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Piggery Farming as a Sustainable Livelihood: A Case Study of Aoyimkum Village, Dimapur, Nagaland

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Abstract: *This study is investigated on the role and viability of piggery farming in Aoyimkum Village, with a focus on its economic contribution, the challenges faced by farmers and the long-term sustainability of the practice. The study is assessed how pig rearing supports household livelihoods and resource utilization. It also identifies major constraints encountered by pig farmers and evaluates the sustainability of piggery farming. The findings revealed that piggery farming serves as a significant supplementary income source for many households, yet its growth is hindered by structural and technical limitations. The study concludes with improved training, better veterinary support and enhanced resource access, piggery farming holds strong long-term potential as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Aoyimkum Village.*

Keywords: *Pig Farmers, Sustainable Livelihood, Aoyimkum Village, household.*

Introduction: Piggery farming plays an important role in the livelihood systems of rural households in Nagaland, where pork consumption is culturally significant and widely prevalent. In Aoyimkum village, pig rearing is practiced primarily on a small scale and contributes meaningfully to income generation, household consumption, and financial security. Despite its relevance, the sector continues to rely heavily on traditional practices, limited infrastructure, and naturally available feed resources. As a result, farmers often encounter constraints that affect productivity, profitability, and long-term sustainability.

This study seeks to examine the economic contribution of piggery farming to rural households, identify the major challenges faced by pig farmers, and evaluate the sustainability and long-term viability of pig rearing in the village. The research aims to provide insights into farmers' socio-economic conditions, management practices, levels of government support, and the future prospects of piggery as a livelihood activity. Although the demand for pork in the region remains high, farmers face several challenges, including rising feed costs, inconsistent veterinary services, limited training opportunities, and minimal government support. Traditional breeding and disease-management practices continue to dominate, with modern techniques such as artificial insemination being rarely adopted. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of farmers express confidence in the long-term potential of piggery farming and are willing to continue and recommend it as a viable livelihood activity.

Overall, the study underscores both the economic importance of piggery farming in Aoyimkum village and the need for targeted interventions to enhance productivity, improve access to resources, and promote its sustainability as a rural livelihood.

Statement of the Problem: Piggery farming is an important source of livelihood in Aoyimkum village, but several challenges continue to limit its growth and sustainability. These issues affect farmers' productivity, income, and long-term interest in piggery as an occupation.

1. **High cost of pig feed**, which reduces profit and makes rearing pigs expensive.

2. **Limited veterinary services**, leading to difficulties in treating diseases and managing outbreaks.

3. **Lack of training and technical knowledge**, resulting in traditional and less efficient farming practices.

4. **Financial constraints**, with many farmers unable to expand their piggery units or invest in better facilities.

5. **Weak government support**, leaving farmers to manage challenges mostly on their own.

Scope of the Study: This study focuses on understanding the role and status of the piggery farming in Nagaland, where pork is the most consumed meat and an important source of livelihood among tribal communities. It aims to examine the economic contribution of pig rearing, farmer's management practices, and the challenges faced in the sector. The study practically covers Aoyimkum Village, where many households practice small scale pig farming. It seeks to explore how traditional backyard systems are gradually integrating modern methods like improved breeding, scientific feeding, and veterinary care.The study helps identify the problems faced by the farmers as well as brings forward a broader piggery scenario in Nagaland – its demand -supply gap, government support and strategies for sustainable piggery development and income generation.

Aoyimkum is a village located in Dimapur Sadar circle of Dimapur district in Nagaland, India. It is situated 3km away from district headquarter Dimapur Sadar (tehsildar office) and 3km away from district headquarter Dimapur. According to Census 2011, the total population of Aoyimkum village is around 2,042with approximately 1038 males and 1004 females, with a total household of 394. The literacy rate of the village is about 81.67%, with male literacy at 81.97% and female literacy at 81.35%.

Objectives of the Study:

- To examine the impact of piggery farming in the village.
- To investigate the key challenges faced by the piggery farmers.
- To study the sustainability and long-term potential of Piggery Farming.

Methodology: This is a quantitative study analytical in nature. It examines piggery farming as a sustainable livelihood. Both primary and secondary data have been procured. The primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire along with interview using random sampling technique conducted during May - June 2025 from a sample size of 80 pig farmers from Aoyimkum village. Secondary data were collected from various published and unpublished sources including books, journals, research articles, newspapers and online platforms. Statistical tools such as simple descriptive statistics, charts and percentages were used to analyse the data.

Literature Review

According to **Bhuyan (2017**), pig rearing in Nagaland is strongly supported by traditional feeding practices, particularly the use of locally available resources such as kitchen waste, forest tubers, and agricultural by-products. He found that this localised feeding system reduces production costs and makes piggery a highly accessible livelihood activity for rural households. Complementing this, **Kaur et al. (2018)**in their study revealed that in Nagaland, practices such as herbal treatment of diseases, traditional housing structures, and community-sharing of breeding stock play a central role in sustaining small-scale pig production. In a broader economic context, the Government of Nagaland's *Evaluation Report on Piggery Breeding Farms* (**Veterinary & AHVS Department, 2021)** highlighted that piggery generates substantial revenue for rural households, though productivity is often limited by inadequate breeding infrastructure and irregular veterinary support services. Supporting this view, **Longkumer and Jamir (2022)**, observed that livestock—especially piggery—contributes significantly to household income among mixed farmers in Nagaland. Their findings indicated that pig ownership positively correlates with improved farm income stability, largely because pork remains the most preferred and high-demand meat in the state. ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research) has also produced several reports emphasising the potential of scientific interventions in Nagaland's piggery sector. For example, **ICAR (2019)** underscores that introducing improved breeds such as the "Rani Pig" has helped enhance growth rates and meat production in the state. Another **ICAR report (2020)** discusses the adoption of artificial insemination technologies, noting that such practices significantly improve piglet quality and survival while reducing the dependence on uncontrolled local breeding.

However, alongside these strengths, many studies highlight persistent challenges. **Morung Express (2020),**in its analysis of pig production in the state, identifies feed scarcity, disease outbreaks, and lack of proper housing as major barriers to sustainable pig farming. Similarly, **IOSR-JAVS (2022)** reported that high feed prices remain a recurring constraint for smallholder pig farmers in Nagaland, limiting their ability to upscale production. These constraints align with field-level observations in multiple studies, which suggest that despite cultural importance and strong market demand, piggery development in Nagaland requires systematic interventions in health management, feed availability, and extension services. **Sharma and Tudu (2016),**investigated pig rearing practices among tribal households in Northeast India and found that smallholder farmers rely heavily on locally available feed resources and traditional husbandry methods. They found that while piggery significantly contributes to household income, the absence of scientific management limits productivity and growth. **Saha and Rahman (2018)** also examined smallholder piggery systems in the North-eastern region of India and found that pig farming significantly contributes to household income, especially among marginalized tribal communities. Their study emphasized that the major constraints faced by pig farmers include poor housing, high feed cost, and inadequate veterinary services, which limit productivity and profitability. Similarly, **Ao and Sangtam (2019)**, reported that pig farmers in Nagaland face persistent challenges such as poor access to veterinary services, delayed disease diagnosis, and seasonal feed shortages. They highlighted that improving veterinary outreach and farmer training could substantially enhance production efficiency in rural areas.

Investigating disease prevalence in pigs across eastern India, **Saha and Dutta (2018)** reported that respiratory infections, parasitic diseases, and poor sanitation practices were the major causes of mortality. They emphasized the need for community-level awareness programmes and preventive healthcare practices. Analogously, **Deka and Thorpe (2021),** in a study of livestock production constraints in the North-eastern Hill Region of India, reported that pig farming remains largely traditional, with farmers depending heavily on forest-based feed resources and local herbs for treating diseases. They further noted that lack of extension services, veterinary support, and access to credit are major barriers to the development of the piggery sector. Focusing on the economic importance of backyard pig farming in Assam, **Baro and Saikia (2020)**revealed that piggery provides regular cash income, especially for women farmers. However, they found that high feed prices and lack of market regulation often reduce profit margins for small-scale producers. In the same

line, **Singh & Chanu (2020)** also studied backyard pig production in Manipur and noted that household-level pig rearing provides regular income, supports women's economic participation, and serves as a financial safety net during emergencies. However, the study also identified disease outbreaks and poor hygiene as significant concerns that require government attention. Further supporting these observations, **Singh and Yadav (2021)** found that the piggery value chain in rural India suffers from inefficiencies such as dependence on middlemen, unstable pork prices, and inadequate cold chain facilities. They recommend establishing farmer cooperatives and improving market access to increase profitability. Complementing this, **Chakraborty and Borah (2022)** revealed that the adoption of scientific practices such as improved housing, controlled breeding, and bio-security measures significantly improved pig growth performance. However, they noted that awareness and adoption of these practices remain low among tribal farming communities.

Together, these studies demonstrated that piggery farming among tribal households in Northeast India especially in Nagaland is a culturally rooted, economically vital livelihood with strong long-term potential. Yet, its sustainability depends largely on addressing key challenges related to feeding, veterinary care, and scientific management.

Analysis and interpretation of Data and Result:

Respondents' Profile -

The data shows both men and women contributing equally to piggery activities in Aoyimkum village and majority of them (63.33%) in the age group of 36-55 with 30% of them reported unmarried.

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

Gender	%	Age group	%	Marital status	%	Edu. Quali.	%	Occupation	%	No. of Pigs	%
Male	50	25-35	17	Yes	70	10^{th} below	27	Govt servant	23	1-5	50
Female	50	36-45	30	No	30	10^{th} pass	23	Private employees	33	6-10	37
Total	100	46-55	33	Total	100	12^{th} pass	33	Housewife	37	10 +	13
		56 +	20			Graduate	17	Others	7	Total	100
		Total	100			Total	100	Total	100		

Source: Field Survey, May – June, 2025

The study shows that most of the pig farmers in Aoyimkum village have acquired basic to moderate levels of formal education and that housewives (36.67%), followed by private employees (33.33%), and government servants (23.33%) were found involved in rearing pigs. It was also found that 50% of them rear 1–5 pigs, followed by 36.67% who rear 6–10 pigs, while only 13.33% rear more than 10 pigs, indicating that most farmers practice small-scale backyard pig rearing (Table 1).

Income and Livelihood from Piggery: The study revealed that piggery is generally a supplementary source of livelihood as only 14% of the respondents fully depend on piggery for their livelihood, while a large majority (83%) do not rely on it as their main income source but it helps 40% of respondents manage their daily expenses, while 53.33% can only partly depend on it, suggesting that piggery provides support but not complete financial coverage for most households. However, half of the respondents (50%) use piggery income to pay for their children's education, while others either partly rely on it or not at all (Table 2).

Table 2: Piggery as a Source of Income and Livelihood

Dependency on piggery	%	Manages expenses	%	Children's Edu.	%	Meeting Emergencies	%	Income stability	%	Household jobs	%
Yes	14	Yes	40	Yes	50	Always	17	@	70	Govt job	17
No	83	Partly	53	No	23	Some times	77	#	7	Private job	66
Partly	3	No	7	Partly	27	Rarely	7	$	23	Both	3
Total	100	Total	100	Total	100	Total	100		100	Only pig rearing	14
										Total	100

@ Provides stable income. # Income is irregular. $ Cannot say

Source: Field Survey, May – June, 2025

As such, piggery income helps most respondents (77%) manage emergencies occasionally, while only a small portion (17%) can rely on it consistently. However, as pork is in high demand, 70% of respondents believe piggery provides a stable income, whereas 23% are unsure and only 7% feel the income is irregular, suggesting piggery is generally viewed as a reliable livelihood source but mostly practiced as a secondary occupation because it was found that alongside pig rearing large majority 83% were engaged in either private or government jobs and only 14% depend solely on piggery (Table 2).

Veterinary Care and Breeding: The data shows that 60% of pig farmers had experience disease outbreaks occasionally, while only 10% face them frequently, indicating that although diseases occur, they are not constant but remain a significant concern. Also, data indicates that 60% of pig farmers face occasional difficulties accessing veterinary services, suggesting that veterinary support is available but not consistently accessible. As a result, it was found that most pig farmers combine both veterinary and traditional treatment methods, with only 17% always consulting a vet and 23% relying solely on traditional practices(Table 3).

Table 3: Veterinary Care and Breeding

Disease Outbreaks	%	Use of Vet Services	%	Treatment Preference	%	Boarhiring charge*	%	AI**in Breeding	%	Mortality	%
Never	27	No difficulty	30	#	17	Below 500/-	0	Always	3	High	0
Sometime	60	Sometimes difficult	60	@	33	500 to 1000	3	Sometimes	43	Low	70
Frequently	10	Very difficult	3	##	27	Above 1000	73	Never	53	Neutral	30
Rarely	3	Traditional Healers	7	$	23	Own boar	23	Total	100	Total	100
Total	100	Total	100	Total	100	total	100				

Always consult a Vet. @ Mostly vet, sometimes traditional. ## Mostly traditional, sometimes vet. $ Only traditional method. *Per service. **Artificial Insemination

Source: Field Survey, May – June, 2025

The data shows that large majority of pig farmers (73%) pay more than ₹1000 per service when hiring a male boar, while 23% avoid this cost by keeping their own boar. Also, the data revealed that artificial insemination (AI) adoption in Aoyimkum village is very low, and traditional breeding practices remained dominant as majority of the farmers (53%) never use AI, depending entirely on natural breeding. About 43% use AI occasionally, while only 3% use it regularly to improve breeding efficiency without needing to keep a male boar. Also, 70% of pig farmers reported low pig mortality, while 30% experience occasional losses, indicating that overall mortality rates in the village are generally manageable (Table 3).

Availability and Cost of Feed: With regard to availability and cost of good feed, the study shows that half of the of pig farmers (50%) have access to good feed, while 30% lack it and 20% obtain it only sometimes, indicating inconsistent feed availability among farmers. For supplementary feeds, most farmers (60%) collect from forest, while 27% purchase from the market and only 13% rely on self-cultivation, showing a strong dependence on natural forest resources(Table 4).

Table 4: Availability and Cost of Feed

Availability of Good Feed	%	Supplementary Feed Source	%	Feed Costs Higher than Profit	%	Cost of Rearing till Maturity (Only Feed Cost)	%
Yes	50	Self-cultivation	13	Yes	6	Below 10,000	3
No	30	Collects from forest	60	No	77	10000/- to 30000/-	30
Sometimes	20	Purchase from market	27	sometimes	17	30000/- to 60000/-	60
Total	100	Total	100	Total	100	More than 60000/-	7
						Total	100

Source: Field Survey, May – June, 2025

While a mere 6% of farmers feel feed costs outweighs profits, majority of farmers (77%) do not find feed costs higher than the profit earned, though 17% sometimes experience feed costs out passing market value of their pigs. The data also shows that most farmers (60%) spend between ₹30,000 and ₹60,000 on pig rearing to maturity, while only a small percentage (3%) spend below ₹10,000 and 7% spend above ₹60,000 till maturity (Table 4). In an average, each farmers keeping 2 pigs till maturity, i.e., 80 – 120 kg. per pig, the data shows that at the existing price of ₹300/- per kg., generally farmers do get profit.

Marketing and Pricing: With regard to marketing and pricing process, data shows large majority of farmers (80%) reported demand for pork to be very high, with 12% reporting moderate seasonal demand while only a negligible 2% experience low demand and a mere 6% noted fluctuating demand. Also the data revealed that most farmers (47%) sell directly to customers, while others rely on organized dealers (27%), special-event sales (20%), or middlemen (7%)(Table 5).

Table 5: Marketing and Pricing

Market Demand	%	Marketing Process	%	Price Per Kg	%	Satisfaction with Price	%
Very hight demand	80	Directly to customer	47	below 200/-	0	Very satisfied	20

Moderate demand	12	Through middleman	7	200/- to 300-	10	Somewhat satisfied	63
Low demand	2	Through organized dealers	27	Above 300/-	83	Not satisfied	17
Demand keeps changing	6	Only during special Occasions	20	Depend on seasonal demand	7	Can't say	0
Total	100	Total	100	total	100	Total	100

Source: Field Survey, May – June, 2025

With regard to pricing, data shows that for large majority (83%)of farmers, pork was mostly sold above ₹300 per kg, while for 10% of farmers it was between ₹200–₹300, and none sell below ₹200, with a small group (7%) reporting price variations by season or demand. As such, majority (63%) are somewhat satisfied with the price of pork, while 20% are very satisfied and only 17% are not satisfied(Table 5).

External Support: With regard to receiving external support through government or private agencies, the data shows only 10% of pig farmers have receive government support, while the remaining 90% reported receiving no assistance from anywhere. The farmers who reported receiving government support stated that it was provided through bank. However, only a very small fraction (10%) of pig farmers getting access to this support indicate a limited awareness, outreach, or eligibility. Moreover, data revealed mixed levels of satisfaction: while 7% are very satisfied and 10% satisfied, a large portion remains neutral (43%) or dissatisfied (40%), suggesting that the support received is either insufficient, inconsistent, or not meeting expectations (Table 6).

Table 6: External Support

From Govt.	%	Satisfaction with Govt Support	%	Training Received	%
Yes	10	Very satisfied	7	Yes	7
No	90	Satisfied	10	No	93
Total	100	Neutral	43	Total	100
		Dissatisfied	40		
		Total	100		

Source: Field Survey, May – June, 2025

On training received or attended on pig rearing, data shows only a meagre 7% of pig farmers have attended some form of training from government agencies, while majority (93%) reported having received no training at all, highlighting a significant gap in capacity-building efforts(Table 6).

Challenges Faced by the Farmers: The data shows that although majority, 57% of farmers experience manageable feed shortages, only 13% face serious challenges due to high costs and scarcity and that 60% of farmers sometimes face difficulties with housing, though none reported major or severe problems (Table 7).

Table 7: Challenges

Feed	%	Shelter	%	Disease management	%	Source of finance	%	Knowledge on piggery	%
No problem	30	No problem	40	No major difficulties	53	Self-funded	60	No issue	30
Face shortages But manageable	57	Sometimes difficult	60	Lack of medicine	13	Borrowed from others	30	Sometimes needs guidance	63
Face challenges due to high cost	13	Huge problem	0	Lack of Vet. services	7	Bank loan	3	Requires training	3
Total	100	Total	100	Hight treatment cost	27	Lack fund to expand	7	Rely on others	3
				Total	100	Total	100	Total	100

Source: Field Survey, May – June, 2025

While 53% of farmers faced no major difficulty in disease and sickness management, a significant portion still struggles with high treatment costs, lack of medicines, and limited veterinary services. Data also shows that although 60% are self-funded, 40% face financial challenges such as borrowing or being unable to expand due to insufficient funds. On the other hand, while 30% of farmers have sufficient traditional knowledge, majority (63%) require occasional guidance, with a small proportion lacking proper training or relying on others for advice(Table 7).

Sustainability and Future Potential of Piggery: On the question of piggery as a long-term occupation, half of the pig farmers view piggery as a definite long-term occupation, while the other half remain uncertain but none reject it as a future livelihood. Nonetheless, 53% believe piggery will continue to the next generation, while 37% are unsure, and only 10% think it will not be carried forward. As such, most farmers (67%) would recommend piggery farming to others, while only a few express uncertainty or reluctance. The data also shows that majority (53%) follow environment-friendly practices, though 367% do so only partly and a small fraction do not follow such practices consistently(Table 8).

Table 8: Potential of Piggery

Long-Term Occupation	%	Environment friendly practices	%	Generational continuity	%	Recommendation	%
Definitely Yes	50	Yes	53	Yes, for sure	53	Yes	67
Maybe	50	Partly	37	Maybe	37	Maybe	30
No	0	No	3	No	10	No	3
Total	100	Can't say	7	Total	100	Total	100
		Total	100				

Source: Field Survey, May – June, 2025

Support needed to improve Piggery Farming: According to the study, the most needed support falls under the following four main areas:

A. Financial Support – 47% of farmers said they need financial help such as:

- Government loans with subsidies
- Training with financial assistance
- Affordable feed and farming materials

All for unemployed youth to take up piggery. This shows that financial limitation is the biggest challenge for farmers.

B. Veterinary & Medical Support – 33% of farmers said they need better animal healthcare, including:

- medicines
- Vaccination
- Access to veterinary doctors
- Medical facilities and proper disease prevention

This indicates that healthcare for pigs is still difficult for many farmers and needs medical interventions.

C. Training & Guidance – 13% of farmersstressed the importance of gaining more knowledge through:

- Training for youth
- Proper guidance in pig rearing
- Skill development
- Modern techniques

This shows that farmers want better awareness and training to improve their work.

D. Basic Facilities & Feed Support – 7%pointed to the need for:

- Clean water supply
- Proper waste disposal
- Affordable feed supply

These are essential for maintaining a clean and healthy piggery environment.

Key findings: The findings of the study provide insights into key aspects such as feed availability, veterinary access, financial constraints, marketing practices, and long-term prospects. These results highlight both the strengths and the difficulties faced by farmers, offering a clear picture of the current condition of piggery farming in the village.

- Piggery is a key livelihood with most farmers keeping 1–10 pigs.
- Feed cost and shortage are major challenges affecting profits.
- Government support and training are very limited, with most farmers receiving none.
- Disease management is difficult due to lack of medicines, high treatment costs, and limited veterinary access.

- Marketing is mostly direct, pork prices are high, and demand changes seasonally.
- Financial constraints prevent many farmers from expanding.
- Modern breeding methods like artificial insemination (AI) are rarely used, with most relying on natural breeding.
- Environmental practices are partly followed, but not by everyone.
- Mixed views on long-term sustainability, but many believe piggery has good potential.

Conclusion: The study on piggery farming in Aoyimkum village shows that pig rearing plays a meaningful role in supporting household livelihoods, even though it is not the primary source of income for most farmers. The findings revealed that piggery helps many families manage daily expenses, children education, and occasional emergencies, highlighting its economic value as a supplementary occupation. At the same time, farmers continue to face several challenges such as inconsistent feed availability, high rearing costs, limited veterinary access, disease-management issues, and inadequate government support. Financial constraints and lack of proper training further restrict the growth of the sector.

Despite these limitations, piggery farming in Aoyimkum shows strong potential for long-term sustainability. Many farmers believe it can be continued by the next generation and would recommend it to others, indicating confidence in its future prospects. With improved financial assistance, better veterinary services, and skill-development programs, piggery farming could become a more profitable and stable livelihood activity for the community.

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