

## Role of Agency in Developing Social Capital to Increase Food Productivity (Case Study on Krida Taka and Harapan Jaya Farmer Group in Mendik 1)

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### Abstract

The study aims to describe the shape of the social capital of Krida Taka and Harapan Jaya Farmer Group in Medik 1 Village and analyze the role of agency in the social capital building for intensifying food production of Krida Taka and Harapan Jaya Farmer Group. The research adopted a qualitative approach in the case study. Data Condensation, Data Display, and Verifications analyzed raw data. The findings indicated within the Krida Taka Farmer Group, through the use of agriculture technology, the social capital was powerfully built, and individual agencies, as well as the group, had a better ability to make social capital and high food production. Harapan Jaya Farmer Group showed different results. Through the use of agriculture technology, it has weak built of social capital through the use of agriculture technology individual agency as well as group needs a better ability to build social capital and has lower food production.

**Keywords:** social capital, individual agency, group agency, food productivity

### INTRODUCTION

Food becomes a very fundamental thing in supporting all human activities. The success of food products must be connected to the role of farmer groups. Farmer groups function as a way to produce psychological and social conditions that encourage initiation, creativity, innovation, motivation, a sense of responsibility, and member participation to respond to every problem.

The result of research in Ngroto village showed that social capital is not an aspect or strength owned by a group or community automatically but must be formed and maintained by a community [1].

Social capital has a positive effect on income. In addition, interactions with social capital, institutional quality, and interactions with social capital with human capital positively affect economic development [2].

The mechanism of how social capital affects the quality performance of agricultural products remains unclear. Accordingly, this study developed a theoretical model with propositions from a social capital-quality performance of agricultural products paradigm for examining and comparing the three dimensions of social capital:

The relationships among cognitive (measured by shared values), relational (measured by reciprocity), and structural (measured by communication), and their role in ensuring quality performance of agricultural products from the company and farmer perspectives [3].

This phenomenon made the researcher interested in investigating the role of agencies in building social capital to increase the food productivity of existing farmer groups in Mendik 1 village. From ten farmer groups in Mendik 1 village, the researcher chose two farmer groups to be the object of this study, namely the Krida Taka farmer group and the Harapan Jaya farmer group.

This research is intended to see the relationship between the sources in each farmer group with an increase in food productivity as seen from bonding social capital, bridging social capital dan linking social capital.

Both farmer groups are engaged in rice farming, adjacent paddy fields and had been founded in the same year. But on the otherhand these two groups have the different capacity and uniqueness of the role of the agency to build and utilize social capital. For these reasons, the researcher considered that was important to conduct this research.

### MATERIAL AND METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach. Following with the title and purpose of the research, the approach used is a case study

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where this research explores based on reality or contemporary cases through collecting detailed and in-depth data from various sources of information and reporting case descriptions and case themes.

Research which produces descriptive data in the form of written and interview from people as well as observable behavior [4].

In this study, the researcher decided to use data collection techniques in the form of data triangulation techniques, namely data collection techniques that combine various data collection techniques and existing data sources. The researcher used observation or non-participant observation, unstructured interviews and documentation of the agency activities of the two groups.

Determination of informants using Purposive Sampling techniques. Purposive Sampling is a technique where the informant is chosen based on certain considerations according to the purpose of the study [5]. The characteristics of the informants chosen were people who knew social capital and the role of the two farmer groups' agencies in building social capital. Informants in this study are: 1. Key Informants: Chairperson of the Krida Taka farmer group and Harapan Jaya Farmer group, 2. Main Informant: Secretary and treasurer of the Krida Taka farmer group and Harapan Jaya Farmer group, 3. Additional Informants: Members of the Krida Taka farmer group and the Harapan Jaya Farmer Group.

The reason for using non-participant observation is because the researcher sees that social capital in both farmer groups already exists and was formed beforehand, as well as the role of the agency, both individual and group level, as seen from the processes that have previously taken place in building social capital. The researcher uses unstructured interviews because the researcher adjusts the situation in the field which affects the information provided for the next question for exploring information according to the data requirements, so the researcher only provides drafts of the question outline. Researchers also use documentation, read and examine reports / documents owned by the Mendik 1 village government and documents/reports/proposals of the two groups related to agriculture.

The researcher analyzed the data by selecting, categorizing and then presenting data as an interrelated pattern, which finally formulates a credible proposition. Then, the

validity of the data in this study was carried out by triangulation of data sources, namely by checking the validity of the data by comparing and rechecking the degree of confidence of the data obtained from interviews or documents and making comparisons between the results of research data with actual conditions in the field.

#### **Data Collection**

The agency was divided into two namely individual level agency and group level agency. Agency is defined as the ability or capacity of individuals or groups to influence situations from the external environment [6].

Agency can be presented in the midst of people who pay attention to four things, i.e.:

1. There are individuals/groups who have basic actions (can be internal/external)
2. There are individuals/groups who have the capacity / ability
3. There are individuals/groups who have social capital
4. There are individuals/groups who can anticipate obstacles in society.

Agency actions arise at the individual and group levels. The agency's actions as follows.

1. Agency at the individual level  
Agency = (Desire / attention) + the basis of social action (individual views) + social network) – obstacles at the individual level
2. Agency at group level  
Agency = (capacity + basis for social action) + (social capital) – group barriers

Several points that illustrate the weakness of the group agency's ability as follows:

1. Lack of social capital, such as networks that is too weak or loose tissue
2. No leadership is needed to motivate for process of change.
3. Lack of required skills (capacity)
4. There is no joint pressure and attention to hold meetings about the problem and
5. Barriers to action.

Likewise with individual agencies:

1. Lack of interest in existing issues
2. There is a belief that no individual can make a change
3. Inability to access resources (lack of network or lack of confidence) and
4. There are financial, psychological or physical obstacles.

Ling and Dale's agency theory in this study as a key analysis to see agencies at the individual level and group level agencies that play a role in

increasing food productivity in the Krida Taka and Harapan Jaya founded by building social capital owned by the two groups.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Krida Taka farmer groups**

#### **a. Group Social Capital**

The Krida Taka farmer group builds a variety of trust both within its own group and with other groups and institutions outside, this made farmer group easily carry out various collaborations which very beneficial for the development and progress in increasing food productivity.

As part of a social group, the farmer group Krida Taka gained trust since its inception in 1997 engaged in rubber plantations, the formation of this group began with the cooperation of PPL (extension agent) Paser district with PTP XIII Long Kali and the farmers who were members at the time. The trust is built through cooperation between fellow members of the Krida Taka farmer group, where fellow members of different ethnic groups share knowledge on farming and pest control. the Krida Taka farmer group had been trusted to be engaged in the rice seed breeding section designated directly by the East Kalimantan Food Security Service.

The social capital of the Krida Taka farmer group was built with:

#### **a. Norms**

The Krida Taka farmer group in interacting trust with one another by obeying each other's norms, ultimately produces sustainable trust and forms a network.

#### **b. Networks**

To achieve organizational goals, it is necessary to have an internal network as seen from the activities of fellow group members and an external network as found from the activities of the Krida Taka farmer group with other farmer groups, the Paser Agriculture Service, and other parties.

The Krida Taka farmer group has strong social capital in terms of typology in *bonding social capital*, *bridging social capital* and *linking social capital*. The social capital is strong because all members played a role in building group social capital.

In *bonding social capital*, Krida Kata farmer groups had similarity as farmers who have the same goal of increasing their food productivity. But on the otherhand this group has heterogeneity in terms of ethnicity and crop techniques.

The alternative solutions that can be conducted in strengthening the social capital of the farmer groups in the agricultural development includes the means of production and the marketing solution or networks [7].

### **B. The Role of Individual Agencies in Building Social Capital of Krida Taka Farmer Group**

The desire and willingness of Mr. Lepu to build the social capital of farmers is seen from the beginning of the establishment of this group is active as a manager, Mr. Lepu mobilizes farmers to participate in opening the food crops section in the Krida Taka farmer group. The reason why Pak Lepu built social capital from the farmer group Krida Taka was due to the feeling of the same fate among farmers. Mr Lepu's agency has good relations within the group and has network access outside the group. The network access was held since the beginning of the Krida Taka farmer group.

Pak Lepu has a good relationship with PPL Paser district, where PPL who often goes to Pak Lepu's house provides various agricultural information and then this group was appointed as a rice seed breeder in 2010 by the East Kalimantan Food Security Office.

Pak Lepu's agency also has a good relationship with all farmer group in Mendik 1 Village, because all farmer group representatives in Mendik 1 become members in this RPH section and cooperate with each other when there are activities in this section.

These various explanations illustrate how the role of Pak Lepu's agency affected on building the social capital of the Krida farmer group.

### **C. The Role of Group Agencies in Building the Social Capital of the Krida Taka Farmer Group.**

The Krida Taka farmer group agency can increase food production through the relationship of the Krida Taka farmer group agency, both within the group's own relationships and with outside groups and making changes collectively by influencing decision-making that affects on the group.

The capacity of group agencies is seen in the division of sections in the Krida Taka farmer group. Farmers organize themselves in the Krida Taka farmer group by opening a food crop section in the Krida Taka farmer group on the grounds by income from rubber farming is no longer able to sustain the economic needs of farmers and at the same time the government pays more attention to farmers planting rice, so this group is engaged in farming planting food.

Strengthening social capital through cooperation, namely cooperation in maintaining facilities and infrastructure, cooperation in working on rice fields and the use of livestock manure for fertilizer, cooperation in maintaining agricultural hygiene, and cooperation in maintaining the cleanliness of agricultural irrigation [8].

## **2. Harapan Jaya Farmer Group**

### **a. Group Social Capital**

The Krida Taka farmer group agency has the capacity to increase food productivity through the relationship of the Krida Taka farmer group agency, both within the group's own relationships and with outside groups and making changes collectively by influencing decision-making that has an effect on the group.

After a long period of time this group active in rice farming, there were *mistrust* to previous management because the management did not carry out the trust given by the members so that a change of management was held. The change of management with deliberations shows openness in making decisions and the elected management is someone who can be trusted by members.

In addition, Harapan Jaya farmer groups with Krida Taka have a close trust relationship. The good relationship between the two groups is also illustrated by the trust given by the Krida Taka farmer group to allow Harapan Jaya farmer group to rent out *Handtractor* Krida Taka farmer group.

Harapan Jaya farmer groups did not have written regulations. However, this group has an agreement between the management and members who become a guide when making decisions in the group. The norm in the form of custom applies in groups when group members who carry out land use change then get sanctioned out of the Harapan Jaya farmer group.

Also stated on the other case, The farmers are generally also afraid of sanctions, although there were no written sanctions included in these rules. Compliance with these social norms needs to be supported by commitments ranging from village governments to local governments and the central government in the development of Community Plantation Forest [9].

The importance of networking for the Harapan Jaya farmer group, which had been formed since the founding of this group. This can be seen from the beginning of the establishment of the Harapan Jaya group which involved various

parties including the Paser District Agriculture Office. In addition, this group's network developed with the proven Paser Agriculture Office.

The social capital that is built up in the Harapan Jaya farmer group is weak. This can be seen clearly in the previous discussion. Weak social capital that is built up in the group's food farming activities is in the form of beliefs, norms and networks.

More conventional farmers who have never participated in agri-environment schemes and those currently in government-run schemes display high levels of bonding capital and low levels of bridging and linking capital which may hinder their ability to adapt to change [10].

### **b. The Role of Individual Agencies in Building the Social Capital of the Harapan Jaya Farmer Group.**

The will, desire and attention of Mr. Betiti's agency in building social capital can be seen where Mr. Betiti since its inception the group has continued to be active as an administrator, namely as chairman until now. When the main source of income for farmers, namely rubber plantations, can no longer sustain the economic needs of farmers, Mr Betiti's agency has the role of providing ideas and inviting members to discuss to switch to farming.

The reason Mr Betiti's agency built the social capital of the Harapan Jaya farmer group in order to increase the farmer's food productivity is due to the feeling of the same fate among farmers.

As the head of the group, Mr Betiti has been in contact with the Paser Agriculture Office, so as the leader, Mr. Matari has a network with the agricultural institution. The network is used for the benefit of groups, for example, to submit assistance to the Dinas and the assistance is distributed to group members.

Mr Betiti's agency did not have a strong capacity in building social capital to increase the food productivity of the Harapan Jaya farmer groups. Even though Mr. Betiti's agency had a desire or will, but Mr. Betiti's agency still lacks experience in agriculture and experience of social organization. It is proven that Pak Betiti's agency only has organizational experience in Sumber Rezeki KUD, whereas various agricultural training of Pak Betiti's agency never follow.

### **c. The Role of Group Agencies in Building the Social Capital of the Harapan Jaya Farmer Group.**

The capacity of Harapan Jaya farmer group community agencies can be found from their

various activities in the group, namely rice farming which is their expertise. the low price of rubber made the group switch to rice farming.

Social capital in the form of Harapan Jaya farmer group trust, can be seen in the relationship of trust formed by the management and members in the productive activities of the group namely mutual trust to work together such as mutual cooperation in planting, honesty in the distribution of various assistance, openness in decision making, cooperation in various activities in the community and the trust from the Paser Agriculture Office formed a group and opened a section of food crops and was entrusted with various kinds of assistance.

In addition, this farmer group also has norms in the form of mutual cooperation, agreement on financial matters, and agreement on the requirements of members. Networks in this group are formed in social relations at each group activity (management with members and vice versa) and outside the group (other farmer groups, Mendik 1 village community, Mendik 1 village government and Paser Agriculture Office (PPL)).

But as in the previous explanation, Harapan Jaya farmer group community agency was unable to build strong social capital. This can be seen by the existence of mistrust in groups which makes the process of building social capital slow. This is also the case with norms in this group, group agencies are not able to form ADRT (articles of Association) groups. This group is proven to not have ADRTs. In addition, group agencies are not able to build access to a large network of resources for group development and progress.

#### **Analysis of Social Capital, Agency and Food Productivity of Krida Taka Farmer Group and Harapan Jaya Farmer Group**

The Krida Taka farmer group has strong social capital in terms of the typology of social capital bonding, and bridging social capital and social capital circles. The strength of social capital in this group can be illustrated in the activities undertaken, wherein the activity has seen the process of the flight of social capital in the form of beliefs, norms and network of Krida Taka farmer groups. The strong social capital is due to good cooperation in groups, chairpersons, treasurer secretaries and group members. All of them play a role in building group social capital.

Weak social capital in the form of trust can be seen by the occurrence of mistrust of the

treasurer and secretary so as to slow the process of building social capital in this group. In addition, if we compare it with the Krida Taka farmer group, the Harapan Jaya group does not have the trust as a group engaged in cattle farming from the Paser Agriculture Service and this group also does not have the trust of the East Kalimantan Food Security Service as a rice seed breeder and pest control team. Only the Krida Taka farmer group is trusted by the agricultural institution as a group engaged in cattle farming, rice seed breeding and pest control teams in the village of Mendik 1.

This group does not have much access to network resources with various groups or institutions outside. The networks are not so tight, only had the relationship between institutions, and did not have strong emotional ties, as did the Pak Lepu agency in the Krida Taka farmer group.

The social capital that is built up in the Harapan Jaya farmer group is not strong or weak. Uniquely, the Harapan Jaya farmer group is also a homogeneous farmer group within the tribe, farming methods and expertise still *bonding social capital* was weak, so did its *bridging* dan *linking social capital* compared to Krida Taka farmer group

Individual agencies are able to form many other heterogeneous agencies and organized to be a homogeneous group of agents in terms of interest (expertise, hobbies, desires and abilities possessed), so *bonding social capital* had a strong effect. Individual or group agencies form, had activated and built existing social capital, but this agency is also formed by the social capital owned by this farmer group, so that individual or group agencies have a strong ability to build social capital through the application of technology that affects productivity improvements group food. Also, in applying agricultural technology this group indirectly is able to form a strong bridging social capital and social capital environment.

Whereas Harapan Jaya farmer group illustrates a group of a small number of people with individual agencies that did not have a large ability in the development of social capital through the application of agricultural technology, so that social capital that built is also not strong and individual agencies or group agencies are also unable to provide large participation on increasing group food productivity. Individual or group agencies are

also unable to solve quickly the obstacles that exist within the Harapan Jaya farmers' groups.

Individual agencies are able to form other agencies (secretaries, treasurers and other group members), but do not have the strong ability to make significant changes to the group's progress in building social capital through the application of agricultural technology so that the increase in food productivity in groups is not so high.

Individual or group agencies could be formed, activated and built existing social capital, but this was not strong. Therefore individual or group agencies do not have a strong ability to build social capital through application technology that does not have a high effect on increasing the group's food productivity. In addition, in applying agricultural technology this group indirectly is able to form a bridging social capital and a social capital environment, but it is not strong.

On the other case, the mutual trust of rice farmers in Tridhana Mulya Village is in the form of providing agricultural business capital, increasing the work ethic of rice farmers, increasing farmers' tenacity in farming, and allocation of working hours by farmers [8].

## **CONCLUSION**

The Krida Taka farmer group has strong social capital. Written norms and unwritten norms also work well in groups. This group also has a lot of access to outside network resources. Also, the unique Krida Taka farmer group is a heterogeneous group in terms of ethnicity and farming methods, and there were able to be organized by individual agencies in each section following the common interests of farmers so that the bonding, bridging, and social capital circles of this group are strong.

Whereas The Harapan Jaya farmer group's social capital is weak when compared to the Krida Taka farmer group. The weakness of social capital in the Harapan Jaya farmer group can be found from the occurrence of mistrust in the group and lack of trust from groups or external communities. Uniquely, the Harapan Jaya farmer group is homogeneous in terms of ethnicity and farming methods but has weak social capital bonding, as well as bridging and a weak social capital environment.

The agency of the Krida Taka farmer group had a good ability in building social capital, resulting in high food productivity. While the Harapan Jaya farmer group agency did not have a

good ability in building social capital so they produced low food productivity.

The lack of the ability of individual agencies or Harapan Jaya farmer group agencies to build social capital through the application of agricultural technology had an insignificant effect on increasing the group's food productivity. Likewise, group agencies did not have a large influence in building social capital to increase group food productivity. Also, weak social capital, in terms of the trust, norms and group networks finally resulted in low group food productivity.

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