
Research Article

Business Trends and Marketing Strategies of Vegetable Business Operators in the 3rd District of Albay: An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to determine the business trends and marketing strategies of the vegetable business operators in the 3rd District of Albay. The study used a quantitative descriptive-comparative research design. The study involved 48 registered and active vegetable business operators in the 3rd District of Albay. The study employed various statistical tools such as weighted mean, frequency count, percentage, and ANOVA test to analyze and interpret the data. The findings of the study revealed that most vegetable business operators were small-scale enterprises with limited capitalization and relied primarily on external credits and loans as their source of capital which increases their vulnerability to financial risks. The vegetable business operators experienced business trends related to increasing competition, fluctuating supply, rising operational costs, and changing customer demand. Because of these business trends and challenges, the vegetable business operators were found to have implemented marketing strategies, particularly in offering competitive pricing, maintaining high quality products, maintaining a good relationship with the customers, and ensuring product availability. Using ANOVA one-way, a value greater than 0.05 was observed in all variables which means there is no significant difference on the implementation of marketing strategies when grouped according to business profile. The study concluded that vegetable business operators continuously adapt their marketing practices and operational strategies in response to changing market conditions and industry challenges. Effective resource management, customer-oriented approaches, and adaptive marketing strategies were identified as important factors in sustaining business operations and maintaining competitiveness in the vegetable industry.

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Introduction

The vegetable industry is one of the key industries in the Philippines that supports the local economy, provides employment for people involved in production and operations, and ensures food security for the entire country. Vegetables are among the most important agricultural products consumed every day in a typical Filipino household and serve as a major source of income for farmers, traders, wholesalers, and vegetable operators. As it becomes a fast-emerging business in the Philippines, where continuous change is a reality and economic conditions have become more complex, vegetable businesses are now required to adapt their management and operation practices to remain sustainable and competitive in the industry.

As stated in the Republic Act No. 843511, otherwise known as the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) of 1997, it pushes for the modernization of the agriculture and fisheries sectors in the Philippines to be able to provide better profitability, and to prepare them for the challenges brought by globalization. It will be done by providing an adequate, focused, and rational delivery of necessary support services, and appropriating funds for that purpose and others. This act gives details on how the state recognizes the importance of adopting different market approaches in assisting the agriculture and fisheries sectors, and also recognizing their contribution to food security, environmental protection, and balancing urban and rural development, without neglecting the welfare of the consumers, especially the lower income groups. This includes market-oriented policies in agricultural production to encourage farmers to shift to more profitable crops.

Additionally, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2: Zero Hunger and SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth² outline the significance of sustaining food production. SDG 2 highlights the importance of achieving food security, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable

agriculture. The vegetable industry contributes directly to this goal by ensuring the availability of nutritious food and supporting agricultural productivity. Meanwhile, SDG 8 promotes sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, productive employment, and decent work opportunities. Notably, it creates opportunities for farmers, traders, and vendors to expand their work. Therefore, these goals justify supporting the agricultural sector and promoting sustainable practices within the vegetable industry, as they improve the local economy by supplying healthy, affordable food options, generating job opportunities, and maintaining the agricultural sector's notability.

The vegetable industry continues to face challenges because of the unstable supply chains, rising inflation, high competition, and changing consumer preferences. The vegetable business operators in the 3rd District of Albay, particularly in the municipalities of Guinobatan, Libon, Oas, and Polangui, most run small stalls from which they derive their primary income. With that, they encountered significant challenges, including unstable supply, irregular prices, limited capital at times, costly operations, and competition among vendors. These required them to adjust their business practices and marketing strategies to remain active in the market, and continue to meet the needs of their customers.

As the current situation requires, vegetable operators are seen to have adjusted their pricing based on supply, demand, and even competition, as well as using digital platforms not only to promote products to a wider audience but also to sell them online. Now, these adjustments reflect their acknowledgment that changes are really happening and that they have to cope with them. Therefore, there is a need to understand these emerging trends and strategies to identify the most effective way for a business to grow and become more resilient.

In a similar experience, the researcher has relatives in the vegetable business. They sell agricultural products and depend on distributors or wholesalers who purchase their

vegetables for resale. They also struggle to sell their products in the public market, mainly due to strong competition. As a result, some of the vegetables they sell remain unsold and eventually spoil, resulting in financial losses. Because of these problems, there is a need to conduct a study that would help vegetable business operators improve their businesses to remain efficient and sustainable. Since most of these operators are running small-scale businesses, they are more vulnerable to losses.

This research aims to provide insights that can help vegetable business operators make informed decisions and improve the growth and sustainability of their businesses. It aims to analyze the business trends and marketing strategies of vegetable business operators in the 3rd District of Albay, consisting these first-class municipalities, which are Guinobatan, Libon, Oas, and Polangui, by examining their business profile in terms of capitalization, source of capital, number of years in business, number of workers, and average monthly sales. It further seeks to assess the industry's business trends with respect to supply, demand, cost-benefit, sustainability, and competition, and to determine the extent of implementation of the marketing strategies adopted by vegetable business operators across these areas. Moreover, the study aims to determine whether there is a significant difference on the implementation of marketing strategies across business profiles and, based on the findings, propose a business guide to support improved practices and informed decision-making within vegetable business operations.

Materials and Methods

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive-comparative research design. The descriptive research design was used to determine the business trends and marketing strategies of vegetable business operators. Meanwhile, the comparative research design was utilized to test if there's a difference on the implementation of marketing strategies when grouped according to the business profile.

Respondents

The respondents of the study were 48 registered and active vegetable business operators in the 3rd District of Albay. The study employed purposive sampling, wherein respondents were selected based on specific criteria such as being registered, actively operating, and willing to participate during the data collection period.

Data Sources/Research Instrument

The study made use of a variety of research strategies, including library procedures, informal interviews, and internet searches. The primary data was collected through a questionnaire divided into three sections (business profile of vegetable business operators in terms of capitalization, source of capital, number of years in business, number of workers and average monthly sales. Business trends of the industry in terms of supply, demand, cost-benefit, sustainability, and competition, as well as the extent of implementation of the marketing strategies adapted by vegetable business operators along supply, demand, cost-benefit, sustainability, and competition. Close ended questions answerable by selecting any of the five options using Likert-type rating scale was prepared.

Data Gathering Procedures

The dean of the Graduate Studies and Research and the researcher's thesis adviser evaluated the suggested questionnaire. After the suggestions for improvement have been taken into account, final copies were ready for a dry run. The researcher conducted a dry run or pilot testing with ten (10) non-participants vegetable business operators. The trial run identified several issues such as ambiguous phrasing, unclear directions, and duplication of concepts. A formal request to undertake the study was sought from the Office of the Mayor to allow the researcher conduct the study among the target respondents. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the respondents who are involved in the present study. The gathered data were tabulated, organized, analyzed and interpreted. To protect intellectual property rights, all data acquired was kept strictly confidential.

Data Analysis

In quantifying the responses, a Likert scale with five orderable gradations with a Range of Means and descriptions was utilized. The data were entered in SPSS and Microsoft Excel and were treated using mean, frequency, percentage, and ANOVA. Frequency count is the complete answer of the respondents' perceptions and the percentages of each response. These were used to describe the respondents' profile and summarize their responses to each questionnaire item. Percentage. It refers to the use of numbers expressed as a proportion of a whole to present findings and compare results. It is commonly used to report sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value, and negative predictive value in scientific studies (Scispace, N.D.). Weighted Mean was used to quantify the gathered data in statement of the problem number 2. The business trend of the vegetable business operators in the 3rd District of Albay in terms of supply, demand, cost benefit, sustainability, and competition. It was also used in Statement of the Problem Number 3, the extent of implementation of marketing strategies adapted by vegetable business operators along

supply, demand, cost benefit, sustainability, and competition. One-Way ANOVA used to determine whether there are significant differences among the mean scores of three or more independent groups based on a single grouping variable (Gravetter & Walnau, 2017). It was used to determine if there's a difference on the implementation of marketing strategies when grouped according to the business profile.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The study adhered to ethical guidelines in conducting research with human participants. Before starting the collection of data, the researcher ensured that informed consent was obtained from all participants. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, how the data would be used, and the voluntary nature of their participation. Additionally, the confidentiality of the participants' information was guaranteed, and any identifying information was removed during the data analysis process to protect their privacy.

Results and Discussions

Table 1

Business Profile in terms of Capitalization

Indicators	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Php20,000.00 and below	23	47.92
Php20,001.00-Php30,000.00	21	43.75
Php30,001.00-Php40,000.00	1	2.08
Php40,001.00-Php50,000.00	2	4.17
Php50,001.00 and above	1	2.08
Total	48	100%

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents' profile based on their capitalization. The data reveals that 23 respondents or 47.92% run their business with Php20,000 and below capital. It is closely followed by 21 respondents or 43.75% with capitalization ranging from Php21,000.00 to Php30,000.00. On the other hand, only a portion of the population

of respondents have higher capital; 2 respondents or 4.17% run their business with the capitalization of Php41,000.00 to Php50,000.00, while both Php31,000.00 to Php40,000.00 and Php51,000.00 were the least chosen indicator with 1 respondent or 2.08% of the respondents.

Table 2*Business Profile in terms of Source of Capital*

Indicators	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Personal Investment	2	3.51
Credit/Loans	30	52.63
Savings	17	29.82
Government Grants and Subsidies	1	1.75
Friends and Family	7	12.28
Total	57	100

The source of capital among vegetable business operators is shown in Table 2, which was determined by the date it opened for operation. Total responses (N=57) exceed the number of respondents (n=48) due to multiple-choice selections. The data reveals that the majority of the vegetable business operators relies on Credits or Loans as their primary source of income, with 52.63% of the respondents. On the other hand, Savings emerged as the next common source, with 29.82 % of the respondents. Meanwhile, Friends and Family with

12.28 % indicates that informal lending and/or domestic support still play a role in the latter. Lastly, Personal Investment (3.51%) and Government Grants and Subsidies (1.75%) were the least chosen sources, respectively.

This indicates that most vegetable business operators depend heavily on external financing, particularly formal credit systems such as loans. This suggests that a significant number of vegetable operators may lack sufficient personal capital to independently start or sustain their businesses.

Table 3*Business Profile in terms of Numbers of Years in Operation*

Indicators	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1-2	4	8.33
3-4	8	16.67
5-6	3	6.25
7-8	1	2.08
9-10	3	6.25
11 and above	29	60.42
Total	48	100

The data shows that 60.42% of the respondents have been operating for 11 years and above. Meanwhile, 8 or 16.67% of the respondents have been running their business for 3-4 years already. Then, four respondents or 8.33% acquired 12 years of experience in the business. On the other hand, businesses operating for 5-6 years and 9-10 years both recorded 3 respondents or 6.25%. While those with 7-8 years in business was the least chosen indicator with 2.08%. This reveals that these vegetable business operators have already established an experience in the field over a long period, showing that many of them have been

in the business for many years. It suggests that, by experience, they are already familiar with how the vegetable business works, including buying and selling process, managing customers, handling daily operations, etc. This also indicates that their long years in the business reflect stability and continuous operation over time. This study highlights that vendors who remain in the industry for longer years are more resilient and adaptable in managing potential risks in running a business. These risks include fluctuating demand, supply instability, and capital limitations.

Table 4*Business Profile in terms of Numbers of Workers*

Indicators	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1-2	39	81.25
3-4	9	18.75
Total	48	100

The vegetable business operators' number of workers is shown in Table 4, which was determined by the date it opened for operation. The data show that the majority of vegetable business operators hire 1-2 workers accounting to 81.25 % of the respondents. In contrast, only 9 of 48 respondents or 18.75 % hire 3-4 workers to aid them in the business. The large gap between the two indicators suggests that most vegetable business operators run micro-level operations that require limited

manpower. This implies that the extent of their operations can be managed generally with only a few workers, particularly when daily business operations are just manageable. This is supported by the data presented by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) on 2022 which shows that 90.4% of enterprises or business operations are "micro" with less than 10 workers, and most of these remain micro for years. They survive long-term operations without expanding workforce.

Table 5*Business Profile in terms of Average of Monthly Sales*

Indicators	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Below Php20,000.00	19	39.58
Php20,000.00-Php30,000.00	26	54.17
Php31,000.00-Php40,000.00	2	4.17
Php51,000.00 and above	1	2.08
Total	48	100

Table 5 shows that 26 of 48 (54.17%) vegetable business operators earned Php20,000.00-Php30,000.00 monthly. It is followed by 19 or 39.58% respondents earning below Php20,000.00. Meanwhile, Php31,000.00-Php40,000.00 (4.17%) and Php51,000.00 and above (2.08%) were the

least chosen monthly sales. This finding aligns with Llanto's (2012) explanation that micro and small enterprises in the Philippines typically operate with minimal capital and limited working capital, which restricts their capacity to generate higher sales volumes.

Table 6*Business Trends in terms of Supply*

INDICATORS	WM	VI	RANK
1 Vegetables are consistently available from suppliers to sustain the daily operations of the business.	4.40	A	3
2 Suppliers deliver vegetables on time, allowing the business to operate without interruption.	4.42	A	2
3 The quality of vegetables received from suppliers remains consistent and acceptable for resale.	4.54	A	1
4 The overall supply of vegetables in the market is stable throughout most months of the year.	4.23	A	5
5 Shortages of vegetables rarely disrupt normal business operations.	3.33	S	7

INDICATORS	WM	VI	RANK
6 Alternative suppliers are generally available when regular suppliers experience stock limitations.	4.08	O	6
7 Seasonal changes affect the volume and availability of vegetable supply in the market.	4.38	A	4
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.20	A	

Legend:

4.20 – 5.00	Always (A)
3.40 – 4.19	Often (O)
2.60 – 3.39	Sometimes (S)
1.80 – 2.59	Rarely (R)
1.00 – 1.79	Never (N)

Table 6 presents the distribution of respondents' mean responses on Business Trends regarding supply. The data reveal that the total weighted mean is 4.20 with verbal interpretation Always, which is consistent with its interpretation. This indicates that vegetable operators of 3rd District of Albay generally agree that the supply of vegetables is consistently and securely maintained throughout vegetable business operations. It proves that the supplier consistently provides quality

products that are suitable for reselling and/or distribution. This aligned with the study of Quinn (2024) on his 'Strategies to Mitigate Supply Chain Disruption: Creating Redundancy. According to him, without the concept of redundancy or the practice of having backup options or alternatives, a single failure can affect the entire production, leading to worse results like losing customer trust or losing customers in general.

Table 7

Business Trends in terms Demand

INDICATORS	WM	VI	RANK
1 Customers regularly purchase vegetables from vegetable business operators in consistent volumes.	3.56	O	7
2 Market demand for vegetables remains stable throughout the year.	3.79	O	6
3 Customer demand increases during specific seasons, holidays, or special occasions.	4.10	O	4
4 Buyers prefer purchasing fresh and high-quality vegetables.	4.69	A	1
5 Demand for vegetables changes when selling prices increase or decrease.	4.33	A	2
6 Customers tend to maintain regular buying relationships with specific vegetable business operators.	3.96	O	5
7 The availability of vegetable stocks influences the level of customer demand.	4.17	O	3
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.09	O	

Table 7 presents the respondents' mean responses on business trends in terms of demand. The data account for a Total Weighted Mean of 4.09 with an interpretation of Often (O), implying that demand-related trends are frequently experienced by vegetable business operators, though they are not constant

throughout the year. It indicates that demand in vegetable business operations is highly influenced by quality, price, and supply availability. The lack of stable and consistent purchase volumes causes operational challenges, particularly for microbusinesses like vegetable business operations in the 3rd District of Albay

with limited capitalization, as reflected in Table 1. Vegetable vendors must therefore implement demand forecasting practices, maintain

product freshness, and adopt flexible pricing strategies to mitigate the risks of spoilage and financial loss.

Table 8

Business Trends in terms of Cost Benefit

INDICATORS	AWM	VI	RANK
1 The income generated from sales is sufficient to cover operational expenses.	4.13	0	3.5
2 The business earns a reasonable profit from retail operations.	3.96	0	5.5
3 Operating expenses such as transportation, labor, and storage are manageable.	4.13	0	3.5
4 Increases in purchase prices significantly affect profit margins.	4.50	A	1
5 The business remains financially viable despite fluctuating costs.	3.96	0	5.5
6 The business contributes positively to the financial stability of the owner.	4.13	0	3.5
7 Operating a vegetable retail business is financially worthwhile.	4.19	0	2
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.14	0	

Table 8 shows the mean responses of vegetable business operators regarding business trends in terms of cost-benefit. The overall data recorded a total weighted mean of 4.14, interpreted as Often (O). The results reveal that vegetable business operators have mostly positive experiences with regard to cost-benefit results in their operations, although financial-related difficulties remain observable. It shows that

respondents are very affected by changes in the supplier's prices, proving that when costs increase, profitability is directly affected. It is consistent with the statement by the Management Association of the Philippines President Donald Lim, who asserted that when businesses absorb rising costs instead of raising prices, it's not sustainable, meaning profitability is directly reduced.

Table 9

Business Trends in terms of Sustainability

INDICATORS	AWM	VI	RANK
1 The business has the capacity to continue operating in the coming years.	4.33	A	1
2 The business can withstand periods of low sales.	4.00	0	5
3 The business can survive increases in supplier prices.	4.02	0	4
4 The business can operate despite inflation and economic changes.	3.90	0	7
5 The business maintains a stable base of regular customers.	3.98	0	6
6 Available resources are sufficient to sustain long-term operations.	4.13	0	2
7 The business demonstrates overall financial and operational stability.	4.10	0	3
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.07	0	

Table 9 presents the respondents' mean responses regarding sustainability as a business trend. The data recorded a Total Weighted Mean of 4.07, interpreted as Often (O). This implies that vegetable business operators are

generally confident about the continuity of their business operations. The respondents believe they have sufficient resources and capacity to sustain their businesses for a long time, even after facing challenges such as price

increases and low sales. The lower ratings for customer stability and inflation resilience, however, indicate that sustainability is not guaranteed.

Table 10

Business Trends in terms of Competition

INDICATORS	AWM	VI	RANK
1 There are many vegetable business operators, operating within the same municipality.	4.75	A	1
2 The number of competitors has increased in recent years.	4.21	A	6
3 Competition makes it challenging to retain regular customers.	4.56	A	2
4 New vegetable business operators continue to enter the market.	4.33	A	5
5 Selling prices are often influenced by competitors' pricing strategies.	4.19	O	7
6 Competition encourages businesses to improve their services and operations.	4.54	A	3
7 The business remains competitive despite the presence of many competitors.	4.48	A	4
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.44	A	

Table 10 presents the respondents' mean responses on business trends regarding competition. In general, the overall data recorded a total weighted mean of 4.44, interpreted as Always (A). These results reveal that vegetable business operators operate in a highly competitive environment, with many sellers and new entrants. The higher score on customer retention challenges and the need for service improvement suggest that operators must still work harder to retain their customers. Furthermore, the data indicated that these

businesses can remain competitive even in a crowded market. The slightly lower score on price influence indicates that some operators do not focus entirely on competing on price, but rather on the quality and service they can offer. This is similar to the study by Penaso (2025), which reveals that businesses sometimes have to lower prices, offer discounts and promos, or even move their stalls to find better locations just to keep their customers. The pressure from competition also affects the profits they earn.

The extent of implementation of Marketing Strategies adapted by Vegetable Business Operators

Table 11

Marketing Strategies along Supply

INDICATORS	WM	VI	RANK
1 The business maintains strong and continuous relationships with multiple suppliers to ensure steady vegetable availability.	4.69	VMI	3
2 Orders are strategically planned in advance based on expected supply conditions to avoid shortages.	4.40	VMI	7
3 Alternative suppliers are actively contacted when regular suppliers experience limited stock.	4.58	VMI	6
4 Delivery schedules are carefully coordinated with suppliers to maintain operational efficiency.	4.67	VMI	5
5 Vegetables are inspected thoroughly upon delivery to ensure quality standards are met.	4.73	VMI	2

INDICATORS	WM	VI	RANK
6 Proper storage practices are implemented to preserve freshness and reduce spoilage.	4.77	VMI	1
7 Purchasing quantities are adjusted strategically based on supply availability and seasonal conditions.	4.69	VMI	3
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.65	VMI	

Legend:

4.20 – 5.00	Very Much Implemented (VMI)
3.40 – 4.19	Much Implemented (MI)
2.60 – 3.39	Moderately Implemented (ModI)
1.80 – 2.59	Less Implemented (LI)
1.00 – 1.79	Not Implemented (NI)

Table 11 shows the mean responses of the respondents on the marketing strategies focusing to supply. Overall, the data recorded a total weighted mean of 4.65, interpreted as "Very Much Implemented (VMI)". the findings imply that vegetable business operators in the 3rd District of Albay recognize the importance of an effective supply management system to sustain business operations. They understand the importance of minimizing losses, maintaining customer satisfaction, and responding to changes in supply conditions through the prioritization of product preservation, quality

control, and strategic purchasing decisions. Such practices contribute to the stability and competitiveness of vegetable business operations. This is aligned to the study made by Larry N. Digal and Luis Hualda (2004), as they emphasized that quality grading and standards in the vegetable supply chain are essential to maintain product quality and improve market efficiency. Their study on quality grading in the vegetable supply chain in the Southern Philippines highlighted the importance of quality control practices in reducing inefficiencies and ensuring buyer satisfaction.

Table 12
Marketing Strategies along Demand

INDICATORS	AWM	VI	RANK
1 Selling prices are adjusted based on changes in customer demand and market trends.	4.02	MI	6
2 High-quality customer service is consistently provided to encourage repeat purchases.	4.48	VMI	2
3 Regular customers are prioritized to strengthen long-term business relationships.	4.35	VMI	4
4 Customers are informed about new arrivals and available stocks to stimulate demand.	3.44	MI	7
5 Frequently purchased vegetables are ensured to be consistently available.	4.25	VMI	5
6 Vegetables are displayed in a clean and organized manner to attract buyers.	4.73	VMI	1
7 Discounts or price incentives are offered for bulk purchases to increase sales volume.	4.42	VMI	3
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.24	VMI	

Table 12 presents respondents' responses on marketing strategies focused on demand. The overall data recorded a total weighted

mean of 4.24, interpreted as Very Much Implemented (VMI). The results indicate that vegetable business operators actively employ

demand-related marketing strategies to attract and retain customers. Specifically, operators place strong emphasis on product presentation as a primary strategy to increase sales. It also suggests that good service is a key factor in retaining loyal customers. Furthermore, it shows that operators use both price-based and relationship-based strategies to maintain steady

demand. According to Sabir and Farooque (2017), customers are becoming more strategic and planning their purchases around markdowns and other promotional activities. Retailers are finding it difficult to strike a trade-off between the prices and the remaining shelf life for offering markdown.

Table 13

Marketing Strategies along Cost Benefit

INDICATORS	AWM	VI	RANK
1 Business expenses are regularly monitored and recorded to control costs effectively.	4.02	MI	7
2 Vegetables are handled carefully to minimize spoilage and financial loss.	4.54	VMI	2
3 Purchase prices are negotiated with suppliers to improve profit margins.	4.33	VMI	6
4 Selling prices are strategically set to ensure reasonable profit.	4.38	VMI	4
5 Transportation and logistics costs are managed efficiently.	4.35	VMI	5
6 Waste and unsold inventory are minimized through careful stock management.	4.52	VMI	3
7 Available resources are utilized efficiently to maximize profitability.	4.63	VMI	1
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.40	VMI	

Table 13 shows the respondents' mean responses to marketing strategies focusing on cost-benefit. The overall data recorded a total weighted mean of 4.40, interpreted as Very Much Implemented (VMI). This indicates that respondents strongly apply cost-benefit strategies to manage expenses and improve profit in their vegetable business operations. The results shows that respondents strongly apply

cost-benefit strategies to manage expenses and improve profit in their vegetable business operations. Specifically, this shows that vendors prioritize using their limited resources wisely to increase profits. Along with this, careful handling of vegetables is strongly practiced to prevent losses, since vegetables are perishable goods, and operators closely monitor their stock to avoid waste from unsold items.

Table 14

Marketing Strategies along Sustainability

INDICATORS	AWM	VI	RANK
1 Long-term relationships with both customers and suppliers are actively maintained.	4.71	VMI	2
2 Profits are partially saved or reinvested to secure future business operations.	4.33	VMI	5.5
3 The business adapts operational practices during difficult economic conditions.	4.33	VMI	5.5
4 Workers are guided and supervised to maintain operational efficiency.	4.08	MI	7
5 Cleanliness and proper organization are maintained to ensure business continuity.	4.81	VMI	1

INDICATORS	AWM	VI	RANK
6 Financial planning is conducted to prepare for unexpected challenges.	4.35	VMI	4
7 Strategies are implemented to ensure the long-term survival of the business.	4.67	VMI	3
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.47	VMI	

Table 14 presents the mean responses of the respondents on the marketing strategies focusing on sustainability. The overall data recorded a total weighted mean of 4.47, interpreted as Very Much Implemented (VMI). The result implied that vegetable vendors strongly focus on visible and relationship-based strategies to sustain their business. The top scores for cleanliness, customer-supplier

relationships, and long-term planning show that vendors believe daily presentation and trust are key to staying in business. The findings support the observations of Philip Kotler (2016), who emphasizes that long-term business success depends on good customer relationships, consistent service quality, and the ability to adjust strategies based on market changes.

Table 15
Marketing Strategies along Competition

INDICATORS	AWM	VI	RANK
1 Selling prices are adjusted strategically to remain competitive in the market.	4.52	VMI	6
2 Product quality is maintained to differentiate the business from competitors.	4.56	VMI	4.5
3 Customer service improvements are implemented to retain buyers.	4.77	VMI	1
4 Competitors' pricing and practices are monitored regularly.	3.33	ModI	7
5 Customer loyalty is strengthened through consistent service and reliability.	4.71	VMI	2.5
6 Promotional offers are introduced to attract and retain customers.	4.56	VMI	4.5
7 The business builds and maintains a good reputation to sustain competitive advantage.	4.71	VMI	2.5
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.45	VMI	

Table 15 presents respondents' responses regarding marketing strategies along competition. The overall data recorded a Total Weighted Mean of 4.45, interpreted as Very Much Implemented (VMI). These findings reveal that vegetable business operators compete using strategies that are more customer-focused, such as building customer loyalty, improving service quality, and maintaining a good reputation that represents their entire business. The indicator with the highest score suggests that operators' top priority is on

customer service, which serves as their primary tool to remain competitive in the market. It highlights the importance of directly interacting with customers and providing them with the satisfaction they deserve to encourage them to stay. Competition-related strategies should be more customer-focused rather than competitor-focused. Operators should aim to survive competition by being reliable and trusted, rather than by directly copying or undercutting competitors.

Table 16

Significant Difference on the Implementation of Marketing Strategies when Grouped according to the Business Profile

Business Profile Variable	F-value	p-value	Decision to Null Hypothesis	Interpretation
Capitalization	0.801	0.555	Fail to Reject	Not Significant
Source of Capital	0.348	0.941	Fail to Reject	Not Significant
Number of Years in Operation	0.613	0.69	Fail to Reject	Not Significant
Number of Workers	2.113	0.133	Fail to Reject	Not Significant
Average Monthly Sales	1.165	0.334	Fail to Reject	Not Significant

Table 16 shows the significant difference in the implementation of marketing strategies when grouped according to the business profile of the respondents. Based on the results, all p-values are higher than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected, which means that there is no significant difference in the implementation of marketing strategies when respondents are grouped according to capitalization, source of capital, number of years in operation, number of workers, and average monthly sales. The findings suggest that vegetable business operators implement marketing strategies in a similar manner regardless of their business profile. This may be because they operate in the same type of market and face similar challenges, leading them to use common strategies to attract customers and maintain competitiveness of their businesses.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing findings, the following conclusions were made:

The study concluded that vegetable business operations in the 3rd District of Albay are mainly composed of small businesses that face significant challenges but respond with tangible, more practical marketing strategies. In terms of business profile, most respondents have a small capital of Php20,000 or less which revealed that there is a limited financial capacity to take in rising cost. The vegetable business operators are also prone to financial risks and limitations since their source of income mostly comes from external money lending in the form of credits or loans. This study also found out that these vegetable business operators have already established an experience in the field over a long period, showing that many of

them have been in the business for many years. It suggests that, by experience, they are already familiar with how the vegetable business works, including buying and selling process, managing customers, handling daily operations, etc.

The study concludes that vegetable business operations in the 3rd District of Albay are strongly affected by rising business trends and varying market conditions. Most vegetable business operators operate on limited capital, leaving their businesses financially constrained and at risk of rising costs, unstable demand, and strong competition. Customer demand varies on season, preferences, and market conditions, making sales inconsistent. Although operators remain determined to continue their businesses, their operations are constantly challenged by inflation, low sales, and weak customer demand. These conditions show that vegetable operations in the 3rd District of Albay are highly competitive, yet unstable and financially insecure.

Because of these challenges, the vegetable business operators implemented different practical and effective marketing strategies to keep their business operations. These marketing strategies involve proper storage for the vegetables to avoid spoilage, maintain a high-quality product and maintain a good relationship with the customer. To attract more customers, the vendors provide excellent customer service and building a positive relationship. In dealing with competition, vendors choose to compete on good service, reliability, and high-quality products rather than on price. Overall, the study shows that vegetable business operators survive through resilience, practical decision-making, and other significant experience-based strategies. Accordingly,

the study found that vegetable business operators in the 3rd District of Albay consistently implement marketing strategies regardless of their business profile. Even though they operate with little to ample capital or few to many workers, they still demonstrate a High Extent of implementation of the strategies. However, the findings also show that vendors still need support in areas such as financial management, promotion, savings, and crisis management to achieve more stable and sustainable business operations.

There is no significant difference on the implementation of the marketing strategies when grouped according to their business profile.

The Practical Guidebook for Vegetable Business Operators titled “Diskarte sa Gulayan, Asenso sa Kabuhayan!” can help the vegetable business operators to adopt the best marketing strategies and gain more knowledge about the vegetable industry.

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