

The Management of Rubber Smallholder in The Midst of Globalization Penetration

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Abstract— Rubber is one of the resources owned by the Third World countries, especially Indonesia. The existence of rubber has been acknowledged for its contribution to the life and economy of the country. As a result, rubber becomes the arena of mastery by the imperialists embodied in the format of globalization. From a skeptical perspective, the penetration of global capitalism against smallholder rubber in Tabir Ilir is done through the cooperation of globalization agents at the international level (rubber importing countries), national level (government and rubber factory) and local (toke). Each of these globalization agencies is responsible for its function. The collaboration of these globalization agents gave rise to price policies (Sicom and Tokom) and rubber quality (SIR). To get the result, rubber farmers in Tabir Ilir applies the rubber management mechanism independently and handed it over to others. The application of these two mechanisms is done by the rubber farmers based on their rational choice perspective. Rubber farmers with enough resources will choose how to manage independently, whereas for those who do not have sufficient resources, will choose to hand over their rubber management to others.

Keywords—rubber, smallholder, skeptics, globalization, rational choice.

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of globalization penetration of resources owned by Third World, rubber one of them, interesting to do. This is based on the following reasons. First, history notes that the activities of controlling Third World resources, such as spices and rubber in Indonesia, are the driving forces for Western colonialization of the Eastern regions [1] [2]. Second, colonialization and imperialization positioned Third World regions (like Indonesia) in a backward and poor position [3]. Third, although the era of colonialization has ended with the liberation of Third World countries, mastery of The Western/Developed Countries to natural resources of Third World is still underway in this era known as globalization [4] [5].

As one of the most important Third World resources, rubber is also a venue for control by Western/Developed Countries through a global capitalist system. This is because rubber has been recognized benefits and contribution to life and the human economy. A phrase in Dutch which reads "rubber is de curk waarop wij dirjven" (rubber is the cork where we float) never surfaced [6]. This phrase describes rubber as the savior of the

problems faced by humans so analogous as a cork (buoy) that can be used by people not to drown.

Historically, the introduction of the Indonesian people with rubber stems from an interest in the success and profitability of Dutch plantation companies, although it is still a sideline of main activities as food crop farmers, such as rice and crops [7]. As it is known that the increase in rubber prices in the world market span of 1910 and 1911 made a variety of Dutch plantation companies continue to increase the number of plantation areas [8]. Although in 1920-1921 there was a significant price decline in the market, it did not last long because in 1922 and 1926 again there was an increase in selling prices in the market along with the increasingly advanced car industry in America. Habits that people do at that time is to plant rubber seedlings in the area of land that has been harvested food crops or in areas that have been opened before planted food crops on it [9] [10] [11].

Along with the passage of time, the rubber plantation continues to grow and increase the number of planting area. From time to time, this sector has become a cornerstone of society's hope for a better future. Rubber plantation sector has long been the backbone of the nation's economy, starting with the introduction of this plant in the colonial period until now [12] [13]. Farmers or people then transformed into the central actors in rubber exploitation in the country because 85.10 percent of the total 3.55 million rubber area in Indonesia belongs to the people / farmers [14].

The significant contribution of rubber to the country's economy as indicated from the above data is in fact not directly proportional to the fate of rubber farmers who are the major contributors to this commodity. This situation is related to various problems faced by farmers in their efforts to work on rubber. Until now, rubber farmers still adhere to their classic problems: low quality, low productivity, and simple technology and marketing systems [15] [16]. As an export commodity crop which means that the production of products is more destined for overseas purposes, the specification of the products must follow the wishes of the export destination country or the world market. Because it is not in accordance with the required specifications and determined, the existing bokar does not sell in the market so that farmers do not get any profit from the business it does. Even if still sold, farmers will suffer losses because the production is priced very cheaply, far from the market price [17] [18].

Another problem faced by rubber farmers is the lack of government attention to rubber farmers in cultivating this crop.

Historically, there are actually some government policies related to efforts to overcome problems faced by farmers, namely: Plantation Nucleus (PIR) and Plantation Revitalization Program at the national level and Rubber Rejuvenation Program issued by the Government of Jambi Province. In reality, however, these policies have failed to address the problems faced by farmers in seeking rubber [19] [20].

The various problems faced by rubber farmers above certainly do not appear without any cause. The problems faced by this farmer is a local impact of capital penetration applied in the Third World. According to Petras [21] and Amin [22], the backwardness and powerlessness of the people in the Third World is the impact of globalization which is nothing but a new embodiment of imperialism. Using a globalization mask, capital runs its mission of draining Third World resources through its agents globally, nationally and locally. In the global context, capitalism is driven through the establishment of international trade rules (WTO and GATTs), while in the national/local context through cooperation with elites that can be bureaucrats, local entrepreneurs, and local elites.

Various studies show the penetration of global capitalism to a country makes people live in powerlessness and poverty. Latoni's research found the powerlessness of the people in Puerto Rico to face the penetration of global capitalism. On the basis of developing the country, the Puerto Rican elite implements a system of capitalist development that one manifests in the provision of opportunities for foreigners to invest. Productive endeavors in Puerto Rico are controlled by foreigners which have an impact on the deprivation of society from its economic source. Although the state receives tax revenues from foreign companies, the funds are taken out (especially the United States) are much larger. People who do not benefit from development due to uneven income because foreign firms employ more outsiders, preferring to migrate to America or survive by relying on government aid [23].

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The approach used in this research is qualitative, which is an approach that gives the opportunity to the researcher to be able to do description and interpretation in detail in order to get a holistic understanding [24] [25]. This type of research is case study research, which is a type of research that can be interpreted as an approach to study, explain, or interpret a case (case) in the context naturally without any intervention from outsiders [26] [27] [28].

This research is field research by emphasizing observation and interview as the data collection method, beside the participant observation and in-depth interview [29]. The informants interviewed were selected by using purposive sampling, ie rubber farmers, the data sought was the form of globalization penetration and the way of rubber management of the people. To sharpen the problem, the researchers conducted direct interviews with rubber farmers to find out more about the rubber management mechanisms they undertook. Informants in this study were as many as 15 people of rubber farmers in Tabir Ilir, Jambi. The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive analysis to further illustrate the mechanism of rubber management in Tabir Ilir. To systematize the collected data, the analysis is done through the stages, namely: data reduction, data exposure and verification and conclusion [30].

III. RUBBER FARMER'S RESPONSE TO GLOBALIZATION PENETRATION

In the midst of the penetration of globalization through the capitalist system, the rubber farmer of Tabir Ilir still strives for the commodities that were previously positioned as the object of this export. The efforts of the farmers in Tabir Ilir in managing their rubber plantations are a reflection of the increasingly marketed society in the globalization era, giving rise to what Schuerkens said as a new localism.

According to Schuerkens society is actually capable of appropriating the influence of market culture and globalization into thinking and action while continuing to negotiate some local cultures that still exist for the benefit of local empowerment. In practice, the implementation of the rubber management pattern in Tabir Ilir is done in line with the rational choice theory perspective. The rational choice theory is a theory used for measurement purposes, as an approach to disputes within social institutions (in laws, rules, norms, and cultural values), and can provide possibilities on how to answer a person's choice of goals.

The theory pioneered by Friedman and Hechter focuses on the choice of a person who is self-motivated and committed to the individual methodology and views the optimization prospects. This theory is derived from economics with the basic assumption that society acts rationally and social behavior can be explained by rational calculations..

In general, it can be said that rational choice theory is a theory about how people decide on choices based on their personal inclinations. In performing its actions, the actor first selects the options that are available or which allow being done by paying attention to all aspects, such as what the priority objectives, the resources it has and also the likelihood of success of the actions taken. On the basis of such, in an attempt to explain the various phenomena, one must have additional knowledge about, or a logical explanation of, the characteristics and the origin of these trends.

Associated with the farmer's response to the penetration of globalization of rubber, there are two patterns applied by the community of Tabir Ilir. This method is undertaken in their attempt to manage their own rubber plantations as a form of their rational choice: to self-manage their own rubber garden (independently) and to hand over the management of their rubber plantations to other managers or in the local terminology known as 'snake'. Each of these applied patterns has its own characteristics and has implications that are also different from others.

A. Rubber Management Independently

In an effort to obtain income and profits from the rubber plantations owned, rubber farmers in Tabir Ilir apply the way of self-management. Such a rubber management mechanism is carried out by owner farmers and tappers farmers by handling all rubber management activities in the region independently without working with other managers. In this way, the farmer owner and former owner of the tappers prepare the plantation land, plant, maintain and care, produce (tap) and market the produce independently.

Nevertheless, there are different ways of managing independently applied by the two players of rubber exploitation in this Ilir Tabir. As a larger group of farmers, the farmers are

different from the farmers who own the tapping farmers in terms of producing their own rubber plantations. In an effort to produce their own rubber plantation, the farmers use rubber tapping power (wiper farmers) almost entirely from Java, while the tappers farmers produce (tappers or menderes) their own rubber gardens. Another difference is found in the marketing method applied by each of the main actors of rubber management in this Ilir. As a farmer group that controls almost all rubber plantations in Tabir Ilir, the owner farmers have a direct relationship with the big businessman or factory related to the marketing of their products. Conversely, as a party that has a much smaller rubber area in Tabir Ilir, the tappers farmers sell their rubber products to the farmers.

The implementation of rubber management independently applied by owner farmers in Tabir Ilir, especially related to the production process, is done by applying the exchange of resources owned by each of them. The exchange of resources occurring between the owner farmers and the tappers that occurred in Tabir Ilir was the exchange of means of production owned by the owner farmers with the energy possessed by the tappers. Owner-owned production facilities are mainly rubber and money-growing areas, but they also have other resources such as rubber tapping equipment and daily necessities. The resources are then passed on to the tappers by means of profit sharing. In addition, the owner's farmers also provide loans in the form of money or prizes at certain times that are exchanged with the tappers loyalty by selling their produce to the owner's farmers.

The exchange is not only in economic activity but also in social activities that also color the pattern of this kind of relationship. When tappers need help for various purposes, such as; treatment, repairing houses and so forth, then the owner's farmers will help. Likewise, the opposite happens, where when the farmer owner needs a tapper, such as helping to organize a particular event, then the tappers will immediately necessarily fulfill.

B. Rubber Management by Others

The next pattern of rubber management done in Tabir Ilir is the opposite of the above self-management model, which is to hand over rubber management to others. This pattern in Tabir Ilir is commonly known as 'Child Snake', that is, an owner farmer entirely hands over the management of his rubber garden to other farmers. Like a snake's son who will eat what his parent endeavors, the landlord who handed over his rubber plantation to be managed by another owner will enjoy the benefits as the one who managed the rubber plantation. That is, an owner's farmer only prepares plantation land, grows it and takes care of it, after it is considered feasible to produce, it is handed over to others.

There are several reasons behind this pattern of rubber management. The first reason why a farmer owner does not manage his or her own rubber garden is that of his inability to manage the rubber. The second reason is that the rubber plantation area is not too wide so that the resulting product is also not too much. The last reason for this 'snake-boy' system is that the farmers do not want to be preoccupied with rubber management activities that are time-consuming.

There are two first reasons to be the most dominant factor in the introduction of the rubber management pattern known as

the 'snake-child' system. Like a snake's son, the owner's farmer does not just hand over the management of his rubber garden to others. There are several decisive considerations to whom the rubber gardens it has will be handed over.

The first consideration is the track record of people who will be handed over the management of rubber gardens owned. If the person to be handed over the management of the rubber plantation is considered good and skilled in managing the rubber, then the responsibility will be given. But on the contrary, is based on his judgment the person is not good in the management of rubber, then the owner farmers will look for other parties that are considered better. The next consideration is familial ties or kinship ties with the person who will be handed over the management of the rubber plantation. The closer the kinship relationship between the owner farmer and the person who will be handed over the management of the rubber plantation, the greater the chances will be realized. This is certainly related to the ethics of Eastern or local culture that is still firmly held by the people of Tabir Ilir who put relatives more precedence than others. Large farmer owners still have the kinship that is close enough because it comes from the elders of the original villages in Tabir Ilir, namely: Rantau Limau Manis Village, Tunngul Bulin Village, Ulak Makam Village, and Mekar Limau Manis Village.

Consideration rubber farmers hand over rubber plantation management to others is because of kinship. According to the farmers, they did not have enough expertise to manage rubber plantations, so decided to hand over the utilization of its resources to one of its closest relatives known as rubber entrepreneurs. Thus it can be seen that the two considerations (track record and kinship) merge into one being the underlying factor of the decision of an owner's farmer to make his choice.

In the meantime, there is also a farm owner who implements the 'Snake Child System' for consideration of the entrepreneur's expertise in managing the rubber, although he also has close relatives who are also in the same profession. Thus, the consideration factor of the rubber management actor with the 'snake child' system becomes very dominant in determining to whom the rubber gardens he owns will be handed over.

Since the management has been completely handed over, the rubber garden of 'Child Snake' seems to be fully owned by the managers. That is, how the manager manages his own rubber plantation, so that's what he did to the rubber garden 'Child Snake'. Starting from care, the acceptance of tap or tapping workers and the marketing of their products is entirely the responsibility of managing. The original owner of the rubber plantation or 'Child Snake' received only the net proceeds from the management of the rubber plantation after it was sold or after the 'rubber weed' period. The management period varies, depending on the agreement between the original rubber owner and the person managing it, within a few years to decades.

As part of the delivery agreement, the manager can increase the production of his rubber plantation in various ways, even some who also use the stimulant medication of rubber latex becomes more than usual. Another thing that is also done is the manager to provide loans in a certain amount of money and goods of daily necessities so that the original owner no longer need to bother waiting for the time 'timbang sap'.

Based on the perspective proposed by the rational choice theory, the rubber management actors in Tabir Ilir have the goal to be achieved, namely the improvement of living standard or welfare of life. In an effort to realize their desire to achieve the intended objectives, the rubber farmers have a variety of options available ways or references. Because it has a variety of ways, a farmer chooses some of the ways or methods most likely to accomplish to achieve his desired goals. Selection of the method or method is done after carefully considering the advantages and disadvantages of each of these ways.

Because of it is much more extensive and comprehensive resources (large rubber gardens, large financial and management capabilities), the farmers choose their own way of managing their rubber gardens. On the other hand, there are farmers who, after considering their resources (large rubber gardens but lack sufficient financial ability and good management skills), choose how to apply the 'snake-child' system. The same thing is also done by the tappers farmers, after considering the resources it has (adequate rubber plantation and the ability to tap), then he chose the way of self-management, although still affiliated with the owner-farmers. Finally, the same method is also carried out by tapping farmers who consider the limits of their resources (without rubber plantations, but only rubber tapping skills), then finally choose to join the owner farmers working as rubber tappers.

IV. CONCLUSION

As one of the resources owned by the Third World, Indonesia's rubber is not spared from the mastery of global capitalism. Although politically Indonesia is already independent, but the resources it possesses are still the object of imperialist mastery which in the modern context manifests itself in the format of globalization. Based on a skeptical perspective, the penetration of global capitalism against smallholder rubber in Tabir Ilir is done through the cooperation of globalization agents at international level (rubber importing countries), national level (government and rubber factory) and local (toke). Each of these globalization agencies is responsible for its function. The cooperation of these globalization agents gave rise to price policies (Sicom and Tokom) and rubber quality (SIR). Rubber management in Tabir Ilir is done in two ways, namely: manage it independently and managed by others. This method is practiced by mutual exchange of resources, owners of farmers own rubber plantations and some funds exchanged for energy owned by tapping farmers, as well as tappers farmers who exchange their latex with some funds owned by farmers owners.

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