Impact of rice-biased policy on local food system in Kepulauan Tanimbar District, Maluku Province, Indonesia

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Abstract. In Kepulauan Tanimbar District of Maluku Province, various local food is being replaced by rice which impact on change in food consumption pattern from local food to rice. A study in Latdalam Village, Kandar Village, and Saumlaki City have been carried out to assess whether rice-biased policy has an impact on the Kepulauan Tanimbar community, specifically explored on the effect to local food system. The method of the study was qualitative within case study design supported by primary and secondary data. This study found that the policy not only affect change in food consumption pattern but also threaten the existence of a local food system in Kepulauan Tanimbar community. They no longer depend on their local food system and fulfill food supply from other regions instead.

1. Introduction

Based on data from the Direktorat Jenderal Tanaman Pangan (DJTP) or the Directorate General of Food Crops [1], Indonesia has 77 types of food sources of carbohydrates, 75 types of fat sources, 26 types of nuts, 389 varieties of fruits, 228 types of vegetables, and 110 varieties of spices. From the 77 types of food sources of carbohydrates, only three types of them are widely known and consumed namely rice, maize and types of tubers. However, rice production far exceeds maize and tubers even only various kinds of rice are being grown. It depicts the simplification of food as there is decline in the food varieties provided by nature [2,3].

Among 34 provinces in Indonesia, people who lived in provinces located in the eastern parts such as Maluku, Papua, and East Nusa Tenggara used to consume their local food such as sago, cassava, and sweet potato as their main staple food. However, this consumption pattern has changed after the 1970s where people have been consuming rice more than their local food [2,4]. In 2008, rice consumption reached 104.9 kg per person which is 36.2 times greater than maize consumption, 8.1 times cassava consumption, and 37.5 times sweet potato consumption [2]. This is also supported by the statement of BKP (2018) on its website that approximately 97 percent of Indonesians consume rice as their main staple food.

Because of the explained occurrence, Indonesia has undergone a change in food consumption pattern where various local food widely consumed by the people in particular places are being replaced by rice, as well as the condition where rice has become the main staple food consumed by people throughout Indonesia (especially in a number of areas that are not rice-based) [5,6]. This is particularly true in the Kepulauan Tanimbar district, Maluku Province, where food consumption patterns have changed from local food to rice.
The Department of Agriculture of Maluku Province in Maluku Food Balance Sheet reports that the rice supply in Maluku in 2004 was 179,876 tons; 36,148 tons are self-produced and 143,728 tons are imported. This number indicates that rice import is almost four times greater than local [7]. Another research in 2014 shows that, changes in food consumption patterns of Maluku people increased by 35 percent compared to the previous years. Whereas in the past, the consumption of rice was only 80 kilograms per capita per year, it has now increased to 108 kilograms. What makes it even worse is that rice production in Maluku can only meet 40 percent of rice needs, while the rest must be imported from outside [8]. It means that the fulfillment of staple food should no longer rely on rice since its local production is far below the demand rate.

The high growth of rice consumption compared to other crops cannot be separated from the direction of the food policy that is rice-biased or overly rice-oriented. The rice self-sufficiency program through the implementation of the green revolution in around the 1960s began to reduce local staple food consumption in Indonesia [3,9,10,11,12]. Rice has always been placed as the primary commodity in the implementation of Indonesian food policy [2,13,14]. The government focused on rice “at all cost” while other crops such as cassava, sago, sweet potatoes and sorghum became secondary in terms of research and development of various innovations on-farm and off-farm. It illustrated that the government disregard the culture of each region in which will cause damage to the culture of local food [15].

Few are aware that behind the agricultural development project, there is a cost to be borne by the Kepulauan Tanimbar community. Not only their consumption pattern has changed, but also their local food system being impacted consequently. Therefore, the government’s programs on food and agriculture, at some point and certain places do not work optimally in achieving food security, it leads to food vulnerability instead. This paper tries to analyse Indonesian food policy on how it changes food consumption pattern, how the policy was applied and also tries to fill the gap by examining its implications on the community’s local food system.

2. Methodology

2.1 Study Area and Participants
Kepulauan Tanimbar District (hereafter known as Kepulauan Tanimbar) located in the southern part of Maluku Province. The Kepulauan Tanimbar (Figure 1) is chosen because its people used to consume various local food such as cassava, sweet potato, kembili, yam, taro and sometimes sago (Figure 2). These food crops, in this paper, are hereafter referred to as local food. However, the Kepulauan Tanimbar community is currently experiencing change in food consumption pattern from local food to rice. The landscape of Maluku is composed of hilly land areas and the lack of water are constraints to expanding irrigated rice field in the area while local food grows abundantly and naturally fit the landscape of Maluku [16]. Three places were chosen as they could enrich the primary data, the places are Latdalam village (A), Kandar village (B), and Saumlaki city (C) (with a red square on Figure 3 (edited from Figure 1)).
Figure 1. Map of Kepulauan Tanimbar  
*Source*: Badan Informasi Geospasial (2017)

Figure 2. Local food in Kepulauan Tanimbar  
A. Indigenous sweet potato, B. Taro, C. Kembili, D. Sweet potato, E. Banana, F. Petatas  
*Source*: Personal documentation (2018)
2.2 Case Study Design

This paper uses case study to examine the way food policy of the state works in an area of Indonesia which still cultivates and consumes local food. As stated by Gerring [17], a case study is “observational study of a single case or small number of cases which also promises to shed light on a larger population of cases”. We found case study as a suitable design since the topic of changing in food consumption pattern happens as well in other places. The case study design in this paper is equipped by qualitative methods in order to obtain holistic meaning immerse into their real life and experience the natural setting of the research atmosphere [18].

This paper uses case study to examine the way food policy of the state works in an area of Indonesia which still cultivates and consumes local food. In this paper, the area chosen as a place boundary is the Kepulauan Tanimbar district, particularly in three places namely Latdalam village, Kandar village, and Saumlaki city. The primary data was collected through FGD, semi-structured interviews, and participant observation.

2.2.1 Focus group discussion.

Focus group discussion (FGD) was carried out in the first part of data collection since we wanted to gather as many perspectives as the participants can convey regarding the issue. The method also allowed us to identify their socio-cultural behaviours and their norms. During the FGD, the participants automatically validate their behaviour or phenomena that occur within their community [19]. FGD was conducted in Latdalam village only due to the condition, accessibility, and permission from local government. There were 15 people (0.5% of the total population) came who most of them are male local food farmers with small scale of land possession, with average age range from 35-65 years old. It is quite difficult to get diverse participants since the village composition is somewhat homogenous. Table 1 shows the list of FGD participants in Latdalam.

| No. | Initial | Age | Gender | Occupation |
|-----|---------|-----|--------|------------|
| 1   | Sasongko | 35  | Male   | Farmer     |
| 2   | Susilo  | 66  | Male   | Farmer     |
| 3   | Dodo    | 42  | Male   | Farmer     |
| 4   | Jatmiko | 56  | Female | Farmer     |
| 5   | Argono  | 54  | Male   | Farmer     |
| 6   | Asmadi  | 63  | Male   | Farmer     |
2.2.2 Semi-structured interview
After conducting the FGD, interviews were carried out to get deeper opinions from selected participants. We successfully interviewed 15 participants (0.5% of the total population) from Latdalam village, 3 participants (0.02% of the total population) who live in Saumlaki city, and 3 participants (0.17% of the total population) from Kandar village which was carried out by phone. Furthermore, local government officials were also interviewed from different departments since the issue intersects and relates to several departments. At the national level, we interviewed a senior researcher from agriculture policy institution to get a scholar’s view. Tables 2 to 4 give the list of interview participants in Latdalam, Saumlaki, and Kandar respectively.

Table 2. List of interview participants in Latdalam Village

| No. | Initial  | Age | Gender | Occupation | Preference |
|-----|----------|-----|--------|------------|------------|
| 1   | Sasongko | 35  | Male   | Farmer     | Rice       |
| 2   | Susilo   | 66  | Male   | Farmer     | Local food |
| 3   | Dodo     | 42  | Male   | Farmer     | Local food |
| 4   | Jatmiko  | 56  | Female | Farmer     | Local food |
| 5   | Argono   | 54  | Male   | Farmer     | Local food |
| 6   | Asmadi   | 63  | Male   | Farmer     | Local food |
| 7   | Yanto    | 43  | Male   | Farmer     | Local food |
| 8   | Rahayu   | ±60 | Female | Farmer     | Local food |
| 9   | Tuti     | 39  | Female | Seller     | Rice       |
| 10  | Lestari  | 40  | Female | Seller     | Rice       |
| 11  | Sri      | 40  | Female | Housewife  | Rice       |
| 12  | Bambang  | 41  | Male   | Farmer     | Local food |
| 13  | Jasmadi  | 65  | Male   | Farmer     | Rice       |
| 14  | Aswono   | 35  | Male   | Teacher    | Local food |
| 15  | Tono     | 47  | Male   | Head of the village | Rice |

Table 3. List of interview participants in Saumlaki City

| No. | Initial | Age | Gender  | Occupation        | Preference |
|-----|---------|-----|---------|-------------------|------------|
| 1   | Rukmi   | 24  | Female  | Housewife        | Rice       |
| 2   | Pandji  | 30  | Male    | Civil servant (staff) | Rice       |
| 3   | Wening  | ±50 | Female  | Teacher          | Rice       |

Table 4. List of interview participants in Kandar Village

| No. | Initial | Age | Gender  | Occupation | Preference |
|-----|---------|-----|---------|------------|------------|
| 1   | Wahyu   | 48  | Male    | Head of village | Rice       |
| 2   | Retno   | 33  | Female  | Farmer     | Local food |
| 3   | Yoto    | ±50 | Male    | Farmer     | Local food |

2.2.3 Participant observation
Along with FGD and interview, observation is another essential tool for qualitative research. Observation provides corresponding data regarding the issue. Observation allows “researchers to obtain
a detailed description of social settings or events in order to situate people’s behaviour within their own socio-cultural context” [19]. We lived with and observed 2 families. The first one was in Saumlaki city where we lived in for 3 weeks; with a female teacher-headed big family. The second one was in Latdalam village for 3 days. We have lived with a female farmer-headed small family of two.

2.3 Secondary Data
The secondary data was obtained from government documents related to Indonesian food policy such as the Roadmap Diversifikasi Pangan 2011-2015 (Roadmap of Food Diversification 2011-2015), Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah (RPJMN, Middle Term Development Plan) particularly in food and agriculture sector, Food Act Number 18 of 2012, and Upaya Khusus (UPSUS, Special Effort Program) among others. Alongside that, other official documents were included such as statistics and other data gained directly from the local government in Kepulauan Tanimbar. This study also used articles, books, and discussions related to the study topic in order to make the arguments strong, well-directed and developed. Secondary data enrich the data gathered in the field. It helped us to improve my analysis further especially regarding the rice policy that has been occurred since past decades and analyse the effects of the change in food consumption pattern towards the community.

2.4 Analytical Frameworks
We assembled concepts which will elaborate, examine, and analyse the change in food consumption pattern issue. First we use the state in society concept which we integrated from several scholars as mentioned by Migdal [20], such as Reuschemeyer and Evans in 1986 and Mann in 1989, that state is a set of organisations equipped with authority in making decisions juridically within state’s territory where force can be applied if necessary. The state has the capacity to perform political decisions across territories and/or penetrate the decisions through activities of civil society or known as infrastructural power [21].

Second, as Foucault describes that power is exercised not by itself but by concurrence with knowledge: “it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power”. Thus, knowledge is not dissociated with power, but rather, it depends on each other. Along with the theory of the state in society, power/knowledge assists in understanding the way government controls the agricultural sector through several means such as coercion and knowledge. Through penetration of knowledge, they can control society and conceptualise their development program.

Third, we use (local) food system concept combined from Kuhnlein and Receveur [22] and Feenstra [23] and come up with the definition of local food system which indicates food availability from local natural resources, rooted in specific places and culturally accepted where it aims to benefit farmers and consumers. Further, production and distribution are economically and ecologically safe, and promote social equity for community members. Alongside that the system includes the sociocultural meaning, traditional processing technique, nutritional outcomes and balanced diet gained from food diversity.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 A Glimpse of Indonesia Rice Policy
Rice began to dominate since the colonial era [24,25], particularly around the 1930s when the colonial government have stimulated domestic rice production. In 1939, rice production was intensified to secure food supply in anticipation of the war. Farmers then planted the superior variety of rice which better in production capacity. It made Indonesia self-sufficient in rice in 1941, but the rice supply declined partly due to the of World War II and Japanese occupation [25]. After independence, Indonesia was led by President Sukarno during the Demokrasi Terpimpin era (Guided Democracy 1952-1964). Rice development became the focus of government through land use intensification and expansion.

Rice-oriented policy was emphasized in the Orde Baru (New Order 1969-1998) era of President Suharto through green revolution program in 1970s where the following were implemented:
procurement of high-technology machine, production of high-yield rice varieties, subsidising of inputs (chemical fertiliser, seed, and pesticide), construction of irrigation, expansion of field, strengthening the extension system, and farm financing and incentive. The government had the power to decide what types of seed to be planted, the variety of fertiliser, pesticides, and all things related to crop production to be used. Farmers only had to comply with the rules set by the government. Since the government had invested considerably in the green revolution program, rice production increased rapidly, resulting in Indonesia successfully achieving rice self-sufficiency in 1984 [25,26].

After President Suharto stepped down from power, the government was rolled out to the next president, B.J. Habibie (1998-1999), he also put rice as the main agricultural commodity. Subsequently, the next president after President Abdurrahman Wahid (1999-2000), President Megawati (2000-2004) conveyed her statement that confirmed the role of rice, “Tidak ada pilihan lain kecuali swasembada” or “No other option but self-sufficiency” [27]. In 2008, when President Yudhoyono was in power (2004-2014), Indonesia achieved its second rice self-sufficiency given the support from the government through the program of Peningkatan Produksi Beras Nasional (P2BN, National Rice Production Improvement Program) in which technology was much involved in the implementation [11].

In President Joko Widodo’s era (2014-present), the rice tradition continued. A program named Upaya Khusus (UPSUS, Special Effort Program) [28] was implemented as part of the President’s Nawa Cita, and along with Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah (RPJMN, Middle Term Development Plan) emphasized to increase the production of several strategic commodities namely rice, maize, and beans. These recent policies rather heightened the importance and the prioritisation of rice production. As Banyu (a government official in Kepulauan Tanimbar) said, “(the) UPSUS program is one of the programs that promote rice intervention since this program boosts rice production and two other commodities.” Through the green revolution and various production improvement programs, the government frames Indonesian food policy towards a productionist paradigm. Productionist paradigm is being widely used in many countries which reflect in many countries’ food policy in solving food problems. The paradigm emerged two centuries ago in the era of industrialisation of food along with advancement in agricultural practices such as the usage of chemical substance and agricultural technologies [29]. It is believed that this paradigm can produce more food to feed the growing world’s population. The problem is only certain kind of crops (e.g. rice, corn and ground nuts) are being produced massively. Food production is greatly boosted while ignoring the possible impacts that will emerge such as social, health and environmental degradation, threatening biodiversity, and local food system as only certain commodities are being urged under unsustainable way of production.

3.2 Government Plays a Big Role in Food Consumption Pattern Change

In accordance with the definition of power from Bachrach and Baratz (as cited in [30]) where A controls over B, the Indonesian government exercises its power through the set of policies that explained in sub-chapter 3.1 (green revolution, REPELITA, P2BN, and UPSUS) were set to achieve the goal of national food security. The government controls the commodities to be planted, in this case, is rice with a specific way of production using chemical fertilizer, high-yielded seed, and mechanization, especially at the time when green revolution was promoted. Those programs fulfil one of the points that must be covered in analysing power relations, namely “the means of bringing power relations into being” by Foucault [31] where threat or word, technology or other control mechanisms are used for exercising power. That strategy was applied by the New Order era in executing green revolution as President Suharto, who adopted authoritarian system in carried out his administration, often used military forces to threaten farmers if they refused the government’s order [26]. So to speak, it was hard for people to oppose the ruling government at that time. Farmers inevitably were pushed to produce rice under the instructions and rules that have been determined, even though it might be not in line with their will [26]. Moreover, the government stipulated rice production as one of key performance indicators in the national and district levels, which depicts of what Mann [32] mentioned that the state has the capacity to undertake political decisions.
After 1990, rice production was still increasing but with slower rate of growth. Due to the demand for rice over domestic production, some of the needs were met through import. It indicated that the rice self-sufficiency program was unsustainable, as it triggered resorting to imports to fulfil rice demand. Recently, even though the military force is no longer available, there is another subtler form of force in rice production. In Kandar village, farmers receive aid in the form of agricultural inputs and agricultural machines such as tractor and rice mills. With little power farmers have, they could not refuse the introduction of machines and inputs, particularly seeds. Surprisingly, the farmers are enthusiastic in accepting the aid when Retno (a farmer’s wife in Kandar village), a wife who helped his husband in the farm, said that the machine helps to improve rice productivity so that they could obtain more income (interview 2 September 2018). They thought that the exposure to technology means they find themselves levels ahead compared to their ancestors. We assumed that somehow it is a natural response to something new that could help their lives easier, but what needs to be considered is that hopefully, this is not a pragmatic attitude or indifference to the situation.

Exacerbating this problem is based on the information from Wahyu, head of Kandar village, Kandar’s farmers receive assistance from the government in the form of chemical-based inputs such as herbicides, chemical pesticides, and fertilizers. This practice will indirectly change the way farmers grow plants, as attested by one interviewee, “Yes… now, when we plant rice, before we plant, we apply herbicide first to the field” (Yoto, a farmer in Kandar village, interview 2 September 2018). The problem is, when asked whether the herbicide makes his field conventional, he said that his field is still organic. Whereas, in fact, it is not, the herbicide he used is surely chemical-based. We recognized the brand when he said “the brand of the herbicide is Rentokil.” It assumed that farmers do not know and are not given prior proper knowledge about the input they received. The government only provide a picture that what it orders is proper and is new knowledge for the community. That condition reflects what was mentioned by Foucault that power is exercised not only by itself but also in conjunction with knowledge: the Indonesian government penetrates its program as a modern and appropriate knowledge. As a result, the local knowledge such as traditional local food cultivation began to be neglected. This is due to the condition that to establish a fact or knowledge, other facts have to be discredited (Foucault, as cited in [33]).

In addition to abovementioned improvement programs, rice-biased policy progressed more obviously when the government launched raskin program. This can be inferred from the statement of Wahyu, wherein he had refused raskin to be distributed in Kandar village, but his effort has failed since raskin was already allocated by the government to each village:

We once refused to receive raskin, but we could not do it […] because the government still give us raskin. The government said they already allocated raskin for Kandar Village. We never refuse again ever since (Wahyu, interview 10 August 2018).

It is evident that the government, again, exercises their power, and shows their dominance as a state which indirectly allow rice-biased policy to be running smoothly. In addition, an opinion which supports the dominance of government is conveyed by Bagio (a government official in Kepulauan Tanimbar), that central government often gives aid for social safety nets, crop failure or food crisis in the form of rice.

In fact, we have to see what happened on a scale. If the occurrence is still on a small scale, it can be overcome by our internal program, […] no need to be directly given rice assistance by the central government. We can take advantage of other tubers (Bagio, interview 25 July 2018).

It is then not only creating people’s dependence on rice, but also generating bias on food policy. With the enactment of raskin regulation, the government shows its dominance because its ideas and rules must be appropriately applied. Government programs with all the mechanisms analysed above, indirectly make the people accustomed to consuming rice so that a mindset of eating must be with rice. Therefore, changing consumption patterns to rice makes local food becoming obsolete.
3.3 Threatened Local Food System

The Kepulauan Tanimbar community has their own local food system since the time of their ancestors. They rely on local food to meet their daily food needs, plant what are suitable to be planted and eat what food are abundantly provided in nature.

As for the history of food in Kepulauan Tanimbar, we consume local food since long time ago, and we have local wisdom as well. The commodities they plant are tubers since the environmental condition is more suitable for tubers (Banyu, interview 25 July 2018).

The local food system supports food availability for the majority of the population in Kepulauan Tanimbar. They have a local food system which in accordance with Kuhnlein and Receveur’s [22] definition of (local) food system that it is to indicate food available from local natural resources, processed traditionally, produced and distributed ecologically, and culturally accepted. Based on interviews with the farmers and government officials, we gathered the information regarding the local food system in Kepulauan Tanimbar as follow.

We begin with the explanation of farming practices in Kepulauan Tanimbar. Farming land in Kepulauan Tanimbar is known as arin, a polyculture field consisting of various plant commodities dominated by food crops and owned by several farming households. Cropping patterns in arin are mixed and sequential. When we lived in Latdalam village, we had the opportunity to see Rahayu’s arin where she grows local food (pictured in Figure 4, arin managed by Rahayu and other female farmers.

There are two periods of planting season in Kepulauan Tanimbar. The first period is known as Musim Tanam 1 (MT1: first planting season) from December/January to April/May. Farmers grow almost all crops such as local food and types of rice (red, black, and white rice) during this period. The second period is called Musim Tanam 2 (MT2: second planting season) from April/May to June/September, when beans and cassava are planted. The crop cycle then goes back to the beginning of the MT1. Between MT1 and MT2 is a rain-free period called metikei kecil (MKK). MKK happens approximately in May. This is a short period when rice and sweet potatoes are ready to be harvested accordingly, and harvested seeds are available to be stored for the next planting season or food reserves. Between MT2 and MT1 around October-November, is a long dry season period called metikei besar (MKB). Besides harvesting time for the rest crops, MKB is also a long lead time before entering MT1 (the primary sources obtained from interviews and supported by the article of Pattiselano [34]). The harvest is used for daily needs and managed for consumption for the following months. If the harvest yield is excessive, it is sold at the nearest traditional market in Saumlaki. They have never bought any food for household needs, as all can be fulfilled from farming by themselves.

However, for the past 40 years, rice which was produced massively began to dominate as a main staple food across Indonesia without regarding the local food system that exists in some places, including Kepulauan Tanimbar. Rice-biased policy more or less changed the local food system in Kepulauan Tanimbar. In Saumlaki, this caused the number of people who grow local food reduce as they prefer rice since it is widely available in the market. Aside from that, being the capital city of the district, Saumlaki has people who prefer to be government officials or traders; therefore, the population of farmers is decreasing. As a consequence, they need to buy daily food at the nearest market because they could not fulfil their needs by themselves. From people whose food was once available by nature and who were able to meet their own needs, they no longer rely on their own local food system and they have now become consumers of rice obtained from other regions such as from Surabaya and Makassar.

The condition is not much different in Kandar village where the farmers who initially grew local food, now begin to expand their field for planting white rice and receive all agricultural assistance from the government. Kandar’s farming system is shifting gradually into conventional one where farmers are directed to boost rice production so that they can produce an abundant yield. Their arin field where polyculture was implemented, has progressively turned into a monoculture field by planting white rice only (Figure 5).
Fortunately, Latdalam village has a better condition compared to the two previous villages. Many Latdalam people still perceive that agriculture is their main livelihood and therefore they are still growing local food (and indigenous red or black rice in small scale). However, they were inevitably affected by rice-biased policy as they frequently have to buy rice because their rice production level is still less than of consumption.

What can be said from three villages is that the closer the village is to the center of the city, the faster the penetration of power knowledge which results in the faster local food system change. From above explanation, all are rooted in the power that penetrates knowledge that rice is much better, tastier, more practical and more advanced. When the government gave the subsidy to the farmers and introduced them to the new way of farming, along with the power was exercised, knowledge also transferred as what Foucault stated. The dominant scientific knowledge hinders local knowledge to develop and ruins local knowledge’s existence. As Kuhnlein and Receuver [22] argued, the disappearance of local food system would negatively impact food diversity, Kepulauan Tanimbar’s food sovereignty, and it will lead to the decreasing culture-specific food activities or tradition, for instance, the local knowledge of food planting, harvesting, and preparation.

4. Conclusions
This study set out to explore the impact of rice-biased policy by taking a specific case of three villages in Kepulauan Tanimbar district. This paper questioned why rice is being promoted and what is the role of the state in accelerating rice consumption. This is a condition where various local food is being
replaced by rice which impact on change in food consumption pattern from local food to rice. These questions then led to whether rice-biased policy has an impact on the Kepulauan Tanimbar community, specifically, this impact is explored on the effects of rice-biased policy to local food system.

Rice-biased policy not only affect change in food consumption pattern but also threatens the existence of a local food system in Kepulauan Tanimbar community. The increase in rice consumption and people’s preference for rice has an impact on decreasing consumption of local food. They used to depend on their local food system where they can meet their own needs by planting local food that is ecologically and culturally appropriate. As this is no longer happening in their village, Saumlaki fulfils its food supply from other regions. In Kandar, agricultural patterns have changed gradually into mechanised monoculture practices from traditionally polyculture ones. As compared, Latdalam has quite a better condition where the community still relies on local food system even though sometimes, they need to buy rice because of insufficient supply from their own field. Therefore, the government’s programs on food and agriculture, at some point and certain places do not work optimally and change the existing system instead.

According to the fieldwork and analysis results, there needs improvement, especially policy, given the main causes of change in food consumption pattern from local food to rice is government policies. Agricultural planning has been based on perceptions of the central government only. Therefore, as a consideration for national policy recommendation, policy should not be generalised, rather it should look more at the local context. As well as with pure intention in implementing policy to make the life of the society better, and not running the government as business as usual. Since the Indonesian government has made a food diversification policy, so it must be implemented properly, especially in regions where the culture of eating local food still exist, so the pace of rice consumption can be reduced.

We hope this paper can be a trigger to conduct other more well-developed novel study, for instances, does rice-biased policy affect other than local food system? There are presumptions emerge such as it affects food security, food sovereignty, and local culture. To answer the question, in-depth research is needed.

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