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**Contextual Approach for Food Security:
How Indigenous Community Use Social Capital to
Sustain Their Rice Availability**

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*“You Don’t Have to be Perfect to be
Successful. You Just Have to be Better
Than You Were Yesterday”*

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Abstract

The implementation of programmes and/or policies to address food security issues often overlooks contextual aspects, which have the potential to cause conflict and may lead to injustice. Therefore, a contextual approach is an important part of developing strategies or plans related to food security so that their implementation can be adjusted to the existing needs and contexts. This research uses *Kasepuban Gelaralam* as a case study for its community-based food security, particularly in terms of rice availability, and how it sustains and achieves this using the concept of social capital as a lens of analysis. The research method used is qualitative-descriptive with an ethnographic approach and hybrid data collection conducted by visiting *Kasepuban Gelaralam* and by telephone calls. The results show that *Kasepuban Gelaralam* has a set of customary rules that are included in the structural dimension, which are believed in and implemented by all community members as a form of the cognitive dimension of social capital. These two dimensions are interrelated and strengthen social capital in this community, especially with their *Kabendon* system.

Social capital plays an important role for this community in advancing and sustaining the availability of rice, which is part of community-based food security. However, the results also show that the social capital of this community faces several challenges and threats, such as vulnerability to dependence on the level of community trust about their social capital and some external factors, such as the potential erosion of cultural values, issues related to land tenure, and the impact of environmental change. These findings preserve the contextual aspects of this community. They should be taken into account when implementing food security programmes and/or policies, rather than using a conventional “one-size-fits-all” approach that can potentially cause several problems.

Relevance to Development Studies

Conventional approaches, such as top-down and/or technocratic approaches for addressing food security issues, have the potential to create problems if they do not consider the contextual aspects, especially in indigenous communities. The implementation of inappropriate and “one-size-fits-all” approaches to addressing food security issues has the potential to be counterproductive and actually create conflict and injustice, which are the key drivers of food insecurity itself. This research emphasises the importance of considering contextual aspects in addressing food security issues, using *Kasepuban Gelaralam* as a case study. This research serves as a reminder that development approaches should be implemented in accordance with existing needs/contexts rather than using approaches that are “considered the best” based on particular standards and/or perspectives.

Keywords

Contextual approach, Community-based food security, Social capital.

List of Content(s)

Acknowledgment	iii
Abstract.....	iv
List of Content(s)	v
List of Table(s).....	vii
List of Figure(s)	vii
List of Abbreviation.....	viii
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Nature of problem.....	1
1.2 Justification and relevance.....	2
1.3 Research question and objectives.....	3
1.3.1 Research Questions	3
1.3.2 Research Objectives.....	3
Chapter 2 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework.....	4
2.1 Current debate on the topics	4
2.2 Theoretical Framework.....	5
2.2.1 Food Security.....	5
2.2.2 Social Capital.....	7
2.2.3 Social Capital and Food Security	9
2.3 Research Framework.....	11
Chapter 3 Methodology	12
3.1 Research Approach and Design	12
3.2 Data Collection and Analysis	12
3.2.1 Data Collection Methods.....	12
3.2.2 Data Analysis Technique	14
3.3 Research Ethics and Limitations	14
3.3.1 Informed Consent and Research Permission	14
3.3.2 Limitation, Potential Biases, and Positionality	14
3.3.3 Use of Artificial-Intelligence Related Software	15
Chapter 4 Findings	16
4.1 Overview of Kasepuhan Gelaralam.....	16
4.1.1 Short Overview	16
4.1.2 Activities in this community.....	17
4.2 Ensuring the Availability of Rice.....	18
4.3 How Social Capital Contributes to the Rice Availability	22
4.3.1 Structural Dimension	22
4.3.1 Cognitive Dimension.....	24
4.4 How the practice is sustained and adapts to changes	27
4.4.1 Harmonizing the customs and tradition with modernity	28
4.4.2 Changes and their Impact on Kasepuhan Gelaralam.....	29

Chapter 5 Discussion, Analysis, and Implication	32
5.1 The Role of Social Capital for Kasepuhan Gelaralam	32
5.2 Analysis.....	33
5.2.1 Adapting to Changes: Positive and Negative Effects.....	33
5.2.2 Social Capital: Important but Not Enough.....	34
5.3 Implication.....	36
5.3.1 Literature of Social Capital on Food Security.....	36
5.3.2 Contextual Approach for Food Security	37
5.4 Limitations	37
Chapter 6 Conclusions.....	39
6.1 Conclusion	39
6.2 Suggestions for Future Research	40
References	x
Annex.....	xiv

List of Table(s)

Table 1. Complementary Categories of Social Capital.....	8
Table 2. List of Interviewee(s)	13
Table 3. Rice Production in <i>Kasepuhan Gelaralam</i>	19
Table 4. Estimated Rice Production in <i>Kasepuhan Gelaralam</i>	20
Table 5. Contribution Scheme on Rice Production in <i>Kasepuhan Gelaralam</i>	21
Table 6. Normative Concepts of <i>Kabendon</i> and Their Consequences	23
Table 7. Changes in <i>Kasepuhan Gelaralam</i>	30

List of Figure(s)

Figure 1. Six dimensions of Food Security in its current definition	6
Figure 2. Research Framework	11
Figure 3. The Author approached <i>Abah</i> to get his consent and permission for the research.....	14
Figure 4. Customary Area of <i>Kasepuhan Gelaralam</i>	16
Figure 5. Main Activities in <i>Kasepuhan Gelaralam</i>	17
Figure 6. A <i>Pocong</i> of Paddy	20

List of Abbreviation

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSIN	Food Security Information Network
FST	Food System Transformation
GNAFC	Global Network Against Food Crises
HLPE	High Level Panel of Experts
MBCA	Mutually Beneficial Collective Action
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Nature of problem

The issue of food insecurity remains a global concern, with approximately 295.3 million people in 54 countries directly affected by this issue in 2024 (FSIN and GNAFC, 2025: p.6). There are several causes for this issue, but the main key drivers are conflict/insecurity, extreme weather, and economic shocks, which are predicted to remain the main causes in 2025 (FSIN and GNAFC, 2025: pp.12-15). The rise of global concern about food insecurity has made the concept of food security a strategic issue included in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda and other programmes and/or projects. By definition, food security is a condition in which all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their nutritional needs and food preferences to lead an active and healthy life (FAO, 1996: p.3). There are several conventional approaches to tackle the issue of food security, and they usually use a top-down or technocratic approach, like food system transformation (FST) with a systemic approach through policy strengthening and multi-actor governance, and the use of biotechnology and agricultural technology to enhance and support the agricultural activities that contribute to food security.(UN Food System, 2024: p.2; Patel *et al.*, 2023: p.16; Premanandh, 2011: p.2712)

These approaches are well-intentioned, but they often overlook the fact that it is important to consider the contextual aspects in the implementation. This is demonstrated by the increased potential for conflict within a community when a policy and/or programme is implemented without involving and/or considering the existing context (McGuirk and Nunn, 2024: p.34). This research show that policy and/or programme development aimed to provide benefits has the potential to cause conflict, which is one of the key drivers of food insecurity. Addressing food security without taking into account contextual aspects can potentially lead to problems that make the counterproductive output like food insecurity, rather than advancing food security. This emphasises the importance of considering the contextual aspect when implementing and/or applying a development policy/programme.

Contextual aspects are crucial, especially for indigenous communities that have their own ways of life and customs, which in this research focus on food security. As an example, *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* is an indigenous community known for its ability to meet its own food needs, especially rice as the main staple food, without relying on conventional approaches such as technology or government policies/programmes (Khomsan, Riyadi and Marliyati, 2013: p.187; Dirgahayu, Karman and Budhirianto, 2023: p.3). This community is an example of how they have their own mechanisms and procedures for managing resources and fulfilling their needs internally, which have been established since 1368 and still exist today (Kusdiwanggo, 2024: p.7). Based on this interesting example, this research aims to explore and examine how they can ensure the availability of rice in the community and how these practices have been maintained and sustained over time.

The concept of social capital will be used in this research to examine how the *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* maintain their food need, especially rice, and how they sustain these mechanisms for more than six centuries. The use of social capital in examining food security in indigenous communities is based on previous research that shows social capital, consisting of social networks, trust, communal values, and participation, has a significant influence on their food production levels in traditional communities that practice agroforestry (Yusriadi, 2025: pp.6-9). Moreover, to adjust to the context of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*, this research also limits its focus to the concept of food security in terms of availability, especially rice. This dimension was chosen based on the importance of food availability, which can then be used as a basis for other dimensions of food security with a more comprehensive focus (Maxwell, 1996: p.156 Clapp *et al.*, 2022: p.8).

Based on the explanation, this research aims to examine how the *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* community is able to advance its food security, especially rice, and how this community has sustained this practice by using social capital as a lens of analysis. The results of this research are expected to provide an overview of the mechanisms and context that exist in this community, which can be taken into consideration in the implementation of development policies/programmes.

1.2 Justification and relevance

Conventional approaches for achieving food security, such as top-down and/or technocratic approaches, have the potential to create problems if they do not fully consider the contextual aspects when implemented. The impact of this approach can actually worsen the situation, such as causing conflict, which is also one of the key drivers of food insecurity. On the other hand, indigenous communities like *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* have their own ways of living and fulfilling their needs, in this case, rice in the community. Imposing conventional approaches without considering their own ways and mechanisms for achieving community-based food security can potentially create conflict and imbalance, which in turn threatens existing food security conditions and, worse, threatens the communities.

This research emphasises the importance of paying attention to contextual aspects, especially in indigenous communities, so that development programmes and/or policies are not contradictory and do not impose potentially counterproductive approaches. Empirically, this research will provide insights into how the *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* is able to advance its food security, especially in terms of the availability of rice, and how it maintains this practice for more than 600 years. Furthermore, theoretically, this research also contributes to the discussion on the relationship between social capital and food security, especially in the context of indigenous communities that rely on things such as social networks, trust, communal values, and participation.

1.3 Research question and objectives

1.3.1 Research Questions

How does social capital in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* play a role in ensuring the year-round availability of rice and sustaining community-based food security practices?

Sub-Research Question

- 1) How does the community advance the availability of rice throughout the year?
- 2) In what ways does social capital contribute to maintaining rice availability within the community?
- 3) How does the community sustain these community-based food security practices over time?

1.3.2 Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to provide a contextual description of how *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* advances and sustains its rice availability as part of community-based food security by utilising social capital. This research contributes to a discussion related to social capital and its relation to supporting community-based food security. Additionally, through this objective and the use of the concept of social capital, it is hoped that the results of this research can also contribute to enriching the contextual discussion on food security implementation strategies, particularly in the context of indigenous communities.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Current debate on the topics

Currently, the importance of addressing food insecurity has become a global concern, as in 2024, approximately 295.3 million people in 53 countries were directly facing food insecurity, and this is expected to continue in 2025 (FSIN and GNAFC, 2025: p.6). The causes of food insecurity are complex, but can be attributed to at least three key drivers, which are conflict/insecurity, extreme weather, and economic shocks (FSIN and GNAFC, 2025: pp.15-17). To overcome food insecurity, several approaches and/or strategies are usually used. Firstly, food system transformation (FST), which emphasises incorporating FST policies, establishing multi-sector and stakeholder governance, investing in research and innovation, deepening inclusive design and implementation, promoting increased engagement of businesses and accountability, and ensuring access to finance (UN Food System, 2024: p.2). Secondly, there are also solutions that expand opportunities for sustainable needs fulfilment by expanding markets and trade, diversifying employment and income, safeguarding natural resources, and improving health and nutrition (FAO, 2000: pp.11-12). In addition to these approaches, there are also technocratic approaches that are commonly used, such as the application of biotechnology in supporting agricultural activities and the application of modern technology that can increase production capacity (Patel *et al.*, 2023: p.16; Premanandh, 2011: p.2712).

Some of these approaches have been implemented and used to achieve one goal: addressing issues related to food security. However, in practice, these approaches do not consistently achieve the intended goal. Statements like “increasing productivity” are often cited as a solution, but often overlook other important aspects of food security and instead become a tool for “legitimising” epistemic injustice (Fouilleux, Bricas and Alpha, 2017: p.1672; Boogaard, 2021: p.45). Policies and/or programmes implemented without considering the contextual aspects of a particular region or community can potentially create conflict, which is one of the key drivers of food insecurity (McGuirk and Nunn, 2024: p.34). The importance of considering contextual aspects has become a trend and an interesting topic for discussion. This issue has become important since the 2021 UN Food Summit, which was widely criticised for imposing the “illusion” of a sustainable food system based on trade and economic integration, without considering the context and voices of various backgrounds and conditions (Canfield, Anderson and McMichael, 2021: p.13).

On the other hand, these conventional approaches that may create the “illusion” of an ideal approach to achieve food security are often not necessarily required and enforcing the “one-size-fits-all” model in its implementation, particularly in the context of indigenous communities. Historically, indigenous contextual aspects, such as knowledge, have often been considered a hurdle to modernization and have only been recognised insofar as they align with external interests (Vijayan *et al.*, 2022: p.10). In fact, the perspective of indigenous communities is crucial as insight into the approaches and “the needs” they require to support their existing systems, rather than imposing policies with a

certain approach as if it were universally applicable (Domingo *et al.*, 2021: p.5). Indigenous communities' food systems and ways of addressing food insecurity will undoubtedly differ from conventional approaches that are "considered" most appropriate, including in terms of the challenges they face. Some of the challenges for indigenous communities in maintaining their ways of ensuring community-based food security include land tenure, climate change and environmental degradation, and the degradation of traditional and customary values as a result of modernisation (Rahmawati *et al.*, 2008: p.153; Domingo *et al.*, 2021: p.7. Sokk *et al.*, 2024: pp.32-33)

Indigenous communities' food systems are sustainable because they are based on local and renewable resources, operate through traditional governance embedded in their territories, and have been able to survive and adapt for thousands of years while maintaining biodiversity and community well-being (FAO, 2023: pp.6-8). These systems are based on locally transmitted oral knowledge, making them vulnerable to social change and modernisation. A lack of documentation has marginalised these systems in the global food discourse, while modernisation, urbanisation and the expansion of food markets have accelerated the erosion of knowledge, the loss of biodiversity and the weakening of human relationships with the environment (Vijayan *et al.*, 2022: p.10). Ultimately, if using conventional measurement standards or criteria, what indigenous communities do may be considered as not "successful" because their systems are about how they live and fulfill their needs, and not about achieving some level of production or increasing a series of numbers (Yusriadi, 2025: p.10).

Based on the discussion, this research aims to provide an overview of how *Kasepuban Gelaralam* maintains its system and scheme to ensure the availability of rice to meet the community's needs. Additionally, the methods used to sustain these schemes are also an aspect of the research, as they relate to the strategies employed to address potential challenges they may face, both directly and indirectly. Moreover, the results of this research will enrich the contextual discussion on how policies and/or programmes on food security should be implemented in indigenous communities and enable these policies and/or programmes to "really" achieve the goal to address and/or support food security.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Food Security

Food security has emerged as a highly topical issue, gaining recognition on a global scale and being formally incorporated into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Food security encompasses a range of issues, starting with the question of how to fulfil the food needs, and progressing to the subjects of how the food is accessed and the fulfilment of dietary and nutritional requirements, and so on (Pinstrup-Andersen, 2009: p.5). Along with the development of the concept of food security, it also requires efforts and solutions to overcome several challenges, such as optimising supply and demand, ensuring sustainable food supplies, and eradicating food insecurity among vulnerable groups (Godfray *et al.*, 2010: p.812). Food security is not the same concept as food sovereignty, as this concepts are more focused on food as a fundamental human right, emphasizing the importance of agrarian issues and particularly farmers'

rights (Clapp, 2014: p.210). However, food security focuses on broader aspects by discussing how food can be produced, accessed, and meet the needs of the entire population, as well as the sustainability of these aspects.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), food security can be defined as “a condition in which all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 1996: p.3; FAO, 2008: p.1). This concept has evolved alongside the development of the focus and discussion on food security. The concept initially had four pillars of food security, consisting of availability, accessibility, utilisation, and stabilisation, before eventually being expanded with two new dimensions, consisting of agency and sustainability, and the word “pillars” was replaced with “dimensions” (HLPE, 2020: p.10).

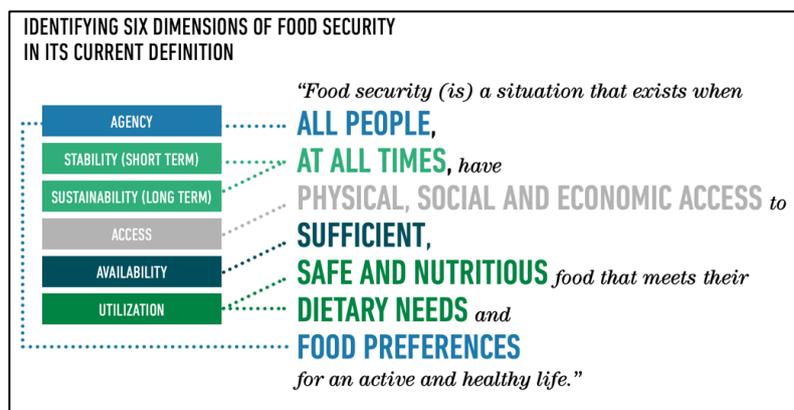


Figure 1.
Six dimensions of Food Security in its current definition

Source: (HLPE, 2020: p.10).

Figure 1 provides an overview of the current definition of food security, which encompasses six dimensions. The development of these dimensions indicates that this concept is dynamics and dynamic and continually adapts to emerging developments (Clapp *et al.*, 2022: p.8).

Initially, the six dimensions of the concept of food security were emphasised, with particular reference to how to address the challenges of food availability used to meet fundamental food needs (Maxwell, 1996: p.156; Clapp *et al.*, 2022: p.2). The inaccessibility of food during was identified as a contributing factor to instability in food prices, which subsequently influenced the accessibility dimension (Upton, Cissé and Barrett, 2016: p.136). This development occurred in other dimensions of the concept of food security, such as concerns about nutrition and diet, which created the dimension of utilisation, and so on (Clapp *et al.*, 2022: pp.3-5). The development of the availability dimension as the foundational element of food security demonstrates that the remaining five dimensions (accessibility, utilisation, stabilisation, agency, and sustainability) become inoperable when the dimension of availability does not exist. In simple terms, this means that when food does not exist, it cannot be accessed, utilised, stabilised, chosen, or sustained. Based on these considerations, this research focuses on the availability dimension, assuming that the other dimensions will develop if the availability of food exists.

The availability dimension of food security is defined as “Having a quantity and quality of food sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals, free from adverse substances and acceptable within a given culture, supplied through domestic production or imports.” (HILPE, 2020: p.10). Several important aspects of this definition serve as references for this research. Firstly, “Having a quantity and quality of food sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals ...” describes the condition when a community has food to fulfil their needs. Secondly, “... free from adverse substances and acceptable within a given culture ...” explains that the food is safe and accepted in the community's culture. Finally, “... supplied through domestic production or imports.” describes how food is fulfilled by the community, either by domestic production or imports. Based on the definitions and taking into account the context of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*, the concept of availability that will be used is about how this community fulfills their food needs of rice as a staple food that is fully fulfilled from local production.

The focus on rice availability in this research cannot claim the entire dimension of availability because rice only meets carbohydrate needs, while protein and fat needs are met through other commodities that were not researched in this research (Kor, 2025: p.1). However, the discussion of rice availability is still related to the availability dimension of food security in this community.

2.2.2 Social Capital

The discussion about social capital in this research will begin with its various definitions and interpretations. The concept of social capital is often interpreted in various ways and scales depending on the context of the research and/or analysis conducted (Foley and Edwards, 1997: p.551). Social capital can sometimes be defined as public goods, signifying the shared or collective assets present within a network that benefit all members of a community. In other cases, social capital can also be seen as private goods, indicating the potential benefits that individuals derive from their own social networks (Alguezaui and Filieri, 2010: p.894).

Bourdieu defines social capital as private, which views social capital as an aggregate of actual or potential resources associated with the possession of a network of durable relationships that are more or less institutionalised based on mutual recognition and acknowledgement (Bourdieu, 1986: p.248). Social capital is also understood as actual and potential resources embedded in, available through, and derived from networks of relationships owned by individuals or social units (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998: p.243). Moreover, social capital is also viewed as a relational connection, comprising non-material resources embedded in social networks that are utilised to obtain benefits or access to resources (Lin, 2001: p.20).

On the other hand, social capital can also be viewed as public, defined as the networks, norms, relationships, values, and informal sanctions that shape the quantity and quality of social interactions within a community (Aldridge, Halpern and Fitzpatrick, 2002: p.5). Social capital is also understood as the knowledge, understanding, norms, rules, and shared expectations about patterns of interaction that a group of individuals brings to a repeated activity (Ostrom, 2000: p.176). More broadly, social capital can also be considered as the

accumulation of various types of social, psychological, cultural, cognitive, institutional, and related assets that increase the number (or probability) of mutually beneficial cooperative behaviours (Uphoff, 2000: p.216).

Moving on to the discussion of the dimension of social capital, this concept has three dimensions that are commonly used in analysis and/or research. These dimensions consist of a) structural dimension that includes network ties, network configurations, and appropriable organisations, b) cognitive dimension that includes shared codes, language, and narratives, and c) relational dimension such as trust, norms, obligations, and identifications (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998: p.251). Each dimension plays a specific role in shaping patterns of interaction, levels of trust, and social structures that support cohesion in society. Understanding these different dimensions and/or roles is vital so that the analysis of social capital does not only focus on interpersonal relationships, but also considers how norms, values, and institutions influence social capital practices at a broader level. These three dimensions not only indicate components or levels of social capital, but also help explain how social capital works at various levels of analysis, consisting of micro at the individual level, meso at the group or organisational level, and macro at the community or society level (Claridge, 2018: p.4).

Based on the research context, the level of analysis used in this research is macro, which discusses social capital at the community level and views social capital as a public good that signifies the shared or collective assets present within a network that benefit all members of a community. This macro-level discussion makes the relational dimension irrelevant because this dimension tries to understand the quality of interpersonal relationships, while the norms and identities discussed on a broader scale reflect collective understanding, thus falling under the cognitive dimension (Claridge, 2020: p.2). Therefore, the dimensions discussed in this research consist of only two dimensions: the structural and cognitive dimensions.

Table 1.
Complementary Categories of Social Capital

Description	Structural	Cognitive
Source and manifestations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and rules • Networks and others interpersonal relationships • Procedures and precedents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norms • Values • Attitudes • Beliefs
Domain	Social organization	Civil culture
Dynamic factors	Horizontal or Vertical linkages	Trust, solidarity, cooperation, and generosity
Common elements	Expectations that lead to cooperation behavior, which produces mutual benefits.	

Source: (Uphoff, 2000: p.221)

Several aspects in Table 1 above serve as a reference in this research when exploring how the *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* carries out their activities. As stated by Uphoff “The structural category is associated with various forms of social organization, particularly roles, rules, precedents and procedures as well as a wide variety of networks that contribute to cooperation, and specifically to mutually beneficial collective action (MBCA), which is the stream of benefits that results

from social capital.” Moreover, “The cognitive category derives from mental processes and resulting ideas, reinforced by culture and ideology, specifically norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs that contribute to cooperative behavior and MBCA.” (Uphoff, 2000: p.218). From this explanation, it can be concluded that the structural dimension enables the formation of a pattern of interaction that has a positive impact on more predictable cooperation, while the cognitive dimension makes what is part of the structural dimension something that should be followed and considered by all the members of the community

Several aspects of the structural dimension that will be considered in this research are roles and rules, networks and other interpersonal relationships, and procedures and precedents that have been established and implemented thus far. The cognitive dimension will examine the norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs that exist in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. This research also considers domains such as social organisation and civil culture, as well as dynamic factors such as horizontal and/or vertical linkages and the levels of trust, solidarity, cooperation, and generosity that exist in this community. The approach model that uses these two dimensions is appropriate for the research context, which seeks to examine how *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* (as a community) is collectively able to generate mutual benefits in the form of rice availability to meet their food and community-based food security, and how they sustain this mechanism.

2.2.3 Social Capital and Food Security

Many studies discuss the link between social capital and the ways in which the concept relates to realising and addressing food security issues. An analysis of 39 articles on the correlation between social capital and food security reveals that, in general, social capital can enhance food security by facilitating knowledge and/or product exchange (Nosratabadi *et al.*, 2020: p.14). Furthermore, some research also used bonding, bridging, and linking schemes to analyse interaction patterns. Research found that bonding social capital plays a role in surviving challenging conditions (getting by) through strong ties, while bridging plays a more significant role in enabling people to overcome challenges (getting ahead) as they have more opportunities to obtain resources from their bridging communities (Rusmawati, Hartono and Aritenang, 2023: p.10). Furthermore, other studies also show that bridging social capital with resources from different groups contributes more dominantly to food security (Craig *et al.*, 2023: pp.7-8). As demonstrated above, networks like bonding, bridging, or linking facilitate the relationship between social capital and food security. This viewpoint is supported by research on the use of a network of relationships at a certain level between individuals and/or communities within an effective social network to overcome food security challenges (Sseguya, Mazur and Flora, 2017: p.127; Wills and Dickinson, 2023: p.959).

Research about social capital in the form of networks and its role in food security has identified a positive correlation between the size of a household's social network and its food security outcomes (Malual and Mazur, 2022: p.91). Another study asserts that the advantages derived from the network of relationships at the individual level are fundamentally part of a broader social network, whose benefits are widely experienced by all members of the existing network (Martin *et al.*, 2004: p.2653). This study shows that perceived food security based on network utilisation is part of a broader network that encompasses the community or all members of the network. Some of these

research findings allow social capital and its impact on food security to be measured at the individual/household and community levels (Niles *et al.*, 2021: pp.11-12)

On the community scale, social capital has been shown to affect how it responds to food insecurity caused by disasters, through coordination and relationships to respond to the situation and ensure resource availability (Chriest and Niles, 2018: pp.81-82). This research also finds that even in the absence of social capital, a community can still establish coordination and access to resources, provided there is a central actor who plays an essential role in initiating the formation of social capital (Chriest and Niles, 2018: p.87). Another research employed a whole-network approach to map the robust social network of a traditional riverine community in the Brazilian Amazon, which relies primarily on fish as a food source. This research provides an overview of the relationship between fish availability, access to fish as a food source, the use of fish to meet nutritional needs while minimising the risk of mercury exposure, and stabilising food sources for the community through community-based management (Mertens *et al.*, 2015: pp. 8-9). Furthermore, social capital is also used in research on how several factors, such as trust, communal values, and participation in agricultural activities, remain essential for understanding social capital in agroforestry communities and for maintaining food security (Yusriadi, 2025: pp. 6-9). This research also finds that the community still faces several challenges, and if these situations persist without addressing the underlying issues, social capital alone may not be sufficient to sustain long-term food security (Yusriadi, 2025, p. 10).

Several different perspectives on the relationship between social capital and food security exist due to the varying definitions of social capital and its levels of analysis. It is not surprising that some literature discusses these two concepts at the individual/household level as well as at the community level. Therefore, this research will examine how social capital at the community (macro) level advances and sustains rice availability in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*, as explained in the previous section.

2.3 Research Framework

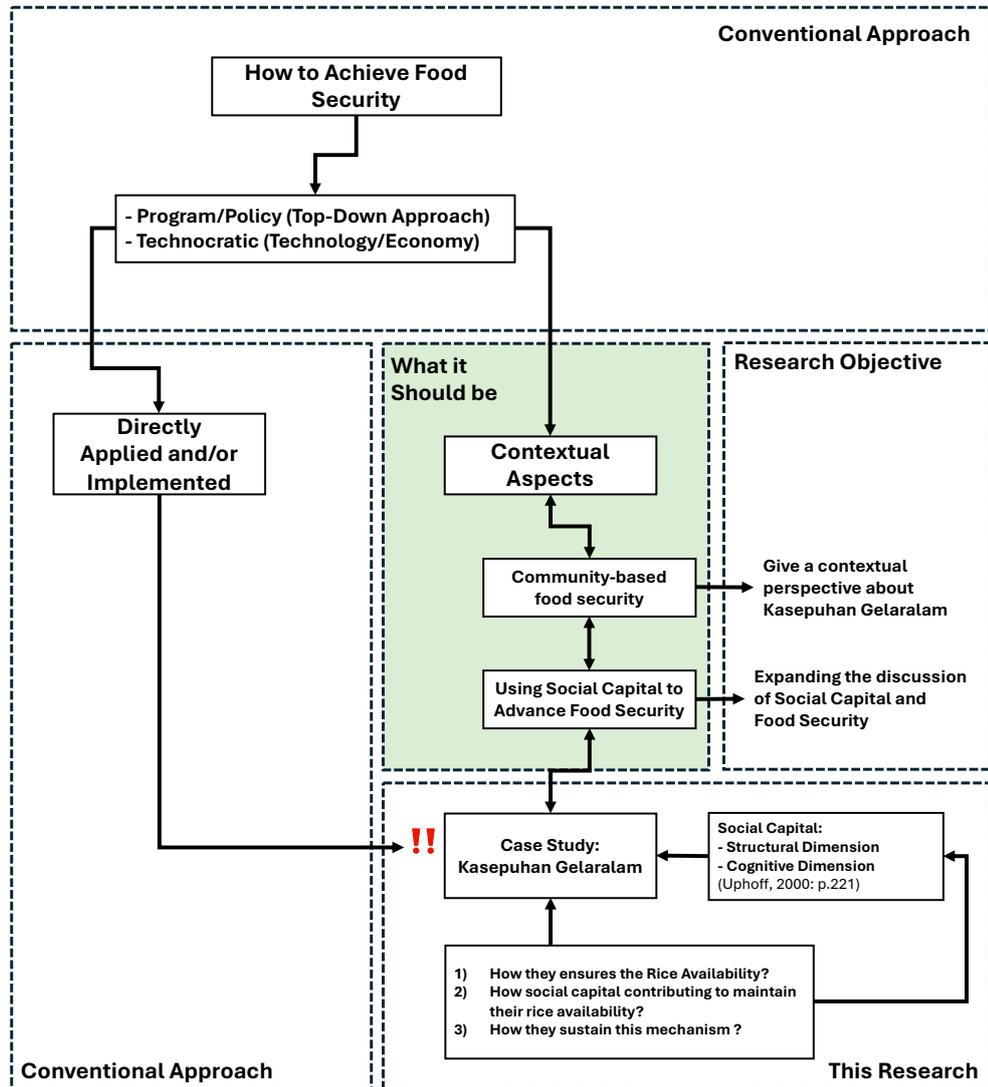


Figure 2.
 Research Framework
 Source: (Author, 2025)

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Approach and Design

Based on the description of the research questions and the concepts used in this research, the model used is qualitative. This qualitative research model was chosen because of its nature, described in the language of what is, using a small sample selected for desire, and focusing on specific events or contexts, so that the analysis is idiographic (Gerring, 2017: p.18). This research also adopts an ethnographic approach in the analysis, documentation and description of the findings. The objective is to comprehend and articulate the authentic essence of the activity/culture under observation (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011: p.16).

This research seeks to achieve two objectives. Firstly, it aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of how *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* maintains food security through its social capital. Secondly, it seeks to accomplish a detailed analysis of how this is achieved and sustained in practice. This standpoint is further reinforced by the need to pay close attention to cultural aspects, value boundaries, and dimensions unique to a community when measuring food security in the context of indigenous communities (Deen *et al.*, 2025: p.2). This awareness serves as a crucial foundation for understanding the potential diversity in the conceptualisation of food security, both within academic and cultural contexts. This also emphasises the importance of respecting the existing cultural and social context of the community, rather than unilaterally imposing concepts on it. Instead, this standpoint advocates for the acknowledgement and appreciation of existing diversity as a valuable resource that can enrich the research itself.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

3.2.1 Data Collection Methods

The data collection process in this research was conducted by visiting *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* directly and online. The first stage of the visit to *Kasepuhan* was carried out over a week with the aim of requesting permission to conduct research and data collection according to custom. The second stage was carried out two weeks later with the objective of completing the data that was deemed necessary. Then, the third stage was carried out online in October to complete the required data.

This research uses triangulation, or the collection of data using multiple methods and sources, which is considered essential to ensure the reliability of the data collected, minimise potential bias, and mitigate any uncertainty (Turner and Turner, 2009: p.173; Heale and Forbes, 2013: p.98). There were at least two primary methods used in this study: semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face and by telephone, and observation conducted during direct visits to *Kasepuhan*. These two methods were reinforced by the identification and collection of secondary data sources related to *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*.

First, semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face and via telephone calls lasting approximately 1 to 2 hours based on a preliminary list of questions that evolved during the conversation. This research selected seven interviewees who were determined based on their roles in the community and their backgrounds and/or experiences. To respect tradition and consent, no identities were attached to this research. Therefore, roles and backgrounds will be used as references. The following is a list of interviewees:

Table 2.
List of Interviewee(s)

No	Title	Role or Background
1	<i>Rorokan Pamakayaan</i>	An official and important figure in <i>Kasepuhan Gelaralam</i> who serves as the custodian that is responsible for rice cultivation practice and overall community welfare related to rice.
2	<i>Jambatan</i>	A <i>Kasepuhan</i> member assigned as the liaison of the community. He used to represents <i>Abah</i> and the <i>Kasepuhan</i> when invited to events. In addition, he is also responsible for digitalization, content production, and managing the <i>Kasepuhan's</i> social media and their own TV channel.
3	<i>Sepuh Lembur</i>	Respected elders in each village who act as the representative of <i>Abah</i> at the village level. They are tasked with organizing and ensuring the proper implementation of customary practices and activities.
4	Housewife in <i>Kasepuhan</i>	A female around 40 years old. She has experience working outside the <i>Kasepuhan</i> before marriage, but now fully resides and carries out daily activities within the <i>Kasepuhan</i>
5	<i>Kasepuhan Member 1</i>	A community member around 35 years old. He previously worked in the agricultural sector in Japan when he was younger. He now fully lives in the <i>Kasepuhan</i> and contributes to technical/electronic matters for the community.
6	<i>Kasepuhan Member 2</i>	A young community member around 25 years old with a background in digital creative skills. Currently works in the creative industry outside the <i>Kasepuhan</i> , but occasionally returns for community events or important customary ceremonies
7	<i>Kasepuhan Member 3</i>	A young member of <i>Kasepuhan</i> around 20 years old. Has some informal work experience outside the <i>Kasepuhan</i> but now fully lives and participates in community life within the <i>Kasepuhan</i> .

Source: (Author, 2025)

This research selected several interviewees with various backgrounds and roles in the community to ensure heterogeneity, which was expected to provide a more diverse picture and minimise any representative bias that might occur. Secondly, the Author also used data/information based on direct observation by observing cultural activities and daily life practices during the research period. This method became a primary source of data that added to the richness of the data collected. Lastly, this research also used documents or secondary data sources. Several sources were used, such as documents or secondary data owned

by *Kasepuhan*, articles, and YouTube/website content containing information about this community.

3.2.2 Data Analysis Technique

After collecting the data, the next step is to analyse it. In line with the context and characteristics of this research, abductive is the most appropriate analytical technique. This approach enables researchers to discern the most logical and meaningful explanations for the observed occurrences. Researchers adopt an initial theoretical understanding as a point of reference, yet remain receptive to findings emerging from the community's social context (Thompson, 2022: p.1411). This abductive approach enables a more in-depth and contextual understanding of how communities build and maintain food security systems based on social and cultural values.

3.3 Research Ethics and Limitations

3.3.1 Informed Consent and Research Permission

This research was conducted by first seeking permission or consent from *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. In their culture, anyone who comes to *Kasepuhan* must go to Abah, the leader of *Kasepuhan*, to convey their purpose. The Author followed this process to obtain permission and consent from *Kasepuhan*.



Figure 3.
The Author approached *Abah* to get his consent and permission for the research
Source: (Author, 2025)

In accordance with the circumstances and customs of the community, consent was obtained from all the interviewees orally by first explaining the purpose and objectives of the research and guaranteeing the confidentiality of their identities. In addition, permission was also obtained for taking and using all images used in this research when the Author conducted research in *Kasepuhan*.

3.3.2 Limitation, Potential Biases, and Positionality

Several points need to be emphasised in this research, especially regarding limitations, potential research bias, and positionality. Firstly, it should be noted

that this research is context-related, which means the findings must be interpreted with these contextual limitations. Moreover, the exploration of rice availability indicates that the findings are insufficient to address the broader conceptual and dimensional concerns of food security. Nevertheless, it is essential to note that these results remain tied to the conceptual frameworks and/or dimensions of food security.

Additionally, the selection of informants in this research may not fully represent the diversity of views within the community due to time and opportunity limitations. Moreover, despite the Author belonging to the same ethnic group and possessing knowledge of their indigenous language, there remains a possibility of interpretive bias. Finally, as an outsider, the Author realises that there are explicit stipulations about *Kasepuhan* that make it impossible to obtain all the desired information. Consequently, the Author has taken care to respect these cultural boundaries and applies them to this research.

3.3.3 Use of Artificial-Intelligence Related Software

In accordance with the Author's self-perceived limitations in English language proficiency, software designed to enhance the structure and grammar, like *Grammarly* and *DeepL*, was utilised during the thesis writing process. This software is designed exclusively to assist in refining grammatical proficiency, thereby ensuring adherence to academic standards. All processes, including writing the draft in Bahasa Indonesia, translating, and proofreading, are carried out manually by the Author without the relying on any software or programmes. It should be noted that the Author is entirely responsible for the content of this research paper, which is wholly based on the Author's own research and effort.

Chapter 4

Findings

This chapter is divided into four subchapters, which will provide a brief overview of the community as a context, how the community ensures the availability of rice, how social capital impacts the community's ability to ensure the availability of rice, and how the strategies and ways used by the community to sustain themselves in ensuring the availability of rice are achieved.

4.1 Overview of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

4.1.1 Short Overview

Kasepuhan Gelaralam, also known as *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar*, is a traditional Sundanese community residing in the area surrounding Mount *Halimun-Salak* National Park, with its current central community government in *Sukabumi* Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia. This community possesses a customary area, or *wewengkon adat*, that spans 103,038 hectares within the surroundings of Mount *Halimun-Salak*, with an altitude range extending from 800 to 1,300 meters above sea level. Administratively, these customary territories are part of three regencies: *Sukabumi* and *Bogor* in West Java Province, and *Lebak* in Banten Province (Kusdiwanggo, 2024: p.5).

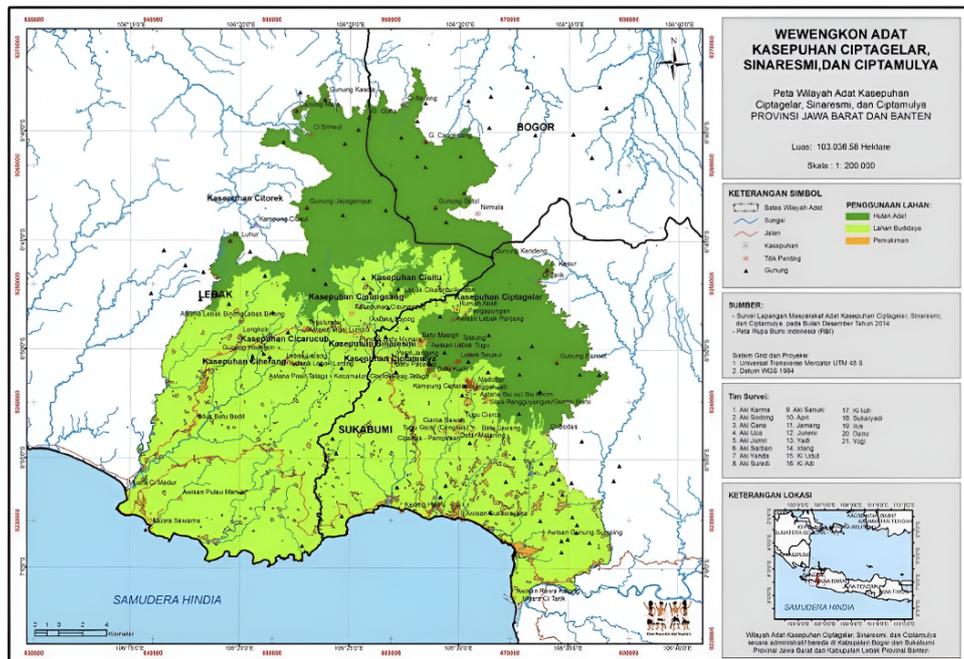


Figure 4.
Customary Area of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*
 Source: (Kusdiwanggo, 2024: p.5).

This community is led by a figure known as *Abah*, assisted by several officials (*rorokan*) who are responsible for specific tasks and concerns. This community has existed since 1368 AD. Since that time, *Kasepuhan* has moved the

centre of its government, called *Ngalalakon*, 24 times to new areas/villages within its customary territory (Kusdiwanggo, 2024: p.14). According to data, the average population of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* during the period 2020–2025 was estimated to be between 25,000 to 26,000 persons, residing within at least 568 villages. For centuries, the cultural and daily activities of this community have centred on agriculture, particularly rice cultivation. They adhere to a legal system comprising three distinct categories: *sara*, religious law; *nagara*, state or government law; and *mokaha*, *Kasepuhan/Kabendon* customary law. These three laws coexist in the community's lives.

4.1.2 Activities in this community

In *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*, they believe that everything in the world is created in pairs. Some of these concepts include good and evil, right and wrong, male and female, and other paired concepts. This belief also applied to their belief in the “Creator/God”, which is represented as “Father-Mother” (or parents). This perspective is further reinforced by the belief that the sky is their father and the earth is their mother. Thus, they believe that God (the Parents) provides their children (who are *Kasepuhan* members) with “provisions” for living through cultivating, which produces rice as a source of life. This belief has made the community famous for their culture and rice farming practices, and they consider rice to be a sacred “source of life”, more than just a commodity. There are many activities and ceremonies in the traditional culture and practices of rice farming carried out by this community, among these, at least they have five main activities.

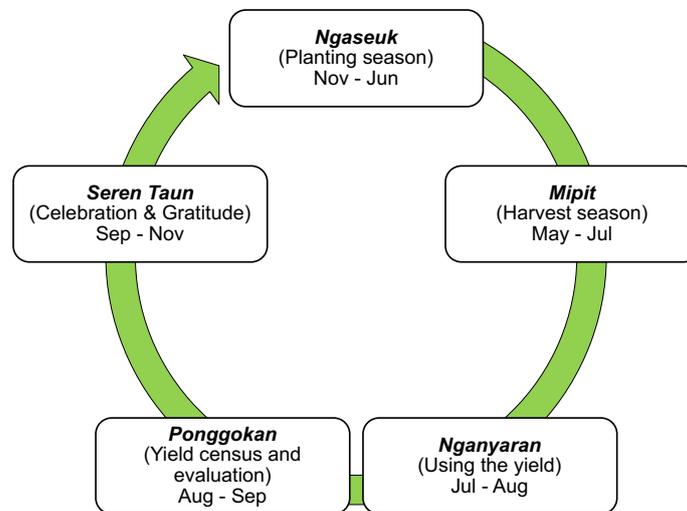


Figure 5.
Main Activities in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*
Source: (Author, 2025), retrieved from *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

All activities in this community follow an annual cycle, meaning they engage in agricultural activities, including rice cultivation, only once a year. The yearly cycle is initiated by *Ngaseuk*, a procession that marks the start of the rice planting season in *Kasepuhan*, which usually occurs between November and June. The planting season is determined by “Father”, who guides a star constellation that indicates the time to commence planting activities. Following the completion of the planting season, *Mipit* is performed as a procession that marks the start of the harvesting season, which *typically occurs* around May to June, depending on

when *Ngaseuk* begins. Following this ritual, *Nganyaran* is celebrated as a mark of the harvest's completion, and the yield is then consumed, typically around July to August. The next stage in the process is *Ponggokan*, where a procession will be held to both record this year's rice production and evaluate the rice cultivation carried out. This usually occurs around August to September. Finally, *Seren Taun* is a procession held as a form of gratitude and celebration for the year's successful rice cultivation that is usually held between September and November. None of these activities has fixed dates each year, so the months mentioned are the typical timeframes during which each activity is usually carried out.

The annual cycle of activities in *Kasepuhan*, including rice cultivation, is based on the belief that “Mother” can only give birth once a year. All activities embedded within the annual cycle at *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* are mandatory for all married residents. The belief that all things come in pairs is a foundational principle of this community, which holds that an individual becomes a complete human being through marriage. Consequently, all activities at *Kasepuhan* are predicated on the equitable distribution of roles within the family as a manifestation of this belief. The husband or male household member initiates each activity or stage in the *Kasepuhan* agricultural cycle, while certain activities are undertaken by the wife or female household member. This cycle and belief have been practiced and maintained by *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* since 1368 AD and remain in their original form today.

4.2 Ensuring the Availability of Rice

Kasepuhan Gelaralam relies entirely on local production to sustain its rice availability and fulfilling their needs. The rice cultivation practices of this community are based on intergenerational knowledge and experience. These practices are not documented and thus perpetuated through the community's continued practice. As illustrated in Figure 5 above, this community follows an annual cycle of rice cultivation, and all stages and activities in the rice farming cycle enable them to produce rice to meet their needs and provide the necessary supply. The five primary activities in *Kasepuhan* —planting, harvesting, utilising the yield, record-keeping, and celebrating the harvest —demand the collective engagement of all *Kasepuhan* members, especially those who are married. In practising rice cultivation, there is a rule that requires *Kasepuhan* members to prioritise collective interests over individual ones. This principle is deeply entrenched in the community's cultural ethos, shaping the way residents approach both their communal responsibilities and personal endeavours. In *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*, the agricultural landscape is characterised by two distinct types: *Kasepuhan* Land, utilised for *Kasepuhan* purposes, and Resident land, managed and intended for *Kasepuhan* members.

Agricultural activities in *Kasepuhan* involve strong inter-community ties and are carried out over a specific period. If someone does not have time to plant rice during the planting season, then they are not allowed to grow it outside that time, and so on. The essence of this provision is that cultivated land must be managed at the specified planting time. If this obligation is ignored, the rice cultivation cycle will be disrupted for those who can't make it. For those who are unable to manage their land for specific reasons, they are permitted to hire or ask for help (representative) from other members to cultivate their land.

Again, the practice of representation in land cultivation is only allowed for those who have compelling reasons for not being able to fulfil their farming obligations directly. The following is an example of a case illustrating the application of this representative rule:

“Representation in land management is permissible. Take me, for example. I am no longer as strong as other residents to farm, especially since I have to document every activity in *Kasepuhan*, so I do not have time to farm. So, I fulfil my obligation by asking others to help me cultivate my land.” -**Jambatan**

This explanation from *Jambatan* provides a rationale for implementing representation in land management practices within *Kasepuhan*. The terms of the agreement determine the compensation for such assistance or representation and may take the form of financial remuneration, commodities, goods, or other mutually agreed-upon items. The efficacy of this practice depends on the specific context and the objectives that underpin the representation of land management. In instances where there is potential for fraud, *Kabendon*, as customary law, will issue consequences and warnings.

At the start of the rice-planting season, which follows *Ngaseuk*, locals are permitted and expected to begin planting rice. However, they also have an obligation to collectively grow the rice owned by the *Kasepuhan* on the *Kasepuhan* Land. Upon completion of their obligations to manage and work on the *Kasepuhan* land, residents are permitted to engage in agricultural activities on their own farmland. This practice of participation in *Kasepuhan's* public interests also applies during the harvest season (*Mipit*) and other *Kasepuhan* activities. Given the presence of two categories of farmland during the rice-planting process, rice production in *Kasepuhan* is also divided into two categories: rice owned by residents and rice owned by *Kasepuhan*.

Table 3.
Rice Production in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Rice planted (in <i>pocong</i>)	19.065	14.023	22.295	13.969	11.523	14.483
Amount <i>Pare Tatali</i>	7.415	6.946	8.162	7.506	6.971	7.459
<i>Kasepuhan</i> -Owned Rice	7.535	8.198	9.250	8.523	7.116	9.200
Pritave Rice	761.584	1.018.060	806.222	1.145.556	543.982	1.050.068
Total Yield	776.534	1.033.204	823.634	1.161.585	558.069	1.066.727

Source: (Author, 2025), retrieved from *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

The two types of rice are classified based on ownership and purpose. *Kasepuhan*-owned rice is used primarily to meet the operational and general organisational needs of *Kasepuhan* officials, either regarded as “salary” for them or for public consumption in the operation of *Kasepuhan*. In contrast, community or private rice is wholly owned by *Kasepuhan* members, who determine its use. Meanwhile, *Pare Tatali* is a compulsory contribution from residents allocated to support the operational needs of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. This subject will be addressed in more detail in the following section. The data in Table 3 indicate

the volume of rice production in *Kasepuhan*, categorised by rice type, measured in units of “*pocong*”.



Figure 6.
A *Pocong* of Paddy
(Author, 2025)

One *pocong* or bundle of paddy in Figure 6 weighs around 4 to 7 kilograms, but everyone in the community usually calculates one *pocong* of paddy in a specific weight unit. The following is the explanation:

“One pocong of paddy typically weighs 4 to 7 kilograms, depending on the type and size of the bundle. However, if you want to count, it’s usually 5 kilograms per bundle.”

–Jambatan

Based on this explanation, the total rice production in *Kasepuhan* uses an average of 5 kilograms per *pocong* of paddy, as illustrated in the table below:

Table 4.
Estimated Rice Production in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Yield	776.534	1.033.204	823.634	1.161.585	558.069	1.066.727
Estimated Rice Yield (average: 5 kg)	3.882.670	5.166.020	4.118.170	5.807.925	2.790.345	5.333.635

Source: (Author, 2025), based on the data from *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

The rice production data in Table 4 are just an estimation, as the average weight per *pocong* is based on estimates and traditions. Despite rice being cultivated and harvested in a single annual cycle, the community claims to maintain sufficient rice to meet its needs consistently. This is the explanation of that claim:

*“As long as I have lived and heard stories from my parents, I have never heard of a food shortage in Kasepuhan. In fact, every year people always add more *leuit* to store rice.”*

–Jambatan

This claim from *Jambatan* supports the assumption of a constant and sufficient supply of rice produced from rice cultivation in *Kasepuhan*, which has been observed to exceed demand, as evidenced by the construction of new *leuit* (rice barns) each year for its storage. The following information is provided to expand the claims further:

“I have never received a report that the Kasepuhan harvest is lacking. Since a long time ago, based on stories from my parents, grandfather and previous generations, it has been stated

that from year to year, rice production is always sufficient and usually even exceeds the needs of the community.” – Rorokan Pamakayaan

As stated by *Rorokan Pamakayaan*, a *Kasepuhan* official responsible for agriculture and welfare, the claim that food production has always met demand—and, in fact, often exceeded it—is supported by evidence. This assertion does not originate with the subject alone; rather, it is a claim passed down through his parents, grandparents, and previous generations, who are also *Rorokan Pamakayaan*, as these roles are patrilineally inherited.

Kasepuhan Gelaralam has implemented specific provisions for allocating a proportion of the rice yield among community members. The allocation of the residents’ rice harvest is classified into three types: *pare* (paddy) *tatali*, *jekat*, and *girik*.

Table 5.
Contribution Scheme on Rice Production in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

No	Scheme(s)	Purpose
1	<i>Pare Tatali</i>	10% of the total rice yield of each family. Used to fulfil <i>Kasepuhan</i> needs such as ceremonial events and to pay those who work and/or have some participation for the <i>Kasepuhan</i> .
2	<i>Pare Jekat</i>	Not determined but usually follow the total rice yield of each family. Used as assistance to <i>Kasepuhan</i> residents who are deemed worthy of assistance such as those who are in need of rice such as those who are no longer able to produce rice.
3	<i>Pare Girik</i>	Same as the number of pocong of paddy planted by each family. Handed over to the <i>Kasepuhan</i> to be used for public purposes and common affairs.

Source: (Author, 2025), retrieved from *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

The three *Pare* schemes in Table 5 are entirely sourced from the rice yield of *Kasepuhan*. As previously stated, *Pare Tatali* is a contribution from *Kasepuhan* members to support *Kasepuhan’s* operational needs. *Pare Jekat* scheme is not fixed; rather, it is subject to adjustments based on each family’s production and the number of neighbouring families eager to receive it. In this community, *pare jekat* is used as a mechanism for maintaining relationships among its members. In the context of reciprocity, those who engage in the practice of giving are often expected to receive something in return. This fosters a positive relationship, enabling the development of cohesive and reciprocal ties within the community. The unconstrained portion of the *jekat* allows every family to decide the amount to be gifted by their family. Furthermore, *Pare Jekat* scheme also facilitates the exchange of different types of rice, since each family typically possesses or cultivates a variety of rice types. Finally, the *Pare Girik* scheme is intended to serve the collective needs of *Kasepuhan* members. Generally, *Pare Girik* is used for smaller-scale public activities, such as those at the local village scale.

Rice, as mentioned earlier, holds a high status and is considered very important in the culture of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. Therefore, there are special treatments and procedures in managing and utilising this rice. One of the strict rules related to rice is the prohibition of selling rice. This activity is prohibited because it is not in accordance with the values and beliefs of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. The following provides an elucidation of the value of rice and the prohibition of selling it:

“Rice is a form of life given to us by our parents in life, the sky and the earth. Thus, the position of rice is crucial to us. There is a proverb, ‘Mupusti Pare lain Migusti’, which means we revere rice but do not worship it. Selling rice is like selling your life and not taking responsibility for what you have been given.” -Jambatan

This description provides context for understanding the status of rice in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* and its role in the community’s lives. This is also the primary rationale behind the prohibition of rice trade in *Kasepuhan*. This norm is a cultural practice that preserves the historical and cultural significance of rice produced in *Kasepuhan*. This norm ensures that the rice produced will remain in *Kasepuhan* and be consumed solely by its members.

Several practices of customary norms and rules in *Kasepuhan* demonstrate their strategies for ensuring and advancing the availability of rice to fulfil their needs. The rice cultivation practices carried out in *Kasepuhan* are believed to meet and/or exceed the community’s needs, despite being conducted only once a year. The practice of prioritising the public interests over personal interests and the separation of *Kasepuhan*’s rice from residents’ rice ensures a clear delineation of the utilisation and allocation of rice. Moreover, the practice of representation in cultivating land also strengthens the possibility that the land in the *Kasepuhan* could be used for cultivating rice without exception. The *Kasepuhan* members’ contribution scheme, known as *pare tatali*, *jekat*, and *girik*, advances the availability of rice by allocating production results from joint contributors. This scheme is mutually beneficial, with benefits shared among *Kasepuhan* members. Finally, the norm prohibiting the sale of rice ensures that all rice produced remains within the *Kasepuhan* and strengthens the community-based food security for *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*.

4.3 How Social Capital Contributes to the Rice Availability

4.3.1 Structural Dimension

Several explanations in the previous sub-chapter describe how this community operates in terms of their ability to maintain their rice production and availability. Several aspects identified as part of the structural dimension of the social capital concept are the activities, obligations to manage public land over private land, the importance of rice farming and representative practices, rice production, information related to consistent production surpluses, three schemes for distributing community production, and the prohibition on commercializing the rice.

The first aspect examined is roles and rules, and how they are reflected in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. The annual cycle in *Kasepuhan*, which consists of five main activities, and the rules regarding the division of time in rice farming are a set of rules that *Kasepuhan* members must obey. These rules enable rice cultivation to be carried out simultaneously by all community members without exception. Next, the rules prohibiting the sale of rice clearly restrict community members for one purpose, to ensure that rice remains in *Kasepuhan* and will be solely consumed or used by its members, and to ensure their rice availability. Moreover, roles are reflected in how *Kasepuhan* members are obliged to cultivate land belonging to *Kasepuhan* (or public land) before they can work on the land they

manage themselves. This provision emphasises the role of contributing to the community by working on land designated for *Kasepuhan*. They do this because they realise that they are members of the community and it is their role to prioritise and work on getting things done for the community.

The second aspect is the networks and other interpersonal relationships in *Kasepuhan*. These aspects are illustrated by how the three *pare* schemes in *Kasepuhan* are implemented and utilised. First, *pare tatali* and *pare girik*, which are intended for the benefit of the *Kasepuhan* and/or the public in the community, illustrate the vertical relationship between *Kasepuhan* members and the *Kasepuhan* as a community. The contribution of rice production by giving some amount of the yield to the community is a form of vertical network between members and the community. Second, *Pare Jekat* illustrates how interpersonal relationships are formed horizontally in *Kasepuhan*. The *Pare Jekat* scheme enables reciprocal relationships between members based on a sense of togetherness and caring in the name of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*.

The third aspect is procedures and precedents. First, several procedures are depicted in the practices of this community, including rules regarding the cultivation of public and private land, the *pare* scheme, and procedures for representative practices in land management in *Kasepuhan*. These procedures serve as guidelines for the community to carry out their activities and/or daily lives. Second, precedents are illustrated by the example of rice production in *Kasepuhan*, where it is claimed that they are always able to meet the needs and even generate a surplus every year, despite being carried out only once a year. This abundant amount of rice is the precedent that will be achieved by all of the community members if they follow the roles, rules, and procedures using the networks and other interpersonal relationships that the community has.

Another important aspect that exemplifies the structural dimension of social capital is the presence of sanctions. Based on the information and findings, *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* has a traditional customary sanction system known as *Kabendon*. The following is an interview with *Jambatan* about what *Kabendon* is:

“Sanctions in the form of warnings from ancestors that are mystical and non-physical. This sanction must be resolved by custom to ward off disaster with instructions from the Kasepuhan officials. This Kabendon is the main guide for the people of Kasepuhan wherever they go.”

-Jambatan

This explanation provides a detailed description of the form and function of the *Kabendon* in ensuring that community members’ behaviour adheres to the customs and established rules. This sanction can be interpreted as a cause-and-effect legal system (akin to *karma*) that serves as a regulatory mechanism for the community, ensuring that their actions align with customary practices. The *Kabendon* itself comprises several aspects and terms, each with its own specific focus, forms of violation, impacts, and consequences. The ensuing table contains a comprehensive presentation of *Kabendon*:

Table 6.
Normative Concepts of *Kabendon* and Their Consequences

Term	Transgression	Violation	Consequences
<i>Kabadi</i>	Speech or Utterance	Gibbering	Words come true (one “reaps what one says”)

Term	Transgression	Violation	Consequences
<i>Pamali</i>	Cultural prohibition	Violating taboos or customary restrictions	Experiencing adverse outcomes as a reminder
<i>Santap</i>	Moral consistency	Contradicting one's own statements	Shame; becoming subject to ridicule
<i>Walatan</i>	Ethics toward elders and/or ancestors	Showing disrespect or defiance toward ancestral values	Spiritual misfortune or unseen afflictions
<i>Bendon</i>	Social behavior	Acting in an irritating way that provokes antipathy	Being avoided, disliked, or losing social sympathy
<i>Kaliwara</i>	Duty or responsibility	Refusing tasks or neglecting assigned roles	Loss of blessing, legitimacy, or social dignity

Source: (Author, 2025), retrieved from Kasepuhan Gelaralam

Based on their type, six types of violations or consequences form a major part of the *Kabendon* in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. This system demonstrates that sanctions can affect an individual's relationships with their social environment and ancestors. The consequences in the form of social sanctions fall under the terms *Santap*, *Bendon*, and *Kaliwara*. On the other hand, consequences in the form of sanctions that originate directly from ancestors/mystical beings fall under the terms *Kabadi*, *Pamali*, and *Walatan*. Despite numerous types and aspects subject to regulation, the community collectively recognises this system of sanctions as a unified entity known as *Kabendon*.

4.3.1 Cognitive Dimension

The cognitive dimension of social capital consists of norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs that create and reinforce positive dependencies on utility functions that support mutually beneficial collective action. This dimension is illustrated by how members or communities in general view the existing structural dimensions.

First, as a cultural focus, rice cultivation — including how they perceive rice — is vital for gaining insight into how these practices are implemented in *Kasepuhan*. The following is an explanation of this:

“For me, rice is like life itself. When someone sells rice, they sell their own life.”
–Kasepuhan Member 3

This assertion from *Kasepuhan Member 3* demonstrates the high regard for rice within the cultural context of *Kasepuhan*. In order to enhance comprehension, the following is an interview conducted with other *Kasepuhan* members about the value of rice cultivation and the rice itself:

“I consider rice cultivation as a culture, a routine, and a legacy passed down to us from our ancestors. I consider this to be the identity of the Kasepuhan Gelaralam community. We do not worship rice, but coexist with it. Rice needs us to develop through agriculture, and we need rice as a source of life.” **–Kasepuhan Member 2**

These details from *Kasepuhan Member 2* highlight the symbiotic relationship between the community and the rice, underscoring the reciprocal dependence between both of them. From the interview, it can be inferred that both

interviewees perceive the rice and the community as interdependent and interconnected. Rice is an essential resource for the community, and the community cultivates it as a symbol of respect for its role in their livelihoods.

Moving forward, the next topic will focus on the collective's perspective on the norm prohibiting the sale of rice. The following interview was conducted with a member of the *Kasepuhan* about the prohibition:

“This norm has become a belief, for selling rice is the same as selling life. When rice is sold, I feel our identity as a rice-farming community is lost. Because selling rice is for money, which ultimately helps fulfil needs such as food. We have rice, why sell it if the end goal is to buy food?” -Kasepuhan Member 2

This statement highlights the interviewee's acknowledgment of the inefficiency of trading rice, as it is ultimately intended for use in addressing fundamental human needs, such as food. The prohibition on the sale of rice in *Kasepuhan* is among the most strictly enforced norms. With respect to the implications of transgressing this norm, the following statement has been provided by *Jambatan*:

“It usually takes the form of an unnatural illness or even death. There was once a story of a Kasepuhan member who was distrustful and curious and sold rice. Eventually, he got sick and received a punishment that had to be endured by seven generations below him. It is said that the current generation is only the 4th generation of that story.” -Jambatan

The information from *Jambatan* clarifies the consequences of violating the norm prohibiting the sale of rice, and the implications of transgressing this rule have been demonstrated to be potentially fatal, even intergenerational. This information provides an overview of the enforcement of rules for norm violations in *Kasepuhan*, which is non-informal and mystical, governed by a law called *Kabendon*.

The next topic of dialogue will focus on the principles that govern prioritising the public interest over personal concerns. To illustrate, the following are the results of interviews with community members:

“The point is that the benefits of this Kasepuhan will come back to us. So, for me there is no reason not to do it, and it is our obligation as citizens of a community, namely Kasepuhan Gelaralam.” -Kasepuhan Member 1

This statement from *Kasepuhan Member 1* provides information about the interviewee's awareness of the obligations and benefits gained from these public activities. From another perspective, these are the results from the other *Kasepuhan* members:

“For senior members or those with obligations, they usually take the initiative to participate. For the younger generation, they usually have to be directed because not all of them want to participate because they are not yet obliged to do so.” -Kasepuhan Member 3

As stated above, the interview with *Kasepuhan Member 3* offers insight into the interviewee's assessment of the varying responses to the prioritisation of public over personal interests in *Kasepuhan*. To further explore this practice, the following is the opinion about this from *Jambatan*:

“When there is a communal activity for Kasepuhan, usually everyone understands their respective duties and functions. In practice, the consequences return to each individual. When they are enthusiastic, people around them can judge them. Conversely, when lazy, people judge and are reluctant to help or cooperate with that person.” -Jambatan

This third statement from *Jambatan* provides information about the tendency of *Kasepuhan* members to be willing and take the initiative to participate together in public activities, such as planting rice on *Kasepuhan* farmland before doing it on their own land. This statement also emphasises that the consequences of carrying out these activities, whether good or bad, fall back on each individual.

The next topic of examination is the perspective of community members on the rules that govern contributions from the annual yield in three specific schemes: *Pare Tatali*, *Jekat*, and *Girik*. The following interview statement provides further insight into this matter:

“People here are very familiar with this. They understand how much to deposit and who to give it to. However, usually when there is a new family, they will ask for guidance on the amount to be deposited because they are giving for their new family and are no longer dependents of their parents.” -Kasepuhan Member 1

The statement from *Kasepuhan member 1* above indicates that they are familiar with these schemes. It is also noted that when a new family is established, the head of the family is often not fully aware of the precise amount that must be remitted, as the scheme has been initiated on behalf of the family only recently. Nevertheless, the primary assertion of this statement is that *Kasepuhan* members are aware of this scheme. To provide more extensive information on this topic, the following are the results of interviews conducted with other members:

“I believe because I realise that this rice deposit is food savings for ourselves in the future if needed. I don't feel the need to know detailed figures about its management, I just know that it is beneficial and believe in the purpose behind the scheme.” -Kasepuhan Member 2

This statement from *Kasepuhan Member 2* provides information about the trust and awareness of the benefits of the rice yield contribution scheme. The statement implicitly conveyed an understanding of the scheme and its purpose, as well as the realization that it was beneficial for *Kasepuhan* in general, including the interviewee. The following section presents supplementary information regarding the perspectives of *Kasepuhan* residents concerning this initiative:

“Because it is used to being carried out every year, every resident, including myself, understands how much and how to deposit it.” -Housewife in Kasepuhan

This statement from a *Housewife in Kasepuhan* demonstrates that she considers the execution of this scheme to be well understood by both herself and the *Kasepuhan* community, as it is carried out annually. This information once again demonstrates that this community is intimately trusted and familiar with the scheme and can implement it with full awareness and initiative.

Finally, the cognitive dimension of the *Kabendon* system is explored, which is a guiding principle for *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. The following are the opinions on *Kabendon* and its consequences:

“Kabendon is inherent to us and pervasive. The impact or punishment varies depending on what has been violated, such as illness or bad luck. I was once sick for days, and after being traced, it turned out to be caused by the incorrect position of the rice that I stored in the Leuit, as simple as that mistake, but still gave consequences.” Kasepuhan Member 1

This information from *Kasepuhan Member 1* suggests that *Kabendon* is a system of sanctions upheld by the community. This system remains sustainable because it has become a deeply ingrained belief among the *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. Its application is not limited to rice cultivation; rather, it is comprehensive and regulates all aspects of life in *Kasepuhan*. The following is an exposition on the

implementation of *Kabendon* in the context of preserving the values and practices of rice cultivation in *Kasepuhan*, as elucidated by a village elder:

“In the application of the Pare Girik contribution scheme, which must be as much as the rice planted, it is no longer necessary to remind or ascertain whether the amount is appropriate. When there is a form of cheating, they will usually immediately get the consequences from Kabendon.” -Sepuh Lembur

A statement from *Sepuh Lembur* demonstrates *Kabendon*'s role in ensuring that agricultural practices always comply with the customary rules applicable to them. This informal and mystical sanction applies to all *Kasepuhan* members, regardless of their location or the activities in which they engage. The sanctions, which can take various forms, including but not limited to social, non-physical, or mystical dimensions, function as a system that maintains the cultural and/or values inherent to *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*. This system serves as a constraint on the community's activities, as well as on any potentially harmful intentions related to the customary order currently in practice. This assertion is further elaborated upon in the ensuing interview:

“There was once a story about a distant relative of mine. He had lived outside for a long time and had never been to Kasepuhan, but knew that he was of Kasepuhan descent. Then he intended to leave as part of Kasepuhan. Shortly after that intention, he felt an impact such as unnatural pain and only recovered when he consulted with Kasepuhan officials here.” - Kasepuhan Member 2

This statement from *Kasepuhan Member 2* indicates that even when an individual's intentions are malicious, they will still be subjected to the *Kabendon*. This provides further explanation of how this system maintains the conformity of the customary order that is carried out, even at the individual level, and how it perceives the customary orders. *Kabendon* also serves as a preventive sanction for those who attempt to exploit or circumvent the established rules during *Kasepuhan* or public activities. The following is a statement regarding this matter:

“When there is a communal activity for the Kasepuhan that requires participation and someone cheats, such as not participating or making up excuses, then he/she will get the consequences from Kabendon for not fulfilling the obligations.” -Jambatan

The explanation from *Jambatan* above further clarifies how *Kabendon* preserves the values and culture. This case may result in two sanctions: a sanction from the ancestors for noncompliance with the customary rules requiring participation, and a social sanction when the surrounding community learns that the person has attempted to commit fraud and/or cheat.

4.4 How the practice is sustained and adapts to changes

During the research, the Author observed that the community has adopted and integrated several modern technologies into their daily lives, including vehicles, hydroelectric energy facilities, an internet service provider, television channels, and social media platforms. These findings contrast with the community's reputation as an indigenous community that maintains traditional rice farming practices in accordance with customary laws and rules passed down from its ancestors. This section will focus on how conventional agricultural practices in *Kasepuhan* have persisted despite changes.

4.4.1 Harmonizing the customs and tradition with modernity

Kasepuhan Gelaralam is a community that openly accepts the influence of modern developments in their lives. In practice, a distinction is made between two distinct areas: rice cultivation practices, which include rice processing and must adhere strictly to traditional customs, and other aspects unrelated to agriculture or rice cultivation, which can be developed to keep pace with contemporary advancements. The following is an explanation of this principle:

“There is a term ‘Kudu ngigel jaman tapi ulah kabawa ku jaman’ which means that Kasepuhan must be able to keep up with the development of the world without being completely carried away by it. That’s our guiding principle.” -Jambatan

This description from *Jambatan* above offers an insight into the community's contemporary practices, highlighting its ability to adapt to changes while maintaining strong ties to ancestral traditions. The customary practices surrounding rice cultivation and processing are inherently resistant to the influence of evolving temporal dynamics. This practice is considered a legacy from the ancestors to the *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*, which must be preserved in its original form. Concurrently, other aspects can be enhanced to support the community's way of life and maintain alignment with current developments. The following explanation from *Jambatan* serves to reinforce this point:

“Some things are as absolute as directed by the ancestors, like the practice of customs related to rice cultivation, including the processing and utilisation of rice. There are also things that are free for Kasepuhan to adapt and adjust to current developments and situations.” -Jambatan

The information from *Jambatan* above shows that there are a lot of aspects outside customary tradition that can be developed and adapted to current developments, like the adoption of electricity, the utilisation of vehicles for mobility, the incorporation of electronics and the internet to support communication and information, and the adoption of social media to introduce *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* through the internet. The integration of tradition and modernity in their daily lives is a unique feature of this community. In terms of customary tradition, the extent to which modernity can be integrated into *Kasepuhan's* lives and cultural practices remains ambiguous. The only certainty established is that rice cultivation and processing must continue in accordance with traditional practices. However, there is a lack of clarity regarding other aspects, and no clear boundaries have been delineated between these two concepts. The following is a statement from *Jambatan* regarding this matter:

“Kasepuhan does not set boundaries between modernity and the existing customary order, including in traditional rice farming, which can actually be interpreted differently depending on who interprets it. Sometimes, it is each individual's knowledge and understanding of the customary order in Kasepuhan and modernity itself that determines the boundaries. The deeper the understanding, the clearer the boundaries..” -Jambatan

This explanation demonstrates how the boundary between traditional and modern in *Kasepuhan* has never been clearly defined. The community's understanding of the term “traditional” in the context of rice farming and processing is subject to individual interpretation, influenced by perceptions of the value of modern practices and by each person's understanding of tradition.

The interesting aspect of the blending of traditional and modern concepts in *Kasepuhan* is that they choose openness rather than avoiding modernity altogether. Here is what *Jambatan* had to say about this:

“Concerns arise from ignorance. So, instead of avoiding and closing ourselves off from changes, we should accept them while understanding them comprehensively so that we can recognise their benefits and adverse effects. This view makes worries disappear and the changes can be utilised optimally.” -Jambatan

The explanation from *Jambatan* above demonstrates that *Kasepuhan's* strategy to embrace modernity involves comprehensively understanding this concept. By engaging with modernity, *Kasepuhan* has been able to discern what is considered beneficial, as well as the parameters for its implementation within the community. However, these two notions are not entirely discrete; instead, their boundaries are determined by the extent of their knowledge and understanding of each other. Consequently, there will likely be disagreements over these boundaries. In this context, the community employs *Kabendon* as a “tool” to evaluate the alignment between the recognised boundaries and the established customary order. The following is additional information regarding this matter:

“Usually, people use Kabendon to assess whether the new things they implement are in accordance with the customary order or cross the boundaries. When it is implemented and there are no consequences from Kabendon, it means it is still within the boundaries. But when it is implemented and they feel something wrong, then it means that they have gone too far and must be stopped.” -Jambatan

This explanation from *Jambatan* offers a nuanced perspective on the establishment of boundaries between tradition and modernity in *Kasepuhan*. The absence of regulations pertaining to boundaries, coupled with the lack of any entity with the authority to establish these boundaries, results in the utilisation of *kabendon* as a marker. This practice is interesting because it demonstrates that informal and mystical sanction systems, such as *Kabendon*, can also serve as early warning signs for this community in determining boundaries between modernity and traditional practices.

4.4.2 Changes and their Impact on Kasepuhan Gelaralam

Before the current openness to modernity and development, *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* was less open than it is today. *Kasepuhan* experienced a series of "change" phases due to its exposure to modernity. The pattern of change so far has been top-down, originating with *Abah*, the leader of *Kasepuhan*. The following is a statement regarding the changes that have occurred:

“When there is a change in customary or, for example, something new to be implemented, it usually starts with Abah, then goes to the Kasepuhan officials before it is finally implemented and applied throughout Kasepuhan. -Jambatan

This explanation from *Jambatan* indicates that *Abah*, as the leader of *Kasepuhan*, played a central role in the changes. A series of significant changes had a substantial impact on the way of life in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*, particularly those related to the introduction of modernity and/or technology. The details are as follows:

Table 7. Changes in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

Year	Change	Place
1987	Electricity entered <i>Kasepuhan</i>	<i>Ciptarasa</i>
2008	First internet provision program in <i>Kasepuhan</i>	<i>Ciptagelar</i>
2022	Digitalization & documentation of all activities in <i>Kasepuhan</i>	<i>Gelaralam</i>

Source: (Author, 2025), retrieved from *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

The data in Table 7 reveal that the changes introduced have had an impact on the community's lives. These changes required a period of development before the community could fully adapt to them. The approach to each of these changes was customised to align with the community's particular needs and context. Consequently, the development and implementation of these changes were guided by the existing institutional framework and continue to occur today.

The application of modernity in areas supporting life in *Kasepuhan* has had various impacts on the community. Evidently, the consequences of these changes can be both positive and negative. A series of statements from *Kasepuhan* residents has been collected to address the impact of the changes and developments occurring in the community:

"Of course, there are positive and negative impacts, in my opinion. The positive side can be felt from communication and broadening access to information. There are also negative sides, such as excessive use of technology, especially by children, and reduced direct interaction between people in Kasepuhan." -***Kasepuhan Member 3***

This statement from *Kasepuhan Member 3* provides information about changes, particularly those related to modernity, which bring both benefits and negative impacts. Here are some opinions from members of *Kasepuhan* about it:

"For the benefits, there are obviously many, such as job opportunities and also knowledge that is more easily obtained. The disadvantages, in my opinion, are that many children often play with gadgets and their habits are now different from when I was a child." -***Kasepuhan Member 1***

"There are definitely changes; now, doing anything is easier and simpler, especially since there is electricity and vehicles. But in my opinion, there are also many things that have changed in Kasepuhan, such as the fact that children now stay at home too much and are too lazy to be invited to do activities because they like to enjoy themselves." -***Housewife in Kasepuhan***

"There are positive and negative sides. The positive side can be seen from the easier life of the Kasepuhan. The negative side is that many young people spend too much time playing with gadgets, forgetting about their time." -***Jambatan***

As explained above, interviewees appear to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of changes in *Kasepuhan*. This information suggests that they possess insights into both aspects of modernity.

Moreover, the harmonisation of traditional practices with modernity in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* facilitates access to external resources. To further explore this, here is a statement from *Jambatan*:

"With the existence of change and modernity, it expands and complements people's knowledge of life itself. With the advancement of modernity, many residents realise that there are many things outside Kasepuhan that could be useful if practised in Kasepuhan." -***Jambatan***

The statement from *Jambatan* above suggests that there is a potential for *Kasepuhan* to access external resources and utilise them to benefit the community. This openness to modernity and the influx of modern influences have also led some members of the community to seek opportunities outside of *Kasepuhan*, motivated by a variety of factors and objectives. A series of statements from *Kasepuhan* members has been collected, in which they articulate the motivations:

“I was given a direct assignment by Abah to participate in the selection of an apprenticeship programme to Japan at that time. I passed and joined the internship program in Japan for three years in the agricultural sector. While there, I gained a lot of knowledge and experience in addition to the material. After returning, I brought a lot of knowledge back to Kasepuhan and applied it.” -Kasepuhan Member 1

“My objectives in working outside are, of course, to earn money, but I am also looking for experience and knowledge that I will not get in Kasepuhan because it is related to the creative sector. What I learnt will be applied and developed in Kasepuhan, and I will also use it to filter what comes into Kasepuhan.” -Kasepuhan Member 2

“I worked outside for only a few months. The aim was to gain experience and answer my curiosity about life outside Kasepuhan. After that, I returned.” -Kasepuhan Member 3

Several statements about the purpose and motivation for working outside *Kasepuhan* produced varied findings. Some members work outside *Kasepuhan* because they have been instructed to do so by *Abah*; others work to acquire skills and materials that are not available in *Kasepuhan*; and others do so simply because they want to gain life experience outside the community. These motivations are indeed accompanied by the acquisition of resources that they can use as a result of their work and/or activity. *Jambatan* claims that everyone who works outside the *Kasepuhan* will eventually bring back everything they have acquired to be used or developed within the community. The following is the explanation:

“After a while, at the end, those who work outside Kasepuhan will fulfil their needs or realise their desires. Everything they have from outside Kasepuhan will be used or dedicated to their life in Kasepuhan or for the benefit of Kasepuhan as a community. This applies and includes anything like experience, skill, money, economic material, and other resources.” -Jambatan

This information from *Jambatan* explains that the potential for accessing resources from outside *Kasepuhan* obtained through work and/or experience is primarily utilised within *Kasepuhan*. This suggests that they benefit from the potential opportunities arising from a commitment to modernity while retaining their traditionalism and customary order.

This section (4.4.2) examines the perceptions of *Kasepuhan* members regarding the changes implemented and their impact on their lives. The interview descriptions obtained indicate that they feel the positive effects, including increased access to information, easier communication, and more open employment opportunities. On the other hand, they also feel the negative effects of these changes and modernity, such as realizing that many younger members of *Kasepuhan* nowadays tend to spend time alone rather than socializing due to excessive technology use, etc. Moreover, it is also explained that those who work and/or engage in activities outside *Kasepuhan* will bring every resource, whether human capital or economic capital, they have gained to use in *Kasepuhan* and/or for the benefit of *Kasepuhan*.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Analysis, and Implication

5.1 The Role of Social Capital for *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*

The findings of this research indicate that *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* possesses social capital, comprising both structural and cognitive dimensions. Some forms of the structural dimension include the roles of the community as members of *Kasepuhan*, rules regarding rice farming practices and restrictions on the sale of rice, procedures regarding the three-part scheme (*tatali, jekat, and girik*), networks formed in the distribution of the three-part scheme, and precedents in the form of rice production that are claimed to always be in surplus. These structural aspects contribute to cooperation, which ultimately leads to mutually beneficial collective action (MBCA) in the form of increased rice availability for the community, resulting in a stream of benefits that stems from social capital (Uphoff, 2000: p. 218). Meanwhile, the cognitive dimension, which stems from mental processes and resulting ideas, reinforced by culture and ideology, is reflected in how this community views norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs, ultimately contributing to cooperation and MBCA (Uphoff, 2000: p. 218). Several interviewees stated that they have trust and belief in their culture and implement a set of customary rules (which is part of the structural dimension) with initiative and awareness as members of *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*.

Both of these dimensions are linked and interdependent, as each dimension contributes to the other. The set of customary rules in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam*, especially regarding rice cultivation and its management, is part of the structural dimension that is viewed and considered essential to be implemented by community members to realise collective activities that provide benefits in the form of rice available in the community (Uphoff, 2000: p.218). These two dimensions of social capital have been in place since their establishment in 1368, which also means that the social capital that exists today has been built up, accumulated, stored, modified, expressed, and perpetuated for more than 600 years (Uphoff, 2000: p. 219). *Kabendon*, the sanction system applied and trusted in *Kasepuhan*, plays a vital role in shaping social capital and strengthening its influence within the community. *Kabendon* plays a role in decision-making, resource management, communication, coordination, and conflict resolution, which has specific rules regarding regulations and precedents (Uphoff, 2000: pp. 240-241). In addition to its ability to impose “punishment” from ancestors, the research results also illustrate how *Kabendon* is trusted by *Kasepuhan*, which makes this system effective in ensuring conformity to values and behavior in the community.

Moreover, social capital in *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* is also related to how this community’s strategy in maintaining their customary rules and traditional agriculture. The community's strategy of integrating customary and traditional agricultural practices with changes and modernity (which can also be considered as the structural dimension) enables them to adapt and develop in line with the current developments and technologies. First, the community has a principle of adapting to developments and technologies without being overly influenced by

them. On the other hand, community members realise that this principle allows them to adapt while still maintaining their customary and agricultural practices. Second, because the social capital has been accumulated and passed down over generations, the combination of change and development with customary and traditional practices has been harmonized without exceeding either aspect. Thirdly, even though there are questions or grey areas between these two aspects, as explained, they use *Kabendon* as a “tool” to ascertain the truth of the matter. Therefore, this practice describes how the social capital of this community influences their ability to adapt and maintain traditional practices based on their principles.

5.2 Analysis

5.2.1 Adapting to Changes: Positive and Negative Effects

This research also examines how the community has maintained and sustained its traditional customs and agricultural practices. The sub-chapter above reveals that they have principles that enable the community to combine customary and traditional rice cultivation practices with the changes and developments of the times that have had both positive and negative impacts on their lives. They believe that by trying to engage with the existing “changes” by doing it, they can understand both the positive and negative aspects of these changes and how these can be applied in *Kasepuhan*, rather than completely closing themselves off from the changes and modernity.

The potential or benefits of modernity include easier access to information and increased employment opportunities. The increased availability of information has expanded the employment opportunities available for *Kasepuhan*, which can generate revenue. The research findings show that members of the community, especially the younger generation, have had experience or are currently working outside the *Kasepuhan*. The motivations behind these activities may vary, but the findings reveal that experience and skills are the primary objectives, followed by economic considerations such as money or other resources. In general, based on the interviews, all types of resources obtained will be utilised, applied, and developed for and within *Kasepuhan*. The practice of bringing in resources from outside *Kasepuhan* has become one of the positive impacts of changes in *Kasepuhan*. The formation of networks between *Kasepuhan* and the outside community has facilitated access to resources and opportunities through communication, thereby creating a more interconnected environment. This concept aligns with Lin’s definition of social capital, which states that social capital (networks) is used to obtain benefits or access to resources (Lin, 2001: p.20).

The experience and acquired skills of community members can also be leveraged to build human capital in *Kasepuhan*. Concurrently, the utilisation of financial resources, whether in the form of materials or monetary capital, can enhance economic capital and ensure food security across *Kasepuhan*. Although food in *Kasepuhan* is predominantly sourced from local production, this is insufficient to meet the food needs of all individuals, particularly for foods other than rice. This claim is based on the research that finds financial capacity of this community influences their dietary choices, excluding rice, in order to meet their dietary and nutrition needs (Khomsan, Riyadi and Marliyati, 2013: p.191).

Consequently, individuals with material resources or financial means will be better positioned to enhance their food security by leveraging these resources.

On the other hand, the changes resulting from the harmonization of customary and traditional practices with modernity in *Kasepuban* also affected this community. Several pieces of information from interviewees voicing their opinions on the significant increase in the young generation's use of electronic devices and the observed reduction in face-to-face interaction within the community in real life. On initial observation, the reduced interaction in communities, often observed among younger generations who spend a lot of time on gadgets, will, if left unaddressed, influence the role of social capital in the community and possibly risk their customary and traditional practices. The long-term consequences of this practice are significant, particularly the erosion of indigenous cultures and customs among younger generations (Sokk *et al.*, 2024: pp.32-33). This is further highlighted by the fact that social relationships and values can erode both faster and more easily than they do during their formation (Uphoff, 2000: p. 227). This illustrates the potential threat posed by the implementation of modernity in *Kasepuban*, as signs of which are already appearing among the younger generation.

In addition, modern developments, particularly the influx of economic capital, also have the potential to cause adverse impacts in *Kasepuban*. Someone with greater resources can gain greater control over land and production. Although land cannot be sold, management rights can be transferred between families for a monetary consideration. This can lead to inequality because some residents may own more land, while others have very little or no land at all, making them more vulnerable and dependent on others' land to meet their food needs. In *Kasepuban Gelaralam*, the management of rice fields by each family is both a right and an obligation. This right arises in accordance with the seasonal cycle, at which point the family is responsible for undertaking the necessary tasks. However, under the "representative" rule, the land can be cultivated by other community members, as one of the interviewees does, in accordance with the agreed compensation. However, this representative system still has the potential to create social inequality. Suppose the practice of "representation" in land cultivation continues to be carried out with negative motivations, such as avoiding obligation or a desire to show off wealth by simply paying others without a valid reason. Both cases can easily lead to *Kabendon*, as farming is a moral obligation for all *Kasepuban* members, without exception, especially those who are already married. For rice cultivation and any aspects related to traditional customs, this inequality may be mitigated by the presence of *Kabendon* and their social capital. However, in other areas, the potential for injustice caused by economic inequality remains.

5.2.2 Social Capital: Important but Not Enough

Throughout this research, the Author have discussed the importance of social capital for this community. In addition to social capital, there is also the role of *Abah*, as the leader of *Kasepuban Gelaralam*, who serves as a central actor that facilitates coordination in *Kasepuban* (Chriest and Niles, 2018: p.87). *Abah*'s role as a person with high authority and social status enables him to support both structural and cognitive forms of social capital. In contrast, negative behavior can diminish others' commitment to him (Uphoff, 2000: p. 229). Based on this, *Abah* acts as a role model for the community because even the slightest

negative behaviour will affect the commitment and trust of the community. Social capital also plays a role in community strategies that harmonize customary practices and rice cultivation tradition with change and modernity in other aspects of life in *Kasepuban Gelaralam*. Once again, *Abah* played a crucial role as the initiator of change and the authority responsible for determining the development of this indigenous community. However, although social capital is important and plays a crucial role in this community, it was not able to completely protect them from threats or challenges. The weakness of the community's social capital lies in its dependence on trust and belief in their traditional customs and agricultural practices. Trust, as an essential aspect of social capital, is crucial in ensuring that their traditional customs and agricultural practices are carried out. Social capital can function effectively when the social conditions in *Kasepuban* are ideal and maintain a consistent level of trust over time. However, even the slightest change in trust can have a significant impact on social capital as a whole. These weaknesses and vulnerabilities are the characteristics of social capital, which requires time to develop but can easily diminish or disappear (Uphoff, 2000: p.228).

In addition, *Kasepuban Gelaralam* also faces several external challenges in preserving and maintaining its traditions and cultural values. First, belief in the values and norms that exist in *Kasepuban* is increasingly threatened by the potential negative impact of the acceptance of technology. The potential for changes in values and beliefs, especially among the younger generation, has already shown early signs in *Kasepuban*, marked by a decrease in interaction and a large number of young generation who are reluctant to participate directly in *Kasepuban* activities. If left unchecked, the erosion of these values could accumulate and lead to the loss of values and traditions (Sokk et al., 2024: pp.32-33). Secondly, issues related to land tenure also arise when their customary territory (or what they call *wewengkon adat*), which is part of the *Halimun-Salak* National Park, is claimed by the government and has the potential to create conflicts with the rights of the *Kasepuban* (Rahmawati et al., 2008: p.153). This issue has the potential to limit access to their customary territory and/or land, which are their farming lands. This certainly poses a threat to the *Kasepuban Gelaralam's* ability to grow rice, which ultimately affects the availability of rice in the community. Finally, external threats arise from climate change, which affects how indigenous communities conduct their activities and meet their food needs (Domingo et al., 2021: p.7). As a community that traditionally relies on the environment for rice cultivation, climate change poses a significant threat to their rice cultivation practices and the production of rice to meet their needs. This impact has the potential to disrupt their sole means of meeting their food needs, potentially disrupting the existing balance.

Social capital in *Kasepuban* may have been effective in implementing and maintaining their agricultural practices and customs for more than 600 years. However, social capital is dependent on ideal social conditions within the community, which makes it vulnerable. Even a slight change in values and trust will have an impact on the effectiveness of the mutual benefits produced, which is the availability of rice for the community. *Kabendon* may be effective in maintaining the appropriateness of the customary order and practices carried out by *Kasepuban*, including preventing potential socio-economic inequality resulting from the influx of resources from outside *Kasepuban*. However, even though *Kabendon* is part of a structural dimension that is trusted and implemented

effectively as a cognitive dimension, this does not mean that they are free from internal and external threats and challenges.

On the other hand, *Kabendon* still has weaknesses and is not sufficient to overcome the challenges facing *Kasepuban Gelaralam*. First, due to its reactive nature, it is unable to restore the impact or cause of a violation. For example, when someone commits a violation that affects the community's level of trust in the values and norms they believe in, the impact on that trust will remain, even though they have received the consequences of *Kabendon* for what they have done. Second, this system may be trusted and form an essential part of *Kasepuban Gelaralam*. Still, *Kabendon* is unable to overcome external challenges such as the impact of technology on the younger generation of *Kasepuban*, land tenure issues, and the impact of environmental change. Ultimately, this research demonstrates that social capital is indeed crucial for *Kasepuban Gelaralam*; however, social capital alone is insufficient to maintain the community's long-term food security if the weaknesses of social capital and external threats are not addressed (Yusriadi, 2025: p. 10).

5.3 Implication

5.3.1 Literature of Social Capital on Food Security

The results of this research on *Kasepuban Gelaralam* provide several implications for the literature on how social capital is utilised or supports food security. First, social capital in this community supports rice availability through a product-sharing scheme, whereby a small portion of each family's rice production is set aside for use in meeting common needs. This aligns with one of the approaches commonly used in the literature on social capital and its relationship to food security (Nosratabadi *et al.*, 2020: p.14). Second, this research demonstrates that bonding social capital is a key factor in enhancing rice availability within the community through internal community relationships. However, the results also show that bridging social capital through access to resources outside the community also benefits the community, even though it does not directly affect food security. These results are also in line with the findings and discussions related to bonding and bridging and their relationship to food security (Rusmawati, Hartono and Aritenang, 2023: p.10; Craig *et al.*, 2023: pp.7-8).

Moreover, this research finds that *Kasepuban Gelaralam* relies on trust and cooperative behaviour established within the network between communities, enabling them to guarantee the availability of rice as their food source. The same applies in a different context in the Riparian Community in Brazilian Riverine, where fish is the main resource and food source for the community (Mertens *et al.*, 2015: pp. 8-9). This shows findings on community-based management of resources in different contexts. Finally, the social capital possessed by *Kasepuban Gelaralam*, including *Kabendon*, plays an important role in advancing food availability as part of community-based food security. However, this social capital is fragile, and *Kabendon* is unable to overcome several external challenges faced by *Kasepuban*, including changing values, land tenure issues, and climate change. These findings indicate that this community is vulnerable to external threats, despite possessing social capital. This supports the finding that social

capital alone is insufficient to ensure the long-term sustainability of community-based food security (Yusriadi, 2025: p. 10).

5.3.2 Contextual Approach for Food Security

The results of this research reveal that social capital is able to advance community-based food security in the form of rice availability, even though they only cultivate rice once a year using traditional methods. Their social capital is demonstrated through a set of customary roles, rules, procedures, networks, and precedents combined with the community's perception that these rules benefit all members of the community by ensuring the availability of rice. Although their social capital is important and influences their ability to ensure rice availability, they face several challenges, such as the potential erosion of trust and values, issues related to land tenure, and environmental aspects as a result of climate change (Rahmawati *et al.*, 2008: p.153; Domingo *et al.*, 2021: p.7 Sokk *et al.*, 2024: pp.32-33).

These findings suggest the approach that should be used to support the concept of food security in this community. Several approaches should be aimed at overcoming these external challenges, such as strengthening traditional values, formulating policies related to land tenure issues, and mitigating the impact of environmental change on the community. The sustainability of this community and its ability to ensure the availability of rice for food security are seriously threatened by these external threats. A contextual approach based on these findings is critical to consider because it can perfectly solve the challenges or threats they face, rather than imposing a conventional top-down or technocratic approach. Considering this context is important so that the policies and/or programmes implemented do not only use the term "improving food security" to legitimise methods that are considered "the most appropriate", but have the potential to create injustice and conflict that can emerge and become another external threat to the community (Fouilleux, Bricas and Alpha, 2017: p.1672; Boogaard, 2021: p.45; McGuirk and Nunn, 2024: p.34)

5.4 Limitations

Although this research demonstrates how the social capital possessed by *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* facilitates the advancement of rice availability as part of community-based food security, it is important to acknowledge that this research still has several limitations. First, as outsiders, it may be easier to access narratives that highlight harmony, togetherness, and the success of the customary system in supporting resilience, compared to more critical views. Second, the hierarchical social structure of *Kasepuhan* and respect for existing traditional values and order may also make residents more likely to express opinions that align with collective norms, especially given the presence of *Kabendon* and their belief in its consequences. The Author attempted to realise and respect this condition during the research by paying close attention to cultural aspects, value boundaries, and other unique and contextual dimensions of the indigenous community (Deen *et al.*, 2025: p.2).

Additionally, this research also may not have fully captured the diversity of experiences, internal tensions, or more critical voices regarding traditional practices and ongoing social change. This reflection is also important so that the

reading of the research results does not become mere idealisation, but is understood in the context of limited access, positionality, and the social norms that influence the way information is conveyed.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

6.1 Conclusion

Addressing food security issues without considering contextual aspects has the potential to create a series of problems that further exacerbate food insecurity. Paying attention to contextual aspects in the implementation and strategy of addressing food security issues is important so that the objectives of food security programmes and/or policies can be realised and are align with what is actually needed. This research provides an example of how *Kasepuban Gelaralam* community advances and sustains their rice availability in the long term by utilising social capital.

The results show that their structural dimension, in the form of customary order and traditional practices, functions as roles and rules, procedures, precedents, and networks. Meanwhile, the cognitive dimension of this community is illustrated by the statements of several interviewees who demonstrate solidarity, trust, belief, values, and norms that they practise, thereby supporting their customary order and traditional agricultural practices. In addition, *Kabendon*, as a customary sanction, plays a vital role in this community as a system that ensures customary rules are correctly implemented by the community. Furthermore, they can maintain existing customary rules and traditional practices by harmonising them with change and modernity. They preserve customary rules and agricultural practices to remain pure, while aspects outside of this are developed by adopting change and development. This harmonisation works well because of the social capital that this community possesses.

Although they possess social capital that contributes to their ability to produce rice, this social capital is insufficient to guarantee the continued availability of rice. This community still faces several weaknesses and challenges. Firstly, the weakness of social capital, which relies on trust, means that *Kasepuban Gelaralam* must have “ideal” social conditions at all times. This creates vulnerability because even the slightest problem that affects the community's trust will have an impact on their social capital. Although there is a *Kabendon* that can impose “consequences” changes in the level of trust do not automatically recover. Secondly, *Kasepuban Gelaralam* faces several external challenges to its ability to produce and ensure the availability of rice for the community, such as the erosion of values among the younger generation as a result of technology use, issues related to land tenure that threaten access to their customary land, and environmental change issues that certainly affect their agricultural activities, which rely on nature and are carried out traditionally. The vulnerability of social capital and external challenges to the community's ability to guarantee their rice availability are the contextual aspects of this indigenous community. These contextual aspects are the important things that must be considered if a program and/or policy wants to address and/or support the community-based food security in this community.

6.2 Suggestions for Future Research

Reflecting on the several limitations and interesting findings from this research, there are several areas for further research and development in future research. First, the limitation of the discussion on food security to only the availability of rice makes the discussion of other dimensions of food security an interesting topic for further research. Second, following the characteristics of social capital that are generally interpreted in accordance with research/analysis, it would be interesting to have follow-up studies that utilise the concept of social capital with different models and/or perspectives. Third, the findings on several potential threats and/or external challenges to *Kasepuhan Gelaralam* could be an interesting topic to develop, especially regarding how the community responds and the extent of the impact. Fourth, the limitations related to the interviewees in this research, which were limited and did not fully represent the community's voice, as well as the interview results, which tended to tell on the "positive side" of the story, opened up the possibility of using quantitative methods as a solution. Quantitative methods have the potential to address the limitations of community voices by using a larger data population and making it more possible to quantitatively map the dynamic level of trust in traditional customs or other critical aspects of the community. Finally, the contextual nature of this research makes further research in different contexts interesting, considering that this research itself builds upon the concepts of social capital and food security from different contexts.

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Annex

List of Preliminary Question	
Interviewee(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rorokan Pamakayaan 2. Jambatan 3. Sepuh Lembur
Question(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) What are the rules in Kasepuhan Gelaralam? b) What is the position of rice and rice cultivation for Kasepuhan Gelaralam? c) What is the sanction system in Kasepuhan? d) What is your opinion about modernisation and current development in the world? e) How do customary rules view this phenomenon? f) Do you feel any impact from these changes? g) What is the different that occurs today compared when you are still young?

List of Preliminary Question	
Interviewee(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kasepuhan Member 1 2. Housewife in Kasepuhan 3. Kasepuhan Member 2 4. Kasepuhan Member 3
Question(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) What are the rules in Kasepuhan Gelaralam? b) What is the position of rice and rice cultivation for Kasepuhan Gelaralam? c) What is the sanction system in Kasepuhan? d) What is your opinion about modernisation and current development in the world? e) Have you working outside or have any experience living outside Kasepuhan? f) What is your motivation for doing that? g) Do you feel the positive and negative impacts about the harmonization of traditional and modernity in the community?