

## WHY DO SMALL-SCALE TOMATO PRODUCERS FROM SAN PABLO GÜILÁ WORK INDIVIDUALLY?

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### ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to identify the intrinsic causes that guide the behavior of small-scale producers in relation to their resistance to being part of an organization. Tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum L.*) is the second agricultural product of greatest export in Mexico, with presence in 291 of the 570 municipalities of the state of Oaxaca. In particular, in San Pablo Güilá there are 42.8 ha of greenhouses with tomato for export; of this surface, 52% belongs to 27 producers organized into a cooperative while the remaining 48% is the property of 153 producers who work independently. The study was conducted using a qualitative approach, with exploratory and descriptive reach. The technique used was a survey, adapting the Schwartz Portrait Values Questionnaire and applied to producers who work individually. It was found that the values of Tradition, Compliance and Power are high; Achievement, Stimulation, Self-direction and Benevolence are low; and Security, Hedonism and Universalism are very low. The conclusion is that farmers have an individualistic orientation focused on personal success achieved by their own abilities, as well as on control and dominion over people and resources.

**Keywords:** Individualism, Values, Tomato, Farmers, Greenhouse, Collective work.

### INTRODUCTION

The contribution of the agriculture and livestock Gross Domestic Product in Mexico has been of low significance (between 3.1 and 3.4%) in the past 10 years (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía [INEGI], 2019), although primary activities continue to be important. For example, in 2015 they represented 11.8% of the occupied population in the country, which translated into 4.9 million farmers, livestock and forestry producers, and fishermen (INEGI, 2016). In particular, vegetables are among the main crops and they contributed with 18.2% to the production value of the year 2017 which was 587,200 million pesos (Servicio de Información Agroalimentaria y Pesquera [SIAP], 2018).

Vegetables can be classified according to the part of the plant that is consumed, which is the case of the fruit vegetables such as cucumber (*Cucumis sativus L.*), eggplant (*Solanum melongena L.*) or tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum L.*). The latter is the second export vegetable product after avocado (Agencia de Servicios a la Comercialización y Desarrollo de Mercados Agropecuarios [ASERCA], 2018), and its cultivation is present in all the states of the Mexican Republic. In 2017, close to 50,225.83 ha were sown, and of this surface, 56.1% was concentrated in five states: Sinaloa (27.1%), San Luis Potosí (9.9%), Michoacán (7.3%), Jalisco (6.3%) and Zacatecas (5.6%) (SIAP, 2018). This is how Mexico exported in 2017 close to 1.56 million tons of tomato with a value of 1,786.51 million dollars, with the United States as its main buyer (Secretaría de Economía [SE], 2018).

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This offers a perspective on the importance and the socioeconomic impact of the tomato crop at the national scale, qualities that by extension are observed also in the state of Oaxaca. From the 570 municipalities that make up the state, tomato was grown and produced in 291 of them under protected and open air conditions, with the following municipalities standing out as main producers in the Valles Centrales region: Ejutla de Crespo with 9.7%, and Santiago Matatlán with 8.8% of the total production (SIAP, 2018). According to the information from the *ejido* commissary of San Pablo Güilá, the municipal agency of Santiago Matatlán, tomato production is carried out in 283 greenhouses that represent the main source of income not only for the inhabitants of the community, but also for the neighboring communities, since each of them offer between 5 and 10 jobs.

One of the challenges that producers face is the relationship that is established between them and the intermediaries, on whom they depend for commercialization. According to the National Agriculture and Livestock Survey, of the 101,828 production units that exist in Mexico, 51.1% trade their product through intermediaries (INEGI, 2018). The problem emerges from the advantage that the intermediary gets from the process of negotiation by offering a price for the product without taking into consideration the production costs.

Regarding commercialization, there is an unequal distribution of the trade margins, and commercialization channels are characterized by having a large number of intermediaries and presenting inefficiencies (Fideicomisos Instituidos en Relación con la Agricultura [FIRA], 2018). In general, tomato from Oaxaca is traded locally, distributing it in small market niches, stores and mainly in the wholesale market of the entity, where producers from other states such as Puebla and Estado de México also concur. As consequence, there is market saturation that generates a decrease in the product's price, which finally affects the profit margin and fosters desertion of the crop (Hruska, 2013; Bracamontes, 2017; Sánchez, 2007). In this regard, one of the causes that foster the desertion of tomato production units in greenhouses of Oaxaca's Valles Centrales is the lack of certainty in the sale of their product at a fair price (Martínez-Gutiérrez, Díaz-Pichardo, Juárez-Luis, Ortiz-Hernández and López-Cruz, 2014).

Another problem that impacts the difficult situation of the agriculture sector is the disorganization between producers due to various factors among which there are lack of knowledge about organizational processes, lack of leadership, and individualism. The latter results from the lack of a cooperative culture and the mistrust generated by negative experiences; this inhibits the willingness to unite efforts and resources to achieve the growth of the agricultural activity (Bracamontes, 2017; Hruska, 2013; Ferrando, 2015; Ruiz, 2010; Rodríguez and Ramírez, 2016). In a study conducted by Martínez-Gutiérrez *et al.* (2014), it was found that 19% of the greenhouses with tomato in Oaxaca's Valles Centrales were abandoned because of the lack of organization, among other things.

According to data from the *Ejido* Commissary of San Pablo Güilá, in this place there are 42.8 ha of greenhouses to grow tomato that are farmed by 180 farmers; of these, only 27 represent together 52% of these which are organized into an integrator called *LanYuu Kits*. The other 153 work independently, which is the remaining 48% of the greenhouses.

*LanYuu Kits* has managed to obtain support at the state and federal level, in addition to selling its products (tomato) in the international market, primarily in the United States and Canada (Columna informativa, 2016).

Associativism has multiple benefits compared to individual work, such as access to financing, cost reduction, access to technical advice, better conditions in commercialization without intermediaries, which allow greater control of the product's price and access to new markets (Garrido and Vidal, 2008; Rondot and Collion, 2001; Romero, 2009). Then, why do most (85%) of the tomato producers from San Pablo Güilá opt for working individually, resisting to become part of an organization and, as consequence, limiting the development of this economic activity?

A number of studies that analyze the resistance to collaborative work in the agriculture and livestock sector point to individualism and mistrust as its main causes. Although some others point to the sociodemographic profile of producers as the factor that impacts their lack of participation in organizations. Rodríguez (2014) focused on identifying the degree of influence of individualism and mistrust on associative work of production chains for agroexports of prickly pear and cochinilla from the Mantaro Valley, Junín, in Peru; the author mentions that 16.5% of the producers analyzed showed traits of individualism, which suggests that this variable does not influence associative work negatively, while 46.4% of producers showed mistrust, indicating that this trait is the factor that influences negatively on associative work.

In the same sense, Cáceres, Pardo and Torres (2013) conducted a study about the behavior of agricultural activities in function of associativism and productive chains in Colombia, where they suggest that small-scale producers are disperse and unorganized to carry out their productive and commercialization activities due to the mistrust there is not only among them, but also towards public and private agents. This causes their lack of participation in associative activities that are necessary for the integration of productive chains.

Similarly, Narvárez-Rodríguez (2014), in his study about factors that influence the efficiency and permanence of associations in the agricultural sector of Colombia, suggests that the participation of producers in an organization is given by trust in the government, as well as in the company's management. Therefore, the State's weakness to deal with drug trafficking and pressure from rural elites, as well as its dependency on multinational companies, generates mistrust among producers to become organized into associations. Furthermore, the mistrust inside associations originated from their control by some families (nepotism), as well as by the presence of freeloading associates (uncooperative), impacts their permanence.

Evidence about the negative influence of individualism on collaborative work was provided by Rodríguez and Ramírez (2016), in their study conducted to identify the factors related to the achievement of sustainability in strengthening processes of rural associativism in Asomora, Colombia. They found that individualism was a limitation in the sustainability of those processes. According to their findings, as the organizational process advanced, the producers showed a lower participation in it. This is evidenced by their low involvement

with administrative areas and decision making, although they also showed mistrust between them. In the same line, although in relation to the effectiveness of rural extension work, Landini (2016) identified individualism, mistrust and the lack of associations as the fundamental problems in the scope of small-scale agriculture and livestock producers of Latin America. These aspects, according to the author, limit the work of extension workers and as consequence the development of farmers.

These results were replicated when the author carried out the analysis at the national level. In the case of El Salvador, Landini (2015) reported that among producers there are other problems, mainly individualism, mistrust and lack of associations. These are manifested as egotism and lack of organization by the producers, which make difficult the group work necessary for the success of extension projects. The same happened in the case of Argentina, where Landini (2013) found individualism, mistrust and the lack of associative spirit among the main problems present in small-scale producers. This points to the producer himself as the fundamental problem for rural development and the success of extension projects, so that these problems have a bearing on the difficulty to increase production and its later commercialization.

On the other hand, Salas (2017) suggests that associativism is influenced by sociodemographic factors. In a study carried out in the agriculture and livestock sector in Peru, the author points out that the sex, marital status, education and family size are factors that influence the participation of farmers in organizations of different type. According to their findings, men are more prone than women to participate in associations; in addition, having a spouse, with a numerous family and a high level of education, has an impact in the producers' participation in social, productive users' organizations of irrigation water. In general, the research that refers to individualism and the mistrust as obstacles to associative work are based on descriptive studies about the willingness of producers to work jointly and be part of productive chains, and/or on their behavior in organizations (individualism); as well as in their contribution to productive chains and the willingness to contribute to them, or the degree of trust present in associations and in their colleagues (mistrust). Furthermore, several of these studies are based on the perception of third parties in terms of the behavior of farmers.

Because of this, the objective of this study was to identify the intrinsic motives that guide the behavior of small-scale producers of tomato in greenhouses of San Pablo Güila, Oaxaca, in relation to their resistance to become part of an organization to work jointly. For this, the following hypothesis was set out: individualism and mistrust keep tomato producers of San Pablo Güilá from becoming organized. In this regard, Landini (2015) suggests addressing the problem from a sociocultural perspective, and this study sought to delve into the behavior of the farmers in order to attain greater comprehension of their intrinsic traits that influence the resistance to becoming part of an association.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in San Pablo Güilá, Zapotec community located in the region of Oaxaca's Valles Centrales (Figure 1); and it was approached with a qualitative perspective,



**Figure 1.** Location of San Pablo Güilá. Source: INEGI (2021).

with exploratory and descriptive reach. The study's design was non-experimental, transversal. The data collection method was a survey which used as instrument a structured questionnaire applied through the face-to-face interview technique (Robles, 2011). Data collection was carried out during the month of November 2018 and its analysis was done through descriptive statistics with the Excel 2013 software. The unit of analysis was tomato producers from San Pablo Güilá. Given that the study was focused on identifying the intrinsic motives that guide a part of them to not become part of an organization, all those who worked independently were interviewed. Thus, it was not necessary to determine a sample, which is why the individuals to be interviewed were selected directly and intentionally (Otzen and Manterola, 2017).

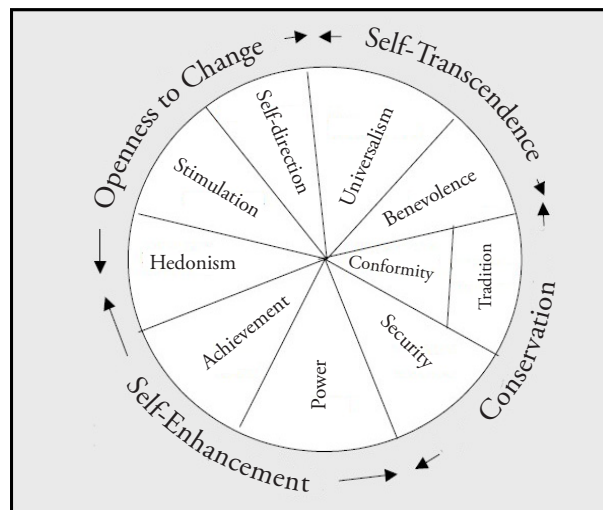
The individuals analyzed were 153 producers who worked independently and with an average age of 38 years. From them, 79% (121) were men; it was found that 95.4% (146) were married and 4.6% (7) single. In terms of the level of studies, 5% (8) indicated not having attended school, 80% (122) had only studied Primary school, 12% (18) Secondary school, and 3% (5) High School. Of the survey respondents, 25% (38) said that they had started growing tomato when they were employed by another producer to later establish their own greenhouse through financing, while the remaining 75% (115) started in the business without previous knowledge about the activity, investing their own resources in the installation of greenhouses, which is why learning about it had been done through trial and error.

Given the objective of the study, the data collection instrument was an adaptation of the Schwartz value scales (2012), known as the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ). The PVQ is made up of forty short statements that describe goals, aspirations or personal wishes, which point implicitly to the importance given to ten values –tradition, compliance, security, power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism and

benevolence. For example, “having new ideas and being creative is important for him/her. They like doing things their own way” describes a person for whom self-direction values are important (Schwartz, 2012).

These values, although independent from one another, form an organized continuity in a circular structure where they are all related to the adjacent values (Schwartz, 2012) (Figure 2). Thus, the closer that two values are around the circle in any direction, the higher the similarity will be between their underlying motivations (for example, compliance and security); on the contrary, the more distant they are, the higher the antagonism between their motivations (for example, benevolence and power). This gives rise to an opposition between the values, manifested in two bipolar dimensions that integrate the four general objectives –openness to change, conservation, self-promotion and self-transcendence– of the theoretical model of relationships between the ten types of motivational values.

One of them confronts the values of “openness to change” that highlight the valuation of propensity to risk, novelty and independence of action and decision (self-direction and stimulation) against the values of “conservation” that emphasize the importance of religion, traditions, kindness and order. The other dimension contrasts the values directed at “self-promotion” that highlight the importance of economic and social status (power and achievement) against the values whose objective is “self-transcendence”, focused on forgiveness, loyalty, equality and justice (benevolence and universalism) (Schwartz, 2012). The two dimensions contain values that give evidence both of the individualist and the collectivist profile, and the mixture of both in people. As pointed out by Gómez and Martínez-Sánchez (2000), individualism is profiled through five values: achievement, power, self-direction, stimulation and hedonism; three other indicate a collectivist behavior: compliance, tradition and benevolence; and the two remaining point to a mixed profile: security and universalism.



Source: Schwartz (2012).

**Figure 2.** Theoretical structure of relations among values.

The importance of the values was assessed using the PVQ scale (1: I feel much identified, to 6: I do not feel identified at all), in its re-codified version in the opposite direction and with a five-point scale. Thus, the survey respondents were asked to indicate in a marking scale that ranged from 1: I do not feel identified at all, to 5: I feel much identified, the degree to which they were similar to the person described in each of the sentences. Then, each value was scored by adding the responses of their items and dividing the sum by the number of items. With the marks for the values, the general objectives score was calculated –self-transcendence, personal promotion, conservation and openness to change– which were part of the structure of motivational values. For that purpose, the marks for the values that made up each objective were added and the sum was divided by the number of them. The individualist profile was obtained by adding the scores obtained in the values that determine it (power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation and self-direction) to later divide the result by five.

Because the participants in the survey were small-scale producers whose main language is Zapotec, the questionnaire was translated into this language. Therefore, a pilot test was carried out with the aim of verifying its correct translation and comprehension. Once these aspects were confirmed, data collection was done with bilingual staff that applied the questionnaire.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the first place, the responses of the survey respondents were analyzed to understand how much they identified with the sentences or not, with each of the ten values that make up the motivational model by Schwartz (2012) (Table 1). In relation to Tradition, 77.8% of the survey respondents considered that they should be satisfied with what they have and do not want more than what they have; on the contrary, 22.2% were of the opinion that one should not be a conformist, but rather aspire to improve in terms of belongings. In addition 88.9% gave great importance to the fulfillment of religious precepts, given their firm belief in God as the creator and giver of all that they have; instead, 11.1% did not give importance to religious beliefs, since they consider that as human beings they have the power of decision and action, and therefore, all that they own they have obtained thanks to their work.

In addition to this, 87.6% of the interview respondents showed a traditionalist profile, which is why they prefer to do their work based on what they have learned; in addition, for these people it is important to conserve the customs inherited from their ancestors; in contrast, 12.4% were of the opinion that changes are necessary, and much more if they imply improving their living conditions. In the same sense, 91.5% emphasized the importance of respect towards older people and obedience, while 8.5% stated the contrary. Also, 66.7% considered that humility and modesty are important, against 33.3% who had the contrary opinion. Regarding Compliance, it was found that 68% of the survey respondents considered that they must do what they are told and follow the rules, while 32% had the contrary opinion since they consider that they should base their actions in free will to do what they believe is right. Likewise, the responses of 51.6% highlighted the

Table 1. Identification of the tomato producers in San Pablo Güilá with Schwartz' motivational values.

Values scale	Goals, aspirations or wishes	Percentage	
		Not identified at all: 1	Very much identified: 5
Tradition	Acceptance of portion in life	22.2	77.8
	Guided by religion	11.1	88.9
	Commitment with customs	12.4	87.6
	Respect and obedience to elders	8.5	91.5
	Humbleness importance	33.3	66.7
Conformity	Rules observance	32.0	68.0
	Polite behavior	48.4	51.6
	Kind to the others	31.4	68.6
Security	Risk evasion	75.8	24.2
	National security	79.1	20.9
	Order y cleanness	35.9	64.1
	Health care	87.6	12.4
	Government stability	37.9	62.1
Power	Richness accumulation	14.4	85.6
	Give orders	5.9	94.1
	Making decisions and leadership	31.4	68.6
Achievement	Abilities deployment	9.2	90.8
	Success	22.2	77.8
	Ambition	3.9	96.1
	Improvement	2.0	98.0
Hedonism	Fun	76.5	23.5
	Self-indulgent	81.7	18.3
	Enjoying life	85.0	15.0
Stimulation	Novelty	42.0	58.0
	Risk propensity	43.3	56.7
	Daring	47.3	52.7
Self-Direction	Creativity	45.5	54.5
	Autonomy in making decisions and planning	35.7	64.3
	Curiosity and understanding of situations	36.1	63.9
	Independence and freedom to act	47.0	53.0
Universalism	Equal treatment to all the people	56.9	43.1
	Tolerance	35.9	64.1
	Harmony	16.3	83.7
	Fair treatment to all the people	9.8	90.2
	Natural environment protection	77.1	22.9
	Adaptation and integration to nature	15.7	84.3
Benevolence	Aid to people	51.1	48.9
	Loyalty to friends	54.5	45.5
	Support to the others	53.6	46.4
	Forgiveness	56.2	43.8

Source: compiled by authors.

importance of a behavior that complies with social norms, against 48.4% that indicated the contrary. In the same line, 68.6% showed their inclination for kindness in search for



a healthy social coexistence, contrary to 31.4% for whom being kind is not important because you cannot be well with everyone else as consequence of human nature.

The analysis of Security indicated that for 24.2% living in a safe place and avoiding risks is fundamental, in contrast with 75.8% of the survey respondents for whom insecurity exists anywhere and cannot be avoided. In the same sense, 20.9% highlighted the importance of national security and the role of the State as its guarantor, in contrast with 79.1% that belittle security at the macro level. Similarly, 62.1% highlighted the importance of a stable government given its impact on improving the economy, although for 37.9% this aspect was irrelevant, as well as its promotion of change. In addition, 64.1% emphasized the importance of order and tidiness, versus 35.9% that considered these aspects as irrelevant. In agreement with this, 12.4% indicated the relevance of personal care to avoid getting sick, contrary to what was stated by 87.6% for whom this aspect was not significant.

In terms of the value Power, the results reveal that for 85.6% of the survey respondents the accumulation of wealth is primordial, contrary to 14.4% for whom wealth is not an elemental objective in life, since they consider that it is sufficient to have enough to live. Also, giving orders to others is important for 94.1% while only 5.9% considered the opposite. Likewise, 68.6% pointed out always wanting to be the ones making the decisions and leading, versus 31.4% for whom decision making should be consensual.

The results from the analysis of the value Achievement highlight the importance of showing abilities through a competent performance that ensures obtaining resources, and therefore survival, for the survey respondents (90.8%). Only 9.2% considered that it is not necessary to show the abilities that one possesses. In the same line, being successful in life is fundamental for 77.8%, something about which 22.2% did not agree, suggesting that there are more fundamental things than success. In agreement with the latter, 96.1% showed emphasis in the importance of aspiring for more than they have, against 3.9% who indicated the opposite. In the same sense, 98% showed their inclination for constant effort to improve and to advance and exceed others, about which only 2% had the contrary opinion.

About Hedonism, only 23.5% sought fun and doing activities that they like, versus a much higher percentage (76.5%) that indicated the opposite. Likewise, 18.3% showed inclination for “indulging themselves” and enjoying the pleasures of life, while a large percentage (81.7%) indicated a position against it. In the same line, 15% said that what is important in life is to enjoy it and have a good time, in contrast with 85% who pointed out the opposite.

Concerning Stimulation, it was found that 58% of the survey respondents considered it important to do different things in life and to experiment; instead, 42% pointed out that it is better to do what has always worked and not attempt any changes in the way of doing things. In agreement with this, 56.7% showed the acceptance of risk suggesting that it is part of life and that it also serves to improve, while 43.3% indicated their aversion to set out on an adventure. Similarly, 52.7% indicated the importance of having an exciting life full of emotions and surprises, contrary to the 47.3% who a different opinion.

The analysis of Self-direction points to the inclination of 54.5% of the farmers towards creativity and the initiative of seeking to do things in their own way, versus 45.5% of them

who showed propensity to what is conventional and to apathy. Likewise, the analysis allows observing the importance conferred by 64.3% to freedom in decision making, as well as to planning and selecting activities to be carried out, versus 35.7% who showed a position of follower. Furthermore, it was found that 63.9% highlighted the importance of curiosity and comprehension to resolve the diverse situations of daily life, in contrast with 36.1% who had the opposite opinion. A last finding indicated that 53% gave preponderance to the autonomy of action in the solution of situations, against 47% who gave signs of dependency.

For Universalism, 43.1% of the survey respondents considered that all people should be treated with equality, while 56.9% showed the contrary. However, 64.1% gave signs of tolerance when pointing out that people who are different should be listened to even when not agreeing with them, against 35.9% who were in disagreement indicating that dialogue is a loss of time when dealing with the lack of coincidence of ideas. Similarly, 83.7% were of the opinion that people should live in harmony, versus 16.3% for whom this is not possible, since problems between individuals are part of life. In the same sense, 90.2% expressed the importance of a fair treatment for all people, although 9.8% had the opposite opinion.

In addition, minimal interest was found for respect and care for the environment. Only 22.9% considered that this is important and for 77.1% it is not since they considered that nature should be exploited without it mattering if it is exhausted. In contrast, 84.3% believed it is necessary to adapt and integrate to nature, while 15.7% were of the opinion that this is not important.

Lastly, for Benevolence 48.9% indicated that it is primordial to help people who are around them, while 51.1% considered that their welfare is more important than that of others. On the other hand, 45.5% considered that it is important to be loyal to their friends, although 54.4% were of the opinion that loyalty is not important. Similarly, 46.4% said that it is necessary to attend to the needs of others and to support them, versus 53.6% who considered that it is not necessary to support others because as long as they are well it is enough. In addition, 43.8% of the survey respondents said that forgiving others and not holding a grudge was fundamental, although 56.2% of the survey respondents had the opposite opinion.

The data analysis conducted based on the Schwartz motivational model allowed observing that a large majority of the survey respondents were identified with goals directed at attaining values –achievement, power, self-direction, stimulation and hedonism– that point to the individualist profile of people. As can be seen in Table 1, a significant percentage showed a strong emphasis in the attainment of social recognition and influence as indicator of personal success (Achievement). To reach this, they manifested an inclination towards the use of their abilities with the aim of proving their good performance. They also exhibited ambition for possessions and progress in relation to others, objectives that they suggest reaching through effort and constant self-improvement.

In addition, there are signs of a high degree of desire for social status and prestige, as well as control and dominion on people or resources (Power). According to the results, a large

number of survey respondents gave much importance to the accumulation of wealth and to giving orders instead of receiving them, as well as to autonomy in decision making and leadership.

The analysis also exposes the longing for independence of thought and action (Self-direction). A large number of the survey respondents manifested their inclination towards creativity and the initiative with the purpose of doing things their own way. Because of this, they highlighted how important it is for them to make their own decisions and plan and choose the activities to be performed, both in day-to-day situations and in those that emerge unexpectedly; for this purpose, they evidenced the main role they give to curiosity and comprehension of daily life situations.

Furthermore, the results suggest that among farmers there was a propensity to emotion, novelty and accepting challenges (Stimulation). This is evidenced because a large number of them consider primordial to do different things in life and to experiment without taking into account the risk they take on, since they consider that this is part of life itself and the cost to improve. In addition, they exposed that emotions and surprises are important to have an exciting life. However, among the survey respondents it was found that there was a low focus on self-complacency and enjoyment of life's pleasures (Hedonism). Only around a fourth of them showed interest in fun and in performing activities that they like, as well as "indulging themselves" and enjoying life's pleasures. In addition to this, very few conceived the idea of living life just for living it and to devoting themselves only to its enjoyment and pleasure.

Although this last result is out of line from the other values that profile individualism, it could be explained by the dynamic relationships there are between the ten values of the Schwartz scale (2012). Thus, in the continuity that is manifested in this scale, Hedonism, being in direct relationship with Achievement, has a complementary role with the latter. That is, in the search for obtaining goods and progress through effort to achieve a good performance, it becomes necessary to focus on seriousness, commitment and responsibility with those activities that allow advancing on the path to success without worrying for how much one likes them. Likewise, an austere attitude can help to achieve goals when not committing economic resources to leisure activities.

In a subsequent analysis the score obtained for each of the values was calculated (Table 2). According to the results, the high scores of Tradition indicate that people were very attached to customs and religion. In the context of the study most of the population practice the Catholic religion and follow its precepts faithfully, which could explain their tendency to respect, compliance and humility, subordinating the "I" of each to the people with whom they interact. There is also a manifestation of respect towards the festivities of saints worshiped in the community. In addition, they show a very pronounced rootedness to the traditional ways of doing things with the objective of preserving the teachings of their ancestors. This could explain their reluctance to adopt new forms of work based on collaboration.

Compliance had a very high score that shows that survey respondents always want to do the same and that change is not an option. For these people things should be done conventionally, just as their ancestors taught them since otherwise they would

**Table 2.** Values of tomato producers in San Pablo Güilá based on Schwartz motivational values scale.

Values	Score	Results <sup>1</sup>
Tradition	2.3	High
Conformity	2.4	High
Security	3.8	Very low
Power	2.5	High
Achievement	3.2	Low
Hedonism	4.4	Very low
Stimulation	2.7	Low
Self-Direction	2.6	Low
Universalism	3.8	Very low
Benevolence	2.7	Low

<sup>1</sup>Measure scale: 1.0 – 1.25 Very high; 1.26 – 2.50 High; 2.51 – 3.75 Low y 3.76 – 5.0 Very low.  
Source: compiled by authors.

be contradicting their elders who have the authority and wisdom that experience gives them. The very low score of Security indicates that the respondents perceived insecurity as something omnipresent and that the State cannot guarantee, which is why it impacts their economic activities. This could be one of the causes why tomato farmers are resistant to work in a joint manner, since given the current context they mistrust not only other people, but also the support that they could get from the government when dealing with a problem that could come up.

The score for Power was high and could be interpreted as the tendency of people analyzed to exert their dominion over others and decide about the use and management of their own resources. This profile could explain why team work is not an option, since it implies involvement in all work areas, collaboration, consensual decision making and solidarity not only to support the members of the team, but rather to share the benefits and results of collaborative work.

The low score of Achievement suggests that the respondents did not prioritize success as a goal in life, or the possession of material goods beyond those that are necessary to live, although it also indicates that for them it is important to show that they can survive based on their individual abilities. This could mean a limitation in the intentions of becoming part of an organization, since the desire for progress implies demonstrating self-sufficiency and competence with others. People with a high motivation for Achievement were characterized by fast learning and developing original methodologies to perform specific tasks (Maluk and Maluk, 2019). On the other hand, those with low motivation choose very easy tasks to ensure their success, or else tasks with a high level of demand but which can be performed by everyone; this way, when facing an occasional failure, it would not be magnified (Soriano, 2001).

Hedonism showed a very low score that indicates that for survey respondents, fun or enjoyment for life's pleasures were not important. They take seriously their farming work,

which they learned from their ancestors which is why they do not know a different one, so that they perform it not for pleasure but out of necessity, and to obtain what is necessary to survive. In agreement with this, Inglehart (1999) pointed out that in underdeveloped societies characterized by social inequality, leisure and hedonism are not observed, which is opposite to what happens in society with high levels of development whose needs are satisfied and the resources for subsistence are guaranteed.

The low Stimulation score denotes that farmers had a certain willingness to take risks and undertake adventures by experiencing new things as a way to seek progress. This explains that they have undertaken the business of tomato growing with non-traditional methods such as greenhouse cultivation; however, taking on risks by them was not so high as to compromise their achievements in a new adventure such as working jointly with other farmers.

Self-direction obtained a relatively low score, which can be interpreted as the orientation of survey respondents to work in their own way using their inventiveness and without depending on someone else's direction, even in the cases where there is a problem. This clearly contravenes the requirements of associative work that requires willingness to listen to others and joint decision making to seek the common benefit.

The very low score of Universalism suggests that farmers do not support equal treatment towards people and have low willingness to listen to others' opinions; in addition, this evidences their aversion to situations where there must be debate or have confrontations with others since they always want for things to be done their way. Evidently, this represents a limitation to participate in work associations. In addition, it denotes the low respect of survey respondents for nature.

Lastly, but not less importantly, the low score of Benevolence evidenced low willingness to help others when they require support, particularly of economic type. Benevolence implies interest for the wellbeing of people with whom there is some sort of connection (Estrada-Villalta and Terpstra-Schwab, 2014). On the contrary case, the cooperation ties between people who are very weak do not favor the formation of organizations. Once the score of each of the values was analyzed, the next step was to calculate the general objectives. The results of this last analysis corroborated the findings of the first, allowing to identify the individualist profile and the mistrust there is among tomato producers in San Pablo Güilá. The study's hypothesis was confirmed with this.

Table 3 shows the high score of Openness to change and manifests that farmers prioritize their wish for independence of action and thought, in addition to giving importance to dealing with challenges. These people tend to be creative and to always take the initiative looking for things to be done their way. For them, it is important to make their own decisions and to plan their activities without a worry for the risk that this represents, since they assume it as the cost for finding better ways to do things.

On the other hand, the score for Self-promotion indicates that the survey respondents chased their own personal interests, without taking into account the welfare of people around them. For them, the main goal is to obtain social recognition and influence over others by developing and showing abilities that allow them to stand out and have

**Table 3.** General Objectives of tomato producers in San Pablo Güilá.

Objective	Score	Results <sup>1</sup>
Openness to change	2.5	High
Conservation	4.2	Very low
Self-enhancement	3.3	Low
Self-transcendence	3.2	Low

<sup>1</sup>Measure scale: 1.0-1.25 Very high; 1.26-2.50 High; 2.51-3.75 Low y 3.76-5.0 Very low.  
Source: compiled by authors.

belongings. Likewise, they wish for control and dominion over people or resources and the accumulation of wealth; and they value autonomy, which is why they do not like receiving orders or being followers but rather leaders.

These results could explain why farmers, even when they took the risk of starting a business to amass economic resources and to improve their living conditions, were not willing to compromise what they achieved on their own by becoming organized with other producers. Morales, Holtschlag, Masuda and Marquina (2018) maintain that being an entrepreneur implies the willpower of wanting things to be done, the willingness to exert their own energy, the pleasure of creating, the desire for change, and the desire for autonomy suggested by Schumpeter (1934); therefore, these characteristics in tomato producers could be limiting their participation in an organization to perform collaborative work.

Associative work implies the general participation of rights, but also of obligations, so that if something were to go wrong, all the people involved would respond for it and this is something that farmers are not willing to do. In addition, their inclination to work in their own way and to not follow someone else's direction, obstructs joint work that requires tolerating diverse opinions to reach agreements and make decisions in search for the common benefit. Furthermore, according to the findings, the presence of egotism is something that can interfere in the organization of producers, since they are not willing to share knowledge or skills that can help others to stand out and therefore to become their competitors. This would be a threat for their performance and therefore for their personal success.

According to the Conservation score, survey respondents showed attachment to religion. This could have a bearing on the behavior of respect, humility and compliance (Roccas and Schwartz, 1997). Although less significant than those of Openness to change, these qualities could have a relevant role in the intention of being part of an organization with the objective of improving performance and therefore having a better economic position with all that it implies in terms of the possession of material goods. Zulkifli and Rosli (2013) have pointed out a significant role of religiosity in the life of people since it influences and guides their decision making and behavior, so that it can impact motivation, commitment with work, leadership and organizational performance.

It was also found that they are traditionalists, which could have an influence in their not considering the associative work that adopting new production methods would imply, going against the methods inherited from their ancestors. In addition, the survey respondents manifested a worry over government stability and the State's actions in the provision of security to carry out their agricultural activities. This could also limit their incorporation into producers' organizations, since there is the perception that when dealing with a problem derived from associative work they would be unprotected. Insecurity generates mistrust among farmers to become part of an association, so that they prefer working jointly with family members and friends, instead of with other producers (Ramírez, Figueroa, Figueroa, Coronado and Castellanos, 2018). Lastly, the Self-transcendence objective suggests that for survey respondents, equal treatment towards people and tolerance of others' opinions were not their goal; they were also not willing to help others when they required support and much less if it was economic. In addition, they did not want to be in situations of debate or confrontation. This could limit their participation in associations where there is plurality and collective participation in decision making, and particularly where cooperation links between people are required in the attainment of a common objective. This should be competitiveness, sought after from a systemic approach that not only integrates all producers, but which fosters interaction between them and with the environment (Schejtman and Berdegué, 2004), on the basis of cooperation, honesty and trust (Lugo-Morin, 2013).

### CONCLUSIONS

The findings indicate that farmers had an individualist orientation focused on personal success achieved by abilities of their own, as well as on control and dominion. They chase their own interests and are not worried about the welfare of others; they also confer much importance to the accumulation of wealth, to giving orders instead of obeying, to autonomy in decision making and to leadership. They wish to express their creativity and work in their own way without following indications from anyone, particularly about what to do and how to do it. In addition, they seek the emotion of facing challenges as part of attaining success, which they complement with austerity and commitment to work.

The producers also evidenced certain religious motivation, which as far as is understood, can impact compliance in terms of entrepreneurial performance. Traditionalism is another value showed by survey respondents, which indicates their attachment to what is established and their aversion to what is new. They also showed mistrust, expressed in terms of uncertainty about the support that they may get from the government to carry out their productive activities through collaborative work.

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