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LOCALS' PERCEPTION ON CATFISH FARMING CULTIVATION TO PREVENT STUNTING

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ABSTRACT

Background: The catfish cultivating community plays an important role in fighting stunting in Timor Tengah Selatan, Kupang, and Manggarai Regencies. By encouraging people to increase their intake of protein from catfish, people increase their overall consumption of fish.
Aim: This study aims to determine the perceptions of the village community towards the development of catfish farming to overcome stunting in Timor Tengah Selatan, Kupang, and Manggarai Regencies.
Method: The method used in this study was a survey method, while the data collection technique in this study used a questionnaire and literature study.
Findings: The results showed that in developing catfish farming, the positive response from the community towards freshwater fish in the Timor Tengah Selatan, Kupang, and Manggarai regions was significant. Of the 50 respondents, almost half said catfish farming was a good idea. As a result of poor marketing efforts and lack of public acceptance, many respondents believed the catfish industry would not be successful. More than half of the surveyed group or 61.67% believe that catfish marketing is inadequate. Moreover, 48.75% of respondents believe this industry will not be popular because people are not familiar with catfish and its related dishes.

KEYWORDS

perception, catfish cultivation, stunting

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INTRODUCTION

The fishing business starts from the initial stages of resource selection and collection to environmental processing, marketing, and management. The fisheries sector has a significant impact on national development (Mardyani & Yulianti, 2020; Zulkarnain et al., 2013). It involves producing more fish through public waters and ponds and creating new jobs thanks to the need for people to eat them. In addition, the sector increases fish production by harvesting in open and closed waters. Due to the increasing need for fish in the community, supporting freshwater fishing efforts is logical. However, agriculture in this area is very promising. People still need to consume fish both as raw and processed products. To date, these needs have not been met.

Indonesia is an archipelagic country with the potential to cultivate fish farming. Catfish is a high-value freshwater fish that can be cultivated in Indonesian waters (Ernawati et al., 2017; Nurhayati et al., 2019). Indonesian commercial fishermen cultivate catfish for commercial purposes. They have limited land and water sources and can easily market fish with high stocking density (Gustiano et al., 2021; Munzir & Khaidir, 2017; Mustika et al., 2021). Compared to other fish, catfish farming requires relatively small capital (Effendie, 2003).

There are two types of catfish found in the Philippines, they are African catfish and local catfish. Both of these fish can be cultivated commercially in Indonesia, especially in Java (Imron et al., 2020; Rimmer et al., 2013). Having an ever-increasing demand for catfish helps make many small businesses a success. Many farmers sell catfish in large quantities so that it requires them to sell fish every day. This causes the market value of catfish to increase and opens up more opportunities for entrepreneurs. In addition, there are business opportunities for catfish farming involving hatchery and growth (Dickson et al., 2016; Lasner et al., 2017). Public demand for catfish ensures stable growth for the agribusiness (Ogidi, 2016). With careful treatment methods, consumers will find this agribusiness interesting.

Catfish farmers need catfish farming places that are easy to shade, with good water and environment. They also need to consider location. Ponds located under trees with fragile leaves are not recommended (Alagbe, 2019). Also, they need to consider the surrounding land whether it is unused or marginal when deciding where to place their pool. It needs additional consideration regarding the size of catfish that can be kept in the pond. It is associated with a specific source of water used to fill pond ponds. Some options include using municipal water or well water. Since ponds in residential neighborhoods need to be addressed when building, pond water waste needs to be considered when building it (Oertli & Parris, 2019). In addition, the proper quality of water for catfish farming needs to be considered.

East Nusa Tenggara Province, especially Kupang, Manggarai, and Timor Tengah Selatan have a catfish cultivation business that is quite promising. Families and restaurants regularly ask for more fish. On-the-ground surveys show that current production is unable to meet the demands of residents in the region. According to the Indonesian Nutritional Status Survey or SSGI 2021, 37.8% of children under the age of 5 are stunted. This is significantly higher than the average prevalence of 24.4% in Indonesia. Furthermore, 3 regions in NTT are included in the high stunting category, namely Kupang, Timor Tengah Selatan, and Manggarai.

Growth and development deficits can be caused by stunting, which is determined by chronic infections and reduced food intake. According to research, the first 1000 days of life have the fastest growth and development rate. It suggests that babies need a sufficient amount of food every day. During dry season in the East Nusa Tenggara region, especially Timor Tengah Selatan (TTS), Manggarai and Kupang, water is often difficult to find. As a result, it is difficult to obtain food for household consumption. In some cases, this can lead to a mismatch between the toddler's needs and the number of food or nutrition options they receive. This problem often arises due to low rainfall in the region. Therefore, the empowerment of freshwater fish farming communities, especially catfish, is an important step to reduce stunting in the Timor Tengah Selatan, Manggarai and Kupang regions. The reason is, awareness of protein intake through catfish encourages people to increase their consumption. In addition, regional leaders and private business actors support community empowerment through fish farming.

All the statements incited the researchers' curiosity. Therefore, the researchers would like to discuss locals' perception on catfish farming cultivation to prevent stunting. In addition, the researchers hope that the research can contribute to greater insight for catfish farming in Indonesia and locals' take on the issue.

METHOD

The method used in this study is a survey method, a critical observation or investigation to get good information about a certain problem in a certain area or location that is patterned to obtain the information needed. The determination of informants is carried out purposively, which is a technique to determine research samples with certain considerations aimed at making the data obtained later more representative (Sugiyono, 2019). Respondents selected were those who have ponds and have been working on freshwater fish farming for more than 1 year, either tilapia farming, catfish, or carp. The data obtained then analyzed by reducing them, analyzing the results, then concluding them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Long Time Running Catfish Farming

Four to six years are the longest respondents who run a catfish farming business. Around 75% of respondents have been in this business for 4-5 years. Those who run a business for 5+ years own a 5% share. Due to the recent demand for freshwater catfish, many 4- to 6-year-old fish farmers have a high market share. This is because many popular fast food restaurants use catfish in their cooking

Perception on Production Aspects

The villagers of TTS, Kupang and Manggarai showed high interest in the development of freshwater fish farming. In particular, they are interested in goldfish and mujair/tilapia. This was revealed after conducting an investigation of catfish farming in the field. Some decide to start breeding fish for profit. However, this raises concerns because there are still many people in the Kupang, TTS and Manggarai areas who view farming as a negative thing.

Some respondents noted that data and information about the perception of catfish farmers were not good. Approximately 14% of respondents stated that activities related to catfish farming were good, while another 50% stated that they were quite good. A smaller percentage of respondents, 36%, stated that catfish production data and information were poor.

Although many respondents obtained information through socialization with BBAT, some said catfish farming was a success. The reason is, they often get information through this method from the Freshwater Cultivation Center. In accordance with the statements of Sunaryo, Rakhmat and others, perception is the final stage of observation. It is the process of perceiving something receiving stimuli before passing them on to the brain. Only after this does the individual become aware of something they feel. Rakhmat stated in 2004 that perception is the experience of relationships, events and objects obtained by collecting information and forming interpretations.

Many people do not understand the way of production of catfish. As a result, their understanding of catfish farming has made little interest in opening a business in the Kupang, TTS, or Manggarai areas. On the other hand, people who understand this method of production show a positive outlook for starting a catfish farming business. The reason is, they consulted with the Fisheries Service to study catfish production.

Perception of Consumption

The assessment of people's perceptions of consumption uses a list of questions to assess public perceptions of freshwater fish farmers in the Kupang, TTS and Manggarai areas. This assessment is used by farmers to determine how prevalent catfish are as consumable fish in the region. From the opinions of respondents, 25% think that catfish are good to eat. Another 25% felt it was okay, and 48.75% thought it was not good to eat.

Respondents tend to argue that eating catfish is unhealthy because most people are not used to eating catfish and do not enjoy the processed dishes much. In addition, many popular fish dishes remain in the Kupang, TTS, and Manggarai areas. People also do not like to prepare catfish-based food because most people are not familiar with this dish. When providing information to survey respondents about the benefits of eating catfish, they stated that the fish is safe and hygienic due to good sanitary practices. In addition, people believe that catfish provide significant health benefits. In addition, respondents in other regions reported high catfish consumption. Some even preserve it or prepare it fresh

Perception of Marketing

When surveyed, 5% of respondents said catfish marketing was "pretty good." In addition, 33.33% of respondents said marketing catfish were not Respondents reported that catfish are difficult to market when they have been harvested. They claimed 61.67% of respondents thought fish marketing was not good. When marketing catfish, 5% of respondents indicated that they are very good at it. In addition, 33.3% reported having good marketing capabilities because they have built marketing channels. The increasing demand for catfish farming products leads to a drastically different business situation for farmers. This is due to the influence of the surrounding environment on the way people perceive things, according to an opinion supported by Robbins (2008).

CONCLUSION

Most catfish farmers in the Kupang, TTS and M anggarai areas have a positive outlook on the business. About half of the 50% of respondents stated that their catfish cultivation was successful. In terms of consumption, most respondents (48.75%) think it is not good because people are not used to eating catfish and do not like various processed products made from catfish. In terms of marketing, most respondents (61.67%) said that catfish marketing is not good, because freshwater fish farmers have difficulty marketing catfish after harvest.

The researchers realize that there are still limitations in their study. Therefore, they hope that future researchers can delve deeper into what people think about local fishfarm, especially catfish farming, and how it affects stunting. Also, research discussing factors affecting stunting are expected to emerge to prevent it from happening further.

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