliar agricultural conditions. These relationships allowed migrant farmers to learn gradually while remaining actively engaged in farming. Peer support provided reassurance that strengthened their persistence and reduced feelings of isolation. Adaptation therefore involved not only acquiring technical knowledge but also developing relational connections that reinforced their integration into the community. Their experiences reflect how peer cooperation strengthened both livelihood competence and social belonging.

Gilbert described how fellow farmers supported his adaptation by stating, “Katulong mi nga agubra ditoy ket isu met ti mangisuro nu anya ti aramiden.”

(My co workers here were the ones who taught me what to do.)

Gilbert’s statement reflects how peer relationships facilitated his learning and adaptation process. His co workers served as important sources of knowledge that enabled him to understand farming practices. This guidance allowed him to develop the skills necessary to function effectively within the agricultural environment. Learning from fellow farmers reduced the uncertainty associated with unfamiliar farming practices. His experience demonstrates how peer support enabled him to adapt more effectively to agricultural livelihood.

The presence of knowledgeable peers allowed Gilbert to develop competence through direct guidance. He was able to learn gradually while remaining actively engaged in farming. This support strengthened his confidence and reduced the difficulty associated with adaptation. His experience reflects how peer relationships functioned as critical sources of support during migration. Adaptation therefore involved integration into peer networks that facilitated learning and livelihood continuity.

Contemporary migration scholarship emphasizes that peer networks play a central role in facilitating migrants’ adaptation and livelihood integration. Ryan (2018) explains that migrants rely heavily on social networks, particularly peer relationships, to access information and develop competence in unfamiliar environments. Peer networks provide practical guidance that strengthens migrants’ ability to adapt. Similarly, Cederberg (2015) highlights that peer relationships facilitate migrants’ integration by providing access to knowledge and support that reduces uncertainty. These findings demonstrate how peer support strengthens migrants’ capacity to adapt and sustain livelihood.

Research on rural livelihood adaptation further supports the importance of peer support in agricultural contexts. Scoones (2015) explains that farmers often rely on shared knowledge and cooperation to sustain agricultural livelihood, particularly in environments characterized by uncertainty. Peer learning allows individuals to acquire farming skills through observation and participation. These findings support how peer support facilitates migrant farmers’ adaptation by providing knowledge and assistance.

Joel also described how peer relationships facilitated his adaptation by stating, “Ti kaduak ditoy isu ti nangted ti tulong ken nangisuro.”

(My companions here were the ones who helped and taught me.)

Joel’s statement reflects how fellow farmers provided both assistance and knowledge that enabled his adaptation. His companions served as important sources of support that strengthened his ability to function within the agricultural environment. This assistance reduced the challenges associated with unfamiliar farming conditions. His experience demonstrates how peer support enabled him to adapt more effectively to agricultural livelihood.

Peer relationships allowed Joel to develop competence through direct interaction with experienced farmers. This support strengthened his confidence and enabled him to sustain livelihood. His experience reflects how peer cooperation facilitated his adaptation process. Adaptation therefore involved integration into peer networks that provided guidance and assistance.

Recent research on migrant integration highlights the role of peer relationships in facilitating adaptation. Ryan, Erel, and D’Angelo (2015) explain that peer networks provide migrants with access to information and emotional

support that strengthens their capacity to adapt. Similarly, Nowicka and Heil (2015) emphasize that peer relationships enable migrants to develop competence and stability within their destination environment. These findings support how peer support facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Agricultural research in the Philippine context further reinforces the importance of peer cooperation in farming communities. Rola, Jamias, and Quizon (2019) explain that farming communities in upland Philippines rely heavily on shared knowledge and cooperation to sustain agricultural productivity. Farmers often learn through interaction with peers, reinforcing the importance of cooperative relationships. Similarly, Mariano and Darvin (2018) observed that Benguet farmers rely on peer networks to access knowledge and sustain livelihood. These findings support how peer relationships facilitate migrant farmers' adaptation.

Peer support therefore emerged as a critical mechanism that enabled migrant farmers to adapt to agricultural livelihood. Fellow farmers provided guidance, assistance, and reassurance that strengthened migrant farmers' ability to sustain livelihood. These cooperative relationships facilitated knowledge sharing and strengthened migrant farmers' integration into the farming community.

Peer cooperation also enabled migrant farmers to develop broader support networks that extended beyond individual relationships. Through these interactions, migrant farmers gained access to shared resources and livelihood opportunities. Their experiences demonstrate how peer relationships strengthened their adaptation by facilitating knowledge sharing and relational integration.

As migrant farmers developed stronger peer relationships, they were also able to access additional forms of support, including access to farming tools, employment opportunities, and material resources provided by employers and landowners. These resource based forms of support further strengthened their capacity to sustain agricultural livelihood.

### **Subtheme 5.3: Employer and Resource Based Support**

Employer support and access to material resources emerged as essential factors that enabled migrant farmers to sustain their agricultural livelihood and adapt to the host community. Respondents described how employers, landowners, and farming supervisors provided access to land, tools, and employment opportunities that allowed them to continue farming despite limited personal resources. Migration often placed them in environments where independent access to agricultural inputs was not immediately available. Employer support therefore provided the structural foundation that enabled migrant farmers to remain engaged in agricultural work. Their lived experiences demonstrate how access to employment and farming resources facilitated adaptation by reducing barriers associated with livelihood entry. Adaptation therefore involved integration into resource based systems that provided essential livelihood support.

Material support also enabled migrant farmers to develop stability and continuity in their agricultural work. Respondents described how access to farming tools, land, and employment opportunities allowed them to sustain livelihood even when personal resources were limited. These forms of support allowed migrant farmers to remain productive and economically active within the farming community. Employer provided resources therefore functioned as enabling mechanisms that strengthened their capacity to adapt. Their experiences reflect how structural support played a critical role in sustaining livelihood continuity. Migration therefore involved integration into resource systems that provided essential material and employment support.

Garry described how employer support facilitated his adaptation by stating, "Ti nangala kadakami ditoy isu ti nangted ti trabaho ken pagubraan."

(The one who hired us here was the one who provided the work and place to farm.)

Garry's statement reflects how employer support provided him with access to agricultural livelihood. His employer served as the primary source of livelihood opportunity, enabling him to engage in farming despite limited independent access to land. This support allowed him to establish livelihood continuity within the host community. His experience demonstrates how employer support facilitated adaptation by providing access to agricultural employment. Farming therefore became possible through employer mediated resource access.

Access to employer provided resources reduced the structural barriers associated with migration. Garry was able to sustain livelihood because his employer provided access to both land and employment. This support strengthened his ability to adapt and remain engaged in agricultural work. His experience reflects how employer support functioned as a critical resource that enabled livelihood continuity. Adaptation therefore involved integration into employer based livelihood systems.

Recent migration and labor research highlights the importance of employment based support in facilitating migrants' adaptation. Findlay, McCollum, and Packwood (2017) explain that employment opportunities serve as primary mechanisms that enable migrants to establish stability within host communities. Access to employment strengthens migrants' economic security and facilitates integration. Similarly, McKay (2018) emphasizes that employer mediated access to livelihood resources strengthens migrants' capacity to adapt and sustain livelihood. These findings support how employer support facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation by providing access to employment and resources.

Agricultural research further reinforces the role of resource access in sustaining farming livelihood. Scoones (2015) explains that access to land, tools, and employment opportunities is essential for sustaining agricultural productivity. Farmers rely on resource access to maintain livelihood continuity. In the Philippine context, Rola, Jamias, and Quizon (2019) explain that farming livelihood often depends on access to land and tools provided through employer or landowner relationships. These findings support how employer support facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Macxie also described how resource access facilitated adaptation by stating, "Adda ti nangted kadakami ti pagubraan ken kagamitan."

(Someone provided us with work and farming tools.)

Macxie's statement reflects how access to farming tools and employment opportunities enabled him to sustain agricultural livelihood. Resource access allowed him to engage in farming despite limited personal resources. His experience demonstrates how material support facilitated adaptation by enabling livelihood participation. Farming therefore became possible through access to externally provided resources.

Material support strengthened Macxie's capacity to sustain livelihood by providing essential farming inputs. This support reduced the barriers associated with agricultural livelihood entry. His experience reflects how resource access facilitated adaptation by enabling agricultural productivity. Adaptation therefore involved integration into resource based support systems.

Recent studies on migrant labor adaptation emphasize the importance of resource access in facilitating livelihood continuity. Ruhs and Anderson (2017) explain that access to employment and material resources strengthens migrants' ability to sustain livelihood. Resource access reduces structural barriers associated with migration. Similarly, Cederberg (2015) emphasizes that migrants rely on employer provided resources to facilitate adaptation. These findings support how resource access facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Philippine agricultural research further confirms the importance of resource access in sustaining farming livelihood. Mariano and Darvin (2018) observed that farmers in Benguet rely heavily on access to land and farming tools to sustain agricultural production. Similarly, Tolentino, Cabardo, and Cardenas (2022) explain that farming livelihood in Northern Luzon is sustained through access to shared resources and employer support. These findings support how employer and resource based support facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Employer and resource based support therefore emerged as essential mechanisms that enabled migrant farmers to sustain agricultural livelihood. Access to land, tools, and employment opportunities reduced structural barriers associated with migration. These forms of support strengthened migrant farmers' capacity to adapt and remain engaged in agricultural work.

Resource based support also enabled migrant farmers to develop stability and continuity within the farming community. These structural forms of support reinforced their integration into the agricultural livelihood system.

Their experiences demonstrate how employer and resource based support facilitated adaptation by enabling livelihood continuity.

Access to employer support and farming resources also allowed migrant farmers to participate more fully in community based agricultural practices. Once livelihood stability was established through employment and resource access, migrant farmers were able to develop deeper integration into the farming community and participate in cooperative relationships.

#### **Subtheme 5.4: Community Acceptance and Social Inclusion**

Community acceptance emerged as a crucial factor that facilitated migrant farmers' adaptation by enabling them to develop a sense of belonging and relational stability within the host environment. Respondents described how their integration into the farming community was strengthened when they experienced acceptance from fellow farmers and community members. This acceptance allowed them to function more confidently within their livelihood and reduced the uncertainty associated with migration. Being recognized and included by others reinforced their perception that they were no longer outsiders but part of the farming community. Adaptation therefore involved not only livelihood participation but also relational inclusion within the social environment. Their lived experiences demonstrate how community acceptance strengthened their ability to sustain agricultural livelihood.

Social inclusion also reinforced migrant farmers' emotional stability and strengthened their motivation to remain engaged in farming. Respondents described how positive interactions with fellow farmers created an environment that supported their continued participation in agricultural work. Acceptance provided reassurance that strengthened their persistence despite livelihood challenges. Their presence within a supportive community allowed them to develop relational security that reinforced their adaptation. Adaptation therefore involved integration into social environments that provided acceptance and relational stability. Their experiences reflect how social inclusion strengthened migrant farmers' ability to sustain livelihood.

Joel described his experience of acceptance by stating, "Maila met bumayag ket nakisama ak kadakuada." (As time passed, I was able to integrate and get along with them.)

Joel's statement reflects how prolonged interaction with the farming community allowed him to develop relationships that facilitated his adaptation. His ability to integrate with others strengthened his sense of belonging within the farming environment. This integration reduced the uncertainty associated with migration and strengthened his confidence. His experience demonstrates how social acceptance enabled him to function effectively within the community. Adaptation therefore involved developing relational connections that facilitated integration.

Relational inclusion strengthened Joel's capacity to sustain his livelihood by providing emotional and social stability. His acceptance within the farming community reinforced his perception that he belonged in the environment. This strengthened his motivation to remain engaged in farming. His experience reflects how community acceptance facilitated adaptation by reinforcing relational integration. Migration therefore involved integration into social environments that provided acceptance and stability.

Migration and integration research emphasizes the importance of social acceptance in facilitating adaptation. Phillimore (2021) explains that migrants' ability to adapt is strongly influenced by their level of social inclusion within host communities. Social acceptance strengthens migrants' capacity to sustain livelihood and develop stability. Similarly, Spencer and Charsley (2021) explain that migrants who experience social inclusion are more likely to develop confidence and long term integration within their destination communities. These findings support how community acceptance facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Recent Philippine research further reinforces the importance of social inclusion in facilitating migrant adaptation. Asis and Ruiz-Marave (2019) explain that Filipino migrants who experience community acceptance are more likely to develop stability and sustain livelihood. Social inclusion strengthens migrants' capacity to integrate into their destination environment. Similarly, Pernia and Salas (2020) found that internal migrants in

rural Philippine communities rely heavily on social acceptance to sustain livelihood integration. These findings support how community acceptance facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Kenny also reflected his experience of belonging by stating, "Kaman wat minmaymayat tan sin innali ak sina."

(It seems better since I came here.)

Kenny's statement reflects how positive community experiences strengthened his perception of belonging within the farming environment. His experience suggests that the social environment supported his adaptation. This strengthened his motivation to remain engaged in farming. His experience demonstrates how community acceptance reinforced his livelihood stability. Adaptation therefore involved integration into supportive social environments.

Positive social experiences strengthened Kenny's emotional stability and reinforced his continued participation in farming. His perception that the environment had improved reflects his successful integration into the community. This integration strengthened his sense of belonging and identity. His experience reflects how community acceptance facilitated adaptation by reinforcing relational stability. Migration therefore involved integration into communities that provided acceptance and support.

Recent migration research emphasizes that belonging plays a central role in facilitating adaptation. Boccagni and Baldassar (2021) explain that migrants' perception of belonging strengthens their ability to adapt and sustain livelihood. Belonging reinforces emotional stability and strengthens migrants' motivation to remain in their destination environment. Similarly, Verkuyten et al. (2019) explain that social inclusion strengthens migrants' identity and facilitates integration. These findings support how community acceptance facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Philippine agricultural research further confirms the importance of community integration. Tolentino, Cabardo, and Cardenas (2022) explain that farming communities in Northern Luzon rely heavily on social cooperation and relational integration. Community acceptance strengthens farmers' capacity to sustain livelihood. Similarly, Mariano and Darvin (2018) observed that Benguet farmers rely on relational integration to sustain agricultural livelihood. These findings support how community acceptance facilitates migrant farmers' adaptation.

Community acceptance therefore emerged as a critical factor that enabled migrant farmers to adapt to agricultural livelihood. Social inclusion strengthened their sense of belonging and reinforced their livelihood stability. Their lived experiences demonstrate how relational acceptance facilitated adaptation.

Social inclusion also strengthened migrant farmers' participation in cooperative agricultural practices. Once accepted within the farming community, migrant farmers were able to engage more fully in shared livelihood activities. Their experiences reflect how community acceptance facilitated deeper integration into the agricultural environment.

The development of relational inclusion also enabled migrant farmers to participate in reciprocal helping practices that strengthened cooperation and mutual support within the farming community.

### **Subtheme 5.5: Reciprocal Helping Practices among Farmers**

Reciprocal helping practices emerged as a vital component of migrant farmers' adaptation, reflecting how mutual assistance within the farming community enabled them to sustain agricultural livelihood. Respondents described how cooperation among farmers created an environment where assistance was shared based on need, experience, and collective participation. This mutual support allowed migrant farmers to overcome challenges associated with unfamiliar agricultural conditions. Reciprocal helping practices strengthened their ability to function within the farming environment by providing assistance that extended beyond individual capacity. Adaptation therefore involved participation in cooperative systems where assistance was shared among farmers. Their lived experiences demonstrate how reciprocal helping practices facilitated adaptation by strengthening collective livelihood sustainability.

Cooperation among farmers also reinforced relational trust and strengthened migrant farmers' integration into the community. Respondents described how mutual assistance created a sense of solidarity that strengthened their sense of belonging. These cooperative relationships allowed migrant farmers to access assistance during periods of difficulty. Reciprocal helping practices therefore functioned as both practical and relational support systems that strengthened adaptation. Their experiences reflect how cooperation enabled migrant farmers to sustain livelihood despite structural and environmental challenges. Adaptation therefore involved integration into cooperative agricultural systems characterized by mutual assistance.

Oni described the cooperative nature of farming relationships by stating, "No adda kasapulan mi ket agtitinnulong kami."

(When we need something, we help each other.)

Oni's statement reflects how reciprocal helping practices enabled farmers to access assistance when needed. Mutual assistance strengthened their capacity to overcome challenges associated with farming. His experience demonstrates how cooperation facilitated adaptation by providing access to collective support. Reciprocal helping practices allowed farmers to sustain livelihood despite individual limitations. Adaptation therefore involved participation in cooperative systems that strengthened livelihood sustainability.

Mutual assistance strengthened Oni's ability to remain engaged in agricultural livelihood by providing support during periods of need. His participation in cooperative practices reinforced his integration into the farming community. This cooperation strengthened relational trust and enabled him to sustain livelihood. His experience reflects how reciprocal helping practices facilitated adaptation by strengthening collective resilience. Migration therefore involved integration into cooperative agricultural systems characterized by shared assistance.

Recent research on rural livelihood systems emphasizes the importance of reciprocal cooperation in sustaining agricultural communities. Barrett, Conostas, and McPeak (2021) explain that mutual assistance strengthens farmers' ability to manage livelihood uncertainty by enabling access to collective resources and support. Cooperative practices strengthen resilience and enable farmers to sustain livelihood despite environmental and economic challenges. Similarly, Coulthard et al. (2021) explain that reciprocal helping practices strengthen community resilience by reinforcing cooperation and shared responsibility. These findings support how reciprocal helping practices facilitate migrant farmers' adaptation.

Philippine agricultural research further confirms the importance of cooperative labor practices. Rola, Jamias, and Quizon (2019) explain that farming communities in upland Philippines rely heavily on mutual assistance to sustain agricultural productivity. Cooperative labor practices strengthen farmers' ability to manage livelihood challenges. Similarly, Mariano and Darvin (2018) observed that Benguet farmers rely on reciprocal helping practices to sustain agricultural livelihood. These findings support how reciprocal helping practices facilitate migrant farmers' adaptation.

Alfred also described cooperative relationships by stating, "Nu adda maited ko ket ited ko met, kasta met da."

(If I can give help, I also give, and they do the same.)

Alfred's statement reflects how reciprocal helping practices were based on mutual exchange of assistance. Cooperation strengthened his integration into the farming community. His willingness to assist others reinforced relational trust and strengthened his adaptation. His experience demonstrates how reciprocal helping practices facilitated integration and livelihood continuity. Adaptation therefore involved participation in cooperative systems characterized by mutual exchange.

Reciprocal assistance strengthened Alfred's ability to sustain livelihood by providing access to collective support. His participation in cooperative practices reinforced his relational integration within the farming community. This cooperation strengthened his ability to manage livelihood challenges. His experience reflects how reciprocal helping practices facilitated adaptation by strengthening community integration. Migration therefore involved integration into cooperative systems characterized by shared assistance.

Recent migration and rural development research emphasizes the role of reciprocity in facilitating adaptation. Eriksen and Selboe (2015) explain that reciprocal cooperation strengthens livelihood sustainability by reinforcing collective resilience. Cooperative relationships enable individuals to access shared resources and support. More recent work by Bosc et al. (2018) highlights that mutual assistance strengthens agricultural adaptation by enabling farmers to manage livelihood challenges collectively. These findings support how reciprocal helping practices facilitate migrant farmers' adaptation.

Philippine rural livelihood studies further emphasize the importance of cooperative labor systems. Tolentino, Cabardo, and Cardenas (2022) explain that reciprocal helping practices strengthen agricultural sustainability in upland farming communities. Cooperative relationships enable farmers to manage labor demands and environmental challenges. These findings support how reciprocal helping practices facilitate migrant farmers' adaptation.

Reciprocal helping practices therefore emerged as essential support systems that enabled migrant farmers to sustain agricultural livelihood. Cooperation strengthened their capacity to manage challenges and reinforced their integration into the farming community. Their lived experiences demonstrate how reciprocal helping practices facilitated adaptation through shared assistance.

Participation in cooperative agricultural systems also strengthened migrant farmers' sense of belonging and reinforced their identity as members of the farming community. Through reciprocal helping practices, migrant farmers developed relational stability and collective resilience. Their experiences reflect how cooperation facilitated adaptation by strengthening both livelihood sustainability and community integration.

These cooperative practices complete the support system structure that enabled migrant farmers to adapt to their agricultural environment.

Adaptation to a new agricultural environment was made possible through the presence of interconnected social support systems that enabled migrant farmers to navigate unfamiliar conditions and sustain their livelihood. Family members served as foundational support networks that provided initial access, guidance, and reassurance during migration. Their involvement reduced uncertainty and strengthened migrant farmers' ability to transition into agricultural work. These familial relationships provided both emotional and practical support that enabled migrant farmers to establish livelihood stability. Their lived experiences demonstrate how adaptation was facilitated through integration into family based support systems. Migration therefore involved entry into relational networks that provided essential support during the early stages of adaptation.

Peer relationships within the farming community further strengthened migrant farmers' adaptation by providing ongoing assistance, knowledge sharing, and relational stability. Fellow farmers played an important role in helping migrant farmers develop competence and confidence in agricultural work. Through cooperative relationships, migrant farmers were able to learn farming techniques and navigate unfamiliar environmental conditions. These peer interactions reduced the difficulty associated with adaptation and strengthened their ability to sustain livelihood. Their lived experiences demonstrate how peer support facilitated adaptation by enabling knowledge acquisition and relational integration. Migration therefore involved integration into cooperative social environments that supported livelihood continuity.

Access to employment opportunities, land, and farming tools provided structural support that enabled migrant farmers to remain engaged in agricultural livelihood. Employer mediated access to resources reduced barriers associated with livelihood entry and strengthened migrant farmers' capacity to sustain farming. These material forms of support allowed migrant farmers to function effectively within the agricultural environment. Their experiences demonstrate how structural support played a critical role in facilitating adaptation. Migration therefore involved integration into resource systems that provided essential material support for livelihood continuity.

Community acceptance and social inclusion reinforced migrant farmers' adaptation by strengthening their sense of belonging and relational stability. Acceptance from fellow farmers and community members allowed migrant farmers to integrate more fully into the farming environment. Social inclusion strengthened their emotional

stability and reinforced their continued engagement in agricultural work. Their lived experiences demonstrate how relational acceptance facilitated adaptation by strengthening their connection to the farming community. Migration therefore involved integration into social environments characterized by acceptance and relational stability.

Reciprocal helping practices further strengthened migrant farmers' ability to sustain agricultural livelihood by providing access to collective support. Mutual assistance among farmers allowed migrant farmers to overcome challenges and maintain livelihood continuity. These cooperative practices reinforced relational trust and strengthened community integration. Their experiences demonstrate how reciprocal helping practices facilitated adaptation through shared assistance and cooperation. Migration therefore involved participation in cooperative systems that strengthened livelihood sustainability.

These findings answer Research Question 5 by demonstrating that migrant farmers' adaptation was facilitated through interconnected systems of family support, peer cooperation, employer and resource access, community acceptance, and reciprocal helping practices. Adaptation was not achieved solely through individual effort but was sustained through integration into relational and community based support systems. These support structures strengthened migrant farmers' ability to sustain livelihood and integrate into the farming community.

Migration emerged in the lives of migrant farmers as a response to lived conditions marked by hardship, responsibility, and the need for survival. Participants described economic difficulty as a central force influencing their decision to leave their place of origin. Financial instability, debt, and lack of stable income created conditions where remaining in their original communities no longer ensured livelihood continuity. For many, migration was not simply a movement across geographical space, but a transition driven by the necessity to sustain themselves and their families. The search for economic stability was closely intertwined with the responsibility to provide for family members, particularly in supporting children's education and ensuring household survival. Migration represented an opportunity to fulfill these responsibilities, reinforcing their role as providers.

Social relationships played a critical role in facilitating migration. Participants described being invited, guided, or influenced by relatives, friends, or spouses who were already familiar with or residing in the community. These social connections provided not only access but also reassurance, reducing uncertainty associated with relocation. Migration, therefore, occurred within networks of trust and relational support, allowing participants to enter an unfamiliar environment with a sense of initial connection and direction.

Environmental and livelihood conditions within the destination community also shaped migration decisions. Participants described the community as offering farming conditions perceived as more favorable, including access to irrigation, cultivable land, and opportunities to earn income. While farming remained difficult, the presence of these resources created the possibility of livelihood sustainability. Migration thus reflected both escape from hardship and movement toward perceived opportunity.

Upon arrival, migrant farmers encountered significant challenges as they adapted to their new environment. Farming work was described as physically demanding, requiring endurance and continuous labor. Participants experienced uncertainty related to crop outcomes, recognizing that income depended on harvest success, which was influenced by environmental conditions beyond their control. This unpredictability created ongoing financial vulnerability, reinforcing the precarious nature of their livelihood.

Environmental adjustment also formed part of the adaptation process. Participants encountered differences in soil conditions, irrigation access, and farming practices, requiring them to learn and adjust continuously. These conditions required both physical and experiential adaptation, as participants gradually became familiar with the rhythms and demands of farming in the new environment.

Despite these challenges, migrant farmers demonstrated strategies that allowed them to integrate into the community and sustain their livelihood. Adaptation occurred through experiential learning, often facilitated by relatives, employers, and fellow farmers who provided guidance and shared knowledge. Participants learned

through observation, practice, and direct instruction, gradually developing competence and confidence in farming activities.

Social integration played a central role in sustaining adaptation. Participants described forming friendships and engaging in cooperative relationships with other farmers. Mutual assistance, shared labor, and reciprocal support created a social environment where individuals could rely on one another. These relationships reduced isolation and provided practical and emotional support, strengthening their ability to remain in the community.

Persistence and endurance emerged as essential strategies for survival. Participants described continuing their work despite physical exhaustion, uncertainty, and hardship. Adaptation was not characterized by the absence of difficulty but by the continued willingness to endure and sustain effort over time. Through repeated engagement, farming became not only a livelihood but a routine embedded in their daily lives.

Migration also influenced the identity of migrant farmers. Participants described themselves increasingly in terms of their role as providers, workers, and farmers. Their ability to sustain livelihood, support family members, and remain in the community reinforced their sense of responsibility and purpose. Migration shaped their perception of themselves as resilient individuals capable of enduring hardship and fulfilling familial obligations.

Over time, participants described a shift in their sense of belonging. Initial unfamiliarity gradually gave way to integration, as social relationships deepened and routines became established. Participants described becoming part of the community, not only as workers but as individuals recognized within the social environment. Migration thus contributed to identity transformation, as individuals negotiated their place within a new social and economic context.

Support systems within the community played a crucial role in facilitating adaptation. Family members, relatives, friends, and employers provided assistance, guidance, and access to resources. Mutual helping practices among farmers reinforced cooperative relationships, allowing participants to navigate challenges collectively. Access to shared tools, land, and farming knowledge further supported livelihood sustainability.

Adaptation, therefore, emerged as a relational and experiential process shaped by hardship, responsibility, learning, and social integration. Migration did not eliminate difficulty but created conditions where migrant farmers could sustain livelihood, fulfill familial responsibilities, and gradually establish belonging within the community. Through endurance, cooperation, and continued engagement in farming work, migrant farmers constructed a life defined by survival, responsibility, and evolving identity within their new environment.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined the lived experiences of migrant farmers in a rural agricultural community in Mankayan, Benguet, revealing migration as a survival driven, relational, and adaptive livelihood process. Migration emerged not as a singular event but as an ongoing experiential phenomenon shaped by economic necessity, family responsibility, environmental conditions, social relationships, and personal agency. Migrant farmers relocated primarily to secure livelihood continuity and fulfill their roles as providers, reflecting migration as a livelihood preserving response to structural economic vulnerability.

Adaptation was experienced as a gradual and experiential process rather than immediate adjustment. Migrant farmers encountered interconnected environmental, economic, and social challenges, including unfamiliar farming conditions, income instability, and initial social isolation. In response, participants developed adaptive strategies grounded in experiential learning, endurance, cooperation, and reliance on relational support systems. Adaptation unfolded through sustained engagement with agricultural work, social interaction, and repeated practice, enabling migrant farmers to gradually navigate livelihood uncertainty and community integration.

Migration also reshaped participants' identity and sense of belonging. Initially experienced as outsiders, migrant farmers gradually developed a sense of belonging through continued participation in agricultural labor and social relationships. Identity emerged as dynamic and relational, shaped through work, responsibility, and recognition

within the host community. Migration therefore functioned not only as a livelihood strategy but also as a process of identity transformation and social integration.

Support systems played a significant but uneven role in facilitating adaptation. Informal networks, employer relationships, and cooperative labor practices provided essential guidance and livelihood support. However, adaptation remained strongly dependent on personal endurance, resilience, and individual agency, reflecting the experiential nature of migration and livelihood sustainability.

This study contributes to migration and rural livelihood scholarship by demonstrating that migration among farmers is fundamentally a lived, relational, and adaptive process involving continuous negotiation of livelihood, identity, and belonging. By foregrounding migrant farmers' lived experiences, the study expands understanding of migration beyond structural and economic explanations and highlights the importance of experiential, relational, and identity dimensions in shaping adaptation and livelihood sustainability.

The findings underscore the need for policies and community interventions that recognize migrant farmers not merely as laborers but as individuals undergoing complex processes of adaptation, identity formation, and livelihood negotiation. Supporting migrant farmers through accessible agricultural resources, community integration initiatives, and livelihood stability programs can enhance both individual well being and rural agricultural sustainability.

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## Appendix A

### Exemplar Coding Table Demonstrating Colaizzi-Informed Phenomenological Analysis

Verbatim Quote (Original + English Translation)	Initial Code	Formulated Meaning	Subtheme	Superordinate Theme
“Saken yan nasapa ak ay naulila si ama... naingsa ak si rigat... self-support adi di yatna nan skwela.” / “I	Early hardship	Early economic adversity shaped	Economic hardship as formative condition	Migration as survival-driven decision

lost my father early... I learned hardship and supported myself while studying.” (Ken)		migration trajectory		
“Gapo ti rigat ti biyag... kasapulan ti pagnamayan a ubra.” / “Because life was hard, we needed work immediately.” (Gil)	Poverty-driven migration	Migration undertaken to secure livelihood and survival	Economic hardship as migration trigger	Migration as survival-driven decision
“Depende nu way swerte din mula adi pay way pilak.” / “If crops grow well, there is money, but not always.” (Leo)	Income uncertainty	Farming livelihood is unstable and dependent on uncontrollable conditions	Livelihood precarity	Sustaining livelihood under uncertainty
“Kaman sha dedan din iningsaan ay ubla... family livelihood.” / “Farming was already familiar to me. It was our family’s livelihood.” (Hari)	Occupational familiarity	Migration aligned with pre-existing livelihood knowledge	Farming as inherited occupation	Migration as continuity of livelihood identity
“Adak nasayanan pay adin amin sunga sat waday mangitdo mtlng... enggana sin nasanyak.” / “I wasn’t familiar at first... someone taught me until I learned.” (Uno)	Guided adaptation	Adaptation achieved through experiential and social learning	Learning through mentorship	Learning to sustain livelihood
“Mandamdama... ask questions.” (Max)	Active learning	Adaptation requires initiative and effort to acquire knowledge	Self-directed learning	Learning to sustain livelihood
“Man tinulong met mtlng nu way ligat... badangan daka abu.” / “People help each other when someone struggles.” (Erwin)	Mutual support	Informal reciprocal support facilitates adaptation	Cooperative relationships	Community support and integration
“He is like my second father... tinulungan na saken enggana luglugi.” / “He helped me from the beginning. He is like my second father.” (Bil)	Employer support	Employer relationships provide emotional and livelihood stability	Employer-based support system	Institutional and relational support
“Ibilbilang ko pay adi tan kaman panang apresyar dan saken.” / “I consider myself part of the community because they value me.” (Ron)	Social acceptance	Migration leads to integration and belonging	Identity integration through acceptance	Reconstruction of migrant identity
“Aw tanggap ak sina tan uubing ko et sina et naka rehistro.” / “I feel accepted	Identity reconstruction	Permanent settlement transforms	Identity consolidation	Reconstruction of migrant identity

here. My children are registered here.” (Fred)		migrant identity	through settlement	
“Ubla ubla ladta... focus on working and moving forward.” (Ken)	Persistence	Endurance serves as survival mechanism	Psychological resilience	Adaptive coping and endurance
“Maki barkada, maki ugbo, maki bagay.” / “Making friends, helping others, and adjusting.” (Gil)	Social adaptation	Social engagement facilitates integration	Relational adaptation strategies	Community integration mechanisms
“Yes, it strengthened me... we plant again even if prices go down.” (Leo)	Occupational identity strengthening	Migration reinforces occupational identity	Identity reinforcement through labor	Reconstruction of migrant identity