

# Social Capital as a Strategy to Sustain Women's Functionality in TNKS Pal Delapan Forest Suburbs Rejang Lebong Regency

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on social capital as a strategy for women's functionality in the forest suburbs of TNKS Pal Eight, Rejang Lebong Regency. Communities, especially women who live around the periphery of the forest, have undergone changes in the area of control of agricultural land, because there are provisions for the boundaries of the TNKS forest area and this is related to social functionality. The purpose of social capital research as a strategy to maintain the social functionality of women living on the edge of TNKS Forest is a qualitative research study that will provide the necessary contribution as a foundation and pattern of problem solving related to women maintaining social functionality in social life. Participant data collection through direct observation and in-depth interviews and documentation. The data were analyzed with an interactive model based on qualitative interplay inductively with an emic approach. The results showed that social capital is a resource that is used as a functional strategy for women tending to be based on land tenure. The area of land tenure after the TNKS area is determined, women in the family unit manage customary forest land communally. For them, forests are an element of sustainable life and forests not only function economically and socially, but also have spiritual value. Households are narrow and unbiased with a pattern of relationships in carrying out social functionality in the form of economic working group units based on region of origin and place of residence.

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## INTRODUCTION

Management of forest resources in Indonesia is regulated in UUPK 1967 and PP.No 21 of 1970 relating to forest tenure and utilization rights which are classified based on state forest and private forest including conservation forest (Marzali, 2009). Conservation forest areas include protected forests, nature reserves and National Parks.

One of the national park conservation forests is in the Sumatran archipelago, namely the Kerinci Seblat National Park (TNKS). TNKS was designated as a National Park based on the Decree of the Minister of Forestry No. 192/KPS-II/1996 of 1996 with an area of 1.386 million hectares.

The TNKS forest is located in 436 villages directly adjacent to this area. This area is very important in the ecosystem of the island of Sumatra and in 2004 this area was registered as a World Heritage Site as the Cluster Mountainous Tropical Rainforest Heritage Site of Sumatra (TRHS) together with TNGL and TNBBS (Siburian & Nurhidayah, 2019).

The TNKS area spans across four provinces, namely Bengkulu, West Sumatra, South Sumatra and Jambi. The Kerinci Seblat National Park Conservation Area is in the Bengkulu Province area in the Rejang Lebong and Lebong Regencies (Lesmana, Senoaji, & Anwar, 2020). PAL Eight (8) Village, Rejang Lebong Regency is one of the villages around the TNKS area with the dominant ethnic Rejang community.

Since 2000, tens of thousands of hectares of forest areas (conservation areas and production forests) have been converted into agricultural, plantation and mining lands in the TNKS forest in the village of Pal eight (8). This phenomenon shows a high level of concern about the sustainability of conservation forests and even creates social conflict between communities living around the forest and the government. Observations made by researchers in 2010-2012 found various damages due to timber looting and land encroachment for plantations.

Timber looting and forest encroachment due to lack of control from the authorities (Raharja, Nuriyatman, & Permatasari, 2018). There is a tendency for the orientation of local governments to prioritize investors with large capital, so that they can increase PAD (Regional Original Income) (Alam, 2015). This concept is profitable in short terms, but does not take into account the sustainability of forest resources. This action is generally carried out by people from other areas who have business capital, such as in the case of encroachment on the area, where they mobilize workers to clear land for coffee, oil palm and other plantations.

These symptoms will increase excessive exploitation of the TNKS conservation forest resources, so there was a change in the nomenclature of the Ministry of Forestry to Environment and Forestry in 2016 making the management of the TNKS area no longer left to third parties or members of the TNI, but regulatory authority in forest management and utilization was given to Center for Security, Environmental Law Enforcement, and Forestry in Palembang, South Sumatra (Pulung, 2017).

This institution handles various programs including forest rehabilitation programs, this program involves the community around the TNKS forest area with a pattern of economic empowerment such as replanting native plants in the TNKS forest covering an area of 3,500 hectares of the TNKS area in Rejang Lebong covering an area of 26,000 hectares (Division of Regional National Park Management). III Bengkulu-South Sumatra, in Rejang Lebong Regency 2016).

This means that the form of the TNKS forest conservation policy involves the community as a support for the existence of forest ecosystems (Rafi, 2021). Substantially, the government's TNKS forest management policy does not separate the interests of the TNKS forest conservation ecosystem from the people who live around the forest area.

Communities around the TNKS forest by the government are developing community development efforts in the form of coaching not to make TNKS forests a source of life but management of conservation forests (Akbar, 2011). The logical consequence of the implications of the government policy model is that the area of farming land has narrowed so that the pattern of business and work opportunities has decreased. This results in changes in the lives of communities around the forest, especially women in family units in accessing the resources needed to maintain social functionality.

The social function of women in the family unit or group and part of the community members who live around the TNKS forest area can be maintained, but on the other hand it does not conflict with government policies. This can be done as a strategy through the development of community institutional strength, one of which is the strength of social capital.

Social capital owned by members of society, including women, exists at the individual, social group, organizational, community, ethnic and state levels (Delanty, 2009; Gianecchini, 2020; Herdiawanto & Hamdayama, 2021; Ostrom, 2009; Rajapathirana & Hui, 2018; Woolcock, 1998). The contribution of social capital can provide strength in the life order of women around the TNKS forest, because social capital has elements of values, norms and rules that are located in the social structure and then in turn the social structure, guides and controls all actions or activities that occur on maintaining social functionality.

The network of cooperative relations between women in an organized society guarantees the continuity of social functionality and even at the same time gives boundaries and self-identification as a certain social whole. Thus, the perspective of social capital based on the manifestation of women in relationships between individuals in families or groups, relationships between citizens in the community in building social functionality. The pattern of relationships is organized by bonding, bridging and linking that have the purpose of social action. Thus, social capital can be used as resources in strategies to maintain social functionality oriented towards community development. Based on this phenomenon, the emphasis in this study is to examine social capital as a strategy in maintaining the social functionality of women around the TNKS conservation forest area. In addition, there has been no research on the problem of women in forest resource management even though social symptoms related to conflicts in conservation forest areas tend to have more clashes between the government and women's carrying capacity in community-based forest resource management approaches. The question of this research is formulated in the formulation of problems.

The aim of research on social capital as a strategy for maintaining the social functionality of women who live on the outskirts of the TNKS Forest is a qualitative research study that will provide the necessary contribution as a foundation and pattern of problem solving related to women maintaining social functionality in social life. In addition, the results of this research are material for theoretical studies among academics, social sciences and community development and as material for scientific studies both in the context of the development of pure science and the development of applied science. Through this research, it is expected to be able to challenge the theoretical perspective of social capital conceptually related to the mechanism of social functionality.

## **METHOD**

### **Types of Research and Research Limitations**

This study uses a qualitative method which is a research design that is open to the conditions in the field. The research concentration is social capital as a strategy in functionality for women who live on the outskirts of the TNKS Pal Depalan forest, Rejang Lebong Regency. The elements of social capital are examined from the aspects of bonding, bridging and linking which originate from Woolcok's theory (1999). The elements of social capital are a force that is used in reciprocal relationships between women in the household unit to maintain social functionality. The concept of functionality refers to the way individuals or groups maintain social functioning, namely they can meet basic needs, can solve problems and carry out roles in accordance with the various statuses inherent in women.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Participatory observation, namely observations made by researchers by means of researchers participating in a limited way in certain social events into the object being observed. Before making observations, make a list of concepts that will be observed by participating in activities carried out by village elites (village heads, heads of TNKS management bodies, adat norms. Furthermore, researchers make participatory efforts with women in family units or groups. In addition, researchers are involved in matters relating to activities to maintain women's social functionality as members of society Participation observations are complemented by an overview of activities related to: (1) availability of social capital related to bonding, bridging and linking. (2) Forms of social capital inherent in the structure of land tenure structures. In addition to paying attention to the sources of social capital that have the potential to support the functional process of citizens in social life.

Field notes are recording data in observations used as a tool by researchers in non-participating observation situations. Observations in this case are relatively free to make notes and are carried out at the time after the observations are made. The notes are in the form of categories in the elements of social capital that are used as a strategy in maintaining women's functionality.

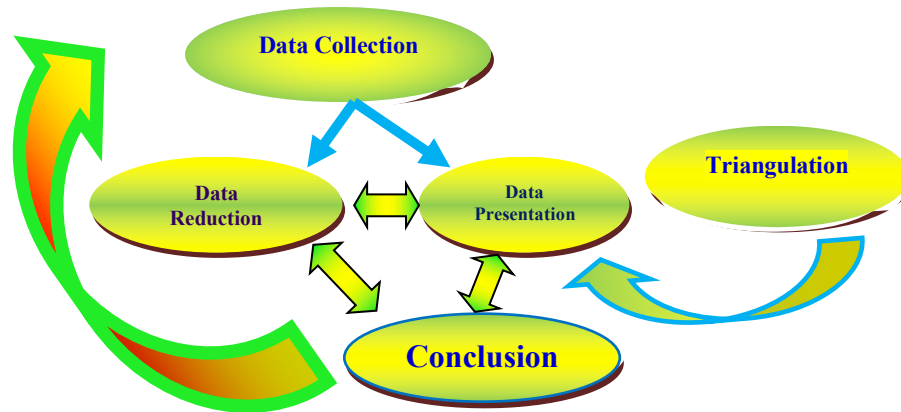
Interviews are conversations and questions and answers directed to achieve research objectives. Interviews in qualitative research were conducted to gain knowledge about subjective meanings understood by individuals, groups according to the theme of the study. Interviews conducted; (1) informally, namely the interview process is based on spontaneous questions in the interaction, (2) in general, the researcher interviews with informants equipped with very general interview guidelines that are oriented towards the phenomena needed and aspects that must be discussed, (3 ) open standard interview.

Document study. This study is one of the data collection methods used to trace historical data. Documentary materials in the form of diaries, personal notes, letters, reports.

In addition, data collection is classified into two stages, namely the exploratory and descriptive stages. Collecting data in a systematic way according to context, so that accurate and holistic information is accumulated.

### **Data analysis**

Data analysis had already started while in the field, namely starting from the classification process and data categories between what was obtained from the documentation with data obtained through interviews and observations related to the components of social capital in women's social functionality. The data were analyzed qualitatively through 3 (three) processes, namely reduction, presentation and drawing of conclusions which move back and forth between the three processes in an interactive loop.



**Figure 1. Components of Interactive Analysis**

This qualitative analysis process is an analysis model that is not one by one, but in an integrative manner, for example collecting data first and then analyzing and presenting it, but collecting data, then the data is reduced to be presented in conclusions, but the conclusions are checked back to the original data, so that it will not be wrong in concluding something. This analysis mechanism is comparative in nature which aims to be able to formulate the concept of social capital as a strategy in maintaining the functionality of women around the TNKS forest.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Social capital is an important resource in the continuity of social life (Saheb, Slamet, & Zuber, 2018). Bonding is exclusive as a bond that is very strong in the interests of an action goal to maintain social functionality, especially for women who live around the TNKS forest, between homogeneous groups such as family members and close relatives. Bridging is inclusive which refers to relationships between groups, distant friends, partners and colleagues. This bond is actually rather weak but it is really needed if there is an opportunity to mobilize. Linking social capital refers more to the relationship between individuals, between groups at different social strata in a hierarchy according to power, wealth and social status accessed by different groups in a formal collaboration with a vertical system. In other words, linking social capital is a bond that unites people in an important position.

### **Landless and Narrow Land Household Social Capital**

Social capital in the form of a type of bonding for women in landless and narrow land farming household units is in the form of a bond that facilitates maintaining social functionality, namely related to norms of collective action in the management of Indigenous Forests. Existing values and norms prioritize togetherness in obtaining economic resources needed to meet the necessities of life, such as the use of customary forest land with secondary crops and ground rice. In addition, they make use of TNKS forest plants in the form of combrang flowers, resin, pine. Collective action refers to the addition of labor, for example helping during harvesting, household production on managing land under lease status in various activities that have economic value.

Collectivity between landless and narrow-land strata households is obtained through social networks and mutual trust based on kinship and region of origin. This network is a form of bridging social capital that bridges them to overcome problems that are closely related to the

second function of social functioning. Solving problems both material and non-material such as school fees, sickness, credit and morals, mutual respect. Relations between social strata groups are recognized that relations within a hierarchy have very strong exchanges for accessing resources compared to groups outside the community.

While the type of social capital in the form of linking to this stratum tends to be bound by a unified position in developing roles as citizens of the community such as they identify as self-help groups actively helping each other and contributing to building existing infrastructure in the community or helping individuals or families in Marga village. Magic. The purpose of their actions is to develop their role in maintaining social functionality so that they are recognized and can participate to guarantee survival.

Social capital in carrying out social functionalities based on this stratum is in the form of collective action (bonding), which has economic value to meet basic needs. Social network is an element of social capital that is classified as bridging based on kinship and area of origin or place of residence that strengthens them to trust each other. This is manifested in a labor exchange system such as helping each other, especially in solving economic and non-economic problems. This type of social capital in the form of linking to this stratum further strengthens the position as an active self-help group such as mutual cooperation, friendly relations, and mutual respect. The elements of this type of social capital are very important resources in carrying out social functionality.

Women's perceptions of the resilience of social functionality as a community unit, in general, are considered to be very united with the characteristics of the differences between women among members of the community who live in Pal 8 Village, who do not own land and have narrow land, neither large nor very small. This condition is understandable because most of the women in Pal 8 village are in relatively low strata. public. Visible differences can be seen from ethnicity, race, ethnicity and the differences between natives and immigrants.

### **Medium and Large Land Household Social Capital**

Women in the household strata with medium land and large land are categorized as socially upper-class strata. This social stratum has correlated social capital in accessing resources as the purpose of carrying out social functionality. Social capital in the form of a bonding type in this stratum is more likely to be bound by norms based on social concern and solidarity in the form of activities to maintain water supply. This activity emphasizes values that have a social dimension, namely for the benefit of the community as a whole. The form of social concern in the activity of maintaining water supply is individual awareness in a group unit that grows continuously in social relations between strata of women in Pal 8 Rejang Lebong.

Social concern is manifested in the form of cooperation in maintaining forest plants and carrying out reforestation in the TNKS forest and customary forest. Adequacy of water supports the stability of social functionality. The strength of this norm connects available resources at the local level and serves the interests of every citizen, especially the adequacy of meeting basic needs. The form of concern for these strata is building tertiary irrigation so that there is sufficient water when managing rice fields and ensuring sustainable water sufficiency. Apart from that, social care among households with medium and large land strata is followed by social values in the form of a set of beliefs socialized through religious values which are manifested in the form of Earth Alms.

The concept of *Sedekah Bumi* has a philosophy that all available resources to carry out social functionality come from the Creator. The consequence of this is that a safe community

condition is created and the property rights of all members of the community are protected. Thus, the community is able to control the forest environment, social and economic environment that supports social functionality for women in particular and society in general.

Women in the household unit the wide-spread type of bonding social capital in the form of social care in the form of solidarity, especially for economic activities. Bridging capital is more about strengthening participation in building social integration within forest units and communities. The mechanism of social care forms a social network based on place of residence such as neighbors, kinship which is long term in nature and is followed by mutual responsibilities. Bridged networks based on place of residence are a type of bridging social capital. This type of social capital places more emphasis on empowering citizens to be able to overcome and reduce the problems they face.

Bridging social capital supports social linking capital in the form of economic business mechanisms in the form of perennials cultivation and cooperatives partnering with KPPL (Group of Women Cares for the Environment). The strengthening of self-help groups is controlled by village elites, priests, traditional leaders. The village elite facilitated the involvement of all residents to participate in responding to community needs that were relatively conditional in nature, such as establishing savings and loan cooperatives, helping with education in schools, regular recitations. Implementation of roles in these strata is not only horizontal but also vertical. This means that the purpose of action between citizens to carry out social functionality involving women is not homogeneous but heterogeneous from various social strata.

## CONCLUSION

Social capital is a resource that is used as a functional strategy for women that tends to be based on land tenure. The area of land tenure after the TNKS area has been determined, women in the family unit manage the customary forest land communally. For them, forests are a sustainable element of life and forests not only function economically and socially, but also have spiritual values. Households with narrow land and no land tend to be a type of bonding social capital with a pattern of relationships in carrying out social functionality in the form of economic work group units based on the area of origin and place of residence. Social capital in the form of bridging emphasizes communal-based relationship patterns in water rescue. However, social linking capital is in the form of an economic business mechanism that partners with KPPL (Women Concerned for the Environment) through strengthening in self-help groups. Households with large land area types of social bonding capital in the form of social care in the form of solidarity and elements of bridging capital are strengthening in participation in building social integration in community units around forests such as *Sedekah Bumi*. Meanwhile, the type of social capital linking to this stratum is in the form of social groups controlled by village elites.

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