

Comparative Analysis of the Level of Social Integration in Cattle Farmers' Groups in Banjarnegara District, Indonesia

**(Analisis Perbandingan Tingkat Integrasi Sosial pada Kelompok Peternak Sapi Potong
di Kabupaten Banjarnegara, Indonesia)**

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ABSTRAK: Pembentukan dan pengembangan kelompok peternak akan dapat meningkatkan kekompakan dan kebersamaan antar peternak dalam melakukan aktifitas usaha peternakan. Melalui kelompok peternak, anggota akan bersatu dan bekerja sama untuk menjadikan mereka lebih berdaya (*empowered*). Integrasi sosial (*social integration*) di dalam kelompok peternak merupakan faktor yang penting dalam upaya peningkatan proses pemberdayaan anggota dan keberlanjutan kelompok ternak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan membandingkan tingkat integrasi sosial peternak dalam kelompok peternak yang digolongkan berdasarkan tingkat perkembangan organisasi (*organizational development*) di Kabupaten Banjarnegara. Ketiga golongan kelompok peternak tersebut adalah pemula (*beginner*), madya (*intermediate*) dan lanjut (*advance*). Delapan kelompok peternak yang terdiri dari 145 peternak dipilih sebagai responden dengan menggunakan metode pengambilan sample berjenjang. Data tentang tingkat integrasi sosial dikumpulkan menggunakan kuisioner terbuka dan tertutup. Uji Kruskal-Wallis digunakan untuk membandingkan tingkat integrasi sosial pada tiga golongan kelompok ternak berdasarkan tingkat perkembangan organisasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi sosial peternak di dalam kelompok peternak di Kabupaten Banjarnegara sudah cukup tinggi. Berdasarkan uji Kruskal-Wallis, tingkat integrasi sosial peternak menunjukkan perbedaan ($P < 0,05$) pada ketiga golongan kelompok ternak yang ada di Kabupaten Banjarnegara (pemula, madya dan lanjut). Peternak pada kelompok peternak golongan lanjut (*advance*) mempunyai rata-rata tingkat sosial integrasi yang relatif lebih tinggi dibandingkan pada kelompok peternak golongan pemula (*beginner*) dan madya (*intermediate*).

Kata Kunci: Pemberdayaan, integrasi sosial, tingkat perkembangan organisasi

Introduction

The development of the livestock sector in Indonesia has generated a number of achievements and contributions such as increasing job opportunity, poverty reduction, and increasing quantity and quality of animal production (Rohaeni and Hamdan, 2004). However, the small-scale farmers still remain a major player in national cattle development. These small scale farmers are characterized by (1) limited number of cattle owned by farmers, (2) using simple technology, (3) the cattle farming is just a sideline business, and (4) labor intensive. These characteristics have resulted in low bargaining power of farmers and high sensitivity to change (Yusdja *et al.*, 2001). Hence, it is necessary that farmers be encouraged to increase productivity through technical, economic, and institutional enhancement.

The effort to increase cattle population technically and institutionally in Banjarnegara has been done simultaneously through improving the farmers' knowledge and practice in cattle production. Establishment of cattle farmers' group in the village and sub district level, which has been supervised by Local Government Unit (LGU) of Banjarnegara District since 1999 was aimed at increasing the cattle farmers' welfare.

The "group approach" in empowering farmers would increase unity and thereby collective action. Through the association, farmers can learn from each other and foster mutual cooperation among themselves. Besides, through a farmers' group, members unite and cooperate which become a strategic action for making them powerful. The lifespan and success of farmers' group depends on the unity and active involvement of members in the group's activities. This could ensure survival of the organization to benefit all members.

Diversity has recently captured the attention of those interested in group performance. Group members can differ in functional specialization and

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demographic or cultural identities, such as age, race, sex, and citizenship (Chatman and Flynn, 2001). However, differences among group members give rise to varied ideas, perspectives, knowledge, and skills that can improve their ability to solve problems and accomplish their work by providing suitable environment for members to integrate into a group (Ely and Thomas, 2001). Integration of an individual into a group will in the long term improve socio-economic conditions and participatory opportunities for individuals. It will benefit society as a whole through the achievement of stability, economic security and social cohesion. A highly cohesive group would promote empowerment. Cohesiveness increases the member's willingness to listen to and be influenced by group mates. On the other hand, inability of farmers to adjust in a group will lead to low cohesiveness and high turnover rate from a group. Therefore, social integration is required to promote members' empowerment, group sustainability, and achievement of goals (O'Reilly, 1989).

Social integration is key predictor of group performance and empowerment (Smith *et al.*, 1994). However, integrating farmers into farmers groups are not really easy. Based on report from the Regional Livestock Office of Banjarnegara (2004) there were 56 groups of farmers who were engaged in cattle farming. However, in 2003, this number was significantly reduced to only 16 farmers' groups which were classified into beginner, intermediate and advance level of farmers group. It indicates the difficulty of integrating farmers into groups and maintaining them as a group. Interpersonal conflict among members is inevitable which could result to diminished cooperation, generate dissatisfaction among members and finally lead to group disintegration.

Under the well-developed farmers' group, the members would be able and capable to perform their duties and roles as farmers. However, there are three different levels of farmers group in Banjarnegara based on organizational development. The differences of group development level of farmers groups in Banjarnegara would determine the level of social integration of farmers in a group. Therefore, there is an urgent need to take a deeper look into the level of social integration of cattle farmers' groups in Banjarnegara District in three different level of organizational development of farmers groups.

In general, this study aimed to analyze the level of social integration in cattle farmers' groups in Banjarnegara District, Indonesia. Specifically, it aimed to (1) Determine the level of social integration in cattle farmers' groups in Banjarnegara District, and (2) Compare the level of social integration among three different levels of organizational development of the farmers' groups.

Research Methods

The survey research was used to gather information from respondents of cattle farmers' groups in Banjarnegara. The population of the study comprised of the 16 cattle farmers' groups in Banjarnegara Regency. These cattle farmers' groups are supervised by the Livestock Service of the Local Government Unit of Banjarnegara.

The multi-stage sampling method was used in this survey research. The multi-stage sampling involves selecting a sample in at least two stages. In the first stage, the researcher stratified large groups into three specific strata of farmers groups (*beginner, intermediate, and advance*) and then, the researcher selected randomly farmers' groups in each stratum. In the second stage, within a farmers' group, response was obtained on a variety of questions for selected individual farmers in a group by simple random sampling which was taken proportionally based on the number of members. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the 145 respondents of cattle farmers' groups which were taken proportionally from the eight selected farmers' groups in each stratum comprised the sample based on Slovin Formula. This formula was used to improve accuracy of sample from large number of population (Agustina, 2003). Observation values of those groups were at ordinal data. Kruskal-Wallis test was used to compare the level of social integration of three different level of farmers' group development.

Results and Discussion

Aspects of Social Integration

Social integration refers to the degree to which group members are attracted to the group, feel satisfied with other members, interact socially with them, and feel psychologically linked to one another (Smith *et al.*, 1994). The level of social integration into the group is reflected in the behavioral patterns

of group members. It is a substantive incorporation of all members to build a shared set of norms, values, and culture for a new group. Table 1 present the aspects of social integration as measurement of the level of social integration. It was measured through (a) individually perceived attraction to the group, (b) satisfaction with other members, (c) social interaction among members, (d) interpersonal conflict, (e) interpersonal cooperation, and (f) motivation to sustain relationships.

Attraction to the group. It was indicated that majority (77.24%) of the respondents had been attracted much to the farmers' group and only a few (1.38%) of them were not attracted much by the group. The table shows that most of the farmers desired to be identified and accepted as member of the farmers' group due to some reasons. It was found that most members of intermediate and advanced farmers' groups had slightly higher attraction to the group (82.86% and 80.43%, respectively) than members in beginner farmers' groups (71.88%). Members who are attracted strongly with their group should cooperate more with group interests and exert greater effort on behalf of the group (Kramer, 1991).

Satisfaction with other members. More than two-thirds (67.59%) of the respondents expressed a feeling of satisfaction after some periods of experience within the farmers' group. As defined, satisfaction is related to the degree of adequacy to meet the needs, feeling with other members, and experience to have relationship with other members.

Members in the intermediate farmers' group (74.29%) expressed more satisfaction to have relationship with other members than farmers in the beginner (60.94%) and advanced (71.74%) farmers' groups. The members in intermediate farmers' group have high social sensitivity. It indicates that the members has high ability to understand a member better than others in farmer's group indicated by respect, empathy, help, and care about each other in group activities. Besides, group communication in intermediate farmers' group tends to be better than other farmers groups. These facts cause the members of the intermediate farmers' groups to have high satisfaction to stay with other members. Smith (1994) explained that members of groups with better communication process experience higher morale and satisfaction and, most importantly, exhibit greater efficiency in the coordination of tasks

Group interaction. Majority of the respondents (78.62%) had moderate interaction with other members in a group and only a few (2.07%) had low interaction with other members in group. Overall, cattle farmers in advanced farmers' group tend to have more interaction with other members. The more dynamic the group is and the clearer rules are giving more space for members to interact with others. Dovidio *et al.* (1998) interpersonal social interactions in a group are able to achieve productive negotiations, conflict resolution and personal empowerment.

Interpersonal conflict. It was found that all the respondents did not experience conflict with other members of farmers' group in terms of incompatible goals, scarce resources, and involvement of other parties in achieving goals. All (100%) of the respondents cited that they seldom experienced conflict and easily solved these conflicts during meeting. The results show that the advanced farmers' group had lesser conflict compared to other levels of farmers' groups. This suggests that farmers had achieved solidarity in their group as one of the goals in the establishment of the farmers' group. Jehn and Mannix (2001) supported that higher development stage of a group has generated low conflict among members.

Interpersonal cooperation. Majority (51.03%) of the respondents exhibited moderate cooperation with others while only very few (0.69%) of them did not. It reveals that the respondents tend to work together, share, collaborate, and cooperate with other members to achieve goals and run the daily activities in cattle production smoothly.

The findings show that members in the advanced farmers' groups cooperated more frequently with other members to achieve farmers' group goals. Interpersonal cooperation was done more often in advanced farmers' group along with more interactions. Van Dyne *et al.* (1995) stated that higher stage of group development with high cohesiveness shall enhance members' desires to help one another.

Motivation to sustain relationship. Majority (70.34%) of the respondents expressed high motivation to sustain relationship with other members in the group. No farmer (0%) reported poor motivation to sustain that relationship. Members in the intermediate and advanced farmers' groups tended to have higher motivation to sustain relationship with others. Hence, a higher stage of

group development would result in satisfaction of members to stay longer in organization. Ugboro (2006) explained that people in more developed group tend to have higher job satisfaction and therefore they would gain higher loyalty to stay in a group.

Level of Social Integration in Three Different Levels of Organizational Development of Farmers' Groups

There is an increasing awareness that integration will improve socio-economic conditions and participatory opportunities for individuals, as well as benefits society as a whole, through the achievement of stability, economic security and social cohesion (Rudiger, 2003). Participation is high among members of group when they are really

empowered. To empower the people, unity and integration of people in a group must be guided and formed strongly. Highly cohesive groups would promote empowerment. Social integration is really imperative for the promotion of individual, group, community, and societal well-being (Nelson *et al.*, 2001).

Level of social integration in farmers' groups is the degree to which an individual is linked to others in the group (O Reilly, 1989). In this study, the level of social integration is a summation of the scores from six subjects (attraction to the group, satisfaction with other members, social interaction among members, interpersonal conflict, interpersonal cooperation, and motivation to sustain relationships).

Table 1. Aspects of social integration as measurement of the level of social integration across three different levels of organizational development of farmers' groups

Aspects	Level of Organizational Development						All Groups (n = 145)	
	Beginner (n=64)		Intermediate (n = 35)		Advanced (n = 46)			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Level of Attraction to the Group								
High (> 44)	46	71.88	29	82.86	37	80.43	112	77.24
Moderate (28-44)	17	26.56	5	14.29	9	19.57	31	21.38
Low (<28)	1	1.56	1	2.86	0	0.00	2	1.38
Mean score		45.26		46.40		46.39		45.89
Level of Satisfaction with Other Members								
High (> 18)	39	60.94	26	74.29	33	71.74	98	67.59
Moderate (12-18)	25	39.06	9	25.71	13	28.26	47	32.41
Low (< 12)	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Mean score		18.36		20.14		19.26		19.07
Frequency of Group Interaction								
Often (>18)	11	17.19	5	14.29	12	26.09	28	19.31
Moderate (12-18)	52	81.25	29	82.86	33	71.74	114	78.62
Seldom (<12)	1	1.56	1	2.86	1	2.17	3	2.07
Mean score		16.69		16.54		16.80		16.69
Occurrence of Interpersonal Conflict								
Often (>26)	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Moderate (17-26)	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Seldom (<17)	64	100.00	35	100.00	46	100.00	145	100.00
Mean score		7.75		7.43		8.08		8.01
Interpersonal Cooperation								
Often (>21)	30	46.88	13	37.14	27	58.70	70	48.28
Moderate (14-21)	33	51.56	22	62.86	19	41.30	74	51.03
Seldom (<14)	1	1.56	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.69
Mean score		20.89		20.66		21.59		21.06
Motivation to Sustain Relationship								
High (>26)	39	60.94	30	85.71	33	71.74	102	70.34
Moderate (17-26)	25	39.06	5	14.29	13	28.26	43	29.66
Poor (<17)	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Mean score		26.86		27.46		27.09		27.07

Table 2. Test of difference on the level of social integration among three different levels of organizational development of farmers' groups in Banjarnegara

Aspects	Level of Organizational Development						All Groups (n = 145)	
	Beginner (n=64)		Intermediate (n = 35)		Advanced (n = 46)			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Level of Social Integration								
High (> 144.85)	1	1.56	7	20	10	21.74	17	11.72
Medium (130.40 – 144.85)	51	79.69	28	80	35	76.09	115	79.31
Low (< 130.40)	12	18.75	0	0	1	2.17	13	8.97
Mean score	135.81 ^a		138.62 ^b		139.93 ^c		137.80	
Interval	102 -145		131 -151		130 -150		102 –151	

^{a,b,c}. Means in the same row with different superscripts are significantly different (P<0.05)

This study found that majority (79.31%) of the respondents had medium level of social integration and only few (8.97) of the respondents had low level of social integration. Table 2 shows that members of the advanced farmers' groups have relatively higher level of social integration. The Kruskal-Wallis analysis showed that there is significant difference (P<0.05) of level of social integration among the three different levels of farmers' groups.

Based on Table 2, it can be observed that farmers' groups at different level of organizational development (OD) tend to have higher level of social integration among members. This confirms the finding of Robbins (2002) where he concluded that members of highly-developed groups were more satisfied. It is expected that advance groups will be more cohesive, integrated, interact frequently, and exhibit more off-task and interpersonal behavior. This is added by Shaw (1981) that groups whose members are more socially integrated should be able to coordinate their efforts and integrate their perspectives more effectively and efficiently, yielding a coherent and timely final product.

Conclusion

To empower the people, unity and integration of people in a group must be strongly guided and formed. Social integration in farmers' groups is therefore, a precondition of empowerment of cattle farmers. The study has looked into the level of social integration and factors related to the level of social integration. Based on the objectives of study, the following conclusions were drawn : 1. It has been considered how the level of social integration becomes an important entry point to improve empowerment of farmers. The finding led to the conclusion that level of social integration in cattle farmers' group in Banjarnegara was generally moderate.

Increasing level of social integration in cattle farmers' group could improve participation, empowerment and sustainability membership of cattle farmers. 2. The results show that three levels of organizational development of farmers' groups existed although the level of social integration among them differed. Advanced level farmers' group had the highest level of social integration. Building and improving capacity of farmers' group as an advanced group would be a great challenge to increase level of social integration.

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