

The Mental Attitude of Farmers and the Lack of Interest of Gen-Z in Food Crop Farming in Beru-Beru Village, Kalukku District, Mamuju, West Sulawesi in 2025

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ABSTRACT

This research addresses the theme "Farmer Mental Attitudes and the Lack of Gen-Z Interest in Food Crop Farming in Beru-Beru Village, Kalukku District, Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi Province in 2025." The main focus of this study is to analyze the mental attitudes of farmers and to explore the factors causing the low interest of Gen-Z in the field of food crop farming. The approach used is a qualitative method, with data collection techniques in the form of interviews and questionnaires involving five farmers and five respondents from the Gen-Z group in Beru-Beru Village. Research findings indicate that farmers generally have a positive outlook on their profession and are ready to face various challenges, including adopting agricultural technology. Meanwhile, most Gen-Z individuals express interest in agriculture, but they still face obstacles such as limited capital, access to technology, and a lack of training and guidance. A small portion of Gen-Z respondents view agriculture as less aligned with their personal interests and modern lifestyle. The analysis results indicate a gap between the older generation who are still active in agriculture and Gen-Z who do not yet fully consider agriculture as a prospective career choice. Therefore, strategic interventions from various stakeholders are needed to create a more innovative, efficient, and attractive agricultural sector for Gen-Z, in order to ensure the sustainability of agriculture in the future

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is a sector that is considered very specific in meeting the food needs of society. However, considering the development of the current era, there is a decline in interest among the younger generation, especially Gen-Z, in the field of agriculture, particularly those commonly found in the crop farming sector. This fact has become a very serious concern, especially in Beru-Beru Village, Kalukku District, Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi Province.

Regarding the mental attitude of farmers, which is formed from farming experiences and culture passed down from generation to generation, it has a significant influence on the sustainability of agricultural enterprises. However, there are changes in lifestyle and also perceptions of work in the agricultural sector.

The agricultural sector is currently facing many significant challenges related to the declining interest of young generations, particularly Gen Z, in working in the agricultural field. What can be seen now is that young people or Gen Z prefer jobs in non-agricultural sectors because they look at the processes and actions involved, so those who remain in the agricultural sector are aged 50 and above due to the lack of interest among young people, especially Gen Z, in agriculture. This has caused the number of workers in the agricultural sector to decrease because those working are over 50 years old, leading to a decline in successors for the agricultural sector. In addition, a negative perception of the agricultural sector has emerged, where today's youth consider agriculture to be less promising in the future and relatively low-paying, which affects the interest of young generations, particularly Gen Z, in engaging in agricultural activities.

One of the main factors causing the lack of interest of the younger generation or Gen-Z in the agricultural sector is that the income level is very low, so many young people are reluctant to farm. This is known because income in the agricultural sector is often not enough to meet living needs, and many young people choose to seek jobs in other sectors that offer higher salaries than what farming provides.

In addition, the lack of supportive policies related to increasing farmers' income hinders the younger generation of farmers. Limited access to modern technology also becomes an obstacle in attracting the interest of young generations, especially Gen-Z, to the agricultural sector. This is because the use of technology in agriculture is still limited and many farmers do not have sufficient access or knowledge about agricultural technologies that can increase productivity. Therefore, the introduction and implementation of more modern agricultural technologies are very necessary to attract the interest of the younger generation. Moreover, the independence of many Gen-Z individuals is one factor that causes low interest among young people in the agricultural sector, leading them to prefer jobs that align with contemporary trends. Many young people consider work in the agricultural sector to be less prestigious and associated with heavy and dirty working conditions (Interest & Sectors, 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

General Conditions of the Research Location

1. Geographical Location

Beru-Beru Village is one of the villages located in the Kalukku District, Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. Geographically, this village is situated within the administrative area of Kalukku District, which has an area of approximately 470.26 km². The Kalukku District is located at coordinates between 2°27'0" and 2°42'0" South Latitude and 118°57'0" and 119°15'0" East Longitude. To the south, Beru-Beru Village directly borders Kalukku Subdistrict.

2. Climate Conditions

Beru-Beru Village, located in Kalukku District, Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi Province, has a humid tropical climate characterized by high rainfall throughout the year. Based on climatological data for Mamuju Regency as a whole, the daily air temperature in this area ranges from 21°C to 32°C, with an annual average temperature of around 27°C to 28°C. The air humidity is also relatively high, between 80% and 83%, which makes the air feel humid and hot.

Every year, the recorded rainfall reaches approximately 2,100 mm, with the most intense rainy season occurring from March to June. April usually records the highest rainfall compared to other months. Although rainfall continues throughout the year, its intensity varies. This condition makes Beru-Beru Village not experience a long dry season, making it very potential for the development of the tropical agriculture sector, particularly for crops that require a continuous supply of water.

3. Population Conditions

Based on the population projections of Kalukku Subdistrict and estimates from the Village government, the population of Beru-Beru Village in 2025 is estimated to reach around 1,585 people, predominantly from the Mandar tribe as the indigenous population. In addition, there are also other ethnic groups such as Bugis, Toraja, Mamasa, Javanese, and Balinese residing in this village.

Table 1. The Population of Beru-Beru Village

No	Gender	Number (Population)
1.	Male	800
2.	Woman	785
	Total	1.585

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics of Kalukku Subdistrict, 2025

Table 1 shows that the number of male residents is higher compared to female residents. The majority of the population in Beru-Beru Village, Kalukku District, Mamuju Regency, work in the agricultural and fishing sectors, with agriculture being the main sector, involving the cultivation of rice fields and

gardens as the primary source of livelihood. In coastal areas, some residents rely on the sea for their livelihood. In addition, there are also residents who work as entrepreneurs, laborers, and civil servants.

METHODOLOGY

1. Type of Research

This research uses a qualitative approach, which is a method used to understand phenomena in natural conditions, not through experiments. In this study, the researcher acts as the main instrument, with data analysis carried out inductively. The research results are more focused on understanding deep meaning rather than drawing general conclusions or generalizations, because reasoning starts from specific things towards a broader understanding.

2. Research Location and Time

The research location was conducted in Beru-Beru Village, Kalukku District, Mamuju Regency. This research was conducted for 1 month in May.

3. Population and Sample

3.1 Population

Population includes all objects or subjects that are the target of the research (Subhaktiyasa, 2024). The population in this study is the total number of respondents, which is 5 farmers and 5 Gen-Z individuals (youth) in Beru-Beru Village, Kalukku District, Mamuju Regency.

3.2 Sample

A sample is a part of the population that reflects the characteristics of the population representatively. To select an appropriate sample, researchers need to have a deep understanding of sampling techniques, both in determining the sample size and in selecting the individuals or elements to be made into a sample (Abunawas et al., 2017). The determination of the sample in this study was done by cluster sampling and using the census method.

4. Data Collection Method

4.1 Primary Data

Primary data is information obtained directly from the original source without intermediaries. This data is authentic and has not undergone any statistical processing. To collect primary data, researchers must gather data directly through methods such as observation, interviews, focus group discussions, or the distribution of questionnaires (Sari & Zefri, 2019). In this study, the researcher uses primary data as the main source, which is obtained through interviews or questionnaires.

4.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data is data collected by researchers from sources that are already available. This data functions as a complement or support to the primary data that has been obtained, and usually comes from library materials, literature, previous research results, books, journals, and other written sources (Inadjo et al., 2023).

4.3 Analysis Method

The data and information that have been obtained were analyzed qualitatively, with the aim of understanding the mental attitudes of farmers and the lack of interest of Gen-Z in agricultural crop farming businesses in Beru-Beru village, Kalukku sub-district, Mamuju regency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study aims to understand the mental attitude of farmers and what causes the lack of interest among Gen Z in the field of food crop farming in Beru-Beru Village, Kalukku District, Mamuju Regency. The interview results show that all respondents who are farmers in Beru-Beru Village stated that they are currently engaged in farming, and they can also adapt to climate changes and new challenges in agriculture, although there are indeed obstacles. Some farmers explained that the obstacles sometimes include pest attacks, sudden drops in prices, or even cases where harvests are stolen.

Then the results obtained from the answers of Gen-Z respondents through a Google Form (questionnaire) regarding their interest in agriculture. One in five respondents answered that they have little interest because they feel they are not skilled in the field of agriculture; moreover, they are more interested in working in the industrial and office sectors. However, even though they have little interest in agriculture, they do not consider agriculture to be outdated; what they need is training and guidance to increase their knowledge related to the field of agriculture.

Then 4 (four) out of 5 (five) respondents answered that they are interested in agriculture because they believe that we will always need food, as the agricultural sector is not only a business field but its results can also be used for personal needs, and generally farmers begin to follow technological developments over time.

The following is the response from one of the farmers representing all the farmers in Beru-Beru Village, through a direct interview regarding the attitude and mentality of farmers in food crop farming as follows:

The answer from Mr. Hadi Marsono as a farmer is that he has been farming for 4 years and he feels happy and enjoys his work. He also believes that the agricultural sector is a promising source of income, but it depends on what is planted and whether it matches the majority of buyers' interests. He is also interested in learning new technology in farming if available. Then, when he was asked whether he agrees if his children want to continue the family farming business, he answered, 'strongly supported.' He also answered that he is motivated to increase the harvest yield every season because he also sees that farming is part of cultural identity.

Here are the answers from Gen-Z in Beru-Beru Village, Kalukku District, Mamuju Regency, from interviews conducted through a Google Form (questionnaire) that was distributed, regarding whether they are interested and keen on the field of food crop agriculture as follows:

1. **The answer from Ms. Riska as Gen-Z**, that he feels interested in becoming an entrepreneur in the field of agriculture because 'the need for food will always exist at all times.' And Ms. Riska also answered that 'agriculture is not outdated because no matter how long, we will always need food,' regarding the question of whether lack of access, capital, and technology is what makes it a challenge for Gen-Z, he answered that 'what causes obstacles is the lack of capital to buy seeds and fertilizer.' In addition, regarding agricultural knowledge, he answered that 'he still feels lacking in agricultural knowledge and therefore still needs to continue learning.' Regarding the question of whether he feels embarrassed to work in the field of agriculture, he answered that 'no, because work in the field of agriculture has quite promising results, and besides that, agricultural has already started to develop.'
2. **The answer from Ms. Nurul as Gen-Z**, that she feels interested in becoming an entrepreneur in the agricultural sector because "the agricultural sector is not only a business field but can also be utilized for personal needs," and Ms. Nurul also does not consider agriculture to be an outdated job because "agriculture can be a business field that is always progressing in every era." Regarding whether she is interested in the agricultural sector, she answered that "for work, I am more interested in working according to my educational background but I am not ruling out the possibility of being interested in doing small-scale farming at home." Regarding the question of whether lack of access, capital, and technology are obstacles for Gen-Z, she answered that "not really because I have just not focused on farming activities." Regarding the question of whether she feels ashamed to work in the agricultural sector, she answered that "not really because, in my opinion, farming allows one to get to know plants and nature better."
3. **The answer from Ms. Asma as a Gen-Z**, that he does not feel interested because he is "not talented in the field of agriculture," and sister Asma

also does not consider agriculture as an outdated job because "working in agriculture is not outdated at all since agriculture has always been a primary sector for food needs," regarding whether he is interested or not in the agricultural sector, he answered that "he is more interested in the industrial and office fields because he feels he is not strong enough to go directly into the field," concerning the question of whether the lack of access, capital, and technology is an obstacle for Gen-Z, he answered that "no, because nowadays there is a lot of sophisticated technology that can help people working in the agricultural field," regarding the question of whether he feels ashamed to work in agriculture, he answered that "no, because all jobs are the same".

4. **The answer from Ms. Yulia Citra Manakarra as Gen-Z,** that she feels interested in becoming an entrepreneur in the agricultural sector because "agriculture can help increase food availability and thus reduce dependence on imports," and Ms. Yulia Citra Manakarra also does not consider agriculture to be an outdated job because "generally agriculture has begun to follow technological developments over time." Regarding whether or not she is interested in the agricultural sector, she answered that "I feel quite interested in working in the agricultural field because I want to better understand the challenges farmers face in managing their agricultural products." Concerning the question of whether lack of access, capital, and technology is an obstacle for Gen-Z, she answered that "it can be a barrier to achieving productivity and efficiency in conducting agricultural activities." Regarding the question of whether she feels embarrassed to work in agriculture, she answered that "not feeling ashamed to work in the agricultural field because working in agriculture is fun and noble since it can produce the main food sources for humans.
5. **Answer from Ms. Saparuddin as Gen-Z,** that he feels interested in becoming an entrepreneur in the agricultural sector because "he already feels quite skilled in agriculture," and Ms. Saparuddin also does not consider agriculture to be an outdated job because "generally, agriculture is starting to follow technological developments over time," regarding whether he is interested in the agricultural sector or not, he answered that he is "interested in working in agriculture because he wants to better understand the challenges that farmers face in cultivating agricultural products," regarding the question of whether lack of access, capital, and technology is an obstacle for Gen-Z, he answered that "not really because nowadays there is a lot of advanced technology," regarding the question of whether he feels prestige if he has to work in agriculture, he answered that "because farming is also very good and developing nowadays.

Discussion

Observing the answers from direct interviews with one of the farmers in Beru-Beru Village and the distribution of questionnaires to the younger generation (Gen-Z) provides a general overview of their attitudes and motivations toward the food crop agriculture sector.

The response of Mr. Hadi Marsono, a farmer who has been engaged in the profession for four years, admitted that he feels happy and enjoys his work. He believes that farming is a potential source of income, depending on the type of crops planted and in accordance with market demand. He also showed enthusiasm for learning, especially in adopting new agricultural technologies. When asked about his child who wants to continue the farming business, he expressed full support. He added that farming is an important part of cultural identity, and this becomes his main motivation in improving harvest yields each season.

The young generation in Beru-Beru Village has quite diverse views on the agricultural sector, although most show interest and appreciation for the importance of this field.

Overall, both senior farmers and the younger generation show a positive attitude towards agriculture. Farmers remain committed and open to change, while Gen-Z tends to view agriculture as an important and potentially rewarding sector. The challenges faced by Gen-Z are more technical, such as limited capital and knowledge, rather than due to negative perceptions of the profession.

This shows that with support in the form of training, capital, and technology, the agricultural sector can attract more interest from the younger generation and promote the sustainability of farming businesses in village.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Research on the mental attitude of farmers and the low interest of Gen-Z in food crop farming in Beru-Beru Village reveals that the majority of farmers have a positive view of their profession. The farmers feel proud, responsible, and enjoy working in agriculture, even showing readiness to learn new technologies to improve production yields. This indicates a strong commitment to maintaining and continuing farming activities, although they still face various challenges such as limited capital, pest attacks, and price fluctuations. On the other hand, Gen-Z's interest in agriculture is still relatively low, although some of them show enthusiasm. Some of the main obstacles faced by Gen-Z include limited access to land, capital, and technology, as well as a lack of technical knowledge, in addition to the perception that jobs in this sector are not compatible with a modern lifestyle. Nevertheless, most respondents from the Gen-Z group still view agriculture as an important sector that is relevant to modern developments. These findings indicate a gap between the enthusiasm of active farmers and the younger generation, who have not yet fully seen agriculture as a promising career option. Therefore, an appropriate approach and strategy are needed to bridge this gap in order to ensure the sustainability of the agricultural sector in the future.

Recommendation

The results of this study indicate the need for strategic steps to encourage Gen-Z's interest in the agricultural sector, particularly in the field of food crops. Active roles from the government, educational institutions, and society are highly needed in creating a more modern, attractive, and era-appropriate agricultural atmosphere. Extension and training activities based on agricultural technology need to be expanded and adapted to the characteristics and needs of Gen-Z, so that they can view this sector as a potential business opportunity. In addition, access to financing, superior seeds, as well as agricultural facilities and infrastructure needs to be facilitated, especially for young generations who are just starting. Shared awareness within families and social environments regarding the importance of the agricultural sector's role in supporting food security and the need for farmer regeneration must also continue to be cultivated. With the right and collaborative approach, the agricultural sector is expected not only to become a sustainable business field, but also to be able to attract active participation from Gen-Z as the successors of national agricultural development.

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