

## **Gotong royong (cooperation) transformation of rural communities in Jambi Province, Indonesia**

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### **Abstract**

One nowadays un denied phenomena is that society changed. Jambi Province rural community has also changed toward modernization. The main goal of this research is to analyze factors effect *gotong royong* (cooperation) transformation in Jambi Province rural communities based on its remoteness from urban area. The research analysis used in this research is the Delphi method. Research found that there has been a change in the value of *gotong royong* in Jambi Province. It was also found that there are differences in changes in rural locations that are close to city and that are far from city. Some factors effecting the transformation are information technology, household income and accessibility while some factors that keeps *gotong royong* alive are family, harmony and help. The strategy to keep *gotong royong* value remain solid in Jambi Province's villages should be to wisely accept global technology, income increases and better accessibility while still maintain the social capital strength.

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**JEL Classification:** O18, O35, R20

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is no society that does not change. Every society has changed. Harper (1989) argues that social change is a significant change of social structure based on the cycle of time travel. Blau's (1998) then explains that there are two types of structural change parameters, namely nominal parameters and gradual parameters. The nominal parameters distinguish members of the population into discrete categories, such as gender, ethnicity, and religion. The gradual parameters distinguish members by a certain development level, such as income, age, wealth, power, socioeconomic status, and prestige. Heterogeneity or diversity is a social differentiation based on nominal parameters. The social gap is a differentiation based on gradual parameters known as social stratification or social coating in society.

In rural communities in Jambi Province, the modernization of agriculture can be interpreted as a transformation or change in the management of farming from traditional to more advanced agriculture with the use of new technologies. Transformation in this case not only covers changes that occur in the outer form, but includes the basic form, function, structure, or characteristics of economic business activities of a community (Pranadji, 2000). Within this framework the advance changed in technology in Jambi has brought its own impacts to rural society.

The impacts of information technology, transport and transparency have resulted in social and cultural changes in rural communities especially *gotong royong*. In general, the meaning inherent in *gotong royong* is to work together to achieve a desired

outcome. This term comes from the word “*gotong*” means to work and “*royong*” means together, there for *gotong royong* is defined as working together (Koentjaraningrat, 1974). Another meanings of *gotong royong* is one of the characteristics of village communities owned by almost all regions of Indonesia is mutual cooperation or in Javanese society better known as “*sambatan* or *gotong royong*” (Adi, 2016). Uniquely, without having to be asked for help, they will immediately “*nyengkuyung*” or work together to relieve the burden of their neighbors who are having “*gawe*” or “work”. They do not take into account the material losses incurred to help others. Their principle: “*loss sathak, bathi sanak*”. Which is more or less meaningful: it is better to lose material but not relatives.

The impacts will certainly be different between rural communities close to urban area and rural communities far from towns. The impacts can result in changes in education, lifestyle, relationships, livelihood patterns, and local wisdom. The process of change will likely result in differences in the process of adaptation to the life of various rural communities. Industrialization as a modernization project, including the development of information technology, transportation and openness of the region as a symbol of the progress of civilization has gradually shifted social, economic and cultural system of society in rural Jambi. *Gotong royong* institution as a form of social, economic as well as cultural has slowly goes out from the rural society.

Considering that almost 70 % of Jambi people live in rural areas, any changes in social economic and cultural in rural area could significantly change the Jambi Province economic performance. Parsons (1985) in functional structural theory said that the changes in rural areas cannot be avoided, such as changes in the value of social capital which is important for development of rural development. Anticipating the effect of the changes, it is important to know the patterns changing. Parsons (1985) also proposed an evolutionary theory that explains the movement of primitive societies to modern through four major structural change processes, namely differentiation, adaptation upgrading, inclusion, and generalization of values. The structural differentiation and developmental processes associated with influencing evolutionary processes such as the emergence of social stratification systems, bureaucratic organizations, the money system, impersonal market networks, and the patterns of democratic associations are called evolutionary universal, which play a role in enhancing people's capacity in their adaptation. The objective of this research is to analyze factors of *gotong royong* transformation on rural communities based on its remoteness from urban.

## METHODS

This research was conducted in Jambi Province at Year 2018. The sample locations are Sumber Jaya and Talang Belido Village in Muara Jambi District, Giriwinangun and Muara Sekalo Village in Tebo District, Muara Madras and Dusun Tuo village in Merangin District, Pulau Pauh and Adi Purwa Village in Tanjung Jabung Barat District. Respondents are villagers with total of respondents were 160 household.

The research analysis used in this research is the Delphi Method. The method that can describe problems and solve the problems through the opinion of community leaders in different villages and effective in describing the socio-cultural transformation in the rural area (Linstone & Turoff, 1979). Variables studied were economics variable consists of household income and income sources in addition to various social culture variables. The phases of Delphi approach are the same question should be asked in three phase in order to check the validity the answer. Furthermore, the answers from the villagers for the three phases are averaged.

Data from survey results will be cross tabulated and analyzed descriptively, while the data of observations and in-depth interviews will be analyzed qualitatively. Data analysis in this research took place along with the data collection process by providing a

review or interpretation of the data obtained so that it becomes more clear and meaningful. The analysis steps include data reduction, presentation of data with charts and text, and drawing conclusions to reveal facts, circumstances, phenomena, variables and circumstances that occur when research runs (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Gotong royong avoiding changes factors**

As it was declared by theory, there is no society left unchanged. The research showed that change in the value of *gotong royong* even though it shows up differently, it was found happen both in rural area close to urban area and far from urban area. In rural communities close to the cities it was characterized by a force factor to maintain the value of *gotong royong*, or more precisely expressed to be a factor driving the emergence of *gotong royong*.

There is a quite different between high sense of family factor in close to and far from city area. It can be seen that the high sense of family factor score was 328 in the first phase then went down to 324 in the second phase and reversed back to 328 in the third phase (Table 1). The average score of high sense of family factor was 326.6. This factor pattern was very much different found in remote to city area where the score first went up from 371 to 375 before decreased back to 371 in third phase with the average score 372.3. This means that family sense factors to encourage the *gotong royong* value remain unchanged is higher in the remote area compared to the factor value in urban area.

**Table 1.** The average scores of the emergence of *gotong royong* driving factors in Jambi Province villages

Gotong royong avoiding changes factors	Close to city area				Far from city area			
	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Average	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Average
High sense of family	328	324	328	326.7	371	375	371	372.3
Workload	200	192	204	198.7	242	242	251	245.0
Value of Money	272	264	268	268.0	291	291	291	291.0
Harmony	328	320	324	324.0	360	364	360	361.3
Willingness to Help	320	324	324	322.7	331	329	331	330.3

Note:

<i>Criteria:</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	:	<i>Score</i>
<i>Very willpower</i>	: 337 – 400	<i>Sufficient willpower</i>	:	209 – 272
<i>Willpower</i>	: 273 – 336	<i>Less willpower</i>	:	145 – 208
<i>Sufficient willpower</i>	: 209 – 272	<i>No willpower</i>	:	80 – 144

The second willpower in encouraging the *gotong royong* transformation in Jambi Province was workload factor. There is a different pattern of workload factor score between two research locations. Workload factor of community in area close to city area was 200 in the first phase, went down to 192 in the second phase before went up back to 204 in the third phase. The average score workload factor was 198.6, means the workload factor does not encourage the *gotong royong* to remain. On the other hand, it looks like that score of workload of community far from city during the research somehow more stable compared to the community close to city. The score of workload factor of far from city community was 242 in the first and second phases before went up to 251 in the third phase. The average in the three phases with a score of 245. This means that workload factors encourage the survival of *gotong royong*.

The third willpower that could encourage the *gotong royong* to remain in Jambi Province was value of money. The more people needs are satisfied by money exchange the easier cultural value to transform. Research finding showed that the moving pattern of community value of money in close to city villages somehow consistent to high sense

of family and workload factors. Its scores first went down from 272 in the first phase to 264 in the second phase before went up back to 268 in the third phase. On the other hand, quite differs from the above factors, the score of value of money to the community remote from the city is stable from phase one until phase three.

Another close factor that theoretically could keep the *gotong royong* values unchanged in certain community is the community harmony. Harmony that could be defined as cooperation between various factors in such a way that can produce such a pleasant unity is very close to *gotong royong*. Just like some previous discussed encourages factor, the score of community harmony was 328 in the first phase and went down to 320 in the second phase before went up again to 324 in the third phase. The average score of community harmony in area close to city was 324 means this factor could be treated as very willpower in encouraging the *gotong royong* value remain unchanged.

On the other hand, the pattern of harmony factor's score in far from city was upside down to the pattern of the same factors in close villages to city. The harmony factor's score of community far from city was 360 in the first phase, 364 in the second phase and 360 in the third phase. The average score of Harmony factors in far from city area was 361.3 higher than the score of the same factor of close to city community score. In short, it could be said that Harmony factor both in close to and far from city area could be treated as a powerful factor in encouraging *gotong royong* values remain unchanged.

The other factor that theory said as encouraging factor in keeping *gotong royong* values remain unchanged is willing to help. *Gotong royong* that basically colored by helping each other minded of course exists based on willingness to help. Research showed that the pattern of willingness to help factors goes inversely than the other factors. The score of willingness to help factor in community closed to city in Jambi Province was 320 in the first phase. This score then went up to 324 in the second and third phases. The average score of willingness to help in these three phases was 322.6 which means that the desire factor to help is a factor that encourages the strength of the *gotong royong* value remain unchanged.

Goes inversely to the other factors, the willingness to help factor score in community far from city was first went down from 331 in the first phase to 329 in the second phase and went up back to 331 in the third phase. The average in three phases of willingness to help was 330.6, which means that this factor was a powerful encourages for *gotong royong* to remain unchanged.

### ***Gotong royong* transforms driving factors**

Besides revealing the factor encouraging *gotong royong* values remain unchanged in Jambi Province community area, this research was also aimed to find out factors effecting the *gotong royong* transform based on the remoteness of community area. The first factor hypothesized to be the driving factor of *gotong royong* transformation in rural area in Jambi Province was accessibility. Table 2 shows that the score of accessibility of rural area community was 324 in the first phase. The score then went up by five points to 329 in the second phase and even went up to 335 in the third phase. Furthermore, the average score of accessibility as a main *gotong royong* driving transformation factor was 329.3 which means that this variable has a very good effect in transforming the *gotong royong* values in Jambi Province communities.

The second driving factor of *gotong royong* transformation in Jambi Province was technology. Score of technology tend to be flatten in the third phase. The score of technology in driving *gotong royong* transforms was 332 in the first phase and went up to 341 in the second phase. The score of technology then went up 342 in the third phase. The average score in the three phases was 338.3 which means that the technological factors in pushing up *gotong royong* transform from time to time in Jambi Province was

very powerful.

The third driving factor of *gotong royong* transformation was local knowledge. The role of local knowledge on to *gotong royong* transformation in village area in Jambi Province some how goes different way to technology factor. Quite different to other driving factors discussed previously, the score pattern of local knowledge first went down from 229 in the first phase to 211 in the second phase before went up back to score 319 in the third phase. Based on these three phases observation, the average score of local knowledge was 219.6. This means that the factor of increasing local knowledge of the community power to encourage *gotong royong* transformation in rural area in Jambi Province is sufficient.

Table 2. The Average scores the transforms of *gotong royong* driving factors in Jambi Province villages

Gotong royong transforms driving factors	Close to city area				Far from city area			
	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Average	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Average
Accessibility	324	329	335	329.3	222	221	218	220.3
Technology	332	341	342	338.3	287	291	284	287.3
Increasing local knowledge	229	211	219	219.7	301	305	296	300.7
Communication access	256	261	261	259.3	292	305	296	297.7
Income increase	345	352	344	347.0	288	286	291	288.3

Another factor in driving *gotong royong* transformation in rural area in Jambi Province is communication access. Some villagers said that the role of *gotong royong* values reduction was somehow caused by advanced increase in communication technology that made communication access better. Never the less, the score of communication access as a driving factor based on the research goes to sufficient willpower level.

The score of communication access as a driving factor in transforming *gotong royong* values in Jambi Province rural area was 256 in the first phase and went up to 261 in the second and third phases. The average score in the three phases was 259.3. This means that the communication access factors could be categorized as sufficient willpower in encouraging *gotong royong* values of rural area community in Jambi Province.

The other driving factor to *gotong royong* transformation predicted in Jambi Province rural community was income increase. Increase in household income could make the value of *gotong royong* in the community fades out. The first phase in Delphi method, the score of income increase was 345. The score than increased to 352 in the second phase before decreased back to 344 in the third phase. From the three visits, the average score was 347 which is categorized to strong willpower. The meaning is very dilemma, while community in villages want income increase along with a change in the value of mutual cooperation.

**Value of *gotong royong* as social capital in villages area**

In traditional community it could be mention that the value in *gotong royong* Institution plays a very strong role in every social economic community activity. *Gotong royong* value for example could be seen in establishing work in rice farming from preparing farm work until harvesting activity. However, the value of *gotong royong* is now days has been found fading out not only in urban community but also in rural area. The changing value of the *gotong royong* as a social capital in Jambi Province countryside is described in the following discussion.

*Gotong royong* value as social capital, which is obtained from the culture of the village community comes in various understanding as presented below:

- Mutual help is to help ease the burden on others, for example suffering or hardship.

Mutual help also means helping in doing something, which can be in the form of help from energy, time or funds. An action that produces or benefits others (Sarwono, 2009). Actions that are more beneficial to others than oneself (Wrightsmen & Deaux, 1981).

- Collaboration is a work done by two or more people to achieve a goal or that has been agreed upon together or can be interpreted for mutual benefit.
- Volunteering is their own willingness to work on their own without being mandatory.
- Kinship is family, coming from the origin of Sanskrit, which means members of a group or relatives, who are still blood relations.
- Empathy is derived from Greek which means physical attraction, defined as ability with a variety of different definitions covering a broad spectrum, revolving around others that create a desire to help others, experience emotions like those of others, know what others feel and think, blur the line between yourself and others. Empathy also includes the ability to feel the original state of others, feel and try to solve problems, and take the perspective of others.
- Social equality is a social political order, where all people in a certain community or group have the same status. Includes the right to feel security, the same right under the law.
- Altruism is prioritizing the interests of others, attitudes that exist in humans, which may be instinctive in the form of encouragement to do services to other humans.
- Social identity is part of an individual's self-concept, which comes from the results of perceptions that are in accordance with membership in a group.
- Trust is a person's ability to rely on other people where we have confidence in him (Robinson, Kraatz & Rosseau, 1994). This is a psychological area that is a concerned to accept what is based on expectations of good behavior from others. Morgan and Hunt, 1994 interpret trust: it occurs when someone is convinced of the reliability and integrity of the person who is trusted.
- Time efficiency according to Mulyadi & Puradiredja (1998) is the level of time savings in terms of time when carrying out work, until the job is completed.
- Reciprocity is reciprocal. For example, if someone helps someone else at the time of harvest, then the person who is assisted will reply to the person he helped. (Reciprocal action or arrangement involves two people or groups of people who behave in the same way or agree to help each other and give each other advantages) (James Scout, 1989).

Based on eleven parameters of the *gotong royong* as a social capital, it shows that there has been a change in the meaning of the *gotong royong* in the lives of rural communities both in close to the city and rural communities far from the city (Table 3).

**Table 3.** The average scores of *gotong royong* social capital transformation in Jambi Province villages

Parameter	Close to city area		Far from city area	
	Average Score	Percentage	Average score	Percentage
Familiar Relationship	80.00	12.06	80.00	11.29
Voluntary	48.00	7.24	52.00	7.34
Mutual Assistance	80.00	12.06	80.00	11.29
Empathy	51.00	7.69	54.00	7.62
Cooperation	71.67	10.80	72.00	10.16
Social Equality	64.33	9.70	66.00	9.32
Altruism	34.33	5.18	37.33	5.27
Social Identity	70.00	10.55	72.33	10.21
Trust	51.67	7.79	55.67	7.86
Time Efficiency	60.33	9.10	72.33	10.21
Reciprocal	52.00	7.84	66.67	9.41

The results of the analysis show that the value of *gotong royong* and kinship *gotong royong* social capital has exposed some changes. Changing in *gotong royong* value exposed in the same pattern in both rural near to and far from the city. In fact, despite the location of rural communities near to and far from the city, this value is very original in the life of Indonesian people that are actually difficult to change. *Gotong royong* is a symbol of the life of Indonesia people.

The same opinion about the value of *gotong royong* explained above was also in line with the results of Julaikha & Bahri (2014) study which showed that the value of *gotong royong* is largely influenced by a sense of togetherness among community members that is done voluntarily without any collateral in the form of wages or other forms of payment. These collaborations do not always need to be formally formed by the committee but rather there is enough notice to the community members about the activities and the time of its implementation, then the work is carried out after it has broken up on its own, more voluntary in nature. The results of this study indicate the value of *gotong royong* could decrease due to the influence of technological factors, increased in access as well as income. The three influential factors must also be attached to the life and development of village progress, the value of family strength, harmony and togetherness to help one another. All of this in its term can well maintain the values of *gotong royong*. Furthermore in line with this findings, one of activities carried out by the community in term of togetherness, especially in rural communities is help each other in agricultural activities especially in busy seasons such as planting and harvesting seasons. In those busy seasons if the main or extended family is not available to complete all the work in the fields, farmer usually ask for help from fellow community members or hire additional workers to help doing the job. This system actually is universal in all communities in the world particularly in small communities. Any compensation paid for services rendered is not judged as wages but as aid workers (Koentjaraningrat, 1985)

The value of *gotong royong* that experiences changes are mainly in social identity and the efficiency of the time, while aspects experiences major changes are the value of altruism, voluntariness, empathy, trust and reciprocal. In line with the results, Suandi (2007) also found that any improvement in the economy of farmers can increase family participation in their surrounding social activities which means increase social capital. In line with the result of the study Mohammed & Lee (2014). Cooperative is recognized by UN and others international organization, as a solution for equality, poverty reduction, building social capital, improving marketing and financing system, empowering producers and women. At the same time, such community development facilitates the retention of local control of cooperative decisions (Brennan & Luloff, 2005).

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

There has been a change in the value of the *gotong royong* in rural community in Jambi Province. There are differences in changes in rural locations that are close to the city and that are far from the city. The values that drive the emergence and which trigger to fade differ depending on factors.

Some reducing factor are technology, increased income and accessibility. The factor that keeps *gotong royong* remain un-changing are family, harmony and help. In remote rural area the value of mutual assistance values still exists, if there is a change in the value it is smaller than the change in village location close to the city.

The value of social capital supports the people close to the city and those far from the city for family and harmony factors, although the values are still the same. But for voluntary factors, cooperation, empathy, social equality, altruism, social identity trust, time and reciprocal efficiency there is a difference in value. The value of *gotong royong*

in community far from city area is stronger than that close to the city.

The strategy of the village community, both near and far from the city, is to accept global technology flows selectively, and still maintain the social capital strength of *gotong royong*. This approach shows that family factors, harmony and high willingness to help, are factors that strongly encourage *gotong royong* to remain in rural locations close to the city. The reality in the field even though the village community is close to the city is a sense of harmony, a sense of family, and a willingness to help stay still.

### Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, it is suggested to conduct a series of counseling and guidance to the community to take advantage of economic growth through improved technology, accessibility and family income increased to strengthen the value of mutual cooperation in rural areas in Jambi Province. Strengthening the value of mutual cooperation in rural areas can also be circumvented by strengthening the value of social capital. This can be done by increasing the government's commitment to facilitate social activities and strengthen institutional values in rural areas.

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