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**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN MAINTAINING VEGETABLE FARMERS  
BUSINESS OF SELO VILLAGE, SELO SUBDISTRICT, BOYOLALI REGENCY**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study intended to explain the role of social capital in maintaining the business of vegetable farmers in Selo Village, Selo District, Boyolali Regency. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. Six vegetable farmers in Selo Village who had fulfilled the criteria of determined informants were involved in this study. In-depth interviews with informants were taken as the sources of data, and strengthened by the study of documentation and literature studies and supported from the data of the Selo village. This study used an accidental sampling technique. The sampling technique, in this case, is vegetable farmers. The data were collected through observation and interviews. Triangulation techniques, namely data triangulation, researcher triangulation, methodological triangulation, and theoretical triangulation were used in this study to seek validity. Miles and Huberman models became the technique of data analysis. This study found that the social capital of vegetable farmers in Selo Village was at the meso (group) stage. Social capital is tied through the activities of farmer groups. Vegetable farmers incorporated into farmer groups since they had a common goal of member welfare through activities held in groups. Thus, social capital is important in maintaining vegetable business for vegetable farmers in Selo Village, Selo District, Boyolali Regency.

**KEYWORDS:** social capital, vegetable farmers, business endurance

**A. INTRODUCTION**

Indonesia is an agricultural country with the agricultural sector as the main livelihood, especially in rural areas. The agricultural sector currently no longer guarantees the fulfillment of clothing, food and community boards in the countryside. Increased demand is not in line with the income generated so that poverty continues to occur. According to the statistics center (BPS) in September 2017, the poor (population with per capita expenditure per month below the poverty line) in Indonesia reached 26.58 million people (10.12%), a decrease of 1.19 million people compared to the conditions in March 2017, which amounted to 27.77 million people (10.64 percent). The reduction in the poverty rate should be appreciated, but should not be satisfied because Indonesia still continues to fight against poverty.

Within these conditions, vegetable farmers do not change over their jobs but maintain their business. According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2017, the population of Indonesia mostly depends on their livelihoods to the agricultural sector, which is 88.50 percent of the total working population of Indonesian. Likewise in Central Java, which was the location of this study, the total population of Central Java who worked as many as 92.29 percents worked in the agricultural sector

(Central Statistics Agency, 2017). Based on these data, it shows that the amount of labor absorbed is dominated by the agricultural sector.

In maintaining an agricultural business cannot be separated from the role of social capital because social capital is called the power of development. Social capital can influence the community in solving problems that exist within the community. Social capital encourages communities independently to achieve maximum goals together. In general, social capital is defined as aspects of the organization such as norms, networks, and social beliefs that encourage collective action to achieve common goals and benefits. According to Fukuyama (1995), social capital is a capability that arises from general trust in a society or certain parts of it. Social capital refers to relationships of trust, togetherness, and exchange, shared rules and norms, interrelationships, networks within the community allowing each member to take collective action and secure other important resources.

The initiated forming of social capital is because of social interaction. Basically, social interaction is the key to all social life. Without social interaction, there will be no life together. The interaction will occur if it fulfills two conditions, namely the existence of social contact and the existence of communication. According to Soekanto (2012), social interaction is dynamic social relationships that involve relationships between individuals and individuals, individuals with groups and between groups and groups. With continuous social interaction, social relations are established. The perpetuated social relationship will result in a broad social network that will result in trust which ultimately entails reciprocity and information sharing. So in this case, social capital is important in maintaining vegetable business. The researchers relied on this background to examine the role of social capital in maintaining vegetable farmers business in Selo Village, Selo District, Boyolali Regency.

## **B. METHODOLOGY**

Based on the topics raised by the author, this study used a type of qualitative research with a qualitative descriptive approach or strategy. According to Nawawi (1994), the object of qualitative research is humans or everything that is influenced by humans. The object is examined under conditions as it is or in a natural state or naturally. Based on these opinions illustrate that qualitative research is centered on the object of research to be studied. Suyono (1985) explains that qualitative research is research with a method of collecting as much as possible detailed facts in depth about a problem or symptom in order to get an understanding of as much as possible the nature of a problem or symptom. Based on this opinion, qualitative research is a study that collected based on facts in the field.

The data that are used in this study were primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the main data in the study. The primary data in this study were vegetable farmers' informants in Selo Village, so the main data sources could be recorded through written records such as books or voice recording devices and secondary data, supporting data obtained from the Selo village.

Sampling technique was a technique used by researchers to select informants according to their research. In this study, the researchers used an accidental sampling technique. The sampling technique, in this case, was vegetable farmers. The technique of collecting data through observations made for the first time was only limited to the introduction of the research location and knowing the characteristics of the people, then making observations accompanied by interviews. The interview technique used was in-depth interviews; with the intention of getting as much data as possible when research doing the research. The interviews conducted here were direct interviews that were conducted by researchers towards vegetable farmers.

The validity of the data is a guarantee for the stability of conclusions and interpretations as a result of the study. The validity of the data in this study used triangulation techniques. Triangulation is the most commonly used method for increasing data validity in qualitative research. In relation to this, Patton states that there are four types of triangulation techniques, namely data triangulation, researcher triangulation, methodological triangulation and theoretical triangulation (Sutopo, 2006). Data analysis in this study used the Miles and Huberman Model that the activities in qualitative data analysis were carried out interactively and take place continuously until completed so that the data was saturated.

## C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

According to Wolf as cited in Agustin (2018), farmers can be divided into two parts, namely traditional small farmers called Peasant and farmer entrepreneurs called Farmers, peasants do not do agricultural business in the economic sense, which means not a farmer company but refer to agricultural households while farmers combine a system of production factors to increase profits as an agricultural company.

In this case, in Selo village, vegetable farmers have two groups, namely Peasant and Farmers. Where the vegetable farmers in Selo Village only work on agricultural land they have. But some farmers, besides working on their own agricultural land, also rent agricultural land to other farmers and then the results of the agriculture are divided into 2 but others only get benefit from the rented agricultural land.

The theory of social capital was delivered by several experts, Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam, Fukuyama, and Nan Lin. The theory form five expert have differences and similarities. This difference occurs because the focus of the analysis is different, resulting in different opinions. All of the theory from those experts has a similar aim that is the role of social relations in encouraging and forming productive actions. In social relations, there are trusts, networks, beneficial relations (reciprocity relationships), and norms that are agreed collectively. The principle of social capital is that only groups of society have a set of social and cultural values that value the importance of cooperation that can advance and develop with their own strength (Shahra, 2003). So the community

is expected to be able to develop with its own strength and be supported by the role of the government through farmer groups.

Based on this concept, Bourdieu defined social capital as the beginning of the formation of a network so as to produce relationships between individuals in society. Relationships that have occurred and perpetuated continuously will lead to mutual recognition between these individuals. Bourdieu, in his writing, distinguished the notion of social capital as consisting of economic capital, cultural capital and social capital. Economic capital is capital that can be converted into money and in the form of ownership. While cultural capital is the academic achievement of individuals. Pierre Bourdieu's concept of social capital shows that there are interdependencies between various types of other capital resources and as embedded in economic capital (Edwards, in Slamet, 2011). Coleman emphasizes two aspects of social structure in developing social capital. First, the aspect of social structure that creates confinement in a social network that makes each person interconnected in such a way that obligations and sanctions can be imposed on everyone who is a member of the network. Second, the existence of social organizations that used to achieve common goals (Shahra, 2003: 4). The wider the social network owned by vegetable farmers, the easier it is to develop a vegetable business. Conversely, if the narrower social network owned by vegetable farmers is likely to be difficult to maintain vegetable business. The social network of vegetable farmers in this study is seen from the micro, meso and macro stages. Because basically, the social capital theory of perpetuated social networks will generate trust and eventually cooperation will occur.

Understanding the existence of vegetable farmers' social capital at the conception and practical level of daily life cannot be separated from three main elements, namely network, trust, and reciprocity. These three elements are also found in vegetable farmers in Selo Village who are integrated into a system. Vegetable farmers in Selo village interact and cooperate in a system. The vegetable business in Selo Village continues because of a system that supports it from behind. The results of this study showed that the system came from farmer groups. The role of farmer groups in Selo Village greatly influences the sustainability of vegetable businesses. These three things can be explained as follows:

## **1. Social Network**

### **a. Participation**

In the perspective of social capital, participation is defined as the involvement of a person and or group in a process of communication or joint activities in certain social situations. In a practical setting, the concept of participation reflects the involvement of members both in planning and implementing an activity proportionally. The form of group member involvement can be reflected in the implementation of deliberations in order to determine work plans and group regulations. Deliberation is a medium of communication and information to make group policies in order to achieve the goals and interests of vegetable farmers. So in this case, the role of farmer groups in maintaining a business is important. The farmer group is a medium or place for vegetable farmers to

get information related to vegetable cultivation which will ultimately increase the income of the farmer.

## b. Solidarity

Solidarity within farmer groups in Selo Village can be seen in the implementation of group meetings. Solidarity is formed by all members who support group decisions even though there are parts that disagree. Solidarity is reflected in the willingness of group administrators and members to sacrifice for the benefit of the group. It is also reflected in the behavior of vegetable farmers when fellow farmers experience disaster. This feeling is shown to reduce the burden on farmers who experience disaster.

## c. Teamwork

The life of vegetable farmers in Selo Village is not individual but the group. Each agricultural group consists of: landowners (sometimes landowners stretching out as cultivators of agricultural land) and cultivators of agricultural land (farm laborers). In cooperation relations between superiors and subordinates are more of a colegalism and kinship, even though there is a classification between them according to the specifications of each work. While on the other hand in cooperation within farmer groups it can be seen the active participation of group members by paying less magic and compulsory savings, holding loan collection, making financial reports, and serving members who want to borrow and contribute in the form of agricultural tools or labor for the needs of farmer groups.

## 2. Trust

Trust is caused by continuous interaction. At the level of the vegetable farmers group, the trust that is generated is in the form of the trust of vegetable farmers to fellow farmers through the borrowing of agricultural equipment and seeds. Whereas for middlemen, vegetable farmers in the village entrust the agricultural products to the middlemen who are paid after the agricultural products are sold. It can be said that there is no price agreement at the beginning of the transaction.

## 3. Reciprocity

A mutual exchange is conceptualized as a reciprocal relationship between two parties who both have rights and obligations. At the level of the farmer group, reciprocal cases are seen based on buying and selling agricultural produce among the actors of the transaction. In this case, it happens to vegetable farmers with middlemen or traders. Many cases in the field show the relationship between buying and selling vegetables from farmers to middlemen or traders who are "binding" so that vegetable farmers in Selo Village when the harvest arrived, they immediately sell agricultural produce to middlemen.

The results of the research were carried out in Selo Village, Selo District, Boyolali Regency to the role of social capital in maintaining vegetable farmers business showed the potential for social capital as follows:

1. Patron-Clients born of trust are one of the social capitals. The existence of mutual trust that has been built between several groups of vegetable farmers is the basis of the desire to form social networks which are ultimately established in the form of patron-client institutions.
2. Helping attitude is the thing that functions economically and also functions socially in terms of religious rituals, especially when there is death. Economic functions can be seen from the amount of money collected, both voluntary and mandatory donated by members. While social functions can be seen in the form of solidarity from fellow citizens who feel the same and together to collaborate in carrying out and doing things.

Efforts to maintain business through social capital can be done by directing the community to grow and develop by itself. But this is also inseparable from the role of the government, namely the agricultural service which is a forum for the community to obtain information and training related to vegetables so that the efforts that have been made can run according to the prepared plan. So the importance of community participation in activities carried out by the agricultural service through farmer groups, with vegetable farmers getting the right direction related to vegetables and finally increasing the income of farmers to continue to maintain their agricultural business.

## D. CONCLUSION

From the above description, it can be concluded that the social capital of vegetable farmers in Selo Village is at the meso (group) stage. Social capital is interwoven through the activities of farmer groups. Vegetable farmers incorporated into farmer groups because they have a common goal of member welfare through activities held in groups. With the existence of farmer groups, vegetable farmers have a social network because basically social networks originate from social interactions carried out between vegetable farmers. The wider the social network that is owned, the easier it is to develop a vegetable business. The social network that is owned creates trust among vegetable farmers so that in the end arises mutual attitudes, please help and share information about vegetables. So it is important for the role of social capital in maintaining the vegetable business in vegetable farmers in Selo Village, Selo District, Boyolali Regency.

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