

## Competency Skills Development of Salt Farmers in Pademawu Sub-district Pamekasan Regency

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### Abstract

Many salt farmers in Pademawu lived in the middle to lower economic class because they still produced bad raw salt. This study aimed to arrange a new model of developing salt-farmers skills to produce a high amount of salt in better quality. A qualitative method was used in this study. The data presented were the result of interviews and observation. To obtain accurate data, the researchers conducted interviews and direct observations to salt farmers in Pademawu Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency. The data analysis technique used was domain analysis, which sought to analyze general descriptions of research objects at surface level but relatively intact about the object of research. Research findings indicate that the development of salt farmer skills competence in Pademawu Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency is still low and has not run optimally. The Pamekasan Regency Government, through the Fisheries Service and other related agencies, must conduct more intensive training and coaching to develop the competency skills of salt farmers in Pademawu Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency. The result analysis of this study was targeted to obtain a complete description of the object without mentioning detailed elements of the object research. This research only discusses the development of salt farmer skills competency. This research was expected to give a valuable contribution to the model of developing salt-farmers skills.

**Keywords:** *Competency Development, Salt Farmer Skills, Pademawu Subdistrict*



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### INTRODUCTION

Pamekasan is one of the regencies in Madura island, which has large salt evaporation ponds. The total width of the ponds is about 2,113.35 ha, consisting of 839.05 ha of the public salt pond and 1,274.30 ha of the incorporated company. The ponds are located in Galis District, covering an area of 423.22 ha, 409.78 ha in Pademawu District, and the rest 6.06 ha in Tlanakan District. (Suhelmi et al., 2013: 35).

The main problem of developing the salt's quality is generally almost the same as other districts in Madura, namely: the use of traditional production tools, the dependence on the season, the backward production, the low infrastructure that affected the high production cost, the fluctuating price and the low productivity of public salt (Laporan Akhir Pengembangan Demplot Garam Aditif Adirama, 2012: 3).

Until recently, most of the salt production was done individually by salt farmers so that salt production has high productivity low and the quality of the salt is relatively low, so it does not meet the specifications required by the domestic industry (Efendy *et al.*, in Zamroni and Ernawati, 2016: 7).

Salt farmers are individually weak, both in terms of quality of education and capital capacity. This is exacerbated by the difficulty of salt farmers' access to financial/banking institutions, market information, and technology. Farmers with low

levels of education will process their salt traditionally and do not use new technology or machines due to limited capital. As a result, the productivity of the salt business is low, and the level of income is low. With a low-income level, it is difficult for salt farmers to increase their education level (Efendy *et al.*, 2012: 105).

Pademawu is a coastal area; most inhabitants work as salt farmers. Although they did salt production for a long time, the quality of salt is still low. Because of this problem, the researcher is interested in doing research. Based on the initial research by interviewing and observing the sample, it was found that the low salt quality was caused by the low skill they had. Therefore, the researcher was interested in doing the research.

The salt farmers in Pademawu have been producing salt although they have low skills, as mentioned above, limited capital, and less bargaining position than salt limited liability companies and a private company that produced salt for consumption and for industrial has. The difference of this study from the previous one was, this study wanted to describe the current condition of the competence possessed by salt-farmers in Pademawu, Pamekasan. It was supposed that conducting this research would provide a new perspective in developing their competence.

The previous study was conducted by Amril Rahman, Sapta Raharja dan Darwin Kadarisman (2014) about evaluating salt farmer's work at Bima regency, West Nusa Tenggara. The result of this study showed that the salt farmer's work at Bima regency had not been satisfied yet. It was also found that the productivity of salt farmers at Bontokape Village, Bolo Sub-District and Donggobolo Village, Woha Sub-District, Bima Regency, West Nusa Tenggara was 8.12-33.33 ton/ ha. The salt quality at that place had not met the demand of Indonesia National Standard because its quality is seen from the aspect of salt content was only 35.55-36.48%, produced salt with 84.14% NaCl content, had a turbid white color, and had crystal diameter < 5 mm.

Another previous study conducted by Bagus Ananda Kurniawan, Agus Suryono, dan Choirul Saleh (2014) about the implementation of the salt business empowerment fund program (PUGAR) for developing people's salt entrepreneurship (study at the Sumenep Regency Marine and Fisheries Service), Master Program in Public Administration, Brawijaya University.

It was found in the previous study that research about salt farmers had broad aspects, such as social aspect, economic aspect, public policy aspect, and human resources aspect. This study only focused on the human resources aspect, that is, on developing the competency skills of salt farmers. The human resources aspect of the salt farmers is the most important aspect to be evaluated because it is the basis and the main factor for producing salt in large quantities and high quality. This research was conducted to describe the current condition of salt farmers in Pademawu District and to determine their competence.

This study aims to describe and explain the development of skills competence of salt farmers in Pademawu Subdistrict Pamekasan Regency. This study also seeks to

develop a model for developing the skills of salt farmers in Pademawu Subdistrict Pamekasan Regency, so that salt farmers are able to produce high-quality salt.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Definition of Competence**

Hirsch (in Horton *et al.*, 2002) stated that competence is a skill, knowledge, experience, attributes, and behaviour that individual needs to work effectively. Incompetency management, there are core competencies that can be developed in an organization so that the human resources are able to work well due to the support from the organization and coordination with other resource functions.

“.....Core competencies are the collective learning in the organisation especially how to co-ordinate diverse production skills and integrate multiple streams of technologies ... core competency does not diminish with use. Competencies are enhanced as they are applied and shared.....” Prahalad and Hamel dalam (Horton *et al.*, 11:2002).

In the concept of human capital, it is described that there are four important roles to win the competition in the current era. The first role is the management of firm infrastructure, which focuses on administrative processes and personnel functions so that the competencies expected in this role are development and improvement processes, mastery of information technology, and technical knowledge. The second role is the management of employee contribution; in this case, the competencies that need to be possessed are performance management, development management, and work environment (Ulrich, 1997).

Moreover, Spencer and Spencer, (1993) said that competence is (an underlying characteristic of an individual which is causally related to criterion-referenced effective and or superior performance in a job or situation. Another definition of competence was also presented by experts in the field of human resource development who attended a conference on competence in Johannesburg in 1995, stated that competence was a set of knowledge, skill, and attitudes that were interrelated and affected a large part of a person's job (role and responsibility) which correlated to his/her performance in the workplace (Parry 1996 in Seema Sangi, 2007:10).

### **Characteristics of Competency**

Competency characteristics are distinguished based on the level at which these competencies can be taught. The following describes each of the characteristics of competency skills proposed by Spencer and Spencer (1993) as quoted by Emmyah (2009) in Sutoto (2004), namely:

#### **Skills**

Skill affects someone's productivity. It means that a skillful man works better than an unskillful man. The skill cluster includes the competencies of concern for order (CO), initiative (INT), impact and influence (IMP), and information seeking (INFO).

- a. Concern for order (CO) is an impetus in a person to reduce uncertainty in his environment.

- b. Initiative (INT) is an ability to make decisions and take action without always being told what to do.
- c. Impact and influence (IMP) are an act of persuading, convincing, influencing, or impressing others so that they are willing to support their agenda.
- d. Information seeking (INFO) is an extra effort to gather more information.

The level of competence proposed by Spencer and Spencer (in Seema Sanghi, 2007: 11) is like an iceberg, where there are aspects that are visible on the surface, but there are also aspects that are not visible on the surface. Based on Figure 1. below, it can be understood that aspects of skills (skills) and aspects of knowledge (knowledge) are aspects of competence that tend to be visible on the surface so that they are easier to observe, while aspects of self-concept, aspects of personal characteristics (traits), and aspects of motives (motives) are aspects of competence that are hidden and not visible on the surface, so they tend to be difficult to observe.



Figure 1. The Iceberg Model

This study uses the competency theory proposed by Spencer and Spencer (1993) cited by Emmyah (2009) in Sutoto (2004), which stated that underlying characteristics of an individual which is causally related to criterion-referenced effective and or superior performance in a job or situation. The development of the competence of salt farmers in Pademawu Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency in this study focused on aspects of Skills competence which included concern for order (CO), initiative (INT), impact and influence (IMP), and information seeking (INFO) competencies.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study used a qualitative approach; it was a study that emphasized disclosure of the case in certain scope and in particular issues (Burhan Bungin, 2013: 173). The type of research was a more in-depth descriptive which tried to describe a case based on the facts as they are.

This study was not limited to collecting and interpreting data, but it also includes the analysis of the data that has been obtained. This study focused on describing the development of the salt farmers' competence in Pademawu, Pamekasan.

The following was the reasons why this study had been conducted in Pademawu as a research location:

1. Pademawu district was considered as the right sample because this study focused on the development of the salt farmers' competence.
2. Pademawu is one of the districts in Pamekasan which has some wide salt-ponds
3. The welfare level of salt farmers in Pademawu is still low, so it is very feasible to be chosen as the research location.

There were two kinds of data in this research. They were primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained from interviewing and observing the informant. The determination of informants in this study was based on the mastery of the problem and their willingness to provide data to the researcher. The requirements of farmers to be considered as samples were based on spacious salt-farm, working time length as salt-farmers, and soon. The number of samples was based on the adequacy and the saturation of data obtained.

The technique of determining the informants in this study used a purposive sampling technique. According to Sugiyono (2017:219), the purposive sampling technique is a sampling technique as an informant who becomes a data source with certain considerations, for example, the person who is considered to know best about what is expected, making it easier for researchers to explore the research object. Samples of this study were some salt-farmers from Bunder, Tanjung, East Pademawu, Padelegan, Majungan, Pegagan, Badduriah, and one supporting informant, namely the Pamekasan Regency Fisheries Service officer. The list of informants in this study can be shown in table 1 below.

Table 1. List of Research Informants

Number	Name of Village or Organization	Number of Informants
1	Bunder	1 Salt Farmer
2	Tanjung	2 Salt Farmer
3	East Pademawu	1 Salt Farmer
4	Padelegan	1 Salt Farmer
5	Majungan	2 Salt Farmer
6	Pegagan	2 Salt Farmer
7	Badduriah	1 Salt Farmer
8	Pamekasan Regency Fisheries Service	1 Fisheries Service Officer
Number of Informants		11 Informants

Source: Processed by researchers

The data from interviews in this study are also equipped with the results of observations made by researchers; the observation process starts from the time the researcher is first at the research location until the researcher manages to collect the required data. Researchers made observations on the salt production process carried out by salt farmers, for example: compacting the soil into salt fields, entering seawater into salt fields, checking the height and volume of seawater entering the salt fields, checking changes in seawater to solids (crystals). salt) periodically, harvesting salt that is ready to be harvested until packing salt in salt wrapping sacks.

The data in this study were analyzed by using domain analysis. It is used to analyze the object description of the research in general. The result of this study was aimed to

obtain a whole description of the research problem without specifying the elements in detail (Burhan Bungin, 2013: 293).

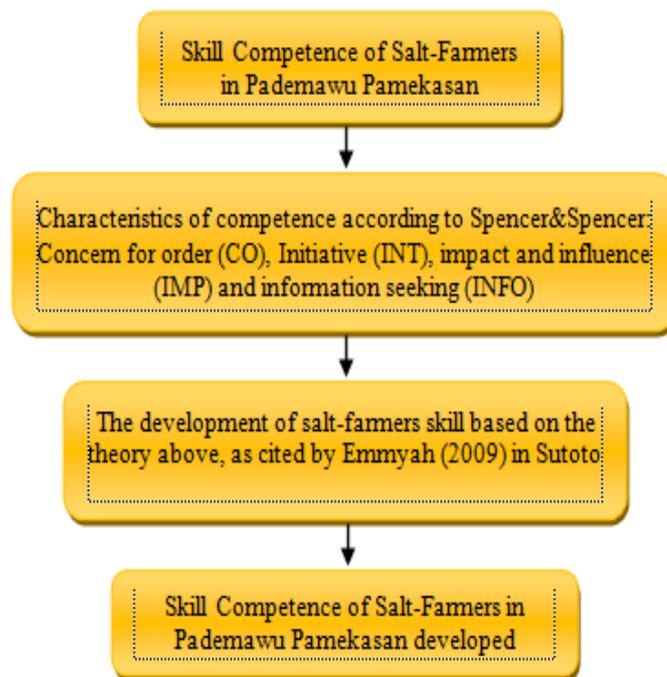


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Developing Salt Farmers Skills

In the beginning, the researcher identified the prior skill of salt-farmers in Pademawu. Later, the competence was reconstructed according to the interest, objectives, and context needed by them.

The process of identifying skills had been carried out by the researcher before he analyzed the reconstruction plan so the skill could be used as a basic consideration to improve the farmers' skills in Pademawu. Based on the result of interviews and field observations, it was found that their skills were acquired from generation to generation. It means that they did not have up-to-date skills. Later, the farmers used that skill as a basis to produce salt.

Based on the observation, it showed that the most important problem in developing the salt farmers' skills was, there was no program held by the fisheries office in Pamekasan. In this case, to improve the quality of local salt, the fishery officers should cooperate with villagers in Baddurih, Pegagan, Majungan, Bunder, Tanjung, Pademawu Timur, and Padelegan village by conducting training and coaching to the salt-farmers and in Pademawu. It was expected that by training, the farmers could improve their performance to produce a better quality of salt.

In this case, an intervention of the village chief was needed because the government had less information about the salt-farmers skill while they also were not able to improve their own skill. Related to this problem, if the salt-farmers were trained, they would improve their skills and practice them to produce better quality. The stages of training and coaching salt-farmers were intended to transmit everything related to improving their skill in some aspects; concern for order (CO), initiative (INT), impact and influence (IMP), information seeking (INFO) for the purpose of maximizing their own skills.

Based on interview and observation results, it was shown that the ways to improve salt-farmers skills could be carried out through meetings or socialization as well as through the implementation of training and coaching by fisheries officers, local government, and all salt-farmers in Pademawu.

Schedule and place should be arranged by the fisheries and village officers before the training is conducted to salt-farmers. Based on the data collected by the researcher, training and coaching for salt-farmers in Pademawu were an alternative way that could be done to improve their skills. The most important thing to be considered in improving the salt farmers' skills is how to make them independently improve their existing skills.

They should have a high commitment to achieve better competence so it will be more sustainable. There are four kinds of skill; concern for order (CO), initiative (INT), impact and influence (IMP), dan information seeking (INFO).

### **Developing Concern for order (CO) Competence**

Giving motivation to a person to minimize uncertainty in his environment, in terms of work arrangements, instructions, and information of producing salt was conducted to develop concern for order competence. Based on interview results, it was found that salt-farmers in Pademawu did not have good motivation to minimize uncertainty in their environment, especially related to work arrangements, instructions, and information of producing salt. Therefore, coaching and training were expected to improve their concern for order competence.

### **Developing Initiative (INT) Competence**

Initiative competence development is a way to stimulate someone to work activities or to do something without being asked. It was aimed to improve one's performance, to avoid some problems, and to create new opportunities. Based on the result of the interview, it was shown that the initiative competence of salt-farmers in Pademawu had not been good yet. They were not able to create new opportunities. To solve this problem, training and coaching were needed to improve their initiative competence so they could boost themselves to produce better quality of salt.

### **Developing Impact and Influence (IMP) Competence**

Developing Impact and influence (IMP) competence can be done by persuading, convincing, and influencing people, so they are willing to support our agenda. Based on observation results, salt-farmers in Pademawu did not have that competence, so

some training and coaching were needed to improve their skill, so they were able to persuade other people to support their agenda. It was expected that by the end of the training program, they would be able to influence the community as consumers, markets, companies, government, and other parties to support their agenda.

### **Developing Information Seeking (INFO) Competence**

Developing information-seeking competency (INFO) represents how much additional effort is being made to gather more information about the work being done. Based on the result of the interview, it was found that the information-seeking competence of salt-farmers in Pademawu has not been good yet. They have not collected some information on how to produce better salt. Therefore, it was needed training and coaching so they could get more information about ways of producing more modern, more sophisticated, and higher quality salt.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research data that has been collected and then analyzed, it can be concluded that the development of skill competence to salt-farmers in Pademawu Pamekasan did not get maximal results. In this case, the government collaborated with fisheries service conducted training and coaching intensively to salt-farmers to develop their competencies. Furthermore, they should have a high commitment to practice the training materials in real work, so they are able to produce salt with high quality and quantity.

The approach that can be taken in developing the skills of salt farmers in Pademawu Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency can be carried out through workshops, community group meetings, or focus group discussions (FGD), as well as through training and coaching. The training and coaching carried out by the Pamekasan Regency Government must also coordinate and collaborate with the Pademawu Subdistrict Government, the local village government, and salt farmers. The training and coaching are aimed at adding, updating the knowledge and information of salt farmers on how to produce high-quality salt, training, and coaching on how to use modern technology or equipment in the salt production process, training in salt packaging according to specified standards.

Overall, the salt farmers have good skills in producing raw salt, but they should improve it more. It was expected that training and coaching could develop their competence to produce salt for the next generation. This research was conducted to provide an empirical description of the competency development of salt farmers in Pademawu District, Pamekasan Regency; it is also expected to be information and input for the Pamekasan Regency Government to develop the competence of salt farmers in Pamekasan Regency, which in turn will have implications for increasing the ability of salt farmers in the Pamekasan Regency.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This research was dedicated to the Directorate of Research and Community Service, especially to the Directorate General of Research and Development LPPM of Madura

University, who gave us valuable contributions so the researcher could conduct this research well.

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