

Role of Farmers' Groups in Increasing Robusta Coffee Farmers' Participation in the Village of Linggajati, Sukaratu District, Tasikmalaya Regency

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ABSTRACT

As one of the most important components of agricultural development, farmer groups must continue to be strengthened in a variety of ways, including by strengthening their roles so that they evolve into strong and independent farmer organizations. Successful agriculture is also characterized by farmer participation in each and every activity. This study aims to determine the level of farmers' participation, the level of farmer group participation, and the link between the levels of farmer group participation and farmer participation. The sampling technique of simple random sampling was used to collect a sample of 42 coffee farmers. Using the Spearman Rank correlation test, the relationship between the significance of farmer groups and farmer participation was examined. The results indicated that the role of the farmer group in all group activities fell within the category of "high." In contrast, the level of farmer participation in all group activities was determined to be moderate by the study. The findings of the relationship study revealed a positive correlation between the level of the role of the farmer group and the level of farmer participation, with a correlation coefficient of 0.262 and a relationship strength classified as weak.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of establishing an organization is to facilitate and support individual decision-making (Mesut, 2011; Fedorowicz & Konsynski, 1992). Through the organization, behavior will become more structured, predictable, and patterned. (Alejandro, 2006; Victor, 2005; Syahyuti, 2011). A farmer's association is one of the agricultural groups. A Farmer's Group is a group of farmers, breeders, and planters founded by farmers on the basis of common interests, similarity in social, economic, and environmental conditions, common commodities, and familiarity with the goal of enhancing and expanding members' companies.

The purpose of farmer group capacity building is to enable the group to function as a learning class, a vehicle for cooperation, and a production unit, so that it becomes a robust and self-sufficient farmer organization. (Regulation 67/Permentan/ Sm.050/12/ 2016 of the Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia). Farmers in Linggajati Village, Tasikmalaya Regency, began cultivating coffee in 2012 and took the initiative in 2017 to organize the Poktan Kubang Koak farmer group, which specializes as a coffee farmer group. The group of farmers consists of 73 individuals, all of whom were local natives. 49 hectares of Perhutani land was used for coffee farming. Robusta coffee was produced as a commodity. The Kubang Koak farmer group is now a legal organization, per the Decree of the Minister of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia No. AHU-0016107.AH.01.07 of 2017 on the Legalization of the Establishment of a Legal Entity Association of Kubang Koak Galunggung Farmers Group.

According to the head of the farmer group, every two months routine activities consisting of meetings and mutual collaboration were held to promote the farmers' cooperation. However, there appears to be less of an effect on farmers. According to him, only twelve of the 73 members truly comprehend and participate in farmer group activities (such as attending discussions/meetings/contributions, etc.). Farmers were nevertheless less independent due to their continued reliance on instructions that were, above all, sensible and profitable. There were still several farmers who were less critical at the gathering (such as rarely asking questions). The results of the Agricultural Extension Agency's (BPP) outreach indicate that few farmers truly comprehend and implement the extension's results.

In contrast, according to Iqbal (2015), agricultural development will be deemed a success if farmers participate in every activity. According to him, engagement through the participation of farmers can be a more effective method of achieving the intended goals. As an activity, participation is a unique manner of interacting and discussing the distribution of power, responsibility, and advantages. Farmers' participation in farmer groups demonstrates their participation in all phases of an activity, including planning, implementation, and monitoring. (Simanjuntak et al., 2016; Adiarsi et al., 2020)

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The Farmer Group's Role

Farmer groups, as one type of farmer organization, have a significant impact on agricultural development. With the formation of farmer groups, the behavior of farmers will be more organized and patterned toward achieving common prosperity. However, this condition is not satisfactory and is still a challenge for farmer groups. Bringing together and harmonizing the various behaviors of farmers in a farmer group is difficult. Every human being is created with understanding and a different point of view. To achieve this, one of the roles of farmer groups must be continuously improved. As explained by Soerjono (2012) regarding the meaning of "role," which is a dynamic aspect of position (status), where a person exercises his rights and obligations according to his position, he carries out a "role." Farmer groups are important in agricultural communities because they provide a platform for member organization and collaboration. This is because groups handle agricultural issues and activities simultaneously.

This is in line with the assertion made by Dani et al. (2017) that farmer groups serve as learning environments where students comprehend and can put what they have learned into practice. A number of variables, including attitudes, interactions, group cohesion, norms, and agricultural extension agents, have an impact on how well farmer groups function as a learning class, according to Sunarru's (2011) research. According to Mutia et al. (2018), effective group formation requires effective cooperation. The findings of Sunarru's study demonstrate that effective group formation requires effective cooperation. Sunarru added that in addition to interpersonal elements, norms, agricultural extension, and direction from village officials all affect how effectively farmer groups function as a means of bringing people together. According to Soedarsono (2008), farmer groups are entrusted with improving their capacity to identify profitable farming patterns as a production unit. According to Sunarru's (2011) research, self-efficacy, member engagement, and administrative support from villages all contribute to farmer groups' performance as production units.

Farmers' Participation

Farmers must participate in all activities for agricultural development to be successful. In accordance with the opinion of Mohamad (2015), participation is a form of special interaction and communication related to the distribution of authority, responsibility, and benefits. Participation through the participation of farmers can be a more efficient way to achieve the goals that have been set. As in the study of Melgi et al. (2016), in measuring the participation of farmer group members, it was found that their participation in the planning, implementation, and monitoring stages was high. It is proven that members of farmer groups actively participate in group meetings, are active in every farming activity, and are active in monitoring activities by both the chairman and group members.

The level of the role of farmer groups and the level of farmer participation have a relationship. This relationship is explained in the research of Sri et al. (2013), who found that the relationship between the role and function of farmer groups as a learning unit, vehicle for cooperation, and production unit for increasing farmer participation is very significant at all stages of participation. The function of farmer groups as a learning class is very significantly related to each stage of participation; the existence of farmer groups and joining as members provide benefits for group members (farmers learn from each other and exchange information and experiences). Farmers who are members of the group have high attachment and togetherness (members know each other and work well together, so problems that arise can be faced together), so the function of farmer groups as a vehicle for cooperation is very evident at every stage of participation. At each stage of participation, the function of farmer groups as production units has a very significant relationship because groups provide production benefits for farmer group members by increasing and meeting needs, and they have an influence on increasing farmer enthusiasm for carrying out conservation activities on their land.

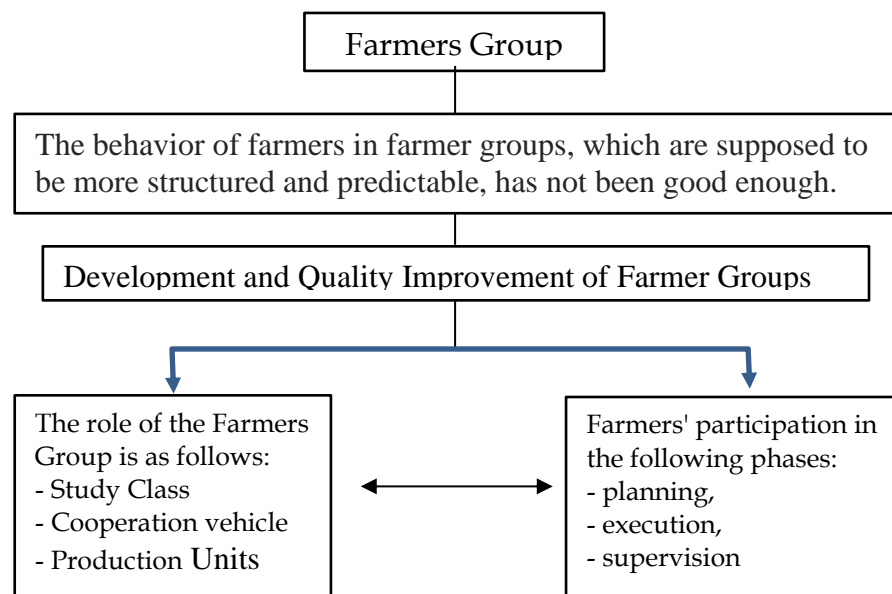


Figure 1. The Flow of Thought on the Role of Farmer Groups with the Level of Farmer Participation

METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out in Linggajati Village, Sukaratu District, Tasikmalaya Province. utilizing a selection approach known as simple random sampling with the Slovin formula (Umar, 2001), a sample of 42 people was selected. Analyze the relationship between the level of farmer group participation as well as the level of farmer participation using Spearman's Rank Correlation. (Sugiono, 2010). The hypothesis proposed is as follows:

Ho: $\mu = 0$, There is no correlation between the level of farmer group membership and the level of farmer group involvement.

Ha: $\mu \neq 0$, there is a positive correlation between the level of farmer group participation and the level of farmer group involvement.

decision rule:

Sig. $> \alpha$ (0,05) \rightarrow Accept H_0 (Reject H_a)

Sig. $\leq \alpha$ (0,05) \rightarrow Reject H_0 (Accept H_a).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The General Situation of Farmers

Half of the Kubang Koak farmers were between the ages of 41 and 60. According to Riyanti (2003) and Srivastava et al. (2003), between the ages of 40 and 60, middle adulthood is characterized by work performance. There really were 90.48 percent more male farmers than female farmers. Therefore, farmers should have attained peak performance or success in their Robusta coffee farming. In practice, however, Kubang Koak farmers' efforts to cultivate Robusta coffee have been insufficient. This was evident in land management and agricultural productivity. However, Kubang Koak farmers still had the capacity to advance themselves, their farmer organizations, and their fields.

Farmers' Levels of Education, Experience, and Cultivated Land

Education is the formal instruction provided in schools as educational institutions (Sianturi et al, 2018; Syukkur and Fauzan, 2021; Redja, 2001). At 83.33 percent, the highest level of formal education among members was elementary school education. Despite the fact that most farmers had only completed elementary school, they had received non-formal education in the form of coffee-related counseling and training. The number of farmers with the longest farming experience was 38.1 percent with farming experience between 4 and 6 years. The experience of farmers in farming shows how long they had been in agriculture, especially in coffee cultivation. Cultivated land for coffee farming was entirely owned by Perhutani, all of which were Perhutani's 49 hectares of land. The proportion of arable land area can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Farmer's Land Area

Land Area (ha)	Respondents (person)	Percentage (%)
0,14 - 0,76	21	50
0,77 - 1,38	13	31
1,39 - 2,00	8	19
Quantity	42	100

Source: Primary Data Analysis 2021

Role of Farmer Group on a Scale

Role is a dynamic aspect of the status or position (Agile, 1952; Soerjono, 2012; Benamar et al., 2017). Community organizations designed to boost agricultural yields are farmer groups (Soekartawi, 2011. Mahindapala et al. 2021). As according Regulation Number 67/PERMENTAN/SM.050/ 12/2016

issued by the Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia, farmer groups serve as a learning class, a vehicle for cooperation, and a production unit.

Table 2. Farmer Group Role Level Score

Indicator	Max. Score	Max. Score	Category Rating
As a Study Group	381	504	Moderate
As a Means of Collaboration	450	504	High
As Production Unit	351	504	Moderate
Total	1.182	1.512	High

Source: Primary Data Analysis 2021

Table 3. Evaluations of the Function of Farmers' Groups as Learning Classes

Item	Total Score	Maximum Score	Rating Category
1. Conduct regular meetings for group meetings or discussions	115	126	High
2. Conducting farmer training and outreach	120	126	High
3. Increase active participation in expressing opinions	70	126	Low
4. Assist and facilitate farmers' learning requirements	76	126	Moderate
Total	381	504	Moderate

Source: Primary Data Analysis 2021

The item containing Conducting farmer training and outreach received the highest score, 120. It was apparent that farmer groups had collaborated to satisfy the training and socialization needs of farmers with various parties. While the lowest score of 70 is on the topic of expressing opinions with greater frequency. It is possible that they belong to distinct groups of thinking. This is evident from Mr. Erwan's remarks at the village party. When BUMDES and the Kubang Koak farmer group met, he observed that group members generally did as they were told and accepted the choice of the majority.

Farmer's Groups as a Means of Collaboration

Table 4. Evaluations of the Function of Farmers' Groups as Learning Classes

Item	Total Score	Maximum Score	Category Rating
1. Fostering an environment of mutual understanding and trust among farmers	124	126	High
2. Increase teamwork enthusiasm	111	126	High
3. Improve the discipline and sense of responsibility of farmers	95	126	Moderate
4. Develop collaborations and business alliances with multiple parties.	120	126	High
Total	450	504	High

Source: Primary Data Analysis 2021

Table 4 demonstrates that the role of farmer groups as a mechanism for collaboration is significant. Fostering an environment of mutual understanding and trust among farmers received the maximum score of 124. Farmers who knew and trusted one another were affected by the existence of the Kubangkoak farmer group. As with group activities of mutual cooperation (gotong royong), farmers who already trust one another would build a cooperative spirit and strive for excellence in these activities. While the measures to improve the discipline and sense of responsibility of farmers, which were placed in the moderate category with a score of 95, must be increased once more. With 73 members, the Kubang Koak farmer group was included in the major farmer group. According to Bimo (2007) and Mergler et al, (2008), personal responsibility in a slightly large group would be less than that of an individual working alone.

Farmer's Groups as Production Units

Table 5. Evaluation of Farmer Groups as Production Units

Item	Total Score	Maximum Score	Category Rating
1. Making decisions about profitable production development	98	126	Moderate
2. Making farming technology more accessible to farmers	52	126	Low

3. Obey and implement agreements, both those generated internally and with other parties	90	126	Moderate
4. Improving sustainable productivity and natural resource and environmental sustainability	111	126	High
Total	351	504	Moderate

The highest number of points is awarded to the item that improving sustainable productivity and natural resource and environmental sustainability. In conducting agricultural activities, members adhere to the values of not damaging the environment and conserving and protecting natural resources. While the lowest score was assigned to the item that making farming technology more accessible to farmers, the only available tool was a peeling machine. This is because the group had not requested agricultural equipment support from the government, particularly the Sukaratu subdistrict authority.

Farmer Participation Rate

Table 6. Farmer Participation Rate Score

Indicator	Total Score	Max. Score	Category Rating
Planning Phase	164	252	Moderate
Implementation Phase	457	504	High
Supervision Phase	155	252	Moderate
Total	776	1.008	Moderate

Source: Primary Data Analysis 2021

Table 6 illustrates the participation rate of farmers in all group activities, including the medium category. Each indicator's specifics will be described as follows:

1. Planning Phase

Table 7. Score for Participation in the Planning Phase

Indicator	Total Score	Max. Score	Category Rating
1. Farmers' participation at farmer group meetings	94	126	Moderate
2. Involvement in farmer's group meetings actively submitting thoughts or proposals	70	126	Low
Total	164	252	Moderate

The category of farmer participation in the planning phase was modest, as shown in Table 7. The item with the highest score is Farmers' participation at farmer group meetings, which scored a 94. Groups of farmers always conduct meetings every two months. The majority of farmers attend three to four sessions per year, including farmers who infrequently attended group meetings. However, there were also dozens of farmers who regularly attend five to six sessions. In addition, it was undeniable that some farmers rarely attend meetings owing to unavoidable commitments or other interests. The lowest score, 70, is recorded for the item involvement in farmer's group meetings actively submitting thoughts or proposals. As group leader, Nanang comments on members who rarely give recommendations or initiatives. Some farmers stated that they rarely asked questions since it was preferable to simply do what was best for the group.

2. Implementation Phase

Table 8. Score for Participation Rate During the Implementation Phase

Indicator	Total Score	Maximum Score	Category Rating
1. Participation in carrying out planting activities	117	126	High
2. Engagement in harvesting and post-harvest activities	109	126	High
3. Participation in counseling activities	110	126	High
4. Participation in paying group fees	121	126	High
Total	457	504	High

3. Supervision Phase

The category of farmer engagement in the supervisory stage is modest, as shown in Table 9. The participation item yielded the highest score of 99 when evaluating the outcomes of various group activities. It appears that the group's activities encouraged farmers to engage in the evaluation process. The evaluation is more of an indication of whether the executed operations have been successful or whether there are still areas that want improvements. The component with the lowest score was participation in the supervision of group activities, which scored a 56. The farmers, who comprised the majority of group members, were not heavily active in supervising group activities. The majority of farmers believe that group activity supervision has become an obligation that was essentially the responsibility of the group's management.

Table 9. Score for Participation Rate in the Supervision Phase

Indicator	Total Score	Maximum Score	Category Rating
1. Supervision of participation in a group activity	56	126	Low
2. Participation in the evaluation of the outcomes of group activities	99	126	High
Total	155	252	Moderate

The relationship between the level of farmer group engagement and the level of farmer participation. Using Spearman Rank correlation analysis with SPSS 25.0, the association between the role of farmer groups and farmer participation was determined.

Table 9. Results of Spearman Rank Correlation Analysis

			The degree of farmers' participation in farmer groups	Rate of Farmer Participation
Spearman's rho	Farmer Group Role Level	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.262
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.047
	Correlation Coefficient	N	42	42
Farmer's Participation Rate	Farmer's Participation Rate	Correlation Coefficient	.262*	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.047.	
	Correlation Coefficient	N	42	42

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

In Table 9, the results of the Spearman Rank correlation test indicate a significance value of 0.047, which is less than the one-way significance value of 0.05 (0.047 < 0.05). Therefore, there is a positive correlation between the degree of farmer group membership and the level of coffee farmer engagement in Linggajati Village, Sukaratu District. According to the correlation coefficient value of 0.262, the degree of the correlation is categorized as low (Cohen et al, 2007 and Sugiyono, 2017).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The degree of farmer groups' roles and the level of participation among farmers are positively correlated. The use of farmer groups as a means of cooperating falls under the high category. Its function as a tool for learning and a tool for production units, however, still falls under the medium group. This demonstrates that the level of farmer participation in the planning and monitoring of the Robusta coffee growing techniques has not been as high as expected. On the other hand, there are high participation rates for activity implementation. In order to effectively deploy extension services to farmer groups, agricultural extension workers are needed to be able to offer alternate ways for resolving farmer-specific issues and further promote the tasks that farmer groups must do. By generating tasks that farmers want or need to complete, you may make farmer group sessions more enjoyable. More farmers will take part as a result of this.

FURTHER STUDY

In contrast, the level of farmer participation in all group activities was determined to be moderate by the study. The findings of the relationship study revealed a positive correlation between the level of the role of the farmer group and the level of farmer participation, with a correlation coefficient of 0.262 and a relationship strength classified as weak.

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