

Life Strategy of Female Farm Workers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari After Divorce

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the survival strategies of female daily laborers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari following divorce. The main focus is to understand the social and economic dynamics experienced by these women as they face life challenges post-divorce. The research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method, utilizing in-depth interviews and participatory observations as data collection techniques. The findings reveal that female daily laborers adopt various strategies to survive, including leveraging social networks, and managing finances strictly. Support from family, local communities, and social organizations plays a crucial role in helping them cope with economic pressures and the social stigma often associated with divorce. However, the study also highlights that limited access to education and skill training poses significant barriers to improving their quality of life.

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of women working in the agricultural sector is not something new for society. History shows that the origin of agriculture began with the division of labor between men and women, where men did hunting and gathering forest products, while women farmed around the house and did housework. The entry of female workers into the agricultural sector was driven by the basic needs of society. Female farmers have a very important role in development, they generally function as housewives, as breadwinners for their families and as members of society who are supporters of various social institutions in their rural environment (Suksesi, 2002). The role of women in the agricultural sector is undeniable. In food crop farming, the division of labor between men and women is very clear, it is often said that men work for activities that use a lot of muscle and women work for activities that require precision and neatness or that take a lot of time (Sudarta, 2010). Therefore, women are involved in economic activities, so women have a dual role, especially if they are widows, namely as housewives who are responsible for domestic roles and also play a role in public activities as the main breadwinner to meet family needs. Thus, the allocation of time for female farmers, especially widowed farm laborers, is not only to carry out domestic roles but is also allocated for public activities.

Women's participation in the workforce contributes greatly to their families, including for mothers who work as farm laborers. Farm laborers are people who work in other people's fields who are determined to get compensation. Farm laborers are included in the Casual Daily Laborer (BHL) group, which means workers who are bound by a working relationship from day to day and receive wages according to the number of working days or hours or the number of goods or types of work provided (Hutapea et al., 2016). According to Law Number 13 of 2003, laborers are people who work with people who receive wages or other forms of compensation. One type of laborer is a farm laborer. Farm laborers are wage laborers who are used to help work on horticultural land or agricultural land (Suryani, 2012). Female farm laborers are one of the classifications of workers based on gender. The connotation of "laborers" especially "female workers" is often considered as low-level specialists and living below the government assistance line, especially those who are female farm laborers who work in the Village. Women have dual roles, especially for single parents, because in addition to being female farm laborers, they are also heads of families who must be able to help the family economy.

Toba Pulp Lestari (TPL) is a company that produces and sells pulp from eucalyptus raw materials. Before changing its name, PT. TPL was called PT Inti Indorayon Utama which produced rayon (an important material for textiles). PT. TPL employs casual daily farm laborers for the process of eucalyptus nurseries, planting and fertilizing. Casual daily farm laborers who are employed come from Silaubosar Village, Hatonduhan District, Simalungun Regency. The recruitment of farm laborers uses subcontractors or those called foremen.

The majority of the community works as farmers and farm laborers. Farm laborers in Bosar Nauli Village work in other people's fields and become casual daily farm laborers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari. The distance from Bosar Nauli

Village to PT. Toba Pulp Lestari's land takes 2 hours. Every day the workers will depart from the gathering point which is usually each hamlet has a gathering point. The workers will be taken using a truck. There is no distinction between trucks. Women and men are all together in the same truck. The workers will receive wages every Saturday through the foreman. The term for farm laborer in Bosar Nauli village is penol. The wages received by farm laborers are Rp. 80,000 (eighty thousand rupiah). The difference in work between female farm laborers and male farm laborers is that male farm laborers work lifting fertilizer, lifting water. However, other work can be done by both men and women, such as spraying grass, planting seeds, and others.

Women who work as farm laborers must prepare equipment, breakfast, lunch for their children and will prepare provisions for themselves. On average, female farm laborers will wake up at 04.00 WIB and leave for the gathering point at 05.30 WIB to wait for the pickup truck and leave for the location at 06.00 WIB and will arrive at the work location at 08.00 WIB. Each woman will first provide for the needs of her children and husband so that when the children come home from school there is already food available.

For women who have small children (toddlers) and become farm laborers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari, in the morning they will be left with relatives and their children will be picked up in the afternoon after returning from work. Female farm laborers who are single parents have great responsibilities towards their families. Those who are divorced mostly have children over 8 years old and can be left to work. Divorce is a solution to conflict in farm laborer families, the causes vary from husbands who do not have jobs or do not have income, abusive husbands, cheating husbands and others.

Suryati is a 51-year-old woman who works as a casual farm laborer and said that she chose to divorce because her husband was irresponsible to his family. "My husband used to beat me, even though he didn't work, even when he worked, he deliberately didn't have any side dishes in the kitchen, and that was only twice a week, he worked at someone else's place to harvest someone's oil palm. Once he got paid, I only gave him Rp. 50,000, the rest he bought palm wine, he came home drunk, when he was drunk he beat me, finally he asked for a divorce, I wanted it, we divorced, so I was the one who worked as a penol (farm laborer)".

Divorce as a way that must be taken by a husband and wife when there are problems in their marriage that cannot be resolved properly. One of the factors of the sustainability and happiness of a marriage is greatly influenced by its economic-financial life. The necessities of life will be met well if the husband and wife have adequate financial resources. In both traditional and modern societies, a husband still plays a major role in supporting the family economy, so that a husband must work in order to have an income. Therefore, with these finances, he will be able to uphold the economic needs of his family. On the other hand, with the existence of financial or economic problems, it will have bad consequences such as family needs cannot be met properly, children experience hunger, get sick easily, easily cause conflict between husband and wife, and finally have a bad impact with the emergence of divorce (Nakamura, 1990). On

the other hand, there are families who are financially sufficient, but the husband has bad behavior, namely trying to limit the financial resources of his wife. This is called economic violence. What is meant by economic violence is a financial life condition that is difficult in carrying out household activities, due to deliberate treatment from his life partner, especially the husband.

Mrs. Hotria Siahaan works as a farm laborer and is a single parent saying that she must be able to meet the needs of her children. "I'm divorced from my husband so I'm the one who earns money so I work as a casual laborer (BHL) because we don't have any fields, so I work at Indorayon". Mrs. Hotria chose to divorce and become a widow and support her family because she often received bad treatment from her ex-husband. Mrs. Hotria experienced violence and her husband also seemed lazy. "If I expect Mr. Junedi (ex-husband) to die, he and my child go to the fields in the morning but he doesn't even see what he does. I've been beaten up and my child doesn't eat. He even had time to be a casual laborer but he cheated on me with another casual laborer, so how can I be with him again? It's better for me to be a widow than with him". The most important thing for farm laborers is the family's food needs. In accordance with the results of the pre-research conducted by the researcher, single mothers who work as casual daily farm laborers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari is a native of Silau Bosar Village. Some of the reasons behind these single mothers working as farm laborers are not only because they have to meet the food needs of their families but also because they do not have land so they choose to work at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari. For female farm laborers, they usually only work until 15.00 WIB and arrive home at 17.00.

The work that is usually done by single mothers who work as farm laborers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari includes planting Eucalyptus seedlings, hoeing, weeding, fertilizing, and transporting wood. Some single mothers who work as farm laborers also receive a policy from the government in dealing with poverty problems, such as the Family Hope Program (PKH), Rice for the Poor (RASKIN), Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT), and Direct Cash Assistance (BLT).

Divorce is often a significant turning point in the lives of female casual farm laborers. After divorce, they have to overcome various challenges, from meeting the basic needs of the family, providing education to children, to rebuilding social networks that can support their lives. In this situation, women casual farm laborers are required to develop adaptive life strategies in order to survive and continue to progress within the existing limitations. On the other hand, the existence of PT. Toba Pulp Lestari as one of the large companies in the area has direct and indirect impacts on the economic and social conditions of the surrounding community, including female casual farm laborers. The existence of PT. Toba Pulp Lestari provides opportunities for female farm laborers to be economically independent and indirectly encourages female farm laborers to take the decision to divorce. A structured work system and fixed salaries are the reasons why female farm laborers feel safe compared to working as casual farm laborers on private land. This raises the question of to what extent female farm laborers can take advantage of these work opportunities as part of their life strategy after divorce. This situation becomes even more interesting to study

considering that female casual farm laborers are in a structurally vulnerable position. However, behind this vulnerability, they often show extraordinary survival skills through various strategies, both individually and collectively. Therefore, this study aims to explore more deeply the life strategies of female casual farm laborers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari after divorce, with a focus on how they manage available resources and face the challenges that arise in their daily lives.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Divorce

Divorce is an event of official separation between a husband and wife and they decide not to carry out their duties and obligations as husband and wife. They no longer live and reside in the same house together, because there is no official bond. Those who have divorced but do not have children, then the separation does not cause a psychological traumatic impact on the children. However, for those who already have children, of course divorce causes psycho-emotional problems for children (Amato, 2000; Olson & DeFrain, 2003). On the other hand, it is possible that children born while they live as husband and wife will be included with one of their parents, whether following their father or mother (Olson & DeFrain, 2003).

Conflict Theory

Conflict is the basic of life. This is an expression to describe the phenomenon of conflict as a basic fact in life. Humans everywhere will always face the possibility of conflict. Throughout human civilization on earth, conflict is another color of life that cannot be eliminated. Darwinism has long seen the phenomenon of conflict in life together as struggle and survival of the fittest (Veeger, 1993: 210). This principle means that in human life there is always a struggle for survival, which causes conflict.

In conflict theory, Collins also divides conflict typology into 2, namely the form of conflict that tends to continue in a longer period than a great conflict, the next form is a relatively mild conflict that tends to reduce the greatness of bureaucratization. In the case of a great conflict, it emphasizes more on emotional resources in the short term, while in the long term it requires more material resource factors (Garna, 1996: 66).

Framework of Thought

The framework of thought is the researcher's thought process as the basis for thinking to strengthen the sub-focus that is the background of this research. In qualitative research, a foundation is needed to underlie the research so that the research is more focused. Therefore, a framework of thought is needed to develop the context and concept of further research so that it can clarify the context of the research, methodology, and the use of theory in the research. The explanation that is compiled will combine theory with the problems raised in this research. The framework of thought in a study needs to be put forward if the research is related to or related to the focus of the research.

The purpose of the framework of thought itself is to form a clear and rational research flow (Sugiyono, 2017: 92). A framework of thought is not just a collection of information obtained from various sources, or not just an understanding. However, a framework of thought requires more than just data or information that is relevant to a study, in a framework of thought an understanding is needed that the researcher gets from the results of searching for sources, and then applied in a framework of thought. Understanding in a framework of thought will underlie other understandings that have been created first. This framework of thought will eventually become a basic understanding and become the foundation for every other thought.

Based on the explanation that has been explained above, several concepts are depicted that will be used as a reference for researchers in applying this research. The theoretical framework of thought above will be applied in a conceptual framework in accordance with the research to be studied, namely "Divorce of Female Casual Daily Farm Workers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari"

Divorce is the breaking of bonds in a husband and wife relationship, meaning the breaking of the marriage law so that both are no longer in the position of husband and wife and no longer live together in a household. Divorce in the big Indonesian dictionary is separation, breaking off relations as husband and wife or the breaking of the marriage bond. This is the general understanding related to the term divorce.

Divorce is not an agreement therefore divorce should not be based on an agreement to divorce. Divorce is an emergency door or the last alternative that can be chosen to resolve disputes in marriage. (Dr. Djoko, 2016):

Casual daily workers are employees who work and are paid according to their arrival at work. Farm laborers are employees who work in the agricultural sector either in gardens, in fields or in rice fields. The meaning of laborers is the same, namely employees or workers, but different meanings are attached to the profession of farm laborers. There are two problems that we want to see in this study, namely:

- A. What conflicts occur in the families of female casual farm laborers working at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari
- B. What are the survival strategies of female casual farm laborers working at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari as single parents.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses ethnographic methods. According to Creswell (2007: 68), ethnographic methods are used by researchers to describe and interpret patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and languages that are shared and learned together in a cultural group. Therefore, ethnographic research generally involves participant observation of a group. Ethnography requires researchers to be involved in the daily activities carried out by the people or groups being observed.

According to Geertz (in West and Turner, 2010: 282), ethnography is a qualitative method that reveals the meaning of a culture by interpreting objects, stories, rituals, and practices in a cultural group. Geertz (in West and Turner, 2010: 282) states that to understand a culture, a researcher must see it from the

perspective of its cultural members. (Fetterman, 2009) says that an ethnographic researcher must conduct research in the original environment or natural situation of the members of the group being studied to see their habits in the real world.

Research location

The location of this research will be conducted in Silau Bosar Village, Bosar Nauli Subdistrict, Hatonduhan District, Simalungun Regency. The researcher chose this research location because the farm laborers working at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari come from Bosar Nauli. The research location with the work location of the casual farm laborers takes 2 hours.

Research Informants

The research subjects will be the informants who will provide various information needed during the research process. According to Bagong Suyanto, informants are as follows:

1. Key informants, namely those who know and have various basic information needed in the research or informants who know in depth the problems being studied, such as female farm laborers who are divorced.
2. Main informants, namely those who are directly involved in the social interactions being studied, namely women who are divorced and become casual daily farm laborers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari.
3. Additional informants, namely those who can provide information even though they are not directly involved in the social interactions being studied, such as distant relatives, neighbors, and close friends

Data Collection Techniques

The researcher conducted participatory observation by mingling with the community. Seeing directly and becoming part of the community to be studied. The researcher saw directly how the community lives its life. The researcher also occasionally employs female casual farm laborers in the fields owned by the researcher so that the researcher can have conversations or interviews with the research objects. The researcher observes how the laborers work and sees the problems faced by female casual farm laborers.

Not only conducting observations, the researcher also conducted in-depth interviews with several informants. According to Fetterman (2009), interviews are the most important data collection technique in ethnographic studies because they allow researchers to group and organize the meaning of informants towards a reality. Fetterman (2009, p. 40) divides interviews into several types, namely structured, semi-structured, informal, and retrospective interviews. However, in their use, these types of interviews often overlap and are mixed (Fetterman, 2009, p. 40).

In this study, the researcher used a semi-structured interview technique. According to Kriyantono (2008), semi-structured interviews allow researchers to develop questions freely and still related to the topic, researchers prepare a list of questions in advance but along with the interview process the researcher develops questions that have been previously prepared. Researchers conducted interviews in the period December 2023 to February 2024. Researchers conducted

interviews directly and asked for telephone numbers from informants and if there were any questions missed the researcher would contact the informant.

Validity of Data

Researchers use triangulation to test information from one informant with another. Kriyantono (2008) said that triangulation is the process of analyzing informants' answers by comparing them with empirical data or other data sources. In other words, informants' answers must go through a cross-check process. Dwidjowinoto (in Kriyantono, 2008) said there are five types of triangulation. However, researchers only use three types of triangulation that researchers consider most relevant and possible in this study. The three types of triangulation are as follows.

- A. Source triangulation. Researchers recheck the degree of reliability of information from different informants. Researchers compare information from one informant with another.
- B. Time triangulation. Researchers check the validity of information over different periods of time. Field studies were conducted directly because researchers are part of the Silaubosar Village Community, while in-depth interviews were conducted in the period from December 2023 to February 2024. Between one informant and another, the researcher arranges a separate time interval to avoid similar answers at the same time.
- C. Method triangulation. Dwidjowinoto (in Kriyantono, 2008) said that method triangulation requires researchers to use more than one data collection technique. In this study, the researcher used three data collection techniques, namely participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies.

Data Analysis

According to Wolcott (in Creswell, 2007), data analysis techniques in ethnographic research include description, analysis, and interpretation. Further explanations regarding description, analysis, and interpretation are as follows.

- A. Description This stage is the first stage that must be carried out by ethnographic researchers. Researchers try to describe in detail the group being studied. Ethnographic researchers are likened to storytellers. Researchers must focus on details and make readers see through the researcher's point of view. In this section, researchers can show different perspectives through the informant's point of view.
- B. Analysis At this stage, researchers re-highlight the data that was previously introduced in the description section. Researchers can display the discussion in the form of tables, diagrams, graphs, or images. Researchers must find patterns from the overall data. Researchers can compare the cultural group being studied with other cultural groups, evaluate the cultural group being studied, draw relationships between the cultural group being studied and a broader theoretical framework, or convey deficiencies in their research.
- C. Interpretation This stage is the final stage of the ethnographic research data analysis process. Researchers convey their meaning of the group they are studying. Researchers draw personal conclusions and turn them into a theory based on interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conflict Theory Analysis on Divorce of Female Casual Farm Workers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari

In the lives of female casual farm workers at PT Toba Pulp Lestari, everyday reality is colored by economic, social, and cultural pressures. As casual farm workers, their employment status is vulnerable: there is no guarantee of a fixed income, no social benefits, and they are often faced with difficult working conditions. This situation not only impacts their individual lives as workers, but also spreads to the dynamics of household and social relationships.

1. Economic Dependence in the Casual Farm Worker System.

One of the characteristics of daily farm laborers is economic instability. Women who work in this sector are often the sole breadwinners of the family, while their husbands, if any, often do not have permanent jobs or earn lower incomes. This condition creates an unequal economic dependency, both on the company system that exploits them and on partners who are not always able to fulfill financial responsibilities.

The low income from casual work is also insufficient to meet the basic needs of the family. As a result, women farm workers face a serious dilemma: on the one hand, they have to work hard to earn income; on the other hand, they still bear the main responsibility for taking care of the household and children. This imbalance of burden is often the root of conflict within the household.

2. Unfair Work System and Gender Exploitation

PT Toba Pulp Lestari, as a large company, provides jobs to many casual laborers, including women. However, the work system implemented often benefits the company and oppresses workers. Low wages, long working hours, and lack of labor protection are the main challenges that female workers must face.

In a patriarchal system, women are often considered to have lower work value than men. This is reflected in the division of labor in the field, where women are often given tasks that are considered "light" but are physically tiring and less financially valued. This inequality emphasizes the exploitation of female workers, which not only occurs in the economic realm but also touches on social and psychological dimensions.

3. Local Patriarchy and Subordination of Women

The community around PT Toba Pulp Lestari, like many rural communities in Indonesia, is still heavily influenced by the patriarchal system. In this context, women are considered to be the ones who must submit to the decisions of their husbands or families. Even when women work hard to support the family economy, their position remains subordinate, both in household decision-making and in broader social relations. When women farmworkers face domestic violence, neglect, or other domestic conflicts, the patriarchal social system often does not provide space for them to seek fair solutions. Divorce, for example, is still considered a major disgrace that is detrimental to women, so many of

them are trapped in detrimental relationships due to social pressure to stay married.

4. Economic and Psychological Tensions as Triggers of Domestic Conflict.

The dual workload faced by female farmworkers – as breadwinners and housekeepers – creates tremendous pressure. When their partners fail to support them financially or emotionally, conflict within the household becomes difficult to avoid. This condition is further exacerbated by feelings of being unappreciated, both at work and at home.

Many female farmworkers end up feeling that their marriage no longer provides support or protection, but rather becomes an additional burden. This imbalance often triggers divorce, which, although considered taboo, is starting to be seen as a way out that allows women to free themselves from the pressures they face.

Conflict in Household Relationships

The household relationships of female casual farm laborers at PT Toba Pulp Lestari are inseparable from complex conflict dynamics, especially when economic, social, and gender pressures become an inseparable part of their daily lives. Within the framework of conflict theory, these dynamics can be understood as the tension between individual interests and oppressive social structures, where women are often in a disadvantaged position.

1) Economic Injustice as a Trigger for Conflict

Female casual farm laborers are often the main breadwinners in their families. However, with low and unstable incomes, these women have to face a heavy burden to meet household needs. In situations like this, their partners – who often also work irregularly or even do not work – are not always able to provide sufficient contributions, either financially or emotionally. This imbalance creates conflict in the household. When women feel that their partners are not playing their role as they should, frustration begins to emerge. This conflict can take the form of arguments over the division of responsibilities, disappointment due to lack of support, or tension caused by ongoing economic pressures.

2) Double Burden and Psychological Tension

Female farm laborers not only work to earn a living, but also bear the responsibility of taking care of the household. This double burden is often unbalanced, especially when their partners are not involved in domestic work. As a result, women have to work hard in the fields during the day and continue housework at night, while they themselves do not get enough time to rest or take care of themselves. This psychological tension is exacerbated by a lack of appreciation, both within the family and from the surrounding environment. Feelings of fatigue, frustration, and unappreciation often trigger verbal conflicts between partners, which if not managed properly, can develop into deeper emotional conflicts. In many cases, women feel that their contributions are being ignored, while their partners continue to demand unbalanced traditional roles.

3) Domestic Violence and Neglect

In some situations, this economic imbalance and psychological burden can lead to more serious forms of conflict, such as domestic violence or emotional neglect. Violence, whether physical or verbal, often occurs as a response from partners to economic pressure or feelings of loss of control. Meanwhile, emotional neglect occurs when partners no longer support each other emotionally, but instead blame each other for the difficult situation.

Women farmworkers who experience violence or neglect are often in a difficult position. With unstable employment status and a social system that stigmatizes divorce, they feel trapped in an unhealthy relationship. In many cases, the decision to stay or divorce is influenced by their ability to be economically independent, as well as their courage to challenge deep-rooted patriarchal norms.

Survival Strategies of Female Casual Farm Workers as Single Parents.

Casual farm workers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari are often faced with unstable income and economic uncertainty. They work hard in the agricultural sector with income that depends on the season or weather conditions, and are burdened with household responsibilities and childcare. Therefore, many casual farm workers must develop frugal living strategies to survive with limited resources. The following are some frugal living strategies that are often applied by casual farm workers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari.

Managing Household Expenses

One way to live frugally is to manage household expenses wisely. Casual farm laborers tend to have limited expenses, and they must ensure that every expense they make is truly necessary and in accordance with their financial capabilities.

Strategies Implemented:

- **Prioritize Basic Needs:** Casual farm laborers often prioritize spending on basic needs such as food, clothing, and children's education. They avoid buying non-urgent items and only buy items that are truly needed.
- **Create a Household Budget:** Even though their income is small, many farm laborers create a monthly budget to monitor their expenses. This way, they can clearly see how much money is needed to meet basic needs and adjust expenses so that they do not exceed income.

Strategy is a form of effort made by someone to face social problems or solve problems experienced with the aim of getting good results or decisions. Survival strategies are an alternative to survive and develop the family economy.

Survival strategies are strategies to meet minimum living needs (basic needs) or to simply meet daily needs. Economic shocks force widowed households to adopt a number of strategies to protect basic household expenses (Saleh, 2014). Divorce experienced by farm workers forces them to be able to support their children and families. Strategies can be carried out by utilizing existing resources or by reducing expenses by reducing the quantity and quality of goods or services. In addition, survival strategies apply a dual livelihood pattern which is part of the economic strategy.

Livelihood activities are actions of household members, especially female farm workers who are single parents as a form of survival strategy. Being a farm worker is not an easy job, this job requires perseverance and patience to do it. Female farm laborers who are single parents choose to work as farm laborers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari because they do not have land to manage, do not have adequate educational qualifications to work in a company, do not have capital to become entrepreneurs or trade. The skills they have are to become farm laborers. From the results of the interview conducted with Mrs. Elpe Sitorus, she said that if she only relies on her wages, she is not able to support her children and family. Added to the problem of her child who is also a single parent, Mrs. Diana Silalahi. They live in the same house. So Mrs. Diana also becomes a farm laborer to help her family's economy.

Strategy for Living Frugally

Living frugally is a strategy used by farm laborers so that the income they earn can meet the needs of their households. The savings made by farm laborers are by reducing expenses. What is done when income is not sufficient is for food needs. If they usually eat 3 times a day with various side dishes, then the laborer will reduce their shopping expenses by still eating three times a day. Replacing food with cheaper ones.

Savings on food, reducing the quality and quantity of food ingredients, daily necessities and also education costs are also carried out by informants Elpe and Hotria. The cost of children's education is not borne by the ex-husband so they have to save.

Savings are also made by minimizing expenses that are not too important. Non-food expenses that cannot be avoided are children's education costs and children's daily shopping so they choose to save. According to Suriastini, the main purpose of someone saving is to anticipate unexpected events and anticipate unexpected income and needs of individuals in the future (Saleh, 2014). When there is a decrease in household income, the household automatically reduces spending. Unlike other informants, namely Mrs. Suryati who applies a frugal life strategy, Mrs. Suryati chooses to save. Mrs. Suryati is assisted by her son who is also a farm laborer.

Strategy to utilize social networks

This strategy is to utilize social networks or establish formal or informal relationships with the social environment and institutions, for example borrowing money from neighbors, stalls (shops) debt, utilizing poverty programs from the government.

Debt

The mechanism of the loan strategy by means of debt is a support for the families of female farm laborers. In difficult conditions where the income obtained is not enough to meet needs, what is done is to borrow or ask for financial assistance from other parties. From the results of the interview conducted by the researcher with informant Mesta Manurung, it was said that if they do not have money, what is done is to borrow money from family.

One indicator of James C Scott's (1989) subsistence ethics is the use of networks and institutions outside the family. Female farm workers use social networks to ask for help in dealing with the problems they face, such as economic problems, namely by borrowing money. Female farm worker households prefer to borrow from friends and neighbors, which is safer because there is no time limit for when to return the loan. That way, farmers can earn income that can be used to meet their daily needs. Although, assistance from them can only be given to the extent of their ability, it is certainly useful and beneficial for female farm workers in surviving by meeting their needs such as eating, paying for electricity, and others.

Utilization of government assistance

Clark (1986) clarified that survival strategies are carried out through informal social support works, namely especially regarding the exchange of goods, services and money to meet sudden routine needs such as through social safety nets. Utilizing Social Networks and the Government, namely the selected social network that must be utilized to obtain economic resource assistance such as social assistance (BLT / PKH / RASKIN) and others. This strategy is also carried out in the households of widowed farm laborers to meet their living needs. The assistance funds provided by the government are intended to strengthen the household economy in meeting daily needs.

Social assistance is defined as the provision of assistance in the form of money/goods from the local government to individuals, families, groups and/or communities that are not continuous and selective in nature and aim to protect against the possibility of social risks. Social assistance is intended to improve social problems, such as poverty problems.

It is concluded that the households of female farm laborers who are single parents experience many difficulties, especially economic difficulties, but they can respond to these difficulties with various efforts so that their lives continue to run. Responding to the difficulties faced is the concept of Survival strategy. The survival strategies carried out by each individual and household can be different, but in responding to them it depends on the characteristics of the individual.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the lives of female casual farm laborers at PT. Toba Pulp Lestari after divorce put them in challenging social and economic conditions. The findings show that these women are able to develop various survival strategies, such as utilizing social networks, implementing efficient financial management, and relying on support from family and local communities. In addition, social assistance programs have also proven significant in helping them overcome economic pressures and the social stigma that often accompanies divorce status. However, this study found that limited access to education and skills training is still a major obstacle in improving their standard of living. In facing these obstacles, female casual farm laborers show high resilience and innovative adaptability, emphasizing their role as resilient individuals in overcoming changes and limitations in life. These

findings emphasize the importance of holistic policy interventions, including increasing access to education, skills training, and social protection, to support the empowerment of women in similar situations.

FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research can focus on examining the long-term impact of survival strategies employed by divorced female casual farm laborers, including the effectiveness of social networks, education, and skills training programs in improving their economic and social well-being. Studies should also explore the role of community support in mitigating stigma and enhancing resilience, as well as the psychological and intergenerational effects of their challenges on mental health and child welfare. Additionally, analyzing cultural barriers and evaluating the implementation of gender-sensitive policies can provide valuable insights for designing more effective, holistic interventions to empower women in similar circumstances.

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