



# Perceptions of Farmer Families on Children's Education in Rural Cianjur

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**ARTICLE INFO****Keywords:**Rural education;  
Future outlook;  
Farming society;  
Social status;  
Economic factor.

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**Article history:**

Received 2022-06-22

Revised 2022-12-01

Accepted 2022-12-02

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**ABSTRACT**

Agricultural development is still considered the most important of the overall economic development, because the agricultural sector is the savior of the national economy. However, most of the farming families are classified as poor. The impact of poverty affects other lives. One of them affects the education of their children. In general, this research is based on the descriptive method, with an emphasis on giving a picture or painting an explanation of the symptoms that occur in the community or the most actual events. The research steps are from determining the method, type of data, data sources, data collection techniques to data analysis techniques, and ends with conclusions. The results showed that the socio-economic life of farming families in Sukamaju Village in Cianjur District, Cianjur Regency, was very low both in terms of socioeconomic, education and others. The factors that cause children to drop out of school in the Sukamaju Village community include economic factors; the low factor and lack of interest of the child to continue school; factor of lack of awareness and attention of parents; the absence of school infrastructure, and cultural factors. The views of parents on children's education are different, basically influenced by their educational background and socio-economic status and culture around them.

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

Indonesia has a population of more than 80% living in rural areas, with most of their livelihoods being farming, which is very dependent on natural resources where they live (Bafdal, 2012). The people who live in the countryside are none other than farming families. This means they are a social group consisting of a father, mother, and child, where the head of the family (husband) works as a farmer and depends on his family's income from agricultural products (Colnago & Dogliotti, 2020).

One way to look at parents' perceptions of their children's education is to look at the attitudes of farming families towards their children's education from the community's enthusiasm to pay attention and their role in their children's education. The attitude shown by farming families can motivate their children to continue their education (Lockley et al., 2019). One of the attitudes is in the form of participation or role in giving time, energy, thoughts, morals, and materials. If this is low, then the perception of the farming community toward education will also be low. For this reason, this issue needs

to be studied in depth. The researchers want to conduct further research on perceptions of children's education in each farming family.

Based on the background of the problem, several symptoms/problems were generated when making observations in Sukamaju Village, Cianjur District, Cianjur Regency. This is important as material for discussion regarding the perceptions of farmer families towards children's education in Sukamaju Village, Cianjur District, Cianjur Regency, including: *First*, from parents' lack of attention towards their children to pay attention to education. *Second*, there is still a lack of parental awareness to educate children, so they do not drop out of school.

The learning process here is in the context of formal education in schools, from low school to the highest level. In line with this, many parents assume that a child who has left school means that he has finished his learning process. In fact, they fully accept this, as is the case in rural communities consisting of farming families and laborers with a low standard of living. Based on the problem's background and the problem's focus, this study examines the views of the farming community on children's education in Sukamaju Village, Cianjur Regency.

## 2. RESEARCH RESULTS

### 2.1. Education and the Farmers

The educational process that exists today has been carried out by people for a long time and is a process that is passed down from one generation to the next with clear goals as well. And the educational process that is experienced is always associated with the learning process, especially for most people who live in rural areas (Yusup & Saepudin, 2017). Parents who have only graduated from elementary school or have not graduated tend to be traditional and do not appreciate the importance of education (Arumdini et al., 2016). They send their children to school only to be able to read and write because they think that a person's education to a higher level, in the end, is to become a civil servant. They believe that school is a waste of time, effort, and money; they also think that children are better served by real things, like helping parents in their endeavors are real benefits for them (Padjrin, 2016). Besides that schools have to go through selection exams that take a long time and are very tiring (Barnes & Olson, 1985).

Older people in rural communities generally play an important role. People will always ask them for advice when there are difficulties encountered. The problem is that the older group of people have views that are based on strong traditions, making it difficult to make fundamental changes (Gustafsson & Olandersson, 2018). Parents view education as important, but this is influenced by the low level of parental education and an unsupportive economy, so education is only described for education (Gong Agus I., 2011). Even though the effect of poverty is very large on children, poverty is not the only influential factor. Another factor is the short and simple mindset due to low education. In Indonesian culture, the head of the household, especially the father, has a very large role in the household, including in determining whether or not children can continue their education. To make this decision is certainly very much influenced by parents' views on education.

Families or parents who are deprived of course greatly affect the mindset of their children's education. There are several reasons why poor people are reluctant to send their children to school, namely:

- a. False beliefs about schools: arguably many poor people have a belief that schools are educational institutions that only children from well-to-do families, smart children can fill. Meanwhile, the poor feel that they have no money and their children are stupid, so they are reluctant to send their children to school.
- b. Lack of insight and knowledge about the world of education. It must be admitted that the factor of lack of information about the world of education causes poor people to be narrow-minded. Education for the poor is still considered a tertiary (special) need that does not have to be fulfilled at this time. In fact, to be honest, education is as important as primary human needs, such as food, drink, clothing and shelter. It can even be said that education is the key to human success in being able to eat, drink, have clothing and boards.
- c. Misconceptions about school. So far, there has been a wrong assumption by the poor about schools, they think that schools are expensive and cannot be afforded by poor people. The notion that schools are expensive is not wrong, but it is wrong if they feel that they cannot reach

schools is wrong. Because currently there are various scholarship programs from the government, private institutions, NGOs and so on for children from poor families, especially for children who have achievements. So, it's good if wrong assumptions about school must be thrown away. It is clear that school is a place where everyone, whether poor or rich, has the same right to go to school.

- d. Easy to give up on circumstances. One thing that becomes the habit of poor people is being too resigned (desperate) to circumstances. This attitude is also one of the reasons why many children of poor people do not go to school. They are more accepting of the situation that the poor only have an obligation to make a living to eat not to have an education.
- e. Carried away by the environment. Usually, poor people will live life as the life of the people around them. If the majority of poor people are rarely educated, their children will likely be uneducated. Such conditions almost occur in poor communities, even if low-income families send only one or two children to school. They prefer to enjoy life as the lives of other poor people who do not send their children to school and feel more comfortable if their children help earn a living for the family (Ansar & Syukur, 2018).

Then the factor of children dropping out of school, according to Candra (Candra, 2018), is caused by several factors, namely the economy, lack of interest in children, absence of schools/facilities, cultural factors, lack of learning facilities and disabilities or mental disorders. First factor that causes children not to attend and drop out of school is the economic factor, which reaches 36%. The economic factor in question is the inability of the child's family to finance all the processes needed while studying or going to school at a certain level. Even though the Government has announced a 9-year compulsory education, it has not had the maximum implications for reducing the number of children who do not and drop out of school. In addition, the free education program that has been implemented has not been socialized to the lower level.

Second factor that causes children not to attend and drop out of school is the child's low or lack of interest in going to school. The low interest of children can be caused by the lack of attention from parents, the distance between the child's residence and the far school, the lack of learning facilities, and the influence of the surrounding environment. Less interest can be caused by environmental influences, for example the low level of public education followed by low awareness of the importance of education.

Third factor is the lack of parental attention. The low attention of parents is caused by the economic conditions of the family or the low income of the child's parents so that the parents' attention is more devoted to efforts to meet family needs. Percentage of children who do not attend school and drop out because of a lack of parental attention. In low-income families, various problems tend to arise related to the financing of children's lives, thus disrupting learning activities and having difficulty following lessons.

Fourth factor is the absence of school infrastructure. The infrastructure factor referred to is related to the unavailability of educational infrastructure in the form of school buildings or means of transportation from the student's residence to the school.

Fifth factor that causes children to drop out of school is inadequate learning facilities. The intended learning facilities are learning facilities in schools, for example learning devices (tools, materials, and media) that are inadequate, and so on. The learning needs and facilities needed by students cannot be fulfilled by students which can cause a decrease in children's interest which in turn causes dropping out of school.

Sixth factor is culture. The cultural factor referred to here is related to the habits of the surrounding community. Namely, parents' low awareness of the importance of education. Environmental factors influence rural communities' behavior in sending their children to school. They think that even without going to school their children can live a decent life like other children who go to school. Because in the villages the number of children who do not go to school is greater and they can live decent lives, such conditions are used to determine their children's future (Hurlock, 1993).

Lack of family income causes parents to have to work hard to meet basic daily needs, so that children's education is not properly paid attention to and even helps parents to go to the fields, because it is considered to lighten the burden on parents, children are invited to accompany parents to work far away and leave

school for a long time. In fact, the cause of children dropping out of school is not only due to the weak family economy but also comes from himself, namely the lack of interest of children to go to school or continue their studies (Sajogyo, 1985).

Farmer education is a factor that influences the perspective and life of farmers (Maldinni et al., 2019). The farmers prefer education that is necessary compared to the education that is lived by the community in general. Most farmers prefer education that is religious and social. However, in the process of getting their education, they were constrained by various problems which caused most of the children of farmers to drop out of school.

The views of an advanced society are certainly different from those of a backward and traditional society. A progressive society certainly has advanced education, and so their children will also have an advanced education compared to their parents. The progress of education also determines the advancement of a society, nation, and state. In general, underdeveloped people or their traditional communities do not understand the importance of education, so most of their children do not attend school. When they go to school, most drop out in the middle of the road (Gustafsson & Olandersson, 2018).

Schools educating children to live outside their community does not mean that there is no education organized to prepare them to live in the midst of their society. It means that the school does not organize it. In fact, every village community always has its ways of educating children so they can live in their community. Traditionally there is informal teaching organized by the family and the community. Such teaching is supported by parents or religious leaders who are adhered to by the local community (Bali & Hajriyah, 2020; Prasetiadi, 2011).

## 2.2. Education at Sukamaju Village

Sukamaju Village is located in the Cianjur District, Cianjur Regency, West Java of Indonesia. This area is in the easternmost part of Cianjur Regency, with an altitude of 20-30 meters above sea level (masl) and an average air temperature of 20-30C. The distance from the district center is 2 km, the distance from the city center is 2 km, the distance from the center of the provincial capital is 63 km, and the distance from the national capital is 81 km. Sukamaju Village consists of land area (housing), agriculture and plantations. Agriculture and plantations are still the main livelihood of the village community. But many of the people besides farmers are self-employed, especially trading.

Sukamaju Village area, is limited by several areas around it. This was written in order to explain the position of Sukamaju Village in the scope of the area. Some of the boundaries of the Sukamaju Village area include:

- a. To the north, it is bordered by the Subdistrict of Cianjur District
- b. To the south, it is bordered by Sirnagalih Village, Cilaku District
- c. To the west, it is bounded by Gede paddy Village, Cianjur District
- d. To the east, it is bounded by Munjul Village, Cilaku District

As the results of the interview with Mr. Yudi. Pak Yudi is from a farming family. The socio-economic condition of his family is very worrying, said:

"I'm a farmer family. My wife and first child also worked as farmers. Understandably we don't have high education, so it's difficult for us to find other work, so they follow my footsteps to become a farmer. My family is poor, have nothing. My wife and children work as labor farmers (coolie) whose income is mediocre. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't depend on the person who told me to. If there is work in the fields or in the fields, from 7 to 12 noon. The workers (wages) are only Rp. 35.000, -. That money is not enough for family needs, so we must make it work. Sometimes, even that isn't a routine every day, getting someone to hire us. Sometimes for 2 or 3 days we don't have any work in the fields. In the end, any coolie work would do. (Yudi, Interview, 2017).

Seeing the low level of education that the people of Sukamaju Village have, they generally work as farmers or farm laborers who rely more on their muscles. Even if someone works as an employee in a factory, his work as a laborer is not in his office. In fact, based on the results of an interview with the Head of Sukamaju Village, stated that:

"The large number of SD/MI or SMP/SMA graduates is more due to the choice of work that follows their parents or helps their parents. They think that it is difficult to find jobs in the formal sector, it is better to choose to work as farmers following their parents' completion of elementary school, than to continue their studies but end up unemployed. Moreover, the Sukamaju area is dominated by rice fields, which allows the farming sector to become the prime choice of work for the labourer in this village. Because of this a farmer don't need high education. To the point that, in the end, they're in a difficult situation and their lives are substandard at best" (Supardi, Interview, 2017).

Based on the study results, the causes of dropouts in Sukamaju Village resulted from the lack of attention of parents in Sukamaju Village to the importance of schooling for their children to complete a certain level of education. Some parents in farming families have the perception that sending their children to school is only for the sole reason that their children can read and write so that other people do not easily deceive them.

Based on the results of the researcher's interview with Mr. Ahmad Syafi'i, as the informant and he is one of the community leaders in Sukamaju Village said:

"Indeed, many children of farmers in this village drop out of school because their parents' culture does not place much importance on education. Coupled with the fact that the cost of educating children is very expensive. In the end, many parents send their children to work as farmers or migrate to other cities to work. Moreover, economically, their income is barely enough for food, so paying school fees for their children never crossed their minds. Income as a farmer is unpredictable, so most cannot pay for their children's schooling. The income is only enough for daily nourishment. If the harvest fails, there is no additional income for daily expenses, especially for children's school fees" (Ahmad Syafi'i, Interview, 2017).

Based on the above, the high cost of education is the cause of many dropouts for children in Sukamaju Village, making it difficult for the poor to send their children to school. Finally, their children work to follow their parents as farmers to earn money. As the results of the author's interview with Mr. Suparman, said that the children do not want to go to school, I also as a parent don't have the money, in the end I use my children to help work the rice fields (Suparman, Interview, 2017).

From the results of interviews with researchers with, community leaders and the people of Sukamaju Village, it can be said that children dropping out of school are due to lack of funds and weak awareness of the importance of education. Moreover, the child's energy is needed to help earn a living to lighten the burden on parents. This is so common in farming families in Sukamaju Village. Parents usually invite their children to farm to help work in the fields, children who are tired from work certainly cannot be asked to go to school. Because parents want their children's energy to help work on the fields. Plus, the author's interviews with children who dropped out of school, including Fahmi, said: "If I continue to go to school, I can't be certain that I can get a better job than my parents, so I should help my parents instead of wasting time and spending money on school, which is uncertain whether I will get a job or not." (Fahmi, Interview, 2017).

Another informant, Haldi, said: "I feel like my parents can't afford to pay for my school, so I better help my parents work. What's the point of going to high school, when you are also looking for money in the end, so it's no better than now to make money" (Haldi, Interview, 2017).

The author interviewed parents of farming families about their perceptions of their children's education. The emergence of good or bad perceptions of parents is influenced by several factors, including:

*First.* Parent Education. Education affects the level of perception of parents. High and low education will affect the view of their children's education (Garbe et al., 2020). This means that the higher the parents' education and family income, the better their perception of their children's education. Most parents in Sukamaju Village have a low level of formal education. They only participate in various non-formal activities held in the community, such as through religious lectures in Sukamaju Village. Therefore, parents in the Sukamaju area have low awareness of their child's education. For them,

education is only enough to be able to read and write, and there is no need for high school. The parents of farmers from Sukamaju Village who have children who drop out of school believe that a person's success is not determined by how high the education is, so it is not too important to send their children to secondary education.

As the results of the author's interview with Mr. Edi, said:

"For me, sending children to school does not need to be high enough so that children can only read and write. Because we can read and write, we will not be deceived in life. Even if they go to high school, in the end they only look for work. So, it's better to just work since childhood in order to earn money. My child has stopped going to school and is now helping me with the rice fields. Plus, I'm old, no one helps me anymore, and also to earn money before the harvest season" (Edi, Interview, 2017).

*Second.* Household Economics. The economic capacity of most members of the farming community in Sukamaju Village is mediocre. They are labor farmers and odd jobs. Income is only enough to eat every day, sometimes even less. This greatly influences their perception of their child's education. This means that due to low economic conditions, their views on education are also low. For the people of Sukamaju Village, the important thing is to work to make money. Even the work they do as farmers is passed on to their children, so that they become farmers from generation to generation (Del Boca et al., 2020).

Farming families in Sukamaju Village who have school dropouts generally have low economic income, so they need help from children to supplement family income to meet family needs. Therefore, parents with low education and income have lower perceptions of education for their children compared to families with higher education and incomes who are generally able to send their children to a higher school level. As the results of the author's interview with Mr. Yudi, said:

"Education is indeed important, but for me who can't afford it economically, how can I continue to go to school for my children. If later the school's goal is to find a job, why go to higher education? Better not go to school but go straight to work to make money for daily needs. I'm not the only resident here whose children don't go to school. The average is because the money to pay for school is too high. Well, if you get to junior high school, you don't have to pay, but you need fees and other things, you still need money" (Yudi, Interview, 2017).

*Third.* Parental Awareness. Parents' awareness of the importance of education can shape one's perception. If you have high awareness, then the perception of your child's education will be better (Mehak Aggarwal Saumya Singh, Sahil Srivastava, Pammi Gauba, 2017).

There are several suggestions that the author can convey, including that the role of the village government, especially the Head of Sukamaju Village for poor farming families, must continue to be empowered, so that they can be socio-economically capable so that it will affect parents' perceptions of their children's education. The government must continue encouraging public awareness of education's importance (Lupton, 2017). Because if children drop out of school, future generations will be left behind (Rais et al., 2018). For this reason, the government's responsibility must be involved in overcoming the problem of dropping out of school for children in Sukamaju Village.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The socio-economic life of the farming community in Sukamaju Village in Cianjur District, Cianjur Regency, seen from their working conditions, most of them are farmers. Judging from their economic condition, they are classified as low-income. So that it can be categorized as poor. And when viewed from the condition of education, they are classified as low education, especially their parents. The average farmer family has an elementary and junior high school education. The low education of the area's people means that their perception of education for their children is also low. Out-of-school children in the Sukamaju Village community include economic factors, the low interest of the child to continue school; factors of lack of awareness and attention of parents; factors of the absence of school infrastructure, and

cultural factors. As for the views of parents on the education of their children, they differ. Parents' views are influenced by educational background, socio-economic status and culture. The better the education, socio-economic status and culture of the parents, the better, better and higher the perception of the parents, and vice versa.

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