ABSTRACT

JELAMU ARDU MARIUS. The Development of the Competencies of the Agricultural Extension Agents in East Nusa Tenggara Province. Under direction of SUMARDJO, MARGONO SLAMET, and PANG S. ASNGARI

The objective of this research are: (1) to analyse the influence of the internal and external factors of the agricultural extension agents to their competencies in doing work, (2) to analyse correlation between the competencies with the performance of the agricultural extension, (3) to analyse the influence of the farmer’s individual characterization (formal education, non formal education, age, cosmopolitan, adopter category, and income) to their perception in evaluating the performance of the agricultural extension activities, and (4) to compose the strategy for developing the competencies of the agricultural extension agents in Nusa Tenggara Province.

The individual characterization of the agricultural extension agents (formal education, non formal education, age, work experience, cosmopolitan, motivation, and the income) were the internal factors which assumed to influence their competencies, and those other i.e the non formal education (diklat), the milieu, and the extension organization structure were the external factors. As a “social agent” the agricultural extension agents have to matter the competencies in working.

The main works of the agricultural extension agents were: preparing the extension, implementing, evaluating and reporting, developing the extension, achieving the professionalism, communicating and social interacting. The farmers’ individual characterization were formal education, non formal education, cosmopolitan, adopter category, and income.

The respondents were the agricultural extension agents and the farmers of the three regency of research area (Kupang regency, Timor Tengah Selatan regency and Manggarai regency). There were 72 agricultural extension agents selected by the census method in six districts and 180 farmers selected by the stratified random sampling method of 18 villages. The research was conducted since Juni 2006 to January 2007 by using survey technique, interview, observation, and indepth interview. Data analysis was done by statistical descriptive, Cronbach Alpha, t-test, Rank Spearmen correlation, and path analysis. The analysis showed that internal factor influenced significantly to the competencies of the agricultural extension agents. One of the external factors i.e non formal education (diklat) was not influenced significantly to the competencies of the agricultural extension agents, but the other external factors i.e the milieu, and the organization structure were influenced significantly to the competencies of the agricultural extension agents. The research showed also that the farmers’ individual characterization i.e formal education, non formal education, cosmopolitan, adopter category, and income were influenced significantly to their positive perception in evaluating the performance of the agricultural extension; but the age was not influenced significantly to their positive perception in evaluating the performance of the agricultural extension. When the age to be higher, the perception tends to be negative. The motivation of the agricultural extension agents was the dominant element in influencing the competencies. The good income was the dominant element of the farmers to give the positive perception for the performance of agricultural extension.

Key words: competence, agricultural extension agent, the performance of agricultural extension, farmer, perception.