

## **ORDER OF SAUDAGAR AND POWER RELATIONS ON AGRICULTURAL FARMERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The production of chili commodity farming in Giri Mulyo Village, Kayu Aro Barat district is the largest chili producing area in Kerinci Regency. In addition to chili commodities, this area is also a producer of commodity potatoes and other agricultural products such as shallots, cabbage, mustard greens, tomatoes, and other types of vegetables that are marketed to various regions. This paper aims to uncover the factors of the survival of chili farmers over the power relations to merchants until now. This study uses a qualitative method with data collection techniques of observation, in-depth interviews and documentation studies. The results showed that the dependence of farmers' prices was very high on traders, but actually farmers suffered losses. Furthermore, the rules and access to trading systems on the market are not economical and in the end chili farmers are reluctant to sell their crops directly to the market. Finally, the relationship between chili farmers and merchants is very close, because the process requires each other, the term is called a patron-client relationship.

**Keywords: Power Relations, Trading, Chili Farmers, Merchants**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Agriculture is the driving force of the National economy. In addition to aiming at fulfilling the lives of the people, the sector is also useful to boost the image of Indonesia in the eyes of the world, and it is much developed compared that other sectors. This is because the agricultural sector is one of the human activities related to meeting basic needs, namely food needs (Jamaludin, 2015). Based on the records of the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), in the second quarter of 2017, the agricultural sector continued to make a positive contribution to the Indonesiaeconomy. According to BPS, it can be seen that Indonesia's gross domestic product (GDP) amounted to Rp 3,366.8 trillion. When viewed from the production side, agriculture is the second most influential sector

in economic growth, after the processing industry. The position of the agricultural sector is still higher other sectors, such as trade and construction (Kompas, 09/30/2017).

One of the commodities from the horticultural subsector of agriculture is chili. Until now, the supply of large chili from production centers throughout Indonesia reached 91,270 tons in November 2016, which exceeded consumer needs in the range of 75,761 tons, resulting in excess supply or a surplus of 15,509 tons. The supply of shallots in November 2016 was a surplus of 21,305 tons, supply from production centers reached 103,677 tons above consumer needs around 82,362 tons did not need to import for these two commodities (Ministry of Agriculture, 2016).

One of the attractions of the development of chili plants for farmers lies in their high economic value. Demand for chili products from time to time tends to increase continuously so that it can be relied upon as a non-oil and gas export commodity. The development of the export volume of fresh chili in 2000-2016 tended to increase with an average growth rate during the period 2000-2016 of 12.36% per year (Ministry of Agriculture, 2016). In recent years it has been proven that chili is among the six major commodities of fresh vegetables exported by Indonesia, namely together with shallots, tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage, and cauliflower (Rukmana, 2005).

In this regard, there was a study conducted by Bayu Aditya in 2016 entitled "Capital Owner Relations with Power in Red Onion Trading in Nganjuk Regency". Explain that the manifestation of shallot trading in Nganjuk Regency includes two processes. The process includes the production and distribution processes, with marketing priorities in the distribution process. Onion trading as part of the agropolitan area program policy, which aims to further raise the name of the onion Nganjuk out of the region and improve the welfare of the peasant community, but its implementation actually benefits for the owners of capital and controls the trading of shallots.

Another study by Iwan Zaenul Fuad *et al* (2015) entitled "Middlemen Shackles for Catfish Cultivation Farmers". As a result, in the trade in peasant commodities, at the production level there is a striking patron-client relationship between peasant and middlemen. The emergence of this relationship was triggered by the unavailability of capital owned by farmers in meeting their production needs. Furthermore, the research was conducted by Ronny E. Putra and Hempri Suyatna in 2018 with the title "Power

Genealogy in the Policy of Development of Organic Agriculture in" Pardikan Region "Java". The results show that the power genealogy (power of discourse) has enabled the authorities to dominate the development of organic agriculture so that it has not been effective in providing improved welfare and access to farmer productivity. The fact that from the planning stage through to the implementation of the power of interests and mobilizing actors dominates the arena of the policy of developing organic agriculture.

Kerinci Regency is one of the regions which is the center of red chilli commodity production in Jambi Province. The red chili production area in Kerinci Regency is located in Kayu Aro and Kayu Aro Districts. Kayu Aro Barat Subdistrict is an agricultural center in Kerinci Regency because the Geographical and Climate conditions have the potential to develop the Agriculture sector. Agro-climate conditions of this area are suitable for planting various vegetable crops, such as cabbage, potatoes, chili, onions, and cauliflower. The chili marketed by farmers in this area is fresh red chili, critical red chili, light green chili and chili which is consumed as vegetables by consumers. The number of chili production in 2015 in Kerinci Regency amounted to 284,209 Quintals or more than half of them were harvested and produced from Kayu Aro District (BPS Kerinci Regency, 2016).

But in reality, with the increasing number of chili production in Kerinci Regency, prices at the farm level are even lower and as a result many farmers are losing money. This is a dilemma condition. Even though chili is a superior commodity in Kerinci Regency because it is a commodity with the second largest amount of production after potatoes. Why this can happen and what factors play in forming prices at the farmer level, this is an interesting side and needs to be explored in research.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method. Qualitative research is a research method used to examine the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is a key instrument, the technique of data collection is triangulated (combined), data analysis is inductive, and the results of qualitative research emphasize the meaning rather than generalization. Objects in qualitative research are natural objects, or natural settings.

Natural objects are objects that are what they are not manipulated by researchers with this conditions when researchers enter objects, after being in an object and after leaving the object, are relatively unchanged (Sugiyono, 2012). Data collection tools in this study are observation, in-depth interviews and documentation studies. Data analysis in this study was carried out qualitatively which was more emphasized on the interpretation of research. Data obtained in the field, both in the form of primary data and in the form of secondary data are recorded with field notes. The process of data analysis stages is by reducing data, presenting data and verifying or drawing conclusions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Giri Mulyo Village is one of the villages in Kayu Aro Barat sub-district which is one of the centers of red chili production in Kerinci Regency. However, this does not guarantee that the farmers get a good selling price. The price of chili is still largely determined by merchants and traders. In terms of the existing chili plant area, Giri Mulyo Village has chili plants that are still ready to harvest covering an area of 87 hectares. However, this vast area has not been maximized by farmers because of the still difficult capital and some obstacles experienced by farmers themselves, this is as explained in previous findings.

In the process of trading carried out by farmers, they still experience a lot of losses, this is because the process of selling chili production to merchants has passed many rules that make it difficult for farmers. On this occasion the Head of the Program and Horticulture Sub-directorate of the Kerinci Food Crops and Horticulture Service, Mr. Heriawan said, most of these farmers could not determine the selling price or follow the market price of chilli because they were already bound by cooperation with merchants or middlemen who came from outside the area.

The selling price of chili by the merchants is also due to the previous farmers getting loan capital from the merchants. Thus it is bound, and the farmers have to sell to merchants, and the price is also determined by the merchant, added Heriawan. According to Mr. Heriawan, the efforts were by the regional government at this time are also not yet maximal. The Government itself cannot intervene too far in the issue of

chili prices at the farm level. The Regional Government only adds agricultural products (multiplied) to deal with existing price fluctuations. In addition, the Government also added physical facilities and infrastructure in physical form.

The plan of the Kerinci Regency Food Crops and Horticulture Service itself in dealing with turmoil and price problems at the farmer level, the Government will provide tactical funds to farmers in the village in the form of social assistance (*BANTUAN SOSIAL*) such as fertilizers, medicines, seeds and so on. When the price of chili is at its lowest point the farmers can only surrender, coupled with the price game made by the merchants. In this case it cannot take this problem seriously. The social assistance provided by the government which mean anything to the problem of the snares that traders have done to these farmers.

This shows that chilli farmers are snared by merchants when farmers start planting chili until the harvest season and sell it to the merchant. all of them have been monopolized by merchants. Although the price given by merchants to farmers is high, the price does not favor the farmers themselves. Moreover, it must be sold to the direct market at a price far below it. For example, the price of chili on the market reaches IDR 25 thousand per kg, and the price given by merchants to farmers reaches IDR 27-29 thousand per kg. Therefore that price the farmers only get a very small profit, complained one of the informants Mr. Prihandono one of chili farmer in Giri mulyo.

In various rural areas, it has become a natural thing that farmers are always the helpless in bargaining, let alone rejecting prices that have been determined or mocked by merchants. Unlike the traders, brokers, and merchants who often the price, starting from determining the criteria for chili, regulating the supply of chili, and the most saddest forcing farmers to accept the lowest selling price of chili commodities. As the main producer of chili and other agricultural commodities, farmers often receive the thinnest share of profit margins. Even though all the risks that might occur, starting from pest attacks and crop failures or because of weather changes so far have always been the responsibility of the farmers themselves. As for merchants, the most important thing is how to get the best quality chili commodities from farmers at low prices.

It can be concluded that the pattern of chili trading to the market directly has inefficient access for farmers. It can be seen that the many criteria faced by farmers when they are going to sell to the market, the existing regulations certainly make farmers reluctant to sell

their chili, then the farmers only have the nature of accepting the existing trading system, although this does not give benefit for them. On the other hand, chili farmers do not seem to have the same opportunity to enjoy the rising prices of chillies on the market because of their weak bargaining position. The chilli farmers who borrowed some of the capital from planting it to the merchants there, usually they could not do anything because they had been caught up in the already formed merchant and deliberately constructed to pressure the chili farmers.

On the other hand, when the number of chili production is abundant, the farmers have been confirmed to be the most disadvantaged because they have to bear enormous losses due to the decline in prices of agricultural commodities. Likewise, when the price of agricultural commodities improves, especially chili, farmers usually will not take part in enjoying the rising prices that occur in the market because those who take large profits are traders and wholesalers and intermediaries who have mastered the game of chili prices on the market.

Thus can be concluded that under any conditions, whether it is the price of chili at the highest and lowest price position the farmers cannot fully enjoy their harvest and profit. In the village of Giri Mulyo Sendiri, chili farmers especially chili farmers who have small capital can be said that no one sells their chili to the market directly, they only sell their crops to their merchant customers. In accordance with the previous explanation, the farmer has been entangled with various assistance that has been given to them for planting capital.

In general, farmers in Indonesia and especially farmers in the village of Giri Mulyo, have not yet benefited from the results of farming that they did as they should. The same goes for chili farmers. Especially if this is related to plant capital and the time they spend in this series of chili farming that takes quite a long time, which is approximately 12 months. The pattern of the chain of trade determines the size of the profits they receive. The more groups involved in the three groups of the lower selling price were offered by farmers. This was also found in the field, that there were merchants who came from outside the village of Giri Mulyo who came to intentionally buy farm produce from the farmers.

Most of them come not only to look for chili commodities, but also to look for other vegetable products such as radishes, shallots, beans, mustard greens, tomatoes,

chives, soups, and so on. But if it is calculated that the most sought after by merchants from outside is red chili. The red chili obtained will be marketed outside the area and Sungai Penuh City, which is the main market center in Kerinci Regency. Outside merchants come to look for vegetables, especially chili because Kayu Aro Barat District is a center for agricultural production in Kerinci Regency. If we look further, actually the merchants and traders who are there also experience a slight loss from accommodating the harvest from these farmers, especially chili, because the chili is not durable stored in this free air. The risks that must be borne by merchants and traders are the declining quality and price of the goods if left too long, so that inevitably many merchants play this chili commodity price to avoid various losses that exist.

James Scott said the Patron-Client relationship is a special relationship between two parties where the party with a higher economic status uses its influence and resources to protect and benefit those with lower socioeconomic status. In this connection, rewards given by clients in the form of assistance or support include services to patrons (Aini, 2009). The factor that causes farmers to survive under the rule of merchants is the emergence of Patron-Client relations and the trusting relationship between chili farmers and merchants themselves. This is in accordance with the informant's explanation, namely merchants that they on average help chili farmers with small planting capital because they feel concerned about the condition of their economic conditions which are not strong enough to fund this chili which is below average, even though they have done many ways and effort so that they can be independent in doing their farming, but because merchants feel concerned about them, merchants help them with the aim of helping their economy.

The factors that cause farmers to remain under the rule of merchants are due to the emergence of Patron-Client relationships and mutual trust between the two, or the care given by merchants (capital owners) to customers, namely the chili farmers. With the presence of merchants (capital owners) who help them, the needs of the economy and planting capital and other needs are met little, without looking for other ways. Merchant said that if the chili farmers who have become subscribers will be assisted easily, the relationship makes mutual need between merchants and chilli farmers

become more familiar because of the caring that exists between the two so that this "social insurance" is perpetuated in the community.

The form of social insurance that is available to the owner of the field with a pick-up farm worker is the existence of a deep relationship or relationship between the two parties. For example, as done by chilli farmers if you want to owe with merchants for urgent needs can be done at any time with unlimited amounts and time. This creates a trust between merchants and chili farmers themselves.

Relationships in such a way can be seen from within chili farmers and merchants who share a mutual dependency. The bond between patrons and clients are form of social insurance that is ubiquitous among farmers that another far-reaching step in social distance. A patron by definition is a person who is in a position to help his clients. Clients who rely on the protection of a more influential patron, are also obliged to be loyal and always ready to do whatever work is given to him.

Furthermore, sustainable relationship between chilli farmers to merchants can be detrimental to the farmers themselves. Bahwasannya if the power relations continuously without being realized by the chilli farmers indirectly occur economic exploitation carried out by traders to chili farmers. Because merchants already felt a lot of help to farmers, the merchant felt he had the right to use his power to chili farmers to get a big profit. Thus what happened in Giri Mulyo indirectly the chili farmers were exploited and they received the treatment.

The resilience of chili farmers to merchants is; First, price dependence on merchants is very high. In addition, the high price of chili does not make the profits obtained by the large chili farmers. Second, the rules and access to trading systems on the market are not economical. Farmers get symbolic violence from the criteria of chili desired by market traders and merchants, and chili farmers do not receive the benefits they should receive. Third, there is a trusting relationship. Patron-client. There is a relationship of mutual trust and special relationship that is so deep between chili farmers and merchants, the special relationship that exists, is one of the factors in the survival of chili farmers to merchants.



## CONCLUSION

The resilience of chili farmers to merchants is; First, price dependence on merchants is very high. In addition, the high price of chili does not make the profits obtained by chili farmers large. Second, the rules and access to trading systems on the market are not economical. Farmers get symbolic violence from the criteria of chili desired by market traders and merchants, and chili farmers do not receive the benefits they should receive. Third, there is a trusting relationship. Patron-client. There is a relationship of mutual trust and special relationship that is so deep between chili farmers and merchants, the special relationship that exists, is one of the factors in the survival of chili farmers to merchants.

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