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Partnership implementation and satisfaction level of plasma farmers in oil palm plantation management in Musi Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra

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Abstract

The nucleus-plasma oil palm plantation partnership policy program began in 1977 through the People's Nucleus Plantation (PIR) pattern. This study aims to see how the implementation of partnerships that exist between plasma farmers and companies and measure the level of satisfaction of plasma farmers as partners. The research was conducted in Musi Banyuasin Regency, Batanghari Leko District, with a sample of 60 oil palm smallholders who partnered with companies. The results of the study show that the partnership pattern carried out by plasma farmers and companies is a subcontract partnership, where there is an agreement that agricultural land will be divided into 60% plasma land and 40% nucleus land with a pattern without compensation for a minimum of 25 years of work contract. The level of satisfaction of farmers as a whole belongs to the satisfied criteria, which is equal to 79.62%, the lowest value is found in the 4th attribute, namely the price offered by the company which will have an influence on the income of plasma farmers. Plasma farmers are still dissatisfied with the price offered by the company because the production results from the plasma plantations do not match the targets set by the company that have been agreed upon.

Keywords: Oil palm plasma farmers; Partnership pattern; Level satisfaction; Oil palm plantation; Plasma farmer income

1. Introduction

Oil palm is a potential plantation crop to be developed in Indonesia, particularly in South Sumatra. Palm oil is a raw material in the cooking oil production process so that a continuous supply will result in a relatively stable price. The process of processing palm oil from upstream to downstream opens up considerable employment opportunities, and with the existing potential it can increase per capita consumption of oils and fats [1]. Oil palm is the most efficient vegetable oil producing plant compared to other vegetable oil producing plants in the world [2].

In its development, plasma oil palm plantations show success and can increase farmers' income so that farmers' lives can be more prosperous [3]. This aims to minimize capital costs and losses that are likely to arise. This partnership concept is offered by the company to farmers to produce a commodity and guarantee the marketing of their products [4]. The plasma nucleus partnership pattern is a partnership pattern with the company/financier as the core while the farmers are the plasma. Plasma farmers will be satisfied with their partner companies if the partnership activities carried out can provide benefits, especially financially, namely higher product prices and guaranteed lives [5]. Some of the dimensions of the core palm oil partnership cooperation program in its implementation are still considered low by plasma smallholders. These instruments are partnership agreements with companies, submission of copies of agreements by cooperatives, reporting of FFB sales results, reporting of FFB production in pieces by cooperatives, and guidance by companies, while there is one instrument considered by plasma farmers to be unsatisfactory, namely the

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participation of plasma farmers in management plasma field. The implementation of the plasma nucleus partnership program does not have a significant relationship with the satisfaction and increase in income of plasma farmers [6].

The plasma nucleus partnership program for oil palm plantations has many shortcomings in its implementation, and even tends to have unfavorable conditions on the part of the farmers. In practice, the plasma core partnership agreement (SPK) is made unilaterally by the company as the core of the partnership. The implementation of the partnership must have repressive legal protection that functions to resolve land disputes [7]. Cooperation between farmers and partner companies is certainly expected to have an impact on increasing the income received by plasma farmers. In an effort to overcome the problem of how to see the implementation of the plasma nucleus partnership that occurred, the district was chosen as the research location, namely Musi Banyuasin Regency, Batanghari Leko District which is the highest palm oil supply area among other districts in South Sumatra.

Considering that there are still many obstacles and problems being faced, such as the low participation of plasma oil palm smallholders in the management of oil palm plantations because the management of the plantations is not in accordance with the plasma nucleus partnership pattern, which emphasizes the participation of both parties, equal benefits for both parties, in addition to offering prices, no intensive land development, unsustainable communications and meetings from both the company and the plasma smallholders, reports or recording of FFB yields that have not been properly recorded. In addition, this study also interviewed plasma farmers on the level of farmer satisfaction with the partnership pattern that they had carried out using qualitative and quantitative approaches which were then analyzed using the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) approach. Based on this description, this study aims to: (1) Describe how the partnership is implemented between plasma farmers and companies and, (2) Measuring the level of satisfaction of plasma farmers as partners.

2. Materials and Methods

This research was conducted in the South Sumatra region, namely in a fairly large area of oil palm production. The location taken was a plasma oil palm plantation in Musi Banyuasin, Batanghari Leko District. The selection of this location was carried out purposively (purposive sampling) with the consideration that in this district there are many smallholders doing oil palm plantation business as plasma farmers and in partnership with companies.

The technique used in sampling is simple random sampling (Simple Random Sampling). This sampling technique was used because the population of oil palm smallholders sampled was oil palm plasma smallholders who participated in partnerships with a total sample size of 60 smallholder oil palm plasmas. Sampling only a few of the total population that will later represent oil palm plasma farmers in Musi Banyuasin district, Batanghari Leko district. To answer all research objectives, a mathematical operational model is needed which will be described in detail for each research objective.

To answer the first research objective, which is to describe how the implementation of the partnership and the benefits that exist between the plasma smallholders and the company is carried out using a descriptive analysis approach. The descriptive method is carried out using interview techniques to describe the condition of the subject or object of research at this time based on the facts as they are, carried out by collecting various opinions from various parties involved, namely oil palm plasma smallholders with the company (PT), with the guidance of a questionnaire instrument which prepared.

Table 1 Likert Scale Used for Satisfaction Attributes of Partner Farmers

No.	Importance Level (Y)	Score	Satisfaction Level (X)
1.	Very important	5	Very satisfied
2.	Important	4	Satisfied
3.	Choke up important	3	Quite satisfied
4.	Not important	2	Not satisfied
5.	Very unimportant	1	Very dissatisfied

Source: [8]

Answering the second objective, namely analyzing the level of satisfaction of plasma farmers who partner with companies, is carried out by qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis. Qualitative analysis is used to find a general picture of satisfaction by analyzing the level of satisfaction of oil palm plasma smallholders who partner with companies, while quantitative analysis uses the CSI (Customer Satisfaction Index) method. The CSI method uses a Likert scale to determine the score for farmer satisfaction. The Likert scale is one of the data analyzes that can be used to measure a person's level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with program plans, program implementation, and program success rates [8]. The Likert scale used can be seen in Table 1.

The score on the Likert scale will be used as the basis for the CSI method, the steps used in analyzing the level of farmer satisfaction are as follows [9].

1. Determine the Mean Importance Score (MIS) and Mean Satisfaction Score (MSS). This value comes from the average level of importance and criteria for each respondent, while the formula is:

$$MIS = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n Yi}{n}$$

$$MSS = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n Xi}{n}$$

Information:

N = Number of Respondents
 Yi = Importance Value of the i-Attribute
 Xi = Attribute Satisfaction Value i

2. Calculating Weight Factors (WF), namely changing the average value of the MIS importance level of each attribute to a percentage number (%). As for the formula:

$$wfi = \frac{MISi}{\sum_i^p MISi} \times 100$$

Information:

P = Number of Attributes of Interest
 I = Attribute to-i

3. Calculating the Weight Score (WS), namely the multiplication value between the average values of performance or satisfaction levels or the Mean Satisfaction Score (MSS) for each attribute. The formula is:

$$Wsi = Wfi \times MSSi$$

Information:

Wsi = Weight Score i
 Wfi = i-th Weight Factors
 MSSi = Mean Satisfaction Score i

4. Calculating the Weight Average Total (WAT), namely adding up the Weight Score of all attributes, namely n. The formula is:

$$WAT = WS1 + WS2 + WS3 + \dots + WSn$$

5. Determine the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI), which is obtained from the Weight Average Total (WAT) divided by the highest scale (HS). As for the formula:

$$CSI = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^p WAT}{5} \times 100\%$$

Overall satisfaction level of respondents can be seen from the satisfaction level criteria. The range of satisfaction ranges from 0-100% to make a numerical scale in determining the level of satisfaction, first look for the scale range (RS) with the following formula:

$$RS = (m - n) / b$$

$$RS = (100\% - 0\%) / 5 = 20\%$$

Information:

- RS = Scale Range
- m = Highest Score
- n = Lowest Score
- b = Number of Classes or Categories

Table 2 Criteria for Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)

No.	Index Value (%)	Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) criteria
1.	81–100	Very satisfied
2.	61–80	Satisfied
3.	41–60	Quite satisfied
4.	21–40	Not satisfied
5.	0 – 20	Very dissatisfied

Source: [9].

Based on Table 2, it can be determined that each criterion for determining CSI can be determined on a percentage scale (%) which can represent how much the level of satisfaction felt by plasma farmers with the performance and partner services provided by the company.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Implementation of Plasma Smallholder Partnerships with Companies

3.1.1. Partner Acceptance Process

Partnerships in activities carried out by plasma farmers and companies in working partners require the availability of plasma farmers to follow the work rules of partner companies in order to produce quality Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB). Working partners are very helpful for plasma farmers who own land but do not have sufficient capital in oil palm farming activities, where the company can fully assist regarding initial capital costs to produce in the form of credit loans which will later be paid by plasma farmers in installments every month which has been deducted from income from farmers.

Oil palm plasma smallholders who wish to join as partners with the company must complete several requirements and go through the partner acceptance procedure determined by the partner company. For farmers who wish to become partners, they will be assisted by the Village Unit Cooperative. Villagers who wish to become oil palm plasma smallholders must first hold discussions with the Prosperous Mandiri Village Cooperative (KUD). In detail, it can be seen in the scheme of the partner acceptance process carried out by plasma farmers with companies, which can be seen in Figure 1.

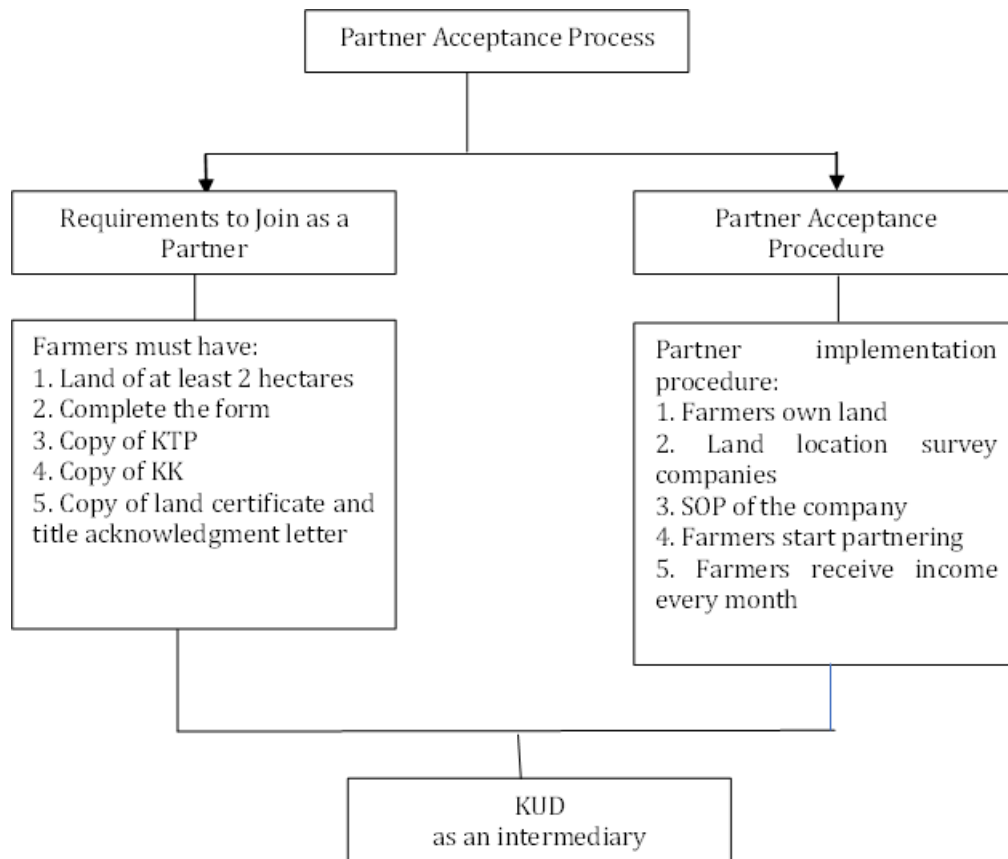


Figure 1 Schematic of the Plasma Smallholder Partnership Process with the Company

Information: — = activity flow → = Affect

[10] stated that the plasma nucleus partnership pattern is the relationship between farmers, farmer groups, or partner groups as plasma with the core company that partners in business. The obligations of the core company are to provide land, production facilities, technical guidance, management, accommodate and process, and market the products. The partner group has an obligation to meet the needs of the core company in accordance with the agreed terms.

3.2. Partnership Pattern

In doing business partners, of course there will be a partnership pattern formed between oil palm plasma smallholders and the company. The partnership pattern that occurs is the result of an agreement or work contract between the plasma smallholders and the company assisted by the Prosperous Independent Village Unit Cooperative (KUD) with the aim of being mutually dependent and mutually beneficial to one another or symbiosis of mutualism. The partnership pattern between oil palm plasma smallholders in Batanghari Leko District and the company can be seen in Figure 2.

Based on Figure 2, it can be seen that the oil palm plasma smallholders who partner with the company have an interdependent and mutually beneficial relationship based on a mutual agreement, in which the plasma smallholders receive capital in oil palm farming, production advice, technical guidance, and definite marketing from the company. Meanwhile, partner companies obtain plantation land which is currently difficult to obtain and produce good quality Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB).

The agreement in partnering is that the land area handed over by the farmers is divided into 60% of the plasma land and 40% of the company's core land with a pattern without compensation. The no-compensation pattern means that the plasma farmers who partner with the company do not receive a living allowance, even if later in farming activities they experience losses, there is no compensation from the partner company. However, plasma smallholders will receive rights and obligations in accordance with the agreements that have been made in partnership.

According to the Decree of the Minister of Agriculture No. 940 of 1997 the sub-contract partnership pattern is a partnership pattern between partners and partner companies that carry out partner activities with a work contract or

agreement between two parties that is mutually beneficial. The sub-contract partnership pattern is cooperation in relation to doing business between partner companies and partner groups that have work agreements or agreements between the two parties so that technology, skills, capital, productivity and marketing guarantees will be transferred from the companies which will later be mutually dependent and benefit both parties between partner groups and partner companies in partnering [11]. Furthermore, if the contract system applied is an unwritten contract system, it means that the contractor and the plantation owner only make verbal agreements regarding contract compensation, the length of the contract and the amount of the contract value. This contract system is not a contract system between entrepreneurs and farmers as stipulated by the government in Law No. 20 of 2008 concerning Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises but contracts carried out individually [12].

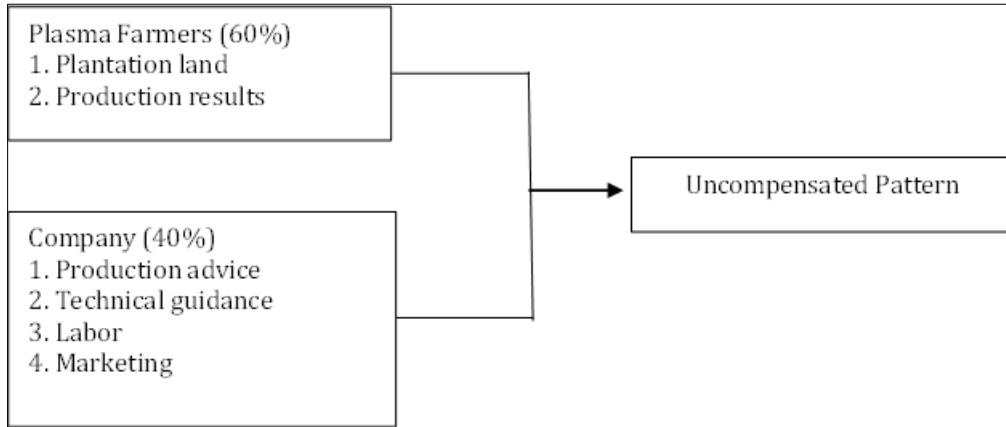


Figure 2 Schematic of the Partnership Pattern between Plasma Farmers and Companies.

Information: ——— = activity flow —————> = Affect

The partnership pattern that is implemented by each partner will have rights that are obtained and obligations that are carried out in partnering. The respective rights and obligations in working partnerships between plasma farmers and companies are as follows. The rights obtained by oil palm plasma smallholders in Batanghari Leko District are as follows:

- Get 60% of the land area, which is used in oil palm farming activities owned by plasma farmers.
- Get capital assistance, from the company in the form of agricultural equipment, production facilities, labor, and other capital that will be used in oil palm farming activities, the capital costs incurred by the company are in the form of loans where every month there will be a deduction from the farmers' income
- Plasma farmers will get market guarantees, the company has guaranteed a market for production in the form of quality Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB) from farmers.
- Plasma farmers will get a high selling price.

Furthermore, the obligations carried out by plasma farmers are as follows:

- Follow and carry out the work program that has been set by the company in accordance with the contract agreement in partnering with oil palm farming.
- Meet the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that have been set by the company, in which the partnership is established in accordance with a mutual agreement with a minimum partnership period of 25 years working contract.
- There is a plantation obligation fee, the plasma farmer has an obligation to pay all plantation obligations in the form of a credit fee of 30%, a PPh 22 fee of 0.25%, a company fee of 5% and labor costs which will be deducted from plasma plantation receipts each month.
- Not allowed to sell production to other parties Plasma farmers have an obligation to sell production to the company.

The rights obtained by partner companies are as follows:

- Obtain 40% of the land area from the plasma farmers which will be the core rights of the company where the land will become the rights of the company in all farming activities.

- The company obtains production results in the form of quality Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB) after each harvest from plasma oil palm plantations.
- Having full rights in the production results, the company has full rights in the production results which must be sold to the company as long as it is a working partner so that the results of the farming of plasma farmers may not be sold to other parties.

Obligations that must be fulfilled by partner companies to plasma farmers are as follows:

- Providing capital, during the partnership the company provides capital costs in all oil palm farming activities in the form of agricultural equipment, production facilities, and others that will be used during farming activities. Capital costs incurred by the company are in the form of loans or credit so that farmers will pay 30% of their income every month.
- Providing labor assistance, companies to assist farming activities owned by plasma farmers where farmers will be paid according to the workforce that has worked. Labor assistance from the company is the result of a mutual agreement with the aim that plasma farmers will not have difficulty finding workers who will assist farming activities.
- Establish quality fruit standards, the company sets good quality fruit standards where Fresh Fruit Bunches are ripe with 50% loose outer fruit and are shiny in color to meet the product needs of the company.
- Purchasing all production, the company provides all palm oil production from plasma smallholder plantations that comply with predetermined quality standards.
- Paying the harvest to the plasma farmers, the company will pay the harvest to the plasma farmers in accordance with the agreed price of Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB) and payment terms. Payment of harvest yields is distributed to KUD Sejahtera Mandiri every month and includes the net income of the plasma farmers.

The partnership pattern between oil palm plasma smallholders and the company is in the form of cooperation where the farmer provides land and labor, while the company provides production facilities such as seeds, fertilizers and guarantees market certainty by accommodating all of the plasma smallholders' palm oil production [13]. The same thing was also disclosed [14] that the partnership program for plasma plantations is a plantation area built on land owned by participating farmers while the company helps provide seeds, other technical assistance and marketing of production. The impact of various partnerships shows that all types of partnerships can increase various added values and increase the participation of smallholders formed by groups in oil palm plantations. In carrying out partnerships there is a role for government programs in a policy so that activities can run well. Private companies must have factories and direct marketing so that they can avoid long marketing and at least supply chains so that farmers' income can increase in implementing partnerships [15].

3.3. Analysis of the Satisfaction Level of Plasma Smallholders Partnering with Companies

In analyzing the level of satisfaction of plasma farmers who partner with companies, it is carried out using several stages of the calculation approach method, namely, where the satisfaction level of plasma farmers who partner with companies is an assessment of the satisfaction or dissatisfaction felt by plasma farmers on the performance of the companies analyzed using the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) method which is determined by the index value on a percent scale by going through several stages of the calculation method, namely:

3.3.1. Mean Importance Score (MIS)

The Mean Importance Score (MIS) value is obtained from the weight of the importance of the *I*th attribute divided by the number of respondents, namely 60 farmers. The MIS table can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3 Mean Importance Score (MIS) of Oil Palm Plasma Smallholders

No.	Attribute	Rating and Weight					Weight (Y)	MIS
		STP	TP	CP	P	SP		
		1	2	3	4	5		
1.	Terms of partner farmers	0	2	15	20	23	244	4.07
2.	Procedure for accepting partner farmers	0	2	12	22	24	248	4,13
3.	Determination of quality of Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB)	0	0	10	27	23	253	4,22
4.	Prices offered by partner companies	0	1	15	22	22	245	4.08
5.	Availability of tools and production facilities from partner companies	0	2	22	21	15	229	3.82
6.	Payment time for Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB)	0	2	11	18	29	254	4,23
7.	Response to partner farmer complaints	0	4	9	28	19	242	4.03
8.	Communication of partner farmers with partner companies	0	4	12	19	25	245	4.08
9.	Transparent information about the costs incurred by the company	0	2	9	25	24	251	4,18
10.	Frequency of technical guidance	0	5	14	21	20	236	3.93
11.	Help distribution of harvest	0	2	10	30	18	244	4.07
Amount		44.85						

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2022

Information: STP = Very Dissatisfied; TP = Not Satisfied; CP = Fairly Satisfied; F = Satisfied; SP = Very Satisfied

Based on Table 3, after evaluating the 11 attributes of interest by giving weight to each attribute of interest, the total value of the Mean Importance Score (MIS) was 44.85.

3.4. Mean Satisfaction Score (MSS)

The Mean Satisfaction Score (MSS) is obtained from the total weight of the value of the satisfaction attribute I divided by the number of respondents, namely 60 farmers. For each respondent, an assessment of 11 attributes of plasma farmer satisfaction was carried out, and the total MSS value was 43.80. The Mean Satisfaction Score (MSS) table can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4 Mean Satisfaction Score (MSS) of Oil Palm Plasma Smallholders

No.	Attribute	Rating and Weight					Weight (X)	MSS
		STP	TP	CP	P	SP		
		1	2	3	4	5		
1.	Terms of partner farmers	0	0	12	23	25	253	4,22
2.	Procedure for accepting partner farmers	0	0	10	26	24	254	4,23
3.	Determination of quality of Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB)	0	0	8	30	22	254	4,23
4.	Prices offered by partner companies	0	3	14	21	12	202	3.37
5.	Availability of tools and production facilities from partner companies	0	5	11	26	18	237	3.95
6.	Payment time for Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB)	0	15	13	21	11	208	3,47

7.	Response to partner farmer complaints	0	4	9	25	22	245	4.08
8.	Communication of partner farmers with partner companies	0	2	13	27	18	241	4.02
9.	Transparent information about the costs incurred by the company	0	3	9	25	23	248	4,12
10.	Frequency of technical guidance	0	3	14	20	23	243	4.05
11.	Help distribution of harvest	0	2	12	27	19	243	4.05
Amount		43.80						

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2022

3.4.1. Weight Factors (WF) and Weight Score (WS)

Weight factors (WF) are obtained from each attribute's importance level value divided by the sum of the MIS values for all the attributes to be tested. After the WF value has been obtained, you can then look for the weight score (WS) value. The WS value is obtained by multiplying the value of each WF by the respective MSS value. The WF and WS values can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5 Value of Weight factors (WF) and Weight score (WS)

No.	MIS	WF	MSS	WS
1.	4.07	9.07	4,22	38,23
2.	4,13	9,22	4,23	39.01
3.	4,22	9.40	4,23	39.80
4.	4.08	9,10	3.37	30.65
5.	3.82	8.51	3.95	33,61
6.	4,23	9,44	3,47	32,72
7.	4.03	8.99	3.08	36,72
8.	4.08	9,10	4.02	36,57
9.	4,18	9,33	4,13	38.55
10.	3.93	8.77	4.05	35,52
11.	4.07	9.07	4.05	36,72
Amount	44.85	100.00	43.80	398,12

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2022

Based on Table 5, the highest Weight factors (WF) value is the 6th attribute when paying FFB which produces a value of 9.44 while the lowest attribute value is the 5th attribute availability of production facilities from the company with a WF value of 8.51. The total weight factor (WF) value is 100.00.

In the Weight score (WS) value, the highest value was obtained for the 3rd attribute of FFB determination with a WS value of 39.80, while the lowest value for the 4th attribute was the price offered by the company with a WS value of 30.65. The total weight score (WS) is the same as the total weight average (WAT) value, where the WAT value will be used to calculate the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) value.

3.5. Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)

The Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) is the value obtained from the quotient between the total weight average (WAT) and the highest scale (HS) used, in this study the highest scale is used with a weight value of 5 which will be multiplied by 100%. The table of CSI values can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6 Value of Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)

No.	Component	Mark
1.	<i>Weight Average Total (WAT)</i>	398,12
2.	<i>Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)</i>	79,62

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2022

Based on Table 6, the results show that the WAT value is 394.52 where the value of the WAT is divided by the highest HS with a weight of 5 then multiplied by 100.00% to get a CSI result of 79.62%. The CSI value obtained means that oil palm plasma smallholders who are partners with companies are included in the satisfied criteria.

The level of farmer satisfaction is still classified as satisfied criteria, this is because the results of the analysis have not reached the criteria of very satisfied. unsatisfied with the price offered by the company, this is because the production results from the plasma plantations do not match the target desired by the agreed company. Differences in farmer satisfaction levels can be corrected by providing clearer socialization regarding work contracts related to prices and yields of FFB production, so that the existing partnership pattern can benefit the plasma smallholders and the company.

4. Conclusion

The results of the research conducted can be concluded that: 1) The partnership pattern that is run by plasma farmers with companies is a subcontract partnership, where there is a contractual agreement that agricultural land will be divided into 60% of plasma land and 40% of nucleus land with a pattern without compensation for a minimum of 25 years work contracts, 2) The satisfaction level of farmers is still classified as satisfied criteria, which is equal to 79.62%, which means that from the results of the analysis the criteria for being very satisfied have not been reached because the lowest value is found in the 4th attribute, namely the price offered by the company has an influence on the income of plasma farmers, while plasma farmers are still dissatisfied with the price offered by the company. This is because the production results from the plasma plantations are not in accordance with the targets desired by the company and the post-harvest carried out by the plasma farmers is not in accordance with what has been agreed.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

We want to emphasize that the research conducted and the findings presented in this article have been approached with the utmost integrity and impartiality. We have taken measures to minimize any potential biases that may arise from these conflicts of interest.

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