

ABSTRAK

Alih fungsi perkebunan teh menjadi perkebunan kelapa sawit tidak hanya mengubah sistem produksi, tetapi juga membawa perubahan terhadap struktur tenaga kerja dan kehidupan sosial ekonomi pekerja. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis transformasi struktur tenaga kerja pasca alih fungsi perkebunan teh menjadi perkebunan kelapa sawit di Perkebunan Bah Birong Ulu, Kabupaten Simalungun, serta mengkaji strategi adaptasi tenaga kerja lama dalam menyesuaikan diri terhadap sistem kerja yang baru. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Informan penelitian ditentukan melalui teknik purposive sampling yang terdiri atas informan kunci, informan utama, dan informan tambahan. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model analisis interaktif Miles dan Huberman yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa alih fungsi perkebunan dipengaruhi oleh pertimbangan peningkatan produktivitas, efisiensi operasional, dan prospek ekonomi komoditas kelapa sawit. Perubahan tersebut menyebabkan terjadinya transformasi struktur tenaga kerja yang ditandai dengan berkurangnya kebutuhan tenaga kerja, perubahan jenis pekerjaan dari pekerjaan padat karya pada perkebunan teh menjadi pekerjaan yang lebih menuntut kemampuan fisik pada perkebunan kelapa sawit, perubahan sistem perekrutan melalui penerapan Perjanjian Kerja Waktu Tertentu (PKWT), serta menurunnya keterlibatan tenaga kerja perempuan dalam pekerjaan formal. Di sisi lain, tenaga kerja lama melakukan berbagai strategi adaptasi melalui penyesuaian terhadap jenis pekerjaan baru, peningkatan keterampilan kerja, pemanfaatan pengalaman kerja, serta melakukan pekerjaan tambahan untuk mempertahankan keberlangsungan ekonomi rumah tangga. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa transformasi sistem produksi tidak hanya membentuk struktur tenaga kerja yang baru, tetapi juga mendorong perubahan pola kerja dan strategi adaptasi pekerja dalam mempertahankan kehidupan.

Kata kunci: *Alih Fungsi Perkebunan, Transformasi Struktur Tenaga Kerja, Strategi Adaptasi, Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit, Bah Birong Ulu.*

ABSTRACT

The conversion of tea plantations into oil palm plantations has not only altered the production system but also brought significant changes to the labor structure and the socio-economic conditions of workers. This study aims to analyze the transformation of the labor structure following the conversion of tea plantations into oil palm plantations at Bah Birong Ulu Plantation, Simalungun Regency, and to examine the adaptation strategies employed by former tea plantation workers in adjusting to the new working system. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach. Informants were selected using purposive sampling and consisted of key informants, primary informants, and supporting informants. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the plantation conversion was driven by the need to improve productivity, operational efficiency, and the economic prospects of oil palm cultivation. This transformation resulted in significant changes in the labor structure, including a reduction in labor demand, a shift from labor-intensive work in tea plantations to more physically demanding jobs in oil palm plantations, changes in the recruitment system through the implementation of Fixed-Term Employment Agreements (Perjanjian Kerja Waktu Tertentu or PKWT), and a decline in women's participation in formal employment. Former tea plantation workers adopted various adaptation strategies, including adjusting to new job types, improving their work-related skills, utilizing previous work experience, and engaging in additional income-generating activities to sustain their household livelihoods. The study concludes that the transformation of the plantation production system has not only reshaped the labor structure but has also influenced workers' employment patterns and adaptation strategies in maintaining their livelihoods.

Keywords: Plantation Conversion, Labor Structure Transformation, Adaptation Strategies, Oil Palm Plantation, Bah Birong Ulu.