

OPTIMIZATION OF AGRARIAN REFORM POLICIES IN TRANSMIGRATION AREAS IN THE PROVINCE OF GORONTALO

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Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the factors influencing the optimization of Agrarian Reform Policies in transmigration areas, specifically focusing on skills, education, and adaptation capabilities. The research data were collected through interviews and direct observations in the transmigration locations. The findings indicate that while the three analyzed factors are relatively adequate, there is still room for improvement. In terms of skills, it was observed that transmigrants' proficiency in modern agricultural techniques remains suboptimal. This is primarily due to the continued employment of outdated methods in training programs. Regarding education, a salient challenge pertains to the limited accessibility of primary and secondary education for transmigrant children who reside in distant locations and encounter inadequate road conditions. Another salient challenge relates to agrarian education programs, where replacement heads of households frequently lack awareness of procedures for acquiring Land Ownership Certificates (SHM) through land ownership. Regarding adaptability, transmigrants still require guidance from mentors, facilitators, or community assistance programs that can help them apply newly acquired knowledge and skills. The government and relevant stakeholders must actively provide the necessary support to facilitate the adaptation process. By doing so, transmigrants can integrate effectively, fostering a harmonious and productive relationship between transmigrants and the local community.

Keywords: Transmigration Policy, Policy Optimization, Agrarian Reform.

INTRODUCTION

Agrarian reform is a series of policies to restructure land ownership and usage to achieve specific social, economic, and political objectives (Benton, 2018). These policies ensure a more equitable distribution of land ownership among the population while reducing inequalities in land ownership and access to natural resources. Similarly, Spoor (2012) asserts that agrarian reform aims to facilitate farmers' access to land, resources, and infrastructure, thereby enhancing agricultural productivity and economic well-being. Furthermore, it fosters rural economic and social development by enhancing infrastructure, social services, and economic opportunities for rural communities.

Evaluating agrarian reform policies in transmigration areas is imperative to ensure the program's sustainability, fairness, and effectiveness. Such evaluations assess inequalities in land ownership and access, the long-term economic and social impacts, and the refinement of agrarian reform policies and transmigration programs. Agrarian reform policies in transmigration areas should improve the well-being of transmigrants by providing access to more extensive and productive agricultural lands. This would enable them to develop larger-scale farming enterprises, increase productivity, and diversify the types of crops cultivated.

Through an in-depth investigation, researchers have identified various biases within the transmigration policy that have led to long-term challenges. These issues include inadequate infrastructure preparation—such as roads, clean water, electricity, and schools—budget constraints in meeting basic facility and infrastructure needs, limited involvement of the local community, lack of assistance and guidance, insufficient evaluation and monitoring, and the failure to uphold sustainability principles in the support and mentoring process.

Subianto (2020) underscores that policy evaluation entails comprehending the implementation of a policy, its repercussions, and the degree to which it accomplishes its intended objectives. Ananda & Rafida (2016) contend that the pivotal factors propelling human resource development and sustainable community growth can be gauged through three indicators. First, the skills indicator encompasses technical skills, soft skills, digital literacy, and entrepreneurial skills. Second, the education indicator encompasses formal education levels, non-formal education, and inclusive education. Third is the adaptability indicator, which includes resilience, adaptability, innovation, creativity, and community participation.

Accordingly, the researcher conducted the study titled "**Optimization of Agrarian Reform Policies in Transmigration Areas in the Province of Gorontalo.**" This research aims to analyze and evaluate the factors influencing the optimization of agrarian reform policies in transmigration areas by examining three key indicators: skills, education, and the adaptability of transmigrants.

METHODS

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach with a case study design, focusing on evaluating agrarian reform policies in North Gorontalo Regency. Research data were obtained through documentation, observation, and interviews with informants, each a stakeholder in the Transmigration Policy Program. The collected data were analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques to identify key issues and the relationships between factors influencing the successful implementation of agrarian policies post-transmigration programs.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Skills of Transmigrants

In the context of agrarian reform policies, the skills of migrants are a critical factor in the successful implementation and achievement of policy objectives. The government has a responsibility to ensure that migrants receive adequate agricultural training, both theoretical and practical, to maximize the use of their allocated land, improve agricultural yields, and sustain their livelihoods in their new environment. The skill factor encompasses various aspects influencing transmigrants' ability to utilize their allocated land effectively and adapt to new environments. The criteria assessed in this study include agricultural skills and entrepreneurial skills.

Interviews with migrants revealed that the training materials were not updated with the latest technology and agricultural methods. This issue arises due to limited resources and restricted access to up-to-date information. Transmigrants have expressed a desire for the government to update the training materials to incorporate the latest agricultural technologies and techniques. The training programs primarily focus on basic knowledge of cultivation, land management, and farming tools. However, these programs are more theoretical than practical, making them less relevant to real-world conditions. For example, some communities in Cempaka Putih Village are engaged in durian tree farming, yet the training provided focused on other crops, making it irrelevant and ineffective. Furthermore, the training programs are often conducted within a limited timeframe, impeding transmigrants' ability to understand and master the material thoroughly.

In the context of entrepreneurial skill development, significant variations in skill levels are observed among transmigrants. While some possess prior experience and demonstrate relative proficiency, others require additional training and guidance. The primary challenge lies in the alignment of training materials with real-world conditions. The efficacy of training programs is contingent upon their alignment with the specific needs of transmigrants. When such programs are meticulously designed and customized to the needs of the target population, they are more likely to enhance the skills and knowledge of the transmigrants. However, when training programs do not align with the needs of the participants—for instance, when overly technical training is

provided to individuals with limited foundational knowledge or when basic training is delivered to participants who are already experienced—the outcomes tend to be ineffective. Another significant challenge transmigrants face is limited market access, resulting in agricultural products being sold in local markets where prices are often unstable due to difficulties accessing broader markets.

To address these challenges, it is imperative for governments to assess the educational background and entrepreneurial experience of migrants to develop training programs that cater to their specific needs. As Syarifuddin, et al. (2019) emphasize, entrepreneurial skills play a crucial role in designing practical and relevant training programs, ensuring that migrants can adapt and thrive in their new environment.

A well-structured training program has the potential to significantly enhance transmigrants' skills and knowledge (Purba, 2023). Conversely, if the training programs are not adapted to the participants' conditions, they become ineffective and a waste of resources (Suhada, 2023). For instance, providing highly technical training to participants lacking basic knowledge may overwhelm them, making it difficult to understand and apply what they have learned. Conversely, providing fundamental training to experienced participants may result in the program becoming obsolete and unbeneficial.

B. Education of Transmigrants

Presidential Regulation No. 86 of 2018 on Agrarian Reform encompasses various aspects related to land redistribution and community empowerment, including education for transmigrants. Education plays a crucial role in determining the success of both transmigration and agrarian reform programs. This study assesses two key educational criteria: access to education and agrarian awareness among migrants.

Evaluating educational access in transmigration areas must consider several factors, including geographical conditions, infrastructure, human resources, and support from the government and related institutions. Transmigration sites in Gorontalo Province are relatively remote and often challenging to reach due to poor road access and limited public transportation, which significantly affects residents' ability to access educational facilities.

A survey of migrants revealed a lack of awareness regarding the process of obtaining land ownership certificates. This problem is particularly pronounced among replacement families who were not part of the initial placement phase. The findings of this study indicate that migrants received inadequate education and socialization on the administrative procedures for obtaining land ownership certificates. The agrarian awareness education program has not effectively reached all transmigrants, particularly replacement household heads, leaving them uninformed about their rights and necessary legal procedures.

The administrative procedures for obtaining land ownership certificates (SHM) can be intricate, necessitating a multitude of documents and legal prerequisites. Many migrants lack the necessary resources, including time, financial means, and access to information and services. The financial burden associated with acquiring land certificates can be substantial, presenting a considerable challenge for transmigrants who often face economic constraints. These limitations hinder proactive efforts to secure legal land ownership. The complexity of bureaucratic processes often leaves transmigrants overwhelmed and confused. The dearth of technical assistance and support from relevant authorities further exacerbates this issue.

Government and institutional support in assisting transmigrants with land certification processes remains insufficient. There is an urgent need for assistance programs that provide technical guidance, information dissemination, and administrative support. The Agrarian Reform Task Force, established by the Governor of Gorontalo, should implement more comprehensive and intensive socialization and educational programs to ensure migrants are well-informed about agrarian rights and land certification procedures.

Beyond the agrarian education challenges, transmigrant children also face significant difficulties in accessing secondary education. Interviews conducted in the field revealed that educational facilities in transmigration areas remain inadequate, with only three elementary schools and one junior high school available. In contrast, no senior high school exists within the vicinity. The nearest high school is located far from the migrant settlements, creating significant access barriers. This dearth of educational infrastructure has led to high dropout rates and prompted many household heads to abandon the transmigration program and return to their places of origin.

Road conditions in transmigration areas are suboptimal, with many roads being damaged or unpaved. This complicates daily travel, increases the risk of accidents, and makes transportation more costly and inconvenient. During rainy conditions, the roads can become extremely muddy and nearly impassable. The availability of public transportation in these remote areas is minimal, and residents often have to rely on private vehicles or travel long distances on foot. The dearth of adequate public transportation severely restricts residents' mobility, further exacerbating their access to various services and facilities.

Access to educational facilities remains a salient challenge. Schools in transmigration areas often lack basic infrastructure, such as adequate classrooms, libraries, and laboratories. A shortage of competent and well-trained teachers also poses a serious issue, affecting the quality of education students receive. Physical accessibility to schools is one of the primary determinants of educational participation. When educational institutions are geographically isolated from students' residences and road access is limited, students often face challenges in maintaining consistent attendance, leading to lower participation rates. Research

by Ningsih and Najamuddin(2021) underscores this phenomenon, demonstrating that the greater the distance between home and school, the higher the probability that students will encounter difficulties in attending classes consistently.

Damanik (2019) underscores several pivotal factors influencing an individual's ability to access educational services. First, geographical distance and travel time have been identified as significant factors. Prolonged travel times resulting from distance to school have been shown to reduce students' study and rest time. Second, transportation costs have been identified as a financial burden, particularly for low-income families. Third, inadequate infrastructure has been identified as a crucial factor in educational accessibility. Poor infrastructure can hinder students' reach to schools, especially in remote or underdeveloped areas. Fourth, socio-economic conditions have been identified as a contributing factor. The impact of family and community socio-economic conditions on educational accessibility is a multifaceted phenomenon that warrants comprehensive analysis. Parents' educational background and their conception of the importance of education can influence their children's school participation. Parents who are unaware of the significance of education may fail to support their children's attendance at school.

Efforts to enhance educational participation must address these existing barriers by developing better infrastructure, reliable transportation, and socioeconomic support programs for underprivileged families. The implementation of these measures is crucial for ensuring that children, including those from transmigrant communities, have enhanced access to primary and secondary education. This, in turn, will improve their quality of life and skill development for future generations.

C. Adaptability of Transmigrants

Presidential Regulation No. 86 of 2018 on Agrarian Reform provides a comprehensive framework to support transmigrants' adaptation through land tenure security, technical assistance, socialization and education, infrastructure development, and economic empowerment. The practical implementation of these factors can enhance the well-being of transmigrants and maximize their economic potential within the context of agrarian reform.

The adaptation criteria assessed in this study include financial management adaptation and the ability of migrants to integrate into the local community. Financial management adaptation in a new environment encompasses several key aspects, such as adjusting to weather conditions, selecting profitable crops, and adapting to various government training programs. The weather conditions in transmigration areas often differ from those in the transmigrants' places of origin, requiring them to acclimate to a new climate to sustain themselves and manage their resources effectively.

An analysis of interview data revealed that many migrants initially lacked an understanding of local weather conditions, including rainfall and dry season patterns,

which significantly affect agriculture and natural resources. This lack of information and education on local weather patterns is often a significant obstacle to adaptation. However, transmigrants who successfully adapted to the transmigration areas of Gorontalo Province developed various strategies to overcome climate and environmental challenges. These strategies encompass the utilization of irrigation technology, the cultivation of shade-providing crops, and the implementation of soil conservation techniques. These measures have been instrumental in enhancing agricultural productivity and ensuring the sustainability of livelihoods in these novel environments.

The study also found that transmigrants often attempted to cultivate crops with which they were familiar from their place of origin, which might not be suitable for local conditions. Education and training in financial management, along with access to affordable financial services, can help them overcome difficulties and improve their well-being. Successful adaptation involves selecting local crops with high economic value that are well-suited to the new environment. Crops such as corn, rice, and horticultural plants are frequently selected due to their high yield potential and adaptability to local conditions. The utilization of high-quality seeds and stringent agricultural practices can further enhance agricultural productivity.

Further research indicates that the level of engagement among transmigrants in training programs often varies. While some migrants are enthusiastic about participating in training sessions, others may be hesitant or unaware of their benefits. Theoretical approaches to transmigrant adaptation in training programs highlight several key aspects explaining variations in participation and applying acquired knowledge to daily practices. Ramadani (2022) explains that transmigrants' enthusiasm for training is often influenced by personal motivation and their perception of the training's benefits. Transmigrants with clear goals who view training as a means to enhance their skills and well-being tend to be more enthusiastic. Conversely, those who do not fully comprehend the benefits of training or deem it irrelevant to their needs may be reluctant to participate. Similarly, Arif (2019) posits that participation is also influenced by individual readiness and the accessibility of training programs. Transmigrants with adequate time, resources, and basic skills are more likely to participate in training. Additionally, the physical accessibility of training locations and the availability of information about training programs play a crucial role in encouraging participation.

Social interaction refers to the manner in which transmigrants communicate and engage with the local community, build relationships, and participate in community activities, including their involvement in social, cultural, and religious events within the local community. Cultural adaptation pertains to how the migrants adjust to local norms, values, and traditions. One of the most significant challenges is the application of knowledge gained from training into daily practice. The implementation of this

knowledge is influenced by various factors, including the social environment, the support received from the community, and the relevance of training materials to the actual needs of transmigrants. Wiradi (2009) asserts that the social environment, particularly the support provided by family and friends, plays a significant role in the application of newly acquired knowledge by transmigrants. Positive support from close social circles has been shown to enhance confidence and motivation, thereby facilitating the adoption of novel approaches. Local norms and cultural practices have also been identified as factors influencing the acceptance and implementation of new knowledge. Specifically, the integration of new knowledge that contradicts existing norms or cultural practices may encounter more significant challenges in terms of its application.

The results of the interviews indicate that many migrants still face difficulties in establishing close relationships with the local community. Their participation in social activities remains limited, primarily due to cultural and language differences. One transmigrant shared that, in the early days, they felt hesitant to perform their religious rituals as Hindus in a predominantly Muslim community.

The ability of transmigrants to adapt to the local community is a crucial factor in the success of the transmigration program. Despite the efforts of migrants to integrate, several challenges persist, including resistance from the local community, often driven by concerns over change and competition for resources. However, through ongoing socialization efforts and interactions, there has been a gradual improvement in the acceptance of migrants within the local community. Many residents now view the presence of migrants as an opportunity to learn new skills and foster mutually beneficial collaborations. To facilitate this adaptation process, the government and relevant stakeholders must actively provide necessary support. When these conditions are met, transmigrants can integrate successfully, fostering a harmonious and productive relationship between them and the local community.

The adoption of sustainable agricultural practices is crucial for reducing environmental impact and enhancing the economic well-being of migrants through more efficient financial management. Continuous mentorship and technical support are essential to ensure the success of training programs. This support can be provided by mentors, facilitators, or community-based assistance programs that help transmigrants apply newly acquired knowledge and skills effectively.

CONCLUSION

This study evaluates the supporting factors in optimizing the Agrarian Reform Policy in transmigration areas. The evaluation process was conducted by analyzing three key indicators: skills, education, and the adaptability of migrants. The findings indicate that while skills, education, and adaptability are generally adequate, there is still room for improvement. Regarding skills, transmigrants have demonstrated a

reasonably good level of agricultural expertise. However, their proficiency in modern agricultural techniques remains suboptimal, partly due to the training programs that rely on outdated methods. Consequently, transmigrants do not receive sufficient training in crucial aspects such as proper fertilization techniques or efficient cultivation methods, which have been proven to enhance land productivity significantly. It is essential for the government to enhance training programs focused on modern agricultural techniques and to systematically document the skills of transmigrants, including both agricultural and entrepreneurial skills. The government will be empowered to develop training materials that more effectively address the needs of migrants. In education, a significant impediment is the limited accessibility of primary and secondary education for transmigrants' children due to the considerable distances to schools and inadequate road infrastructure. It is imperative to improve infrastructure and educational accessibility for transmigrant children. Another challenge pertains to agrarian education programs, where many replacement heads of households lack awareness regarding the procedures for obtaining land ownership rights through a Land Ownership Certificate (SHM). Regarding adaptability, transmigrants continue to require assistance from mentors, facilitators, or community support programs to help them implement newly acquired knowledge and skills. The government and relevant stakeholders must actively provide the necessary support to facilitate this adaptation process. By doing so, transmigrants can integrate successfully, fostering a harmonious and productive relationship between them and the local community.

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