



## Public Perception behind the Declining Interest of Cultivating Coconut in Sindue District

Roslinawati; Anhulaila M. Palampanga

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Tadulako University, Indonesia

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### **Abstract**

Reducing the number of poor people requires real and continuous efforts from each stakeholder by restoring the spirit of cultivating Inner Coconut by the community, so it will be able to provide economic recovery. This study aims to determine the community's perception of the decline in community interest in Sindue District to cultivate Coconut. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive research type. The results showed that the decline in community interest in cultivating coconuts was more dominated by the number of livestock roaming, not having the right land for cultivation, lack of support from local / village governments, and lack of enthusiasm for the younger generation to cultivate. People still believe that the Coconut commodity has many economic advantages and can be enjoyed in the long term. This reason is what makes some people who own Inner Coconut want to rejuvenate (re-cultivate) the land they own.

**Keywords:** *Coconut; Society; Cultivation*

### **Introduction**

The Inner Coconut Commodity has existed since prehistoric times in human civilization, and mostly grows in the tropics. Head of Commodities in almost all regions of Indonesia (Arifin, 2013). The Inner Coconut Commodity has been cultivated from generation to generation by people, especially those who live in rural areas, thus making the Inner Coconut Commodity one of the commodities that support the economy of the people in rural areas.

The area that is the origin of the Coconut Commodity in historical terms is the region in South Asia or Malaysia, or perhaps the West Pacific, which then spreads to the coasts of the Americas, especially in the tropics (Setyamidjaja, 2006). The Inner Coconut Plant has been known in the Philippines and Sri Lanka since 300 BC and in India it has been known since 3000 years ago, so it is estimated that the Inner Coconut Plant must have originated from the surrounding tropical areas.

Plantation commodities contribute to improving the standard of living of the community, because these commodities are cultivated traditionally without fertilization, without pest and disease control, and do not require special skills in maintenance (Etim & Ndaeyo, 2020; Teshome & Temam, 2020). In terms

of operational costs incurred by the people who own the Inner Coconut are relatively low when compared to the operational costs incurred by farmers managing other commodities. One of the efforts to increase the income of the people who own Inner Coconut is to carry out post-harvest activities in the form of copra production. Copra-making activities will provide added value and will also create jobs for some people, thereby reducing unemployment, and will increase the overall income of the community (Somasekharan & Cocker (2017).

Inner Coconut Plantation in Donggala Regency in 2010 is with a coconut area of 181,633 ha with a production of 207,730 tons. The people's plantation area reaches 98 percent of the coconut farming which is generally managed conventionally. Coconut planted area in Donggala Regency is 32,715 Ha or 20% of the total coconut plantation area in Central Sulawesi (<http://sulteng.litbang.deptan.go.id>). In 2014, a land area of 27,912 hectares was a people's plantation, with production in 2014 of 47,482 tons (Ministry of Agriculture, 2019).

The production of Inner Coconut originating from Donggala Regency has decreased from year to year due to the many unproductive felling of inner coconuts and not accompanied by cultivation activities. The background of the felling of Inner Coconuts is that there are entrepreneurs who use coconut trunks or trees to be traded with local entrepreneurs, as well as entrepreneurs in the Java and Bali regions for various needs. One of the sub-districts in Donggala Regency which has adequate land area and number of Inner Coconut is Sindue District.

The problem that is the focus of this research is how the public's perception of the decline in community interest in Sindue District to cultivate Inner Coconut with the aim of replacing unproductive Inner Coconut, which causes a decrease in the production of Inner Coconut behind its economic superiority.

### ***Theoretical Review***

Against the reasons why people have decreased interest in cultivating coconut in this. In perceiving something, the impression that is received by the community or individual is very dependent on all the experiences that have been obtained through the senses so that humans recognize their environment. There are several factors that influence perception, namely: (1) From the person concerned, in this case the influential person is an individual characteristic including attitudes, interests, interests, experiences and expectations. (2) Perceptual targets, can be people, objects, or events that can affect the perception of people seeing them. (3) Factor of the situation, in this case the review of the perception must be contextual, meaning it is necessary in a situation where the perception arises.

The perception of most people that the cause of the decline in public interest in coconut cultivation is more dominated by the disturbance factor of roaming community livestock, not having the right land for deep coconut cultivation, high costs of maintaining deep coconut plants, lack of local or village government support, and lack of awareness the spirit of the younger generation to cultivate deep coconut.

### ***Inner Coconut***

The meaning of coconut in various literatures gives different reviews but the same meaning. Coconut or what is known as "Cocos" may come from Arabic, namely from the word "Quozos Indi" which means seeds from Indonesia. And there is a view which states that the inner coconut comes from the Portuguese "Macaco" which means monkey, because if you look at the coconut seed as big as a

monkey's head, the two eyes where the sprouts come out, and the third hole is like an ape's nose (Setyamidjaja, 2006).

The development of Inner Coconut in Indonesia makes the Inner Coconut commodity a sebra-use plant, because all parts of the Inner Coconut plant are very beneficial for human life. The Inner Coconut Plant has been known for hundreds of years throughout the Indonesian Archipelago. The coconut product that has been traded since ancient times is coconut oil. With the development of technology, it makes part of the coconut plant have economic value, so that coconut plants have their own economic advantages compared to other plantation crops (Nair, 2010; Uwubanmwun et al., 2011).

The economic superiority of the Inner Coconut commodity cannot encourage the community's desire to cultivate Inner Coconut, thus causing a decline in domestic production. Setyamidjaja (2006) states that the causes are: (1) The average coconut plant has passed its productive age. (2) Very minimal cultivation treatment. (3) Pests / diseases attack.

The increasing needs and creativity of the community, making all parts of the Coconut commodity provide benefits that are very important for people's lives. At present, one of the causes of reduced coconut production is the result of the felling of the Inner Coconut plant for the purpose of selling the trunk / tree for housing and other household needs. The presence of wind storms, also causes the destruction and even the fall of the Inner Coconut tree, and even if it is followed by cultivation, it is rarely successful as a result of disturbance of roaming local livestock, so to cultivate Inner Coconut sometimes people experience difficulties due to land processing preparation. Inner Coconut requires location security in the form of a fence which is very expensive and requires a lot of energy and time allocation. In terms of seeds, in Sindue District it can be obtained, because the Inner Coconut plants in Sindue District are decades old, and meet the requirements to be used as a nursery.

### ***Poverty, Measures and Descriptions of Coping Strategies***

Poverty is seen as one of the problems in development characterized by unemployment and underdevelopment which then escalates to inequality. This shows that in general the poor are weak in their ability to do business and have limited access to economic activities so that they are increasingly left behind from other communities.

Todaro (2006) states that the level of poverty in a country depends on two main factors, namely; (1) Average national income levels and (2) Width and narrow income distribution gaps. This shows that no matter how high the national income per capita achieved by a country, if the distribution is not evenly distributed, the poverty rate in that country will remain severe.

Widodo (2006) states that poverty has three main dimensions, namely (1) political poverty, which refers to the degree of access to power which includes a socio-political system that determines the allocation of resources for the benefit of a group of people through the formal political system and contacts. informal with a power structure that has an influence on economic power. (2) Social poverty, namely poverty caused by a lack of social networks and supporting structures in order to obtain opportunities for increased productivity. (3) Economic poverty, which is a condition where there is a lack of resources used in order to improve the welfare of a group of people. The problem of poverty is classified as a multidimensional problem, meaning that it can be seen from various points of view. Based on the causes of poverty can be divided into; natural poverty (natural), structural poverty, and cultural poverty.

Reducing the number of poor people requires real and sustainable efforts. By restoring the spirit of deep coconut cultivation by the community, it will be able to provide economic recovery, even though its implementation requires a long time allocation, but the efforts of deep coconut cultivation in providing benefits for the next generation in society to enjoy the benefits and economic value of Inner Coconut, so that can be separated from the bonds of absolute poverty.

## **Methods**

This activity is field surreal and will describe the real conditions in Sindue District as it is without intervention from any party. Therefore, this study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive type of research aimed at describing systematically and factually about people's perceptions about the decline in interest in cultivating deep coconut. The data collected in this study came from primary and secondary data. All primary data were collected by means of surveys and interviewing informants directly to obtain accurate data.

## **Results and Discussion**

### *Respondent Characteristics*

Most of the research respondents had a junior high school education (SLTP), namely 42 people (45.65%). Informants with a bachelor's degree and bachelor's degree (S1) education respectively amount to 1 person (1.09%). Senior High School (SLTA), namely 27 people (29.35%), SD / SR (Elementary School) the number of 21 people (22.82%).

The people who own the Inner Coconut mostly work as farmers with a total of 67 people. Workers as fishermen do not limit the community to owning Inner Coconut, and as many as 3 research respondents who work as fishermen but they own Coconut In. Entrepreneurial people try to take advantage of economic opportunities for the Inner Coconut commodity. People who work as entrepreneurs believe that Coconut Dalam can provide benefits in the long term, with results that can be enjoyed every harvest period every 3 months. People who work as civil servants and retirees also own Inner Coconut, this ownership is only a gift from parents who have cultivated Inner Coconut cultivation when they were still strong and productive to cultivate Inner Coconut.

### *Analysis of the Factors Causing the Decreasing Public Interest*

The factors causing the decline in community interest in cultivating Inner Coconut in each village in Sindue District, as expressed by the community in each village consist of: (1) The land is less fertile. (2) The land is fertile but there is disturbance by roaming community livestock. (3) Superior seeds that is difficult to obtain. (4) The decline in interest in cultivation is due to the waiting time between planting and harvesting the first crop that is too long, usually 7 years. (5) Do not have the right land for cultivation of Inner Coconut. (6) The high cost of maintaining the Inner Coconut plant. (7) Lack of support from the Regional / Village Government. (8) Lack of awareness and enthusiasm for the younger generation to cultivate Inner Coconut.

The response of the community shows that the main factors that can hinder or reduce community mina to cultivate Inner Coconut are: (1). Less fertile land. (2) The land is fertile but there are disturbance by roaming community livestock. (3) Superior seeds that is difficult to obtain. (4) Lack of support from the Regional / Village Government. (5) Lack of awareness and enthusiasm of the younger generation to

cultivate Inner Coconut. Less fertile land is the reason people do not want to cultivate Inner Coconut, because people have experience farming for Inner Coconut only expects rainfall, while rainfall is getting less and less, and changes in the rainy season are difficult to know, especially since people only rely on natural phenomena (traditional methods).

People still believe that the Coconut commodity has many economic advantages and can be enjoyed in the long term. This reason is what makes some people who own Inner Coconut want to rejuvenate (re-cultivate) the land they own. The Inner Coconut plant is different from other plantation crops; the difference is that the Inner Coconut plant can be planted in a location where Inner Coconut has been grown, because the land where the Inner Coconut grew is not damaged.

The Inner Coconut Commodity also provides benefits in social relations which form good kinship relations to be maintained. An example of one of the activities in the process of processing Inner Coconut fruit to become copra, many people (women / housewives, and men) jointly use parts of the inner coconut fruit (shell) to be used as fuel.

Inner coconut which is no longer productive, still provides an economic advantage in the form of a selling value of coconut stems which have been processed into blocks of various sizes. This coconut wood is an input for the furniture industry around Palu City. With the selling value of the Inner Coconut stems, the community began to rejuvenate / cultivate Inner Coconut with local types of seeds.

The price of processing coconut wood is large enough for one coconut. Most of the coconut logs are mostly used for the roof truss of people's houses. Coconut wood in the hardest part is used as input to be processed into wooden chairs, tables, and various other types of furniture so that it provides high economic value.

The Inner Coconut Commodity also provides advantages in terms of providing employment opportunities for community members who have expertise in matters related to the processing of Inner Coconut into various types of derivative products. For example, to be used as copra, labor is needed to process: (1) climbing, (2) collecting fruit, (3) cart workers for transportation, (4) peelers of kalapa coir, (5) power drying the inner coconut meat, (6) Copra transport services to the marketing place.

## **Conclusion**

The inhibiting factor for decreasing public interest in no longer cultivating Inner Coconut is more dominated by factors; Disturbance of wandering community livestock, not having the right land for cultivation of Inner Coconut, high cost of cultivating Inner Coconut, Lack of support from Local/Village Government, and Lack of awareness and enthusiasm of the younger generation to cultivate Inner Coconut.

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