

Leadership and Organizational Capacity of Cocoa Farmer Groups in Indonesia: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

This study examines leadership and organizational capacity within cocoa farmer groups in Indonesia and their contribution to rural development and farmer resilience. The study contributes to the literature on agricultural institutions by synthesizing recent evidence regarding the role of leadership in strengthening organizational effectiveness among smallholder farmers. A systematic literature review was conducted using peer-reviewed journal articles, institutional reports, and scholarly publications published between 2020 and 2026. The analysis focused on four themes: leadership characteristics, organizational capacity challenges, capacity-strengthening factors, and organizational performance outcomes. The findings indicate that effective leadership enhances member participation, organizational learning, stakeholder collaboration, and resource mobilization. However, limited managerial skills, financial constraints, and weak institutional support remain significant challenges. Strengthening leadership capacity and organizational development is essential for improving the sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness of cocoa farmer groups in Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Cocoa remains one of the most important agricultural commodities in Indonesia and continues to play a significant role in supporting rural livelihoods, employment generation, and regional economic development. As one of the world's leading cocoa-producing countries, Indonesia relies heavily on smallholder farmers who manage the majority of cocoa cultivation areas. The cocoa sector contributes not only to export earnings but also to household income and social welfare in many rural communities, particularly in Sulawesi, Sumatra, and eastern Indonesia (FAO, 2024; ICCO, 2024).

Despite its strategic importance, the Indonesian cocoa sector faces numerous challenges that affect productivity, farmer welfare, and long-term sustainability. Many cocoa farmers continue to experience limited access to technology, financial services, extension support, and market information. These constraints often reduce production efficiency and limit opportunities for improving livelihoods. Previous studies have shown that addressing such challenges requires not only technical interventions but also strong local institutions capable of supporting collective action and facilitating agricultural development (Neilson, 2019; Wessel & Quist-Wessel, 2015).

Farmer groups have long been recognized as important institutions within agricultural development programs. These organizations serve as platforms through which farmers coordinate production activities, exchange information, access training opportunities, and engage with government agencies and market actors. Effective farmer groups can strengthen bargaining power, facilitate knowledge transfer, and enhance access to agricultural services that would otherwise be difficult for individual farmers to obtain (Markelova et al., 2009; Ostrom, 2015).

The effectiveness of farmer groups, however, is strongly influenced by the quality of leadership and organizational capacity. Leadership plays a crucial role in mobilizing members, establishing organizational goals, coordinating collective activities, and maintaining relationships with external stakeholders. Effective leaders can encourage participation, build trust among members, facilitate innovation adoption, and guide organizations through changing economic and institutional environments. Conversely, weak leadership often contributes to low participation, poor coordination, and organizational stagnation (Northouse, 2021; Yukl, 2013).

Organizational capacity is equally important for determining the effectiveness and sustainability of farmer groups. Organizational capacity generally refers to the ability of an organization to mobilize resources, manage activities, achieve objectives, and adapt to changing conditions. This capacity encompasses multiple dimensions, including leadership, human resources, financial management, governance systems, communication mechanisms, and organizational learning. Organizations with strong capacities are generally better positioned to deliver services, maintain member engagement, and respond effectively to emerging challenges (Horton et al., 2003; FAO, 2023).

Recent transformations in agricultural markets have increased the importance of leadership and organizational capacity among farmer groups.

Growing expectations related to sustainability, product quality, market competitiveness, and supply chain governance require farmer organizations to perform increasingly sophisticated functions. In addition to supporting production activities, farmer groups are now expected to facilitate certification processes, coordinate information management, promote innovation adoption, and strengthen relationships with diverse stakeholders. These responsibilities place substantial demands on organizational leadership and management systems (Auld et al., 2021; FAO, 2023).

Within the Indonesian cocoa sector, leadership and organizational capacity remain uneven across regions and organizations. While some farmer groups have successfully developed effective governance systems and strong stakeholder networks, many continue to face challenges related to leadership succession, managerial competence, financial sustainability, and member participation. These institutional weaknesses frequently limit the effectiveness of development interventions and reduce opportunities for organizational growth (Bijman et al., 2016; Donovan et al., 2017).

Although numerous studies have examined cocoa production, sustainability initiatives, value chain development, and farmer organizations, relatively few studies have systematically synthesized evidence concerning leadership and organizational capacity within cocoa farmer groups. Existing research is often fragmented across different disciplinary perspectives and geographical contexts, making it difficult to identify broader patterns and strategic lessons. Consequently, a comprehensive review is needed to consolidate existing knowledge and provide a clearer understanding of the factors shaping organizational effectiveness within the cocoa sector.

This study addresses that gap by conducting a systematic review of the literature on leadership and organizational capacity among cocoa farmer groups in Indonesia. Specifically, the study aims to identify key leadership characteristics, examine major organizational capacity challenges, analyze factors that strengthen organizational performance, and assess the implications of leadership and capacity development for farmer welfare and rural development. By synthesizing current evidence, the study seeks to contribute to ongoing discussions concerning agricultural institutions, organizational development, and sustainable rural transformation in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership in Farmer Organizations

Leadership is widely recognized as one of the most important determinants of organizational effectiveness and long-term sustainability. Leadership refers to the process through which individuals influence, motivate, and guide members toward the achievement of collective goals. In organizational settings, leaders play critical roles in decision-making, conflict management, resource mobilization, communication, and strategic planning (Northouse, 2021).

Among farmer organizations, leadership assumes particular importance because these institutions depend heavily on voluntary participation, collective action, and social cooperation. Effective leaders are expected to encourage member involvement, establish trust, coordinate organizational activities, and

represent organizational interests in interactions with external stakeholders. Leadership also influences the ability of farmer groups to adapt to changing agricultural, economic, and policy environments (Yukl, 2013).

Several leadership approaches have been discussed in the agricultural development literature. Transformational leadership emphasizes the ability of leaders to inspire members, create a shared vision, and promote organizational change. Participatory leadership focuses on inclusive decision-making processes and active member engagement. Community-based leadership, meanwhile, highlights the importance of local legitimacy, social trust, and collective responsibility in rural organizations. Studies have shown that farmer organizations characterized by effective leadership generally demonstrate stronger organizational performance, higher levels of member participation, and greater resilience in responding to external challenges (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2021).

Leadership is also closely associated with organizational learning and innovation. Leaders often serve as facilitators of knowledge exchange, technology adoption, and institutional development. Through effective leadership, organizations can create supportive environments that encourage experimentation, collaboration, and continuous improvement. Such capacities are increasingly important as agricultural systems become more complex and market demands continue to evolve (Yukl, 2013).

In the context of cocoa farming, leadership plays a strategic role in strengthening farmer organizations and supporting rural development initiatives. Leaders frequently act as intermediaries connecting farmers with government agencies, extension services, private companies, and development organizations. Their ability to establish partnerships and mobilize collective resources often determines the effectiveness of organizational programs and interventions (Donovan et al., 2017).

Organizational Capacity

Organizational capacity refers to the ability of an organization to perform its functions effectively, achieve desired objectives, and sustain operations over time. Capacity is generally understood as a multidimensional concept encompassing human resources, leadership, governance systems, financial management, technical expertise, organizational culture, and stakeholder relationships (Horton et al., 2003).

Strong organizational capacity enables institutions to manage resources efficiently, deliver services effectively, and adapt to changing circumstances. Conversely, weak organizational capacity may result in poor performance, limited member participation, inadequate service delivery, and organizational instability. As a result, capacity development has become a central component of agricultural and rural development programs worldwide (FAO, 2023).

Several dimensions of organizational capacity are particularly relevant to farmer groups. Human resource capacity concerns the knowledge, skills, and competencies of organizational members and leaders. Financial capacity refers to the ability to generate, manage, and allocate resources effectively. Governance

capacity includes accountability mechanisms, transparency, decision-making structures, and member participation. Organizational learning capacity relates to the ability of institutions to acquire, share, and apply knowledge for continuous improvement (Horton et al., 2003).

Research on agricultural organizations consistently demonstrates that capacity development contributes to improved organizational effectiveness and sustainability. Organizations with strong capacities are generally better positioned to implement development programs, establish strategic partnerships, access financial support, and respond to emerging opportunities. Capacity development also enhances institutional resilience by improving adaptability and reducing vulnerability to external shocks (FAO, 2024).

In farmer organizations, organizational capacity influences the quality of services provided to members and affects the overall success of collective initiatives. Strong organizational capacities support effective planning, financial management, communication, monitoring, and evaluation processes. These capacities become increasingly important as farmer groups assume broader responsibilities within agricultural development and market integration programs (Bijman et al., 2016).

Farmer Groups and Rural Development

Farmer groups constitute important institutional mechanisms for promoting rural development and strengthening agricultural livelihoods. These organizations provide opportunities for collective action, resource sharing, and coordinated engagement with external actors. By working collectively, farmers can overcome many structural constraints associated with small-scale production, including limited bargaining power, inadequate market access, and restricted access to information and services (Ostrom, 2015).

Collective action theory suggests that cooperation among individuals enables the achievement of objectives that would be difficult or impossible to attain independently. Within agricultural systems, collective action facilitates joint marketing, knowledge exchange, infrastructure development, and resource management. Farmer groups therefore serve as platforms through which collective efforts can generate economic, social, and institutional benefits (Markelova et al., 2009).

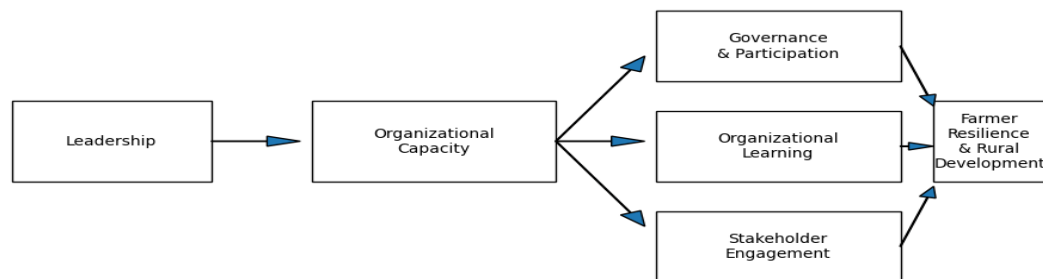
The effectiveness of farmer groups is strongly influenced by social capital. Social capital refers to networks, trust, norms, and reciprocal relationships that facilitate cooperation among individuals and organizations. High levels of social capital contribute to stronger organizational cohesion, improved communication, and enhanced collective problem-solving. Previous studies have found that farmer groups characterized by strong social capital are more likely to achieve sustainable development outcomes and maintain long-term organizational effectiveness (Putnam, 1993; Pretty, 2003).

Farmer groups also contribute to rural development by facilitating access to agricultural innovation and technology. Through collective learning processes, organizations help farmers acquire new knowledge, adopt improved practices, and strengthen adaptive capacities. Such functions are increasingly important as

rural communities confront challenges associated with market volatility, environmental change, and agricultural modernization (Neilson, 2019).

Within the cocoa sector, farmer groups have become essential actors in supporting productivity improvement, market participation, sustainability initiatives, and livelihood enhancement. Their role extends beyond production-related activities to include organizational development, stakeholder coordination, and community empowerment. Consequently, strengthening leadership and organizational capacity within farmer groups has become an important strategy for promoting sustainable rural development and improving the welfare of cocoa-producing households (Wessel & Quist-Wessel, 2015).

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Leadership and Organizational Capacity among Cocoa Farmer Groups



Source: Developed by the author based on Northouse (2021), Yukl (2013), Horton et al. (2003), and Ostrom (2015).

The framework illustrates how leadership influences the development of organizational capacity within cocoa farmer groups. Enhanced organizational capacity strengthens governance and participation, organizational learning, and stakeholder engagement. These institutional improvements contribute to farmer resilience and broader rural development outcomes. The framework highlights the interconnected relationship between leadership effectiveness and organizational performance in supporting sustainable agricultural development.

Based on the reviewed literature, this study proposes that leadership serves as the primary driver of organizational capacity development within cocoa farmer groups. Effective leadership strengthens governance systems, member participation, organizational learning, and stakeholder engagement. These improvements enhance organizational capacity, which subsequently contributes to organizational effectiveness, farmer resilience, and broader rural development outcomes. The framework suggests that leadership and organizational capacity are mutually reinforcing factors that shape the long-term performance and sustainability of cocoa farmer organizations in Indonesia.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to examine leadership and organizational capacity among cocoa farmer groups in Indonesia. The SLR method was selected because it enables researchers to systematically identify, evaluate, and synthesize existing knowledge from diverse sources while minimizing potential bias in the review process (Snyder, 2019; Xiao & Watson, 2019). Through this approach, the study sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of leadership characteristics, organizational capacity challenges, capacity-strengthening factors, and their implications for rural development within the cocoa sector.

The review was conducted between May and June 2026. Relevant literature was collected from major academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Wiley Online Library, and Taylor & Francis Online. Additional publications were obtained from reports produced by international organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO), the World Bank, and other institutions working in agricultural development and rural governance.

The literature search utilized a combination of keywords, including “cocoa farmers,” “cocoa farmer groups,” “farmer organizations,” “leadership,” “organizational capacity,” “agricultural institutions,” “collective action,” “rural development,” and “Indonesia.” These keywords were applied individually and in various combinations to maximize the identification of relevant publications. The search focused on studies published between 2020 and 2026 to capture recent developments concerning leadership, organizational effectiveness, and agricultural governance.

To ensure the relevance and quality of the reviewed literature, several inclusion criteria were applied. First, publications had to discuss leadership, organizational capacity, farmer organizations, agricultural institutions, or rural development. Second, only peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, book chapters, conference papers, and institutional reports were included. Third, the selected publications had to provide empirical evidence, theoretical discussions, or policy analyses related to organizational performance and leadership within agricultural contexts. Studies lacking direct relevance to farmer organizations or agricultural development were excluded from the review.

The literature selection process followed four stages consisting of identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion. During the identification stage, publications were collected from selected databases using predefined search terms. The screening stage involved reviewing titles, abstracts, and keywords to determine relevance. Subsequently, full-text assessments were conducted to evaluate the suitability of each publication. Duplicate records and studies that failed to meet the inclusion criteria were removed from the analysis. This procedure follows widely accepted systematic review practices designed to enhance transparency and methodological rigor (Page et al., 2021).

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. This method facilitates the identification of recurring themes, conceptual patterns, and relationships across diverse studies and is widely employed in qualitative

evidence synthesis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The analytical process consisted of three stages. First, relevant findings were coded according to key concepts associated with leadership and organizational capacity. Second, similar codes were grouped into broader thematic categories. Third, the resulting themes were interpreted and synthesized to explain organizational performance and capacity development among cocoa farmer groups.

The analysis identified four major themes. The first theme focuses on leadership characteristics within cocoa farmer groups. The second theme examines organizational capacity challenges affecting institutional performance. The third theme explores factors that strengthen organizational capacity and leadership effectiveness. The fourth theme analyzes the relationship between leadership, organizational performance, farmer resilience, and rural development outcomes. These themes subsequently served as the analytical framework for organizing the results and discussion sections.

The SLR approach adopted in this study provides a rigorous foundation for synthesizing existing knowledge and generating evidence-based insights regarding leadership and organizational capacity within cocoa farmer groups. Furthermore, the review facilitates the identification of critical knowledge gaps and strategic recommendations that may contribute to strengthening farmer organizations and promoting sustainable rural development in Indonesia (Tranfield et al., 2003).

RESEARCH RESULT

Leadership Characteristics in Cocoa Farmer Groups

The literature consistently identifies leadership as a critical determinant of organizational effectiveness within cocoa farmer groups. Leaders play essential roles in coordinating collective activities, mobilizing members, managing organizational resources, and facilitating communication among stakeholders. In rural agricultural settings, leadership extends beyond administrative responsibilities and often includes social, economic, and developmental functions that influence the overall performance of farmer organizations (Northouse, 2021; Yukl, 2013).

One of the most frequently discussed leadership characteristics in the literature is the ability to build trust and legitimacy among members. Effective leaders are generally perceived as individuals who demonstrate integrity, transparency, accountability, and commitment to collective interests. These qualities contribute to stronger member participation and greater organizational cohesion. Trust-based leadership is particularly important in farmer organizations because participation is largely voluntary and depends heavily on members' confidence in organizational decision-making processes (Putnam, 1993; Pretty, 2003).

The literature further suggests that participatory leadership is strongly associated with organizational success. Leaders who encourage member involvement in planning, decision-making, and problem-solving processes tend to generate higher levels of organizational commitment and collective ownership. Participatory approaches facilitate information sharing, strengthen internal communication, and promote more inclusive organizational

governance. As a result, organizations characterized by participatory leadership often demonstrate greater adaptability and resilience when responding to external challenges (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2021).

Another important leadership characteristic involves the capacity to establish and maintain external relationships. Cocoa farmer groups frequently interact with government agencies, extension services, private companies, non-governmental organizations, and development institutions. Leaders who possess strong networking and communication skills are generally more successful in securing resources, attracting development support, and creating opportunities for organizational growth. Such relationships can significantly enhance organizational capacity and improve access to information, training, and financial assistance (Donovan et al., 2017).

The literature also highlights the importance of visionary leadership in supporting organizational development. Effective leaders are capable of articulating clear organizational goals and motivating members to pursue long-term objectives. Visionary leadership contributes to strategic planning, innovation adoption, and institutional sustainability. In agricultural organizations facing rapidly changing economic and environmental conditions, the ability to anticipate future challenges and opportunities has become increasingly valuable (Yukl, 2013).

Several studies indicate that leadership effectiveness is closely linked to educational background, managerial experience, and continuous learning. Leaders with stronger knowledge and management competencies are generally better equipped to address organizational challenges and facilitate institutional development. Training programs and leadership development initiatives therefore play important roles in strengthening organizational performance within farmer groups (FAO, 2023).

The evidence suggests that effective leadership is characterized by trust-building, participation, networking capacity, strategic vision, and managerial competence. These characteristics not only influence internal organizational processes but also shape the ability of farmer groups to engage with external stakeholders and achieve broader development objectives.

Organizational Capacity Challenges

Despite the important contributions of cocoa farmer groups to agricultural development, the literature reveals numerous organizational capacity challenges that continue to constrain institutional effectiveness. One of the most common challenges concerns human resource limitations. Many farmer organizations operate with limited numbers of trained personnel and depend heavily on a small group of active leaders. Such conditions frequently result in uneven workload distribution and reduce organizational efficiency (Horton et al., 2003).

Financial constraints represent another major challenge. Many farmer groups possess limited financial resources and depend on government assistance, donor-funded projects, or temporary development programs. This dependence often affects organizational sustainability because activities may decline once external support is discontinued. Establishing diversified and

sustainable funding mechanisms remains a persistent challenge for many farmer organizations (FAO, 2024).

Governance-related issues also emerge as important organizational constraints. Weak administrative systems, inadequate record keeping, limited transparency, and low levels of accountability frequently undermine organizational performance. Such weaknesses may reduce member trust and discourage active participation. Studies indicate that organizations with stronger governance systems generally achieve better outcomes in terms of service delivery, member engagement, and institutional sustainability (Bijman et al., 2016).

Another significant challenge involves organizational learning and knowledge management. Effective organizations require mechanisms for acquiring, sharing, and applying knowledge. However, many farmer groups experience difficulties in accessing relevant information, documenting organizational experiences, and facilitating continuous learning among members. These limitations can reduce adaptive capacity and hinder innovation adoption (Horton et al., 2003).

Technological readiness has become an increasingly important issue within contemporary agricultural development. Digital technologies provide opportunities for improving communication, information management, monitoring systems, and stakeholder coordination. Nevertheless, many cocoa farmer groups continue to face barriers related to digital literacy, infrastructure availability, and technological accessibility. Such limitations may restrict their ability to participate effectively in modern agricultural programs and market-oriented initiatives (FAO, 2023; Auld et al., 2021).

The literature also identifies challenges associated with member participation. Sustaining active engagement among members is often difficult due to competing livelihood priorities, limited incentives, and varying levels of commitment. Low participation may weaken collective action and reduce organizational effectiveness. Consequently, maintaining member motivation remains a central concern for many farmer organizations (Markelova et al., 2009).

Overall, the reviewed studies suggest that organizational capacity challenges are multidimensional and interconnected. Human resource limitations, financial constraints, governance weaknesses, insufficient learning mechanisms, technological barriers, and participation challenges collectively influence the performance of cocoa farmer groups. Addressing these constraints is therefore essential for strengthening organizational effectiveness and improving the long-term sustainability of farmer organizations.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this review demonstrate that leadership and organizational capacity are closely interconnected and collectively shape the effectiveness of cocoa farmer groups in Indonesia. While leadership provides direction, motivation, and strategic vision, organizational capacity determines the ability of farmer groups to implement activities, manage resources, and sustain collective initiatives. The literature consistently indicates that

organizations characterized by effective leadership tend to exhibit stronger organizational capacities and achieve more favorable development outcomes than organizations with weak leadership structures (Northouse, 2021; Yukl, 2013).

One of the most important findings concerns the central role of leadership in facilitating collective action. Consistent with collective action theory, effective leaders help coordinate individual interests and encourage cooperation among members to achieve shared objectives (Ostrom, 2015). In farmer organizations, collective action is essential because smallholder farmers often face limitations related to production scale, market access, information availability, and financial resources. Leadership therefore functions as a mechanism that transforms individual efforts into coordinated organizational activities capable of generating collective benefits.

The findings also highlight the importance of trust and social capital in strengthening leadership effectiveness. Social capital provides the foundation for cooperation, participation, and organizational cohesion. Leaders who are perceived as trustworthy, transparent, and accountable are generally more successful in mobilizing members and sustaining collective engagement. These findings support previous research suggesting that trust-based relationships enhance organizational performance and improve the capacity of institutions to address complex challenges (Putnam, 1993; Pretty, 2003). In rural communities where social relationships remain central to economic and organizational activities, leadership legitimacy often depends as much on social trust as on formal authority.

Another important finding relates to organizational capacity as a multidimensional concept. The literature suggests that capacity extends beyond financial resources or administrative systems and includes human resources, governance structures, organizational learning, and stakeholder relationships (Horton et al., 2003). Consequently, strengthening farmer organizations requires comprehensive capacity-development strategies rather than isolated interventions. Investments focused exclusively on technical training or financial assistance may have limited impacts if underlying governance and leadership challenges remain unresolved.

The review further demonstrates that governance quality significantly influences organizational performance. Transparent decision-making processes, accountable leadership, effective communication, and active member participation contribute to stronger organizational resilience and institutional sustainability. Organizations characterized by strong governance systems are generally better positioned to manage resources, maintain member trust, and adapt to changing environmental conditions. These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of governance in determining the success of agricultural cooperatives and farmer organizations (Bijman et al., 2016).

Technological readiness also emerged as a growing dimension of organizational capacity. Contemporary agricultural development increasingly requires organizations to manage information, coordinate stakeholders, and

utilize digital communication platforms. However, many cocoa farmer groups continue to face barriers related to digital literacy, infrastructure limitations, and technological access. Strengthening digital competencies among leaders and members therefore represents an important strategy for enhancing organizational effectiveness and supporting future agricultural innovation (FAO, 2023).

The findings additionally suggest that leadership effectiveness cannot be understood solely as an individual attribute. Rather, leadership operates within broader institutional and social contexts that shape organizational opportunities and constraints. External support from government agencies, extension services, universities, non-governmental organizations, and private companies frequently influences the ability of leaders to mobilize resources and strengthen organizational performance. As a result, leadership development should be viewed as part of a broader institutional strengthening process rather than a stand-alone intervention (Donovan et al., 2017).

From a policy perspective, the review indicates that strengthening leadership and organizational capacity should become a strategic priority within agricultural development programs. Many existing interventions focus primarily on production technologies and farm-level practices. While these interventions remain important, they may generate limited long-term impacts if farmer organizations lack the leadership and institutional capacities necessary to sustain development initiatives. Programs that support leadership training, governance reform, organizational learning, and capacity development are therefore likely to generate broader and more sustainable benefits.

Based on the synthesis of the reviewed literature, this study proposes a Leadership–Capacity Development Framework for cocoa farmer groups. The framework suggests that effective leadership strengthens organizational capacity through improved governance, organizational learning, and stakeholder engagement. Enhanced organizational capacity subsequently improves organizational performance, collective action, and institutional resilience. These improvements ultimately contribute to farmer welfare, livelihood resilience, and broader rural development outcomes. The framework provides a useful conceptual lens for understanding how leadership and organizational capacity interact to influence the long-term sustainability of farmer organizations in Indonesia.

Overall, the findings reinforce the argument that leadership and organizational capacity are fundamental components of successful farmer organizations. Strengthening these dimensions can improve organizational effectiveness, enhance collective action, and support more inclusive and sustainable rural development. As the cocoa sector continues to confront economic, environmental, and institutional challenges, leadership and organizational capacity will remain critical factors shaping the future resilience and competitiveness of cocoa farming communities in Indonesia.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined leadership and organizational capacity among cocoa farmer groups in Indonesia through a systematic review of recent literature. The findings demonstrate that leadership plays a central role in shaping organizational effectiveness, member participation, collective action, and institutional sustainability. Effective leaders contribute to organizational development by fostering trust, promoting participation, strengthening stakeholder relationships, and guiding organizations toward shared objectives. At the same time, organizational capacity determines the ability of farmer groups to mobilize resources, manage activities, deliver services, and respond to changing agricultural and socioeconomic conditions.

The review further reveals that many cocoa farmer groups continue to face significant organizational challenges, including limited human resources, weak governance systems, financial constraints, inadequate technological readiness, and low levels of member participation. These challenges often reduce organizational effectiveness and limit the capacity of farmer groups to support agricultural development and farmer welfare. Consequently, strengthening leadership and organizational capacity has become increasingly important for enhancing the performance and sustainability of farmer organizations.

The findings also indicate that leadership and organizational capacity are mutually reinforcing factors. Effective leadership contributes to stronger governance, organizational learning, and stakeholder engagement, while enhanced organizational capacity enables leaders to implement programs more effectively and sustain collective initiatives. Together, these factors improve organizational performance and contribute to broader outcomes related to farmer resilience, livelihood improvement, and rural development.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be proposed. First, government agencies should strengthen leadership development programs for farmer group leaders through continuous training, mentoring, and capacity-building initiatives. Second, agricultural development programs should place greater emphasis on organizational strengthening, including governance improvement, financial management, strategic planning, and organizational learning. Third, farmer groups should expand partnerships with universities, extension services, private companies, and civil society organizations to enhance access to knowledge, resources, and innovation. Fourth, investments in digital literacy and information management systems should be prioritized to improve organizational efficiency and strengthen institutional adaptability.

In conclusion, the future effectiveness of cocoa farmer groups in Indonesia depends not only on improvements in agricultural production but also on the quality of leadership and the strength of organizational capacity. Strengthening these dimensions can enhance collective action, improve organizational performance, and support more sustainable and inclusive rural development. As agricultural systems become increasingly complex and competitive, leadership and organizational capacity will remain fundamental determinants of the resilience and long-term success of cocoa farming communities in Indonesia.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the analysis relied exclusively on secondary sources, including journal articles, books, and institutional reports. Consequently, the findings reflect patterns and trends reported in the existing literature and may not fully capture the diversity of experiences among cocoa farmer groups across different regions of Indonesia. Second, the reviewed studies employed various methodological approaches, geographical settings, and analytical perspectives, which may influence the comparability of findings. Third, the review focused primarily on leadership and organizational capacity, while other potentially important factors, such as market dynamics, policy environments, gender relations, and cultural contexts, received less attention.

Future research should therefore incorporate empirical field-based studies involving cocoa farmer groups in different production regions to validate and expand the findings of this review. Comparative research examining variations in leadership styles, organizational performance, and institutional effectiveness across provinces could provide deeper insights into the factors influencing successful organizational development. In addition, future studies may explore the role of digital leadership, youth participation, gender-inclusive leadership, and organizational innovation in strengthening farmer organizations. Such investigations would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how leadership and organizational capacity can support farmer resilience, agricultural sustainability, and long-term rural development in Indonesia.

Furthermore, future research could examine the relationship between leadership quality and specific development outcomes, including productivity improvement, technology adoption, market integration, and household welfare. Longitudinal studies would be particularly valuable for understanding how leadership and organizational capacity evolve over time and how these changes influence the resilience and sustainability of cocoa farming communities. Expanding research in these areas would provide stronger evidence for designing policies and development programs aimed at strengthening farmer organizations and enhancing the competitiveness of Indonesia's cocoa sector.

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