

BUILDING COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION AND WORSHIP IN INCREASING BODY IMMUNITY IN NEW NORMAL IN ACEH BARAT, ACEH AND LANGKAT NORTH SUMATRA, INDONESIA

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the role of farmer communication and worship in increasing body immunity through qualitative methods. The sampling technique in this study was purposive random sampling using a questionnaire with open questions to 30 rice farmers in Langkat, North Sumatra and Meulaboh, West Aceh. The results showed that there were 22 male and female farmers with 8 female androgynous farmers. As many as 73.33% of farmers prepare themselves and equipment (hoes and food supplies), then 20% of farmers clean the house and yard and 6.66% do bathing, dressing and masking. Then the data shows that 90% perform special worship activities, such as ablution, Dhuha prayer and prayer before leaving for the land, only 10% perform worship when resting in the fields. Furthermore, farmer communication with extension workers during the New Normal period was carried out intensively and continuously (83.33%) and 16.66% stated that if there was free time and problems on the land, then met with agricultural extension workers. Farmers in general, 100% bring food from home that has been prepared such as rice, vegetables, side dishes and fruit, when buying and selling transactions in the fields / markets and communication is done by discussion, keep a distance of one meter and use masks among farmers and agricultural extension workers of 86.66%, only 13.33% did not use masks or talk very close without distance. From interactions when collecting questionnaires, farmers stated adequate sleep-rest, communication according to health protocols, performing ablution and worshipping on time increases the immunity of the farmer's body so that optimal quality of life is achieved in the New Normal period. The role of farmers as the front guard, after the paramedics are providers of food needs to be supported and accompanied by academics, agricultural extension workers, related agencies in maintaining food security in the North Sumatra and West Aceh Province of Aceh.

Kata Kunci: *Communication, Farmers, Worship, Immunity, and New normal*

1. INTRODUCTION

The agricultural sector plays a strategic and very important role as a source of livelihood for the population in Indonesia [1]. North Sumatra [2] and West Aceh [3] have superior agricultural commodities, including rice. Farmers have a tendency to keep working even though they have entered old age (elderly) [4]. One of the problems faced by elderly rice farmers is the high workload that leads to the ability of elderly farmers to carry out all activities in rice farming business thoroughly [5]. Rice farming work includes the process of seeding, planting, maintenance, irrigation, weeding, fertilizing, pruning, controlling pests and diseases, harvesting and post-harvesting [6]. Work demands that are not balanced with the capacity capacity and health status of farmers, especially elderly rice farmers as individuals who are vulnerable to workloads [7], stress and illness due to work [8], supported by the coming of the Covid 19 pandemic to enter New Normal era now. Rice cultivation when using pesticides will put farmers at risk of diseases that can threaten health [9]. This can cause great stress and affect the quality of life of elderly farmers.



An agricultural extension agent and stakeholders (as a source) must remain active and productive in establishing communication with the main actors and agricultural business actors (receivers / receivers). Various agricultural information, ranging from the cultivation process, harvest to post-harvest, must be conveyed properly and effectively so that no food is retained. In addition, farmers still have to carry out the Covid-19 Health Standard procedure in the New Normal period. Ignoring the Covid-19 pandemic completely and carrying out agricultural communications as usual as if nothing was certainly not the right step. Therefore, we must look for ways or strategies on how we convey the message of agriculture in a good and effective way. Do not let the message that we convey can cause misunderstanding, resulting in agricultural activities can not run well and smoothly. In connection with these problems, researchers need to examine the perspective of farmer communication and how agricultural communication strategies can be carried out in the New Normal Period?

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive design using an open questionnaire. Respondents in this study were 30 farmers from Lankat, North Sumatra and West Aceh. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with the criteria of respondents namely rice farmers aged 25 years to 55 years and can speak in Indonesian. The study was conducted in the Village of Hinai Kiri, Secanggang District, Langkat Regency and several villages, including Gampa, Leuhan, Peuleunteu, Gentong Klang, Suak Ribee in West Aceh. Data collection for the questionnaire was conducted from May to June 2020. The data collection tools used were questionnaire filling guides, field notes, and questionnaires.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Rice Farmers Questionnaire

Respondents in this study were 30 rice farmers, consisting of 15 farmers in Langkat and 15 farmers in West Aceh Barat. As many as 22 people (73%) of respondents were male and only 27% (8) of female respondents, with an age range between 25 to 60 years and the last education of High School (SMA). Figure 1 pie diagram below shows the preparation of farmers before going to the field / farm, where as many as 73.33% of farmers prepare themselves and equipment (hoes and food supplies) to go down to the field/farm, then 20% of farmers clean the house and yard and 6.66% take a shower dressed and bermasker.

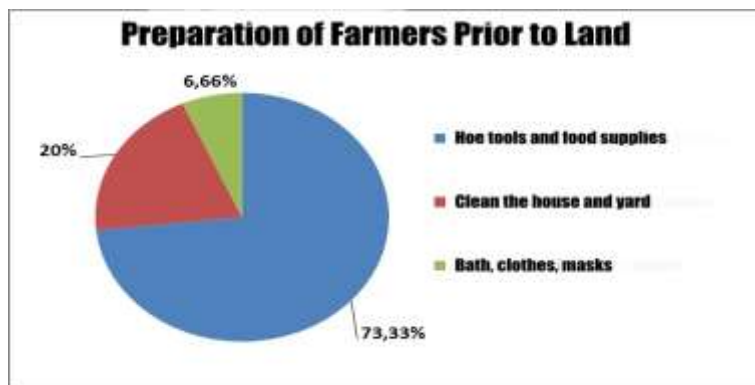


Figure 1. Farmer preparation before going to the land

Then Figure 2 shows 90% of farmers doing special worship activities, such as ablution, praying and praying before leaving for the land, only 10% doing worship when resting in the field/field.

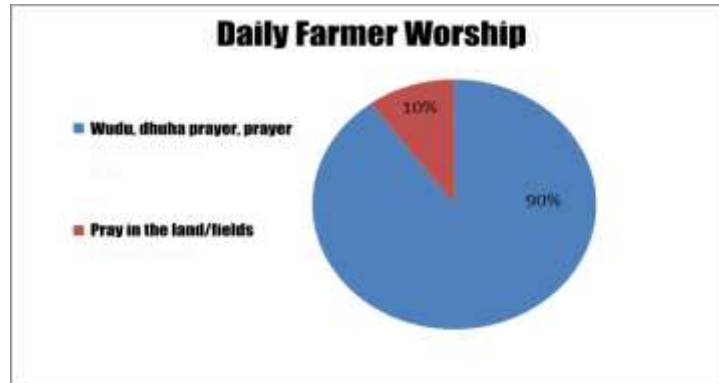


Figure 2. Daily farmer worship

As many as 100% of farmers prepare food supplies (rice, vegetables, side dishes, fruit and drinking water) that are cooked and brought from home. When the communication between farmers and extension workers during the New Normal period was carried out intensively and sustainably (83.33%) and 16.66% stated that if there was free time and problems in the land then they met with agricultural extension workers (Figure 3).

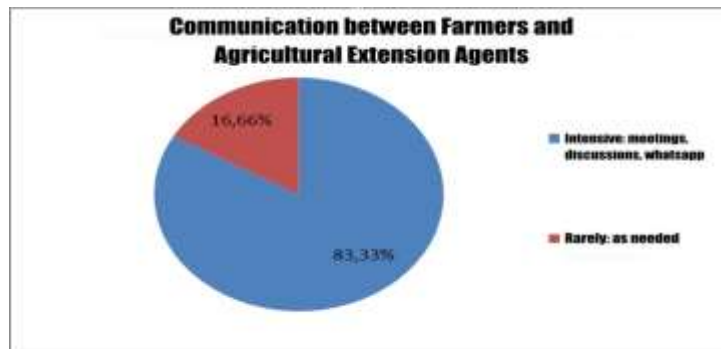


Figure 3. Farmer communication with agricultural extension workers

When Figure 4 below describes the transaction of buying and selling in the fields / markets and communication is done by discussing, keeping a distance of one meter and using masks among farmers and agricultural extension workers by 86.66%, only 13.33% do not use masks or talk very close without distance.

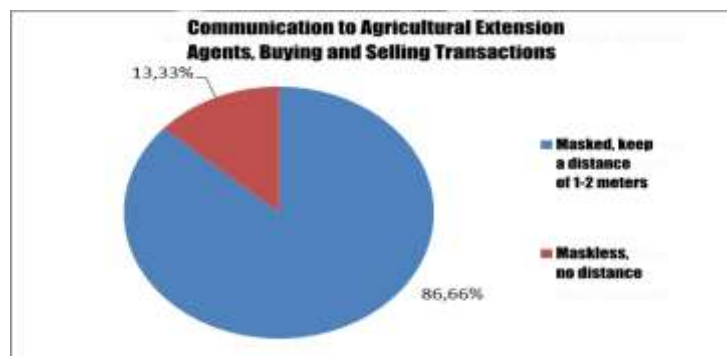


Figure 4. Communication to extension workers and sale and purchase transactions



3.2 Physical Health Quality of Older Rice Farmers

Respondents describe the quality of physical health. consists of: general health and sleep-rest. General health shows indicators of health, energy and vitality. Complaints of declining health that have been experienced by respondents aged 60 years, among others, the body is somewhat less healthy, sometimes coughing or tightness, pain in the feet, and sometimes heat or headaches. In addition to complaints of declining health, respondents complained about a decrease in energy and vitality such as decreased strength, fatigue and aches. According to WHO (1998), energy and vitality are aspects of the physical domain of quality of life. Decreased energy and fatigue can have an impact on quality of life. Respondents in this study are elderly rice farmers with an age range between 50 to 60 years. Respondents perceive the impact of the aging process on the decline in health and strength. In the aging process, the ability of the network to improve itself and maintain its normal structure and function begins to decline [10]. The aging process can result in weakness and physical decline [11]. Decreased physical function is characterized by the inability of the elderly to move or do activities that are classified as heavy. This condition can cause physical disorders that affect health and can have an impact on the quality of life of the elderly. [12]

Fatigue is one of the physical responses that arise when the body gets a workload that exceeds capacity [13]. According to Nurmiyanto in Intan (2013) the majority of causes of the emergence of workload impacts are the behavior of workers who pay less attention to ergonomics (setting the situation in the work environment). Factors that need to be considered in ergonomic planning are the limitations of both physical and mental possessed by humans and the different physical states of each person. If these factors are ignored it can have a negative impact on workers' health. Working hours of rice farming are described by respondents as one of the causes of perceived complaints. Capacity, workload and work environment are three important components in occupational health safety that interact with each other and cannot be separated. Good work capacity and good physical abilities are needed so that workers can carry out work well.[14] Respondents perceive that perceived complaints are not related to the effects of rice farming and are not caused by smoking. In the respondents' view, complaints occur due to unfamiliarity with rice. Someone who is used to working with rice will not have complaints and become accustomed to the smell of rice. Furthermore, improving the immune system of farmers in the New Normal Era is carried out with the following stages.

3.3 How Farmers Improve the Body's Immune System

1. *Running a Healthy Lifestyle.* The first line of defense for boosting the immune system is to choose a healthy lifestyle. If every part of our body, including the body's defense system is functioning properly, our body is not easily attacked by viruses. So male farmers in the Covid Pandemic Period 19 and in the New Normal Era. Reduce and even stop smoking. Farmers and their families consume more fruit and vegetable foods, get enough rest, minimize stress, work with masks if they go out and wash their hands more often.
2. *Consumption of Healthy Food.* A healthy immune system fighter needs good and regular food. There is some evidence that various micronutrient deficiencies such as zinc, selenium, iron, copper, folic acid and vitamin A, B6, C and E deficiency change the immune response in animals, as measured in a test tube. However, the impact of these changes in the immune system on animal health is less clear, and the effects of similar deficiencies on human immune response have not been

assessed. So that need to be considered is to consume vegetables and fruit. Besides that, you can also consume vitamins to maintain a healthy body. Farmers also receive more cooked food intake. Research has shown that fruits and vegetables such as beta carotene, vitamin C, and vitamin E which can enhance immune function, especially controlling the mechanism of action of the Covid virus 19. In this study, respondents' efforts to maintain health were found, among others, through adequate intake of fluids and nutrients and the use of personal protective equipment when farming such as wearing long clothes. Efforts in overcoming complaints were expressed by respondents in several ways such as by drinking energy drinks, checking themselves, using traditional medicine, buying drugs at a food stall, and stopping smoking. Besides that, consumption of vegetables, fruits and other plant foods is also rich in antioxidants, they help reduce oxidative stress.

3. *Managing Stress and Immune Function.* Various illnesses such as abdominal pain, itching, and even heart disease are related to the effects of emotional stress. It is recommended that when collecting questionnaires, farmers can manage stress well, which of course will make the immune system improve in rice farmers. The key to improving safety and health in agriculture is managing risk by systematic assessment and implementing preventive actions based on assessment. In risk management, farmers' attitudes towards health and safety are important [15]. Safe farming practices such as wearing protective clothing and operating machines safely reduce the risk of injury.[16]
4. *Rest / Sleep Enough.* The hours of sleep described by respondents are between 10 and 12 hours. Respondents describe the length of their sleep between 3 to 4 hours. If you feel tired or if you have time to rest, respondents use it to rest. Our body needs rest and energy recovery. Lack of sleep can increase the risk of developing serious health problems such as heart disease, Alzheimer's and obesity. Several studies found that those who slept less than five hours per night were more likely to have the flu compared to those who slept well. Consumption of healthy fruits, vegetables, whole grains and nuts in the diet. One study found that a diet rich in fiber and low in saturated fat can cause quality sleep. So, Rest and sleep are included in aspects of the physical health domain based on quality of life (WHO, 1996). Work and rest time is one indicator of workload that shows organizing time to do and complete the work they have. Good organization of time is indicated by balanced work time and rest periods. This has a good impact on the health of workers, especially elderly farmers []. In this study it was found that the total sleep time of the respondents was described only 3 to 4 hours, even there were respondents who complained there was no drowsiness. According to Dugdale (2012), along with the aging process, the sleep patterns of the elderly tend to change. The elderly feel that aging makes it difficult for them to fall asleep and become awake often. Sleep time is felt to be reduced compared to when young. The balance between rest and work is important to maintain physical health which is part of the quality of life domain, so occupational health efforts need to pay attention to the sleep and rest aspects of the elderly rice farmers.
5. *Communicate and worship regularly and regularly.* Special worship activities, such as maintaining ablution, praying duha and praying before leaving for routine land are carried out by rice farmers in Aceh and Langkat, North Sumatra. Furthermore, farmer communication with agricultural extension workers is carried out intensively and continuously (by face to face by applying the Health Protocol and discussion through WhatsApp. Furthermore, trading transactions in the field / market and communication is done by discussing, keeping a distance of one meter



and using masks among farmers and agricultural extension workers. According to WHO (1998) the meaning of life is an aspect of the domain of individual belief / spirituality of quality of life. The worship activities are described by the respondents in the form of performing prayers and participating in recitation activities. Motivation to worship is described by respondents influenced by time management, faith, and not related to rice farming work. Respondents convey the importance of time management in order to carry out worship. The faith factor is also described as having an influence on motivation in worship. Religious / spiritual / individual beliefs are the domain of quality of life (WHO, 1997).

Dongre & Deshmukh's research (2012) on the elderly shows that praying to God and participating in prayer activities can overcome negative feelings. In rural areas, religious activities can gather people and make them more socially active. Religion and spirituality have a significant influence on the quality of life in the elderly [18]. Spirituality has an important role in the elderly [19]. Spiritual change in the elderly is characterized by the more mature elderly in religious life. Religion and belief are integrated in life and are seen in everyday patterns of thinking and acting [20]. Spirituality can help develop behavior and healthy lifestyle; find psychosocial support; overcome life problems and negative emotions.[21]

4. CONCLUSION

The results showed that there were 22 male and female farmers with 8 female androgynous farmers. Farmers prepare themselves and equipment (hoes and food supplies) by 73.33%, then 20% of farmers clean the house and yard and 6.66% do bathing, dressing and masking. Then the data shows 90% perform special worship activities, such as maintaining ablution, praying duha and praying before leaving for the land, only 10% doing worship when resting in the fields. Farmer communication with extension workers during the New Normal period is carried out intensively and continuously face to face using the Health Protocol. Farmers in general, bring food from home that has been prepared such as rice, vegetables, side dishes and fruit, when buying and selling transactions in the field / market and communication is carried out by discussion, keep a distance of one meter and use a mask of fellow farmers and agricultural extension workers. From interactions when collecting questionnaires, farmers stated that they had adequate rest-sleep, communicated according to health protocols, ablution and worship on time to improve the immunity of the farmer's body so that optimal quality of life was achieved in the New Normal period.

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