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DETERMINANTS OF RICE FARMERS WELFARE IN TABANAN DISTRICT, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

The welfare of farmers has always been a discourse that continues to be fought for to be realized. Several policies contained in several programs have been tried. As a result, the welfare of farmers has yet to be realized. The presence of farmer groups which began to bloom since 2015 in the province of Bali has become a new hope for improving the welfare of farmers. Tabanan Regency, which has long been known as a district with agriculture as the leading sector in its development movement, has many farmer groups. The number of farmer groups reaches 590 units in Tabanan Regency. The large number of farmer groups raises questions about their ability to determine the welfare of farmers in Tabanan Regency. The results of the study qualitatively indicate that farmer groups are able to determine the improvement of the welfare of rice farmers in Tabanan Regency. This can be realized if 1) there are regulations in favor of farmers; 2) there is support from the private sector; 3) there is an increase in the quality of formal education from farmers; and 4) there is periodic evaluation on the performance of farmer groups.

KEY WORDS

Welfare, farmers, performance, farmer groups.

Work as a farmer in Indonesia is a work pattern that is dependent on nature and capital. They have a dependence on land (rice fields) to cultivate as well as their dependence on natural situations such as rainy and hot seasons. Many efforts have been made by the government to maintain and develop this type of work by providing various subsidies and development of the farmer's own resources. The hope is to maintain the existence and fulfill the need for agricultural products (Umanailo, 2019). The government's efforts are triggered by the condition of farmers who are marginalized both socially and economically.

The results of observations made by interviewing farmers in Tabanan Regency show some indications of marginalization of the farming profession. The indications in question are as follows. 1) Marginalization occurs because of the driving factors that have been an obstacle to the lives of farmers in the village. Difficulties in producing agricultural products due to infertile land conditions to the development of areas as industrial and housing bases seem to accompany the process of changing the profession of farmers to find alternative jobs outside the agricultural sector. In general, the cause of the marginalization process is the fulfillment of household needs, inheritance distribution patterns, lack of regeneration and helping children who have not found work. In addition, it is also supported by high demand for land, housing needs as well as the construction of factories and housing. 2) Limited access to jobs that they have been getting to make ends meet and have to do other jobs of course with low pay. All this is done solely to meet household needs. Important things that are the impact of the marginalization process are farm laborers who lack land and job opportunities, job uncertainty because at any time the function of land can change, causing agricultural productivity to decrease, production costs increase to pump water from rivers to fields and farmers' incomes decrease. or even none at all. In addition, they get a share of agricultural products and lower labor costs due to the many parties involved and get paid wages and salaries that are cheap.

3) Limited fulfillment of the necessities of life. This condition is faced by farm laborers by selling agricultural land, working raw materials, trading or migrating to big cities. All methods and strategies are used solely to maintain daily life without having to leave your previous job as a farmer. The various limitations they have and the very limited conditions

make farm workers have to keep working hard to make ends meet. The consequences they have to accept when accessing jobs outside the agricultural sector are labor competition which requires a certain level of education and high business capital so that farmers are only able to receive low wages or wages for every job they do. Observations of rice farmers in Tabanan used in this study are based on data showing that Tabanan Regency has the largest rice harvest area compared to other districts and cities in Bali.

Table 1 – Rice Harvest Area by Regency and City in Bali Province 2016 – 2020 (Ha)

Regency / City	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Jembrana	9.465	10.614	10.419	9.589	9.001
Tabanan	38.062	36.810	32.475	26.607	25.270
Badung	17.180	18.673	17.700	12.943	13.629
Gianyar	27.987	28.575	19.025	17.367	15.157
Klungkung	4.677	5.076	2.862	4.132	3.768
Bangli	4.949	5.054	3.358	2.588	2.737
Karangasem	10.351	10.846	8.113	6.846	6.979
Buleleng	22.631	21.469	13.430	12.798	11.289
Denpasar	4.226	4.375	3.596	2.449	3.152
Bali Province	139.529	141.491	110.978	95.319	90.982

Source: BPS Bali Province, 2021.

Tabanan Regency has long been known as a district with very high rice productivity when compared to other districts and cities in Bali. This condition certainly raises the assumption that the welfare of farmers in Tabanan Regency is much better than farmers in other areas. The analogy that can be conveyed is that high agricultural productivity is certainly balanced by the existence of large agricultural centers. This agricultural center is certainly located in a rural area in Tabanan Regency. Rural areas are synonymous with poverty. Todaro (2011) states that most of the poor live in rural areas, the main activity of farmers is in the agricultural sector and other related activities. The theory presented by Todaro (2011) and the size of the agricultural area in rural Tabanan Regency shows the suitability. The information that has been collected from the observation results of the assessment shows that many farmers in Tabanan Regency have a low level of welfare. This low welfare is due to the income obtained from agricultural production which is often still very cheaply appreciated by the market. Another factor is the failure of farmers to innovate in order to increase productivity and diversity of agricultural products. This failure is realized due to the low quality of human resources who are willing to be directly involved in agriculture. The hope of farmers to get support from the government in the form of capital, production training to product marketing often cannot be accommodated by the government optimally. The presence of farmer groups that began to bloom since 2015 has created new hope for farmers in Tabanan Regency to further improve their welfare.

Table 2 – Data on the Number of Farmer Groups (Units) in Tabanan Regency in 2020

No	District Name	Farmer's Group Class				Number of farmer groups
		Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
1	Baturiti	13	20	28	0	61
2	Kediri	1	43	7	0	51
3	Kerambitan	1	6	38	18	63
4	Marga	2	57	7	0	66
5	Penebel	3	10	54	0	67
6	Pupuan	3	31	12	0	46
7	Selemadeg	16	31	3	0	50
8	Selemadeg Barat	18	21	27	0	66
9	Selemadeg Timur	6	38	13	3	60
10	Tabanan	8	4	44	4	60
Tabanan Regency		71	261	233	25	590

Source: Agricultural Human Resources Extension and Development Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, 2021.

Agricultural development depends on participation so that agricultural goals are achieved to meet community needs and in particular agriculture requires counseling and empowerment of farmer groups starting from participation in planning to the final results of agricultural development in the village (Sunarti, 2019). The success of the agricultural sector in Tabanan Regency cannot be separated from the role of farmer groups. The following presents data on the number of farmer groups (farmer groups) in Tabanan Regency.

The data presented in Table 1.2 shows that of the ten sub-districts in Tabanan District, it is known that Pupuan District has at least 46 farmer groups. The largest number was found in Penebel District which reached 67 units and Marga District which reached 66 units. The total of all farmer groups in Tabanan Regency is 590 units. The number of farmer groups reaching 590 units in Tabanan Regency has various activities. The production activities of farmer groups are divided into two activities, namely primary activities and secondary activities. These two activities can be described as below. Primary activities are activities that have been carried out before this farmer group was founded. Rice cultivation activities interspersed with vegetables is an activity that until now has become the economic pillar of farmer group members. Secondary activities have actually been carried out before the farmer groups were formed. There are several secondary activities that are only carried out after this group is formed. This secondary activity is recognized by farmers as still fluctuating in terms of the value of their income, but at least it has provided an increase in income for both groups and individual members of the farmer group. Not all of the farmer groups in Tabanan Regency primarily develop rice varieties as the primary sector of their business. The types of rice developed are local rice and hybrid rice. Hybrid rice is only a substitute for local rice. The selling price of grain and rice from local rice is cheaper than local rice. In addition, grain from local rice is more durable and stored for a long time. After the rice planting period, farmers also plant secondary crops such as: vegetables, chilies, tomatoes, pumpkins, long beans. The type of beans developed is long beans. Farmer groups in Pupuan and Baturiti sub-districts have developed a lot in the plantation sector. The developed commodities are coffee, cocoa, fruits and vegetables. Farmers not only plant secondary crops and plantations, but also raise cattle.

Fattening and cattle are secondary activities that have been carried out before the group is formed. When a farmer group has been formed, this activity is carried out better. Fattening and animal husbandry were initially carried out in their respective homes or fields. However, currently a central pen has been built that can accommodate the cows of each group member. Making compost is a production activity that has been carried out before and after the group is formed. When a farmer group is formed, the composting process is centered in the group hall and is done together. The result is solid fertilizer. This solid fertilizer is then distributed to group members to support organic farming plans. This product is also marketed to other farmer groups around Tabanan Regency. Making biourine as a liquid fertilizer is a secondary activity that has just been initiated since this group was formed. Biourine, which is useful for soil enrichment and accelerating plant growth, is no longer only for group consumption, but has been successfully marketed to several farmer groups in Tabanan Regency and several organic plant hobbyists throughout Bali.

Making biogas is an activity that has just been initiated since the farmer group was formed. This centralized cowshed has produced manure that can be used as biogas material. This product has been used by group members as a substitute for gas fuel so that it can save more on household needs. Patchouli cultivation (*Pogostemon cablin*) started in 2016 in collaboration with PT. Pharmaceutical Chemistry. This cultivation is found in many farmer groups, especially in the Penebel District. The results of this cultivation have very good prospects in the future. The products sold are not only refined oil, but also stem cuttings that will be used as seeds for patchouli cultivation in other areas. The number of activities and goals of improving the welfare of this group clearly requires maximum performance from all group members. Glueck & Jauch (1988) stated that all organizational activities are mobilized to achieve its goals. That is, the purpose of the institution is the final result that is pursued through the existence and entire operation of the institution, in this case for example; continuity or sustainability, profit, efficiency, employee satisfaction and

development, product quality or service to consumers, social responsibility, market leadership and others. This means that the maximum performance of farmer groups can be realized if performance measurements are consistently carried out. The large number of farmer groups in Tabanan Regency, on the one hand, is a strength as well as an opportunity for improving the welfare of farmers. The developing condition in the form of agricultural marginalization is still ongoing. These two things build contradictory thoughts that farmer groups will face the phenomenon of agricultural marginalization. When referring to the agricultural potential in Tabanan Regency, the hope that arises is that farmer groups can become winners. Winners in the sense of farmer groups can become a forum for developing the potential of farmers in order to improve the welfare of farmers.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

This research uses qualitative study. Qualitative research intends to understand the phenomenon experienced by research subjects holistically, and by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods (Moleong, 2007: 6). The type of research approach is descriptive. Descriptive research is research that seeks to address existing problem solutions based on data.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Obstacles of Farmer Groups in Achieving Prosperity

The welfare of farmers has long been a major concern in development in Indonesia. Various efforts have been made to continuously improve the welfare of farmers. However, these efforts are still not optimal. Farmers are still often in a marginal position in socio-economic life in general. This condition also occurs in Bali. The tourism sector has always been the main prima donna to gain income for the region and the majority of the community. The agricultural sector is only a supporting sector for development in Bali. As a result, the economic condition of the farmers in Bali is generally felt to have not reached a decent level of welfare. The government's support for the need to be further increased to create a new era of the economy during this pandemic. Support in the form of regulations that are more friendly to farmers so that farmers have room to further develop their business. Support for access to capital for farmers should be made easier. The support of experts who can encourage increased knowledge and skills of farmers is a form of support that is also very much needed by farmers. The provincial government of Bali also has limited funding to provide support to farmers. Therefore, the form of government support should be more focused on farmer groups that already have good management and have been able to show their ability to develop themselves even during this pandemic. The purpose of this focus is so that later these farmer groups can become role models for the development of other farmer groups that are still not well organized and have minimal achievements.

There are many limitations that farmers have, so they often fail to innovate in their production processes. Farmers are not impossible to have brilliant innovative ideas. But often they do not know (1) how to realize their ideas; (2) sources of funding that can support the idea; (3) implementing and maintaining the results of the idea; (4) increase the selling point and market the idea. Some farmers finally have the idea to form a farmer group in order to realize these ideas.

Farmer groups that were eventually formed either independently or with support from the government did not all succeed and survive. This is not only related to the commitment between its members. The main factor is the presence of innovation championed by all group members. Innovation is a spirit for all group members to continue to develop their group institutions. The existence of innovative groups like this based on observations shows a very minimal number. The government has tried to encourage the community to increase their participation in development, but the old mentality is still very difficult to change. Most farmer groups do not have the initiative to innovate. The habit of receiving assistance, both material and directive, is the main reason why farmers are reluctant to innovate. Farmer group

institutions are now present in many villages in Bali Province. The regional autonomy policy has caused differences in the implementation of agricultural development policies in each Regency and City in the Province of Bali. The policies implemented by Tabanan Regency, which is known for its agricultural sector, are not necessarily the same as policies from other Regencies and Cities. The supporting capacity of the government will greatly influence the development of farmer institutions in each village which is the center of agriculture.

The constraints faced by farmer groups in Tabanan Regency can be detailed as follows: 1) These various forms of government roles have not significantly improved the welfare of farmers; 2) Several farmer groups have made innovations to improve the welfare of their members. Some of them were successful, but some of them failed and caused a waste of cash for farmer groups. Many other farmer groups are also reluctant to innovate to generate income diversification for their members; 3) The average years of successful education of farmer group members is 11 years. This means formally not until graduating from high school. This condition shows that the basic competence of farmers in Tabanan Regency is still low so that the quality of human resources as a factor of agricultural production is also still low; 4) Many farmer groups just survive to fulfill their daily needs.

Farmer Group Development Solution

Thinking about farmers' welfare needs to be further developed for the resilience of farmers to continue to grow even in very difficult conditions. The resilience of farmers to continue to grow is supported by good and strong institutional performance. The government has an important role in facilitating the sustainability of the production activities of existing farmers and farmer groups. Continuous innovation is one of the keys to improving the welfare of farmers in a sustainable manner. The government has a big role to play in supporting the improvement of farmers' welfare. One of the roles of the government is as a facilitator who encourages farmers' business ideas to be realized and have a high selling value. The government's mediating role will be able to assist farmers in dealing with conflicts and product marketing difficulties. The government as a policy maker should be able to make regulations that favor farmers. The government as a motivator will be able to encourage farmers to be better able to develop themselves. The Tabanan Regency Government has played a role in improving the welfare of farmers. The creation of eternal land in the Jati Luwih area and tax exemptions on productive agricultural land have also been carried out. Both training held in one forum and direct counseling in the field have also been carried out. The government in each village has also developed agricultural supporting infrastructure using financing from the village fund program. Innovations in the form of new ideas that are realized will actually be able to support the improvement of farmers' welfare. The resulting innovation should not only be about new things. Aspects of economic benefits also need to be taken into account in making innovations so that they can trigger an increase in welfare.

Human resources play a major role in efforts to improve the performance of farmer groups. Farmers are often judged to have low quality human resources. Improving the quality of human resources needs to be done to carry out the functions of farmers as they should in an effective, efficient and continuous manner. The ultimate goal is of course to further improve the performance of farmer groups and their welfare. The performance of farmer groups must be improved so as to improve the welfare of farmers. The institutional performance of this farmer group must continue to be improved and developed. Improvement and development of institutional performance is expected to be able to mediate the role of government, innovation and the quality of human resources to improve the welfare of farmers. Not all farmer groups in Tabanan Regency are operating well. The welfare of farmers has become a central issue in development in Indonesia in the last decade. This condition is based on the marginalization of farmers, one of which is the conversion of land functions. This land conversion causes great pressure on the welfare of farmers and farm workers. The government, in collaboration with state-owned banks, has made efforts to digitize agriculture to improve the welfare of farmers. Recommendations for agricultural digitization models are used to increase agricultural productivity and are right on target in

order to support the Indonesian Government Program in food security towards national security in the Adaptation of New Habits era.

CONCLUSION

Determinants of improving the welfare of rice farmers in Tabanan Regency can be done well. There are several things that can be done to create farmer welfare through farmer groups. First, the Tabanan Regency Government can increase its role by spearheading the government at the village level. The government can develop regulations that favor farmers so that farmers have easy access to the fields they need. Second, support from the private sector is very much needed to encourage the enthusiasm of farmers to make innovations that are beneficial for agricultural activities. Farmers should not hesitate to improve the quality of their formal education. This is very necessary not only to broaden their horizons, but also to increase their competence as a modern farmer. Finally, the performance of farmer groups can be improved by continuously evaluating so that the best solution is found for the progress of the group.

SUGGESTION

In achieving involvement of farmer groups in becoming determinants for improving farmer welfare, we suggest several points as follows: the Tabanan Regency Government can create regulations to regulate subsidies to farmer groups, provide access to funding and protect the marketing of agricultural products, the private sector should be more concerned with building partnerships with farmer groups, farmer groups can facilitate members and their families to improve their education by participating in learning package programs provided by the government, farmer groups schedule each activity, one of which is evaluation. This structured schedule must be adhered to by all group members.

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