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Level of Interest and Satisfaction of Farmers on Rice Farming Partnerships in Pamarican District, Ciamis Regency

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Abstract. Partnership is an alliance between two or more parties within an agreed period of time to form a cooperative bond in order to achieve benefits for all parties. This study aims to identify the level of interest and satisfaction of rice farmers with the partnership. The research was carried out in Pamarican District, Ciamis Regency from July to September 2021. The location was chosen purposively with consideration of the implementation of a partnership between rice farmers and PT. Mitra Desa Pamarican (PT. MDP) in Pamarican District. The study used a qualitative approach with the number of respondents as many as 40 farmers involved in the partnership process. The level of interest and satisfaction of farmers with the partnership program was identified with a Likert scale (four scales) and analysis using an interactive model analysis mode covering the process of data collection, data reduction and drawing conclusions. The score of the interests (expectations) of farmers towards the partnership ranged from 3,256 to 3,641 in the important category. The attributes of farmers' interests to the partnership with the highest value are the provision of production facilities (Attribute 4), assistance in handling pests and diseases (attribute 5), and assistance in farming costs (Attribute 8). The average score of farmer satisfaction with the partnership program is 2,459 with the classification quite satisfied. The partnership attributes that have the highest satisfaction are farm cost assistance (Attribute 8) with a score of 3,256, skill improvement/extension (Attribute 3) with a score of 2,769, and timeliness of farming costs (Attribute 9) with a score of 2,667. **Keywords:** partnership, rice farmers, PT. MDP, interests, satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural development is not only to increase productivity to achieve food security, but also to improve the welfare of farmers ¹ Various problems that cause the low welfare of farmers, especially in rural areas, are the main problems in agricultural development today ². Various problems faced by rural farmers include ownership and exploitation of agricultural land which is relatively narrow and the places are scattered ³, lack of capital to purchase production facilities ⁴, farmers' position in marketing is very weak ⁵, and human resources of Indonesian farmers are still relatively low ⁶. This problem causes the level of the rural economy to always be at its lowest point.

One way to overcome problems in agriculture is the integration of farmers into sectors that are considered more modern. This integration aims to change the mindset of farmers from conventional farmers to modern farmers by developing agribusiness-based agriculture ⁷. One form of integration in agribusiness is a partnership program between farmers and other parties to support the welfare of farmers ⁸. The concept of partnership studies is not something new in the development of agribusiness in Indonesia. In recent years, farmer partnerships with various parties, including the government, private sector and non-profit institutions have been carried out ⁹. The ultimate goal of the partnership is to realize resource development and farmer welfare ¹⁰.

In Ciarnis Regency, West Java Province, there is a partnership between farmers and PT MDP (Mitra Desa Pamarican). PT MDP is a government-initiated corporation in the form of a Limited Liability Company (PT), which was established and started operating in October 2018. The coverage area is Pamarican District which consists of 14 villages. This company was founded on the initiative of BUMN in the Digitalization and Farmer Entrepreneurship Program, in collaboration with a combination of Gapoktan and Bumdes in the sub-district. The founders of the company are PT Mitra Bumdes Nusantara (MBN), Gapoktan Bersama, and Bumdes Bersama with potential corporate services for 6,200 farmers in 152 farmer groups. The parties involved outside the corporation are Bank Mandiri as the provider of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and the daily management assistant ¹¹.

The partnership carried out between PT MDP and farmers is expected to solve the problems faced by farmers and provide benefits, both for farmers in Pamarican District and companies. Ideally a partnership aims to grow, improve the ability of the role of farmers so that farmers' welfare is expected to increase with the concept of this partnership. However, in reality, it is often found that these partnerships have not been able to meet expectations. There are often failures and various obstacles and problems in partnership activities. Constraints that often occur in partnerships include the low quality of human resources ¹², and the lack of commitment in implementing the business partnership mechanism, both by farmers and by partner companies ¹³.

Given the constraints in partnerships, it is necessary to study the implementation of partnerships, which aims to determine the implementation of partnerships that occur between farmers and partner companies and to determine the level of satisfaction of farmers with partnership services received by farmers, so that later there will be ways to improve the quality of service to farmers. farmers so that farmers are satisfied. This study aims to analyze the level of interest and satisfaction of rice farmers with partnerships in Pamarican District, Ciarnis Regency.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses the case study method, which is a series of scientific activities carried out intensively, in detail and in depth about an event to gain in-depth knowledge about an event ¹⁴. This research was conducted in Pamarican District, Ciarnis Regency from July to September 2021. The location determination was carried out with the consideration that there was a partnership in the research location. The type of data used consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through interviews with farmers. The method of determining the sample uses purposive sampling which is a technique for determining samples from a population that is determined intentionally with certain requirements ¹⁵. The number of research respondents was 40 respondents (farmers) who joined the partnership of PT. MDP. The data were analyzed using an interactive model analysis model which includes the process of data collection, data reduction and drawing conclusion:

Attributes of Partnership Interest and Satisfaction

The level of importance (expectations/hopes) and satisfaction of farmers with the partnership program are identified with 12 partnership attributes. The partnership attributes consist of various aspects from upstream to downstream. Several aspects of the partnership attributes analyzed include aspects of capital assistance, assistance for farming production facilities, counseling and training assistance, pest and disease control assistance, marketing assistance, selling price determination, and so on. Specifically, the partnership attributes used in this study are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Attributes of Partnership Interest and Satisfaction

Attribute	Attribute Description
1	Continuity of rice supply from farmers to PT MDP
2	Cultivation risk sharing
3	Improved skills/counseling
4	Provision of production facilities
5	Assistance in the management of pests and diseases
6	Weed handling assistance
7	Assistance on water availability/drought
8	Farming fee assistance
9	Timeliness of giving farm fees
10	Respond to all complaints/problems
11	Transport of crops
12	The price given by PT. MDP

Assessment of the level of importance and satisfaction using a Likert scale from a score from one to four. The Likert scale is a psychometric scale commonly used in questionnaires, and is the most widely used scale in survey research. There are two forms of questions that use Likert, namely positive questions to measure positive interest, and negative questions to measure negative interest. Positive questions were scored 4, 3, 2, and 1; while the form of negative questions was given a score of 1, 2, 3, and 4. The form of the Likert scale answers consisted of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree^{16,17}

Farmers involved in the partnership process will score one to four on each attribute of the partnership. A score of 1 means the attribute is very unimportant or very dissatisfied, a score of two means not important or not satisfied, a score of three means important or satisfied, and a score of four means very important or very satisfied. This study did not use sufficient classification (score 3), because it was feared that farmers would choose sufficient categories for each attribute so that it would cause answer bias. However, if the score for each attribute ranges from 2.4 to 2.6, then the attribute is included in the sufficient category.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of the Partnership between PT. MDP

PT MDP is a government-initiated corporation in the form of a Limited Liability Company (PT), which was established and started operating in October 2018. The coverage area is Pamarican District which consists of 14 villages. This company was founded on the initiative of BUMN in the Digitalization and Farmer Entrepreneurship Program, in collaboration with a combination of Gapoktan and Bumdes in the sub-district. The founders of the company are PT Mitra Bumdes Nusantara (MBN), Gapoktan Bersama, and Bumdes Bersama with potential corporate services for 6,200 farmers in 152 farmer groups. Parties involved outside the corporation are Bank Mandiri as the provider of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and accompanying day-to-day management. The assistance received from Bank Mandiri was in the form of RMU and working capital of around Rp. 16 billion¹¹.

PT Mitra Desa Pamarican (PT MDP) was formed as a manifestation of the Government's concern for efforts to improve community welfare, especially farmers and rural community businesses. The majority of PT MDP's shares are owned by a subsidiary of BUMN, namely PT Mitra Bumdes Nusantara and partly owned by the community in Pamarican District, represented by Gapoktan Bersama and Bumdes Bersama. PT MDP is expected to be the representative or extension of the farmers in joint entrepreneurship in agriculture and community business. From the farmers for PT MDP and PT MDP for the farmers. Therefore, the existence of PT MDP is expected, among others, to be able to increase farmers' access to capital, insurance, better planting planning, selection of superior rice seeds, more innovative planting and maintenance patterns, more efficient harvesting methods, higher levels of grain purchases, better, able to process unhulled rice into high-quality rice in a modern way and with broad rice marketing channels.

The establishment and operation of PT MDP is fully supported by the Ministry of BUMN and Bank Mandiri through the Farmer Entrepreneurship Program to ensure that PT MDP's business management runs in a professional manner and sustains success in improving the welfare of farmers. In its formation, PT MDP was also supported by practitioners in the rice field, academics in agriculture, Fintech Bank Mandiri, BUMN in agriculture and the Ciamis Regency Agriculture Service. PT MDP's mission is to create added value for the best farming business to improve the welfare of farmers and village businesses, and its vision is to run a 4-stage farmer entrepreneurship program (pre-planting, planting, harvesting and post-harvesting) in a modern way and professional business management (<https://mitradesapamarican.com/>).

Level of Interest of Farmers in Partnership

The level of interest (expectations) of farmers on the partnership is grouped into four classes, namely very unimportant, unimportant, important and very important. The results of the study illustrate that the level of interest (expectations) of farmers towards the partnership is at an important level (Figure 1). Farmers have high hopes and expectations for partnerships in order to increase productivity and income of rice farming. The value of the interests (expectations) of farmers towards the program ranged from 3,256 to 3,641. The partnership attributes that have the highest value are the provision of production facilities (Attribute 4), partner assistance in handling pests and diseases (attribute 5), and assistance with farming costs (Attribute 8).

The partnership program is expected to be able to overcome farming problems, such as in the aspect of providing farming production facilities. The availability of farming production facilities such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides is a major factor in the success of rice farming. The limited means of farming production will affect the success and productivity of rice farming. As is well known, one of the classic problems of rice farming is the limited availability of fertilizer before the time of fertilization. Delay in fertilization causes a decrease in rice productivity. In addition to production facilities, partnerships are expected to help overcome rice plant pests. Pests and diseases if not handled properly can reduce productivity and crop failure ⁸. Therefore, it is necessary to support partnerships in the aspect of handling rice pests and diseases quickly and accurately.

The partnership attribute with the lowest value of interest (expectation) is assistance on water availability/drought (Attribute 7), transportation of harvested produce (Attribute 11), and response to all complaints/problems (Attribute 10). The low level of interest (expectations) of farmers in the attribute of assistance to lack of water/dryness is due to the large number of farmers' land in the irrigation area so that water is always sufficient. In addition, currently most farmers have water pumps both individually and collectively to overcome water shortages in the dry season. Another aspect that is considered less important by farmers in the partnership program is transportation support and response to farmer complaints/problems. Both of these things are included in the partnership attribute which scores low because farmers consider that these two things are not important aspects that affect the level of rice productivity. As is known, the main problems in rice farming are the availability of production facilities, limited capital, and the low selling price of grain ¹⁹.

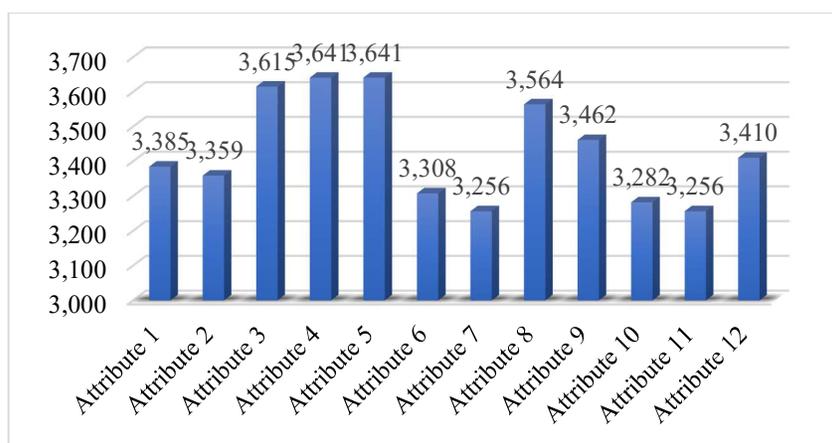


FIGURE 1. The level of interest (expectations) of farmers on the partnership program
Score Description: 1. Very Unimportant, 2: Not Important, 3: Important, 4: Very Important

Farmer Satisfaction Level with Partnership

In general, the level of satisfaction of farmers with the partnership program is lower than the level of interest (expectations). The average score of farmer satisfaction from all partnership attributes is 2,459 (in enough category). However, there are several attributes that have a low satisfaction score, namely the price given by the company (Attribute 12) with a score of 2,051, the provision of farming production facilities (Attribute 4) with a score of 2,128, and transportation of harvested produce (Attribute 11) with a score of 2,128.

For farmers, the selling price of grain is very important. The selling price of grain will affect farm income and revenue. The low selling price of grain will have an impact on decreasing farmers' income and making it difficult for farmers to pay for farming capital, as well as paying for other needs. This in the end has an impact on the low satisfaction of farmers with the partnership program. The selling price of grain is one of the important aspects that affect farmer satisfaction in the partnership program. The low selling price of agricultural products will affect the level of satisfaction of farmers with the partnership program as a whole ^{20,21}.

The partnership attributes that have the highest satisfaction are farm cost assistance (Attribute 8) with a score of 3,256, skill improvement/extension (Attribute 3) with a score of 2,769, and timeliness of farming costs (Attribute 9) with a score of 2,667. A score of 3,256 on the attribute of farm cost assistance means that farmers are satisfied with the performance of these attributes. High farmer satisfaction in the attributes of farming cost assistance is due to the

existence of farming capital assistance by the company through the Mandiri Amal Insani (MAI Foundation) program which is a charity and zakat foundation under the coordination of Bank Mandiri. Farming capital assistance provided by the company to farmers does not have interest so that it does not burden farmers in the process of returning the capital. This has an impact on the high level of satisfaction in the partnership between farmers and companies.:

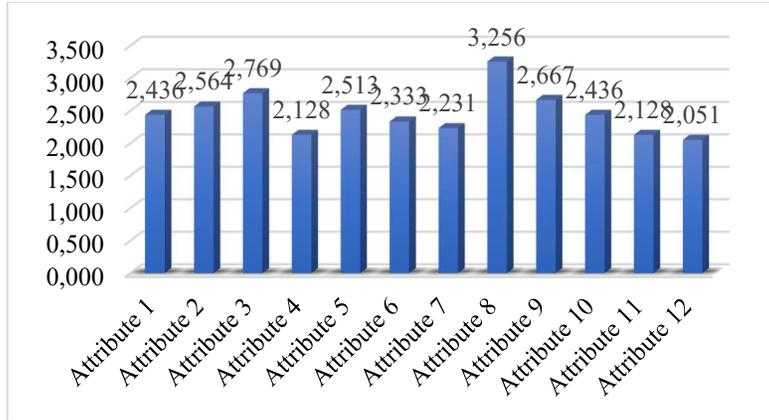


FIGURE 2. Farmer satisfaction level with partnership program
 Score Description: 1. Very Dissatisfied, 2: Dissatisfied, 3: Satisfied, 4: Very Satisfied

Gap between Interest Level and Satisfaction in Partnership Program

There is a high gap between the level of interest (expectations/expectations) and farmers' satisfaction with the partnership program. The average score of the interests (expectations) of farmers towards the partnership is 3,432 while the average score of farmer satisfaction with the partnership is 2,459. The importance score (expectation) of 3,432 is in the high category (towards very high). This score means that farmers have high expectations that partnerships can increase farmer productivity and welfare through the various programs provided. Some of the programs/activities that are highly expected by farmers from this partnership program are support for the provision of production facilities, training programs and skills improvement, as well as assistance in controlling pests and diseases in rice plants.

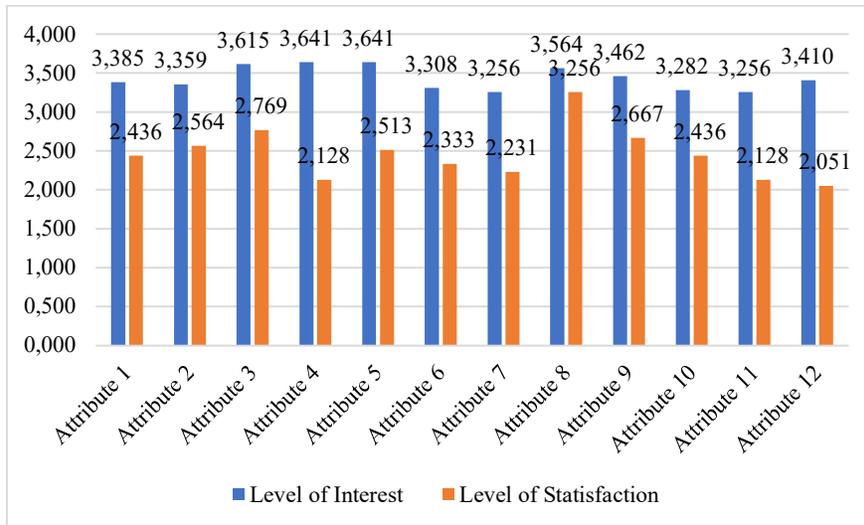


FIGURE 3. Gap between the interests and satisfaction of farmers in the partnership program

Unfortunately, the high expectations of farmers are still not in line with the level of farmers' satisfaction with the partnership program. From the aspect of satisfaction, the average score of farmer satisfaction with the partnership program is 2,459 or quite satisfied. There is a high gap between the level of interest (expectations) and the level of satisfaction of farmers with the partnership program. This illustrates that the partnerships implemented have not been able to meet the expectations and expectations of the community. However, from the aspect of financing/assistance on farm costs, farmers are satisfied with the performance of the partnership. This is due to funding assistance and assistance for farming production facilities from partners. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the performance of partnerships on several important attributes that directly have an impact on increasing farm productivity and the welfare of rice farmers in Pamarican District.

In addition, although in general the level of satisfaction of farmers with partnerships is still not satisfactory, this study becomes an evaluation that the implementation of partnerships between farmers and companies needs improvement in various aspects. Although the level of farmers' satisfaction with the partnership program has not been satisfactory, we cannot say that the partnership program is not a success, let alone a failure. The partnership program in Pamarican District, Ciamis Regency is in a good direction. There are several attributes of the partnership that have benefited farmers, such as the support of interest-free farming models. In addition, the implementation of the partnership which has only been running for about 2.5 years is the reason that faces the need for improvement in various aspects so that the partnership can be satisfactory and have a significant impact on increasing productivity and farmers' welfare. From these findings, in the future the company is expected to improve several aspects of the partnership to increase farmer satisfaction with the performance of the partnership. Continuous improvement needs to be done in order to achieve satisfaction and fair benefits for both.

CONCLUSION

The level of interest (expectations) of farmers on the partnership ranged from 3,256 to 3,641 in the important category. The partnership attributes that have the highest value are the provision of production facilities (Attribute 4), assistance in handling pests and diseases (attribute 5), and assistance in farming costs (Attribute 8). The average score of farmer satisfaction with the partnership program is 2,459 with the classification quite satisfied. The level of satisfaction of farmers with the partnership program is lower than the level of interest (expectations). The low level of satisfaction is due to not achieving several important attributes expected by farmers, such as the low price given (Attribute 12) with a score of 2,051 and the limited supply of production facilities (Attribute 4) with a score of 2,128. The partnership attributes that have the highest satisfaction are farm cost assistance (Attribute 8) with a score of 3,256, skill improvement/extension (Attribute 3) with a score of 2,769, and timeliness of farming costs (Attribute 9) with a score of 2,667. The need to improve the quality of partnership programs to increase satisfaction and increase productivity of rice farming in Pamarican District, Ciamis Regency

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