

# Study of The Role and Function of Agricultural Extension Institutions on Agricultural Development

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**Abstrak** : The role and function of the agricultural extension service for agricultural development which includes services, center of communication, center of institutional development and center of partnership development and the function of extension services as program planning and preparation, provision and dissemination of information, human resource development, administrative structuring and functions evaluation were less optimal. The lack of quantity and quality of agricultural (plantations), extension agents had lack of training along with agricultural (plantations) extension workers, there was a policy of transition from agricultural (plantations) extension workers to food extension workers. Agricultural (plantation) development also seen from economic growth, community welfare, and the increase in plantation production. The decline in production results in several commodities namely cloves, rubber, cocoa and coffee based on data from the statistical center since 2019 to 2022 in Bulukumba regency.

**Kata Kunci** : Role and Function of Counseling Institutions; Agricultural Development

## INTRODUCTION

Counseling is a non-formal education system or an education system outside the normal school system, where people are shown ways to achieve something satisfactorily while the person continues to do it themselves, so they learn by doing it themselves (Kartasapoetra, 1987 in Erwadi, 2012:8).

Institutions are the whole of ideal patterns, organizations, and activities centered around basic needs such as family life, state, religion and obtaining food, clothing, and pleasure and shelter. An institution is always formed with the aim of fulfilling various human needs so that the institution has a function. In addition, institutions are concepts that are integrated with structures, meaning that they not only involve patterns of

activity that arise from social aspects to fulfill human needs, but also organizational patterns to implement them (Roucek and Warren, 1984).

Bulukumba Regency has agricultural sub-sectors that are able to excel (comparatively) compared to other regencies in South Sulawesi Province. The increase in PDRB from each agricultural sub-sector is supported by an increase in production each year, especially in plantations.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Research Approach**

The type of research approach is descriptive. Descriptive research is research that attempts to tell the solution to existing problems based on data. The type of qualitative descriptive research used in this study is intended to obtain information on the Role and Function of Agricultural Extension Institutions for Agricultural Development in Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi Province.

### **Research Location**

The location of this research is in Bulukumba Regency. One of the areas that is developing in the agricultural sector, especially in the plantation sector. This study aims to determine the role and function of an extension institution in developing agriculture, especially plantations in the area.

### **Analysis Unit and Informant Determination**

The object of this study is the role and function of agricultural extension institutions (plantations) towards agricultural development in Bulukumba Regency.

Research Subjects Research subjects are data sources whose information is requested in accordance with the research problem. The meaning of data sources in research is the subject from which the data is obtained (Suharsimi Arikunto, 2002:107).

### **Data Collection Techniques**

In this case, the researcher uses the following data collection methods: The interview method is conducted by the researcher directly with the informant subject. The researcher also uses unstructured interviews, namely interviews with free questions.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

Qualitative descriptive analysis technique, where the author uses this technique to describe, narrate, depict and explain qualitative data that the author obtained from the results of data collection methods through interviews.

Agricultural development is seen from:

1. Growth
2. Economic growth
3. Community or farmer welfare
4. Increased production

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Increasing Plantation Agricultural Production**

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) 2019 - 2022 and the recapitulation data of South Sulawesi plantations both in terms of land area and production itself. The contribution of extension workers is needed in maintaining the stability of plantation product results in various commodities. To find out agricultural

development in terms of plantation production, economic growth and community welfare. Can be seen in the following production table:

**Table 1.** Large Plantation Production by Crop Type in Bulukumba Regency (tons), 2019 – 2022

No	Commodity	2019	2020	2021	2022
1.	<b>Rubber</b>	1.933 (Ton)	2.264 (Ton)	3.182 (Ton)	2014,03 (Ton)
2.	<b>Cloves</b>	1.363 (Ton)	738.2 (Ton)	582 (Ton)	367,45 (Ton)
3.	<b>Coffee</b>	1.601 (Ton)	1630,7 (Ton)	247 (Ton)	1442,55 (Ton)
4.	<b>Cocoa</b>	4.881 (Ton)	4984,7 (Ton)	5.802 (Ton)	4595,62 (Ton)

Source: Primary Data That Has Been Processed

Based on table 4.4. above, it shows that the production results for rubber commodities as a whole in Bulukumba Regency experienced an increase in production from 2019 to 2021 but decreased in 2022 with a production volume of 2014.03 tons. For clove commodities, production decreased from 2020 to 2022. Meanwhile, for coffee commodities, production decreased in 2021 with a total production of 247 tons and increased again in 2022 with a production volume of 1442.55 tons. Meanwhile, for cocoa commodities, production increased from 2019 - 2021 and experienced a decrease in production in 2022 with a production volume of 4,595.62 tons.

Unstable and even declining clove, rubber and coffee production since 2019 - 2022 in Bulukumba Regency which is spread across several sub-districts is caused by some of the farmers' land in clove plantations being planted with coconuts and other commodities. So that the land is getting narrower and affects the production results itself.

Plantation commodities such as cocoa, cloves, rubber, and coffee are currently developing in Bulukumba Regency and are leading commodities. However, some of these leading commodities have experienced a decline, both in terms of land area and production itself, so the government or in this case the relevant agencies must pay more attention to these commodities. Agricultural extension workers must pay more attention to farmers in the plantation sector for the sustainability and improvement of agricultural development. Because some of the clove and rubber farmers have their land planted with coconuts so that their land is getting narrower and this greatly affects plant productivity. The contribution of agricultural extension institutions is greatly needed by farmers so that they can help farmers in managing their farming businesses until the farmers are independent, because we know that plantation crops are annual plants so that sufficient knowledge is needed to maintain them.

#### **Role and Function of Extension Institutions**

Agricultural development cannot be separated from the role of extension institutions and farmer group institutions that always synergize to carry out new innovations for farmers' needs in carrying out their farming efforts. The uneven role and function of agricultural extension institutions can affect farming results, especially in the plantation sector. Many plantation extension workers have been transferred to food crop and horticulture extension workers so that the quantity of plantation extension workers is increasingly minimal and this is the main problem for plantation extension workers so that they are not optimal in carrying out their roles and functions as plantation agricultural extension workers.

*‘the role of agricultural extension institutions as services, Communication Centers, institutional development centers and partnership development centers is sometimes not optimal in the plantation sector. Because plantation extension workers are decreasing in quantity, extension workers have difficulty reaching remote areas or villages’.*

Extension plays a role in increasing farmers' knowledge of new agricultural technology and information in order to improve the welfare of farmers and their families. The role of extension in providing knowledge to farmers can function as a process of disseminating information to farmers, as a process of enlightenment or providing explanations, as a process of changing farmer behavior (attitudes, knowledge, and skills), and as an educational process. Extension is carried out with the aim of improving the quality and quantity of crop production cultivated by farmers and can improve the welfare of farmers (Saadah et al. 2011).

*“the activities of extension institutions in carrying out their functions as planning and program preparation, human resource development, administrative arrangement and as an evaluation function have been running optimally before plantation extension workers were transferred to food crops and horticulture so that extension functions such as HR Development, administrative arrangement and as an evaluation function have not been optimally carried out by agricultural extension workers, especially in the plantation sector. Sometimes internal conflicts in extension institutions also cause one of the factors that hinder extension worker activities”.*

*“farmers in managing their plantation land and managing their production results are still experiencing difficulties. Especially in coffee, cocoa and rubber plants. Extension workers should always be present when they are needed so that extension workers can provide solutions and resolve problems that occur in farmers”.*

*“for example, in 2022, cocoa farmers experienced huge losses because all cocoa plants that were approaching harvest time were attacked by pests and diseases”.*

According to Sutarto in Nining Haslinda Zainal (2008:22), a function is a breakdown of tasks that are similar or closely related to each other to be carried out by a particular employee, each of which is based on a group of similar activities according to their nature or implementation.

The role of extension institutions as this service has been implemented but has not been optimally carried out by extension workers because there are still many complaints and problems that occur among farmers that have not been fully facilitated or served by extension workers, and some plantation farmers still do not receive good services in terms of technology, information and communication services.

This is in accordance with the opinion put forward by Zaithmal, et.al. (2000:26) that good service quality will be one of the determinants of the success of agricultural development. Service quality is determined by five dimensions, namely profit, consistency, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

*“government policy in recent years has focused more on agricultural development in the food crops and horticulture sectors, which has resulted in most of the agricultural extension workers in the plantation sector now being transferred to food crops and horticulture extension workers”.*

Obstacles faced by extension workers, especially in the plantation sector, are:

1. Information systems and technology that are still minimally owned by extension workers.
2. The absence of special training for plantation commodities can affect the quality which ultimately also affects the performance of extension workers in playing their roles and functions.
3. Procurement of technical field officers, who are tasked with controlling all plantation activities. So this is what hinders the role and function of extension institutions or extension workers themselves.
4. Lack of communication and coordination between technical officers and extension workers.
5. The number or quantity of extension workers is lacking in the plantation sector.

These are some of the obstacles that often occur in the agricultural extension environment.

## CONCLUSION

The main factor causing the suboptimal role and function of agricultural extension institutions is because many plantation extension workers are transferred to food crop and horticulture extension workers. So that they no longer provide extension and education to farmers in the plantation sector. Another is internal conflict between extension workers so that it can hinder the overall extension activities.

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