

# Social Relations between Owner Farmers and Farm Workers

Umi Kalsum<sup>1</sup>, Melcian Febrilia Pagalu<sup>2</sup>, Siti Raodha Muttalib<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Tadulako University, Indonesia. E-mail: [umikalsum@gmail.com](mailto:umikalsum@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Tadulako University, Indonesia. E-mail: [melcian0101@untad.ac.id](mailto:melcian0101@untad.ac.id)

<sup>3</sup> Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Tadulako University, Indonesia. E-mail: [raodhamuttalib@gmail.com](mailto:raodhamuttalib@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** Social relations between owner farmers and tenant farmers are not always exploitative - conflict, but can be harmonious - functional. The purpose of this study was to determine the social relationship and to determine the social dynamics between landowners and tenant farmers in Meli Village, Balaesang District, Donggala Regency. This research was conducted using qualitative research methods with descriptive research types. In this research process, the author also used data collection techniques in the form of observation interviews and documentation. The results of this study indicate that the majority of Meli Village people work in the rice field agricultural sector. Farmers are divided into two types, namely landowners and tenant farmers, where landowners need tenant farmers to work on their land. They act as the head of the family in earning a living to fulfil the family's needs. Social relations between landowners and sharecroppers are seen from the forms of social interaction and cooperation, the form of cooperation between the owner and the cultivator is seen in the owner farmer giving his land to be cultivated and the results will be shared with the sharecropper based on the profit sharing agreement.

**Keywords:** Social Relationships, Farmers, Harmony

## 1. Introduction

Indonesians living in mountainous areas work in plantations, those in lowland areas work in agriculture, and those in coastal areas work as fishermen. Indonesia is also known as an agrarian country that relies on nature to sustain its businesses in meeting its needs. The majority of Indonesians earn their living from agriculture, which is mostly found in rural areas (Yuliati and Poernomo, 2003).

Farmers who own large tracts of land use it as their source of livelihood. Extensive agricultural land ownership results in abundant harvests that can be used to meet their needs. Conversely, if the agricultural land ownership is limited, the yield will not be as abundant, so agricultural land ownership is very important for the livelihood of rural farmers. Farmers who own large tracts of land will have rights and power over their land.

Farmers in Meli village are divided into two groups: landowners and tenant farmers. Landowners are farmers who have rights to their land, while tenant farmers are farmers who cultivate other people's land under a profit-sharing system. This shows that most of the people in Meli village work as farmers.

In agriculture in Meli Village, Balaesang District, Donggala Regency, there is a social relationship in the form of social capital, namely the utilization of a network formed from the relationship between landowner farmers and tenant farmers. Within this network, there is mutual trust between the two parties based on existing norms and has become a shared consequence. Therefore, social capital in the farming community is a form of effort to improve welfare.

Meli Village is one of the villages whose residents work in the agricultural sector. The community is highly dependent on agriculture, so the villagers cannot be separated from their farmland. Meli Village has ±141.50 hectares of rice fields. The village has a population of 1,650, consisting of 833 men and 817 women. The farming community has an average education level of elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school. Farmers in Meli Village are divided into two groups: landowner farmers and tenant farmers. Landowner farmers are farmers who have rights to their land, while tenant farmers are farmers who cultivate other people's land under a profit-sharing system. This is done by the community because not all members of the community own land, so they share profits to support their families' economies.

## 2. Method

This type of research is qualitative research. The location of this research is in Meli Village, Balaesang District, Donggala Regency. The research location was determined based on the consideration that the area is predominantly populated by farmers and is also the researcher's village. There were three informants in this study who were considered capable of providing information, while several techniques were used in collecting research data, namely observation, interviews, and documentation.

## 3. The Continuity of Social Relations Between Landowner Farmers and Farm Workers

Social relationships between landowners and tenant farmers are mutually influential. The basis of social relationships is social interaction, which is a basic human need as social beings. According to Gillin, social interaction is a reciprocal relationship between individuals, between groups, or between individuals and groups, where these relationships influence each other. This explanation is similar to the life of Mr. Ali Mudin as a landowner and tenant farmer in Meli Village, who has a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship in economic terms. The results of the interview with Mr. Ali Mudin are as follows:

"As a landowner, I have a good relationship with tenant farmers or people who work on my land. By a good relationship, I mean a cooperative relationship. My family and I are very kind to them because without tenant farmers, my land would not be cultivated, as I am no longer able to do the work due to constant illness. Although I also have a son, he is also unable to work as a farmer. Before I became ill, I was still able to work, but now I am no longer able to do heavy work. Therefore, I decided to look for someone to manage my land".

The social relationship between Mr. Ali Mudin and tenant farmers is quite good. This good relationship takes the form of cooperation, namely cooperation between Mr. Ali Mudin and tenant farmers in managing land using a mutually agreed profit-sharing system. The only problem is a difference of opinion, but this can still be resolved. Otherwise, the interaction between the two parties is quite good.

The people of Meli Village have a very simple social life because they are still traditional in terms of equipment. In Meli Village, the interaction between landowner farmers and tenant farmers is very good, where the landowner farmers build working relationships, kinship, and dynamics that are different from communities with other livelihoods such as fishing and carpentry. The existence of landowner farmers and tenant farmers in Meli Village creates mutual dependence between them and helps reduce unemployment in the village. The characteristics or social system of the local farming community involve development in various aspects of life, forming a systematic and sustainable order, as is typical of social systems in general.

#### 4. Education for Landowner Farmers and Farm Workers

The level of education is closely related to the quality of work produced. Education has its own place in managing and analyzing the results that have been achieved. A good education will produce effective ways to increase the income of each individual and group.

The community in Meli Village as a whole is a farming community, where farmers are divided into two types, namely landowner farmers and tenant farmers, who have a low level of education. From the above description of education, it is understandable why farmers in Meli Village are still far behind in managing the potential related to their sources of income. With limited knowledge, they do not have good planning on how to manage their harvest, finances, income, or rice marketing.

#### 5. Profit Sharing Agreement Between Landowners and Farmers

Agricultural profit sharing is a bond or cooperation agreement between landowners and farmers as cultivators. The wages for cultivating the land are taken or given from the agricultural produce after the harvest is complete. This is based on an agreement that is made when the transaction is first initiated. The amount of profit sharing is the amount of wages earned by each farmer, both landowners and tenant farmers, based on the agreement or mutual agreement.

#### 6. Social Dynamics Between Landowners and Farm Workers

In general, social dynamics are social changes that occur as a result of interactions between two or more individuals in a community who have clear psychological relationships in the situations they experience. Social dynamics can involve social interactions, social groups, and social classes. Every rural community will experience social dynamics where mutual influences occur during interactions between groups, giving rise to social dynamics in the form of changes in social values, social norms,

individual and organizational behavior patterns, social structures, and social classes within the community. The social dynamics of the Meli Village community can be seen in cultural and social changes. Social dynamics can be studied through social processes that occur within communities and cultures, namely internalization and socialization. The results of the study found several dynamics occurring between landowner farmers and tenant farmers in Meli Village, namely as follows:

### **3.1. Patterns of Modernization**

Modernization in rural communities has had a major impact on changes in work systems, lifestyles, and economic activities. These changes are marked by the introduction of industrial systems into agricultural activities in Meli Village. An example is the use of tractors to plow fields, replacing buffalo or oxen.

### **3.2. Cooperation Patterns between Landowner Farmers and Farm Workers**

Cooperation is an activity or endeavor undertaken by several individuals or parties who interact with each other to achieve a common goal. From the above explanation, it can be concluded that a cooperation pattern is a form of endeavor undertaken by two or more parties to achieve a common goal through a division of labor, all of which is directed toward achieving the desired goal.

### **3.3. Conflict between Landowners and Tenant Farmers**

In everyday life, we will all inevitably encounter conflict, because humans are social creatures who constantly interact with one another. Etymologically, the word conflict comes from the Latin words *con* and *figere*, where *con* means together, while *figere* means to strike. In the KBBI (Big Indonesian Dictionary), conflict is defined as a quarrel, dispute, or opposition, so it can be concluded that conflict is a condition where two or more views, beliefs, desires, interests, or needs that have different values are not in harmony and do not align.

Conflict arises from differences in everyday life, such as differences in culture, physical appearance, interests, values, emotional needs, and behavior patterns between individuals and groups within society. The social conflict that occurred in Meli Village between landowners and tenant farmers was an individual conflict, which usually occurs between landowners due to differences in opinion or work, as well as conflicts over the distribution of profits, where tenant farmers experience no increase in income from year to year, leading to conflict between landowners and tenant farmers.

## **7. Analysis of Patron-Client Relationships**

Scott distinguishes three types of relationships in patron-client relationships, namely: (1) Based on inequality; (2) Based on face-to-face relationship characteristics; and (3) Based on the flexibility of integration between them.

Farmers' social relationships can be categorized based on face-to-face relationship characteristics. In explaining problems in the field, they can be analyzed using the patron-client relationship, with the following explanations.

1. There are differences between patrons and clients in terms of wealth, power, and position. In this case, the unequal relationship between patrons and clients means that clients cannot fully repay the patron's gifts.
2. There is a face-to-face nature between patrons and clients, which shows that there is a personal relationship between the two, giving rise to sympathy that leads to trust and a close relationship between patrons and clients.
3. Patron-client relationships are flexible and extensive, so they do not only concern land lease relationships.

In agriculture, the community of Meli Village is divided into two groups, namely landowner farmers (Patron) and tenant farmers (Client). People who own small rice fields usually prefer to cultivate them themselves and consume the produce themselves or sell it. Meanwhile, landowners with large plots of land usually cultivate their land themselves but also give opportunities to other people, such as relatives or neighbors, to cultivate their land. This is in line with the results of an interview with an informant named Mr. Armin, as follows:

“I cultivate this farmland, which is not my personal property, but belongs to my wife's family because the farmland is large and requires more manpower to cultivate it. People here, if they have large areas of land to cultivate, will definitely give it to other people to cultivate, but there are also people who choose to cultivate it themselves if the farmland they own is not very large”.

In addition to people who own large agricultural land, people who have busy jobs and migrate outside the area also cultivate their rice fields to other people who do not own agricultural land to cultivate so that the land remains productive. The relationship between landowners and cultivators is usually based on a close relationship and trust from the landowner to the cultivator.

## 8. Conclusion

The social relationship between landowners and tenant farmers is mutually beneficial, as seen in the form of social interaction, namely cooperation. The form of cooperation between landowners and tenant farmers can be seen in landowners providing their land for tenant farmers to work on. The existence of landowners who need tenant farmers can reduce unemployment. The existence of social relationships among the community, which become more specific relationships, become working relationships in a profit-sharing system. From the agricultural results, the changes that occur in the community are changes in the work system, where farmers who initially worked together and employed farm workers have now been replaced by machines. The introduction of agricultural tools is indeed very helpful for farmers, but it can also cause social changes in the community..

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