

# Koi Fish Cultivator Marketing Strategy During The Pandemic In Ciseeng, Bogor Regency

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## **Abstract.**

*The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on various sectors in Indonesia. One of the sectors affected is koi fish farming in Ciseeng, Bogor Regency. This study focuses on the strategies used by ornamental koi fish cultivators in Ciseeng, Bogor Regency during the Covid-19 pandemic. The research methodology used by the researcher is a qualitative method with a three-month field study from August to October 2021. By using participatory observation and in-depth interviews as data collection methods, plus purposive sampling method as a subject determination. The results of this study are; During the pandemic, koi fish farmers in Cibogo Village, Ciseeng, Bogor Regency do side jobs to maintain and increase income. The side jobs carried out by the cultivators include being construction workers, as well as other fish farming. During the pandemic, only one farmer tried to market online, while the other 14 did traditional marketing. This is because the cultivators do not receive marketing strategy training or assistance from the local government.*

**Keywords:** Strategy, Cultivator, Koi Fish

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The contribution and role of the development of the fishery sector in order to advance the economy of the Indonesian people, especially Bogor during the COVID-19 pandemic is very significant. The fisheries sector is one that has increased compared to other sectors. Fisheries can be used as a major issue given the large potential of the Indonesian fishery sector, but it has not been used optimally. Since the first case was informed of Covid-19 in early March 2020, one of the government's policies to control the transmission of this outbreak is to implement PSBB. This policy resulted in restrictions on community activities so that it had implications for the slow pace of the economic sector. BPS has published Indonesia's economic growth in the second quarter of 2020 which experienced negative growth at minus 5.32%. On the other hand, the fisheries, forestry and agricultural sectors have become one of the business fields that have experienced positive growth. (Amelia, 2020). Koi fish are part of ornamental fish. The business development and the increasing market value of ornamental fish make the sector's business quite promising, even in 2012 the government is targeting 850 million fish, from the temporary record it has reached 978 fish, or 115.16% of the target. Even since 2011, Indonesia's position as an exporter of ornamental fish is in the 5th position, after the Czech Republic, Thailand, Japan, and Singapore. From this data, we can assume that the development of ornamental fish including Koi fish is a promising business sector and even one of the businesses that shows economic growth and foreign exchange. (Directorate General of National Export Development, 2013).

Therefore, in the report of the Indonesian Ministry of Trade, it is stated that the non-consumable fish business sector, in this case ornamental fish, is a mainstay of export business that is never sluggish and always experiences positive developments or trends in the international market. Indonesia's trade balance noted that in 2011 reached 13.26 million US dollars and in April 2012 it had reached 5.24 million US dollars. This indicates that the non-consumable fish market as a commodity has received a positive response in both the national and international markets (Directorate General of National Export Development, 2013). Specifically for Bogor district, in 2015 the ornamental fish business area reached 35.62 Ha or 242.520.230

fish from 33.09 Ha or 156.618.83 tails in 2011 that means this business has become a fairly large commodity in Bogor district so it is not surprising that in 2015 there are 607 RTP (Fishing Households). One of the other options that farmers do inselling fish production so that the price is high is by utilizing digital technology. Because so far farmers have the main problem to increase income, this is due to cartel practices where middlemen create and determine the purchase price of fish farmers and on the other hand, middlemen design high prices to consumers. To overcome this, digital marketing is held, namely the Fishket application, which is a solution in marketing and selling agricultural products, where this application can be accessed directly via Smartphone. This application aims to market online aquaculture products, namely seeds, consumption fish, brooders and various kinds of ornamental fish plants. This application is designed using hardware and software where in this application several features have been provided that can make it easier for users to buy their fish through a very easy payment method, by using via transfer or direct payment on the spot (delivery order). This application provides features that facilitate the buying and selling process, such as product image features, product prices, product information, and payment methods. Application applications can be accessed anywhere with coverage throughout South Sumatra. So, with the Fishket application, farmers can determine the selling price of fish without a third party. This application is expected to increase sales and income of farmers. (Cahyono, 2020). by using via transfer or direct payment on the spot (delivery orders). This application provides features that facilitate the buying and selling process, such as product image features, product prices, product information, and payment methods.

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### **Theoretical framework**

Along with the times, the concept of community empowerment continues to develop dynamically. Different terminology is developed in various ways. However, in essence, community empowerment is an effort made by people who have the ability and empowerment in carrying out their lives towards a more advanced life. Conceptually, community empowerment (empowerment) stems from the word power which has the meaning of power or empowerment (Moran, 2017, Hong, 2019). Community empowerment includes three dimensions, namely people's ability, sociopolitical ability, and participatory ability. In addition, empowerment refers to three things. First, a development process that originates from individual growth and then develops into broader social change. Second, a psychological condition characterized by self-confidence, usefulness, and control over oneself and others. Third, the liberation resulting from a social movement. This liberation begins with educating the weak, then involves all the collective efforts of the weak to gain power and change the social structure or bureaucracy that is still pressing (Makmur, 2020, Ramadhani, 2020). Empowerment can be carried out with the existing social capital in the community. Social capital is the relationship between fellow human beings, namely people who carry out actions against each other, whether they are motivated by social obligations, social solidarity, reciprocity, and community. Social capital is the glue that holds society together. Therefore, empowerment will be successful when it strengthens civil society, namely formal or semi-formal structures that are made by the community sincerely

for their own initiation, and not because of the consequences of community empowerment programs. (Sofia, 2021, Sudarmanto, 2020).

In relation to community empowerment, Tantan Hermansah (2018) explained that in essence community empowerment is a development agenda to achieve ideal community conditions. This is due to mutually beneficial conditions between the giver and the beneficiary. For givers, they can channel their responsibilities as a form of participation in development. Meanwhile, recipients are expected to benefit from the program. So that they can be more empowered in all aspects of life to achieve prosperity. According to Mardikanto and Soebianto (2015), there are 4 scopes that are the focus of community empowerment, namely human development, business development, environmental development, and institutional development. Human development is the first and foremost effort that must be considered in every effort to empower the community. This is based on the understanding that the purpose of development is to improve the quality of life or human welfare. Besides that, in management science, humans occupy the most unique element because apart from being one of the resources, they are also the actors or managers of the management itself. Then for business development, it becomes an important effort in every empowerment, because human development without having an impact or benefit for improving welfare (economy) will not sell and even increase disappointment. On the other hand, only human development that is able (in the near/quick time) to have an impact or benefit for improving welfare (economy) will sell or gain support in the form of community participation. Social responsibility may be easily fulfilled and even exceeds the need itself, but in an effort to build a good and environmentally friendly business ecosystem, it is one of the important things in an effort to preserve the environment so that the environment is not polluted by Merut Keraf (2002) quoted from Alya Putri Mulyani and Adi Firmansya has at least nine ethics and principles towards the environment; namely: the principle of respect for nature, the principle of moral responsibility towards nature, the spirit of mankind, the principle of cosmic solidarity, the principle of compassion and concern for nature, the principle of not harming, the principle of living simply and in harmony with nature, the principle of justice, the principle of democracy, and The principle of moral integration.

In addition to the public, it should also be given an understanding of the importance of the market and how to understand the market in general more on the aspects of marketing, promotion and digital market networking. Especially in the context of this pandemic, business actors must be able to market their products or crops, etc. in a unique and good way and be able to reach all platforms, both conventionally and modernly. Marketing is a system of overall interactions in buying and selling activities in which producers try to offer, maintain their products at predetermined prices or potential prices with the aim of attracting consumers. (Winarto Day, 2011: 124). Therefore, it is important to understand the concept and orientation of marketing because with that it will be easier for business actors to sell and market their products, marketing orientation aims to make producers or business actors treat or serve a marketing environment in which they sell and market their business products (Rahmawati, 2010). 2016: 9).

## II. METHODS

This research was conducted using a qualitative case study method. Researchers seek to describe and analyze especially those related to the learning process together with farmers who are directly involved in empowering farmer groups produced through data collections that focus on informants directly, by going directly to the field (Moleong, 2021, Anggito, 2018). Qualitative research is a research approach conducted in a natural setting, emphasizing the researcher as a data collection instrument, using inductive analysis and focusing on meaning according to participants. The type of research used is a case study research type, where researchers try to describe and explain cases that occur in the field, namely how the agricultural learning process is.

There are three case studies, namely explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive. Referring to the explanation above, the researchers carried out in-depth research steps using a qualitative descriptive type with a case study design focused on the analysis of community empowerment through koi fish farming in Ciseeng Bogor. Data analysis in this study uses the Miles and Huberman model in Ulfatin (2013: 250), namely the stages of data reduction, data display, and decision making. Checking the validity of the data is

done by using triangulation techniques, namely triangulation of data sources and triangulation methods. The key informants in this study were Tabi groups or koi fish farmers with individuals or groups. The number reached more than 10 groups. This study uses data sources with direct observation. In addition, researchers also use documents as additional data. The data collection technique used is using interview, observation, and document study techniques (Setiawan, 2017).

### **Analysis Demographics of Koi Cultivators in Ciseeng, Bogor Regency**

Since 2011 the community in Bogor Regency has become an important part of the ornamental fish business, including Koi fish according to Bogor Regency BPS 2015 and total area 35.62 Ha or 242.520.230 individuals in five years (2011-2015). In 2015 there were 607 RTP (Fishing Households) in the ornamental fish business, ranging from large scale or macro scale companies to small micro scale businesses spread across 18 Districts. However, ornamental fish cultivation activities are still concentrated in several sub-districts, namely Ciampea District, Ciseeng, Parung and Cibinong. In cultivating Koi fish, there are several aspects that can affect the quality of cultivation. One important aspect is the level of education followed by cultivators. Based on the results of researcher interviews, the majority of cultivators are high school graduates (SMA) or equivalent. Even so, there are also cultivators who received education at the Junior High School (SMP) level or its equivalent. Even the researchers found cultivators who did not graduate at the elementary school (SD) level. The level of education that is not so high does affect the competence of human resources in koi fish farming. This is reinforced by the results of interviews with researchers who are still illiterate. So that it has an impact on the marketing aspect, the further development of koi fish farming. Although indeed, these cultivators have been running a koi fish business since the 1980s. But in fact, in terms of development, his business did not develop significantly.

In terms of time, fish cultivators who have been running the business for more than 15 years. Compared to other koi fish cultivators who have only been in business for about 2-5 years. In addition, there are also fish cultivators who have been running the business for 10 years. In the majority, koi fish farmers in Ciseeng have only been running their business for about 2-5 years. What is even more troubling is that the majority of cultivators acquire these competencies by themselves. The self-taught learning process is obtained, both through relatives and the surrounding environment. The absence of training provided by the Regional Government makes the development of koi fish farming difficult to compete outside the region. If we look at it technically, it is necessary for the government to be present in the koi fish cultivation business so that people can better understand the good and correct procedures in the cultivation. For example, in measuring the pH of the water or the level of acidity so that fish can develop properly and healthily, of course this will have implications for the yield or Panin of Koi fish. Koi fish farming business continues to experience a positive trend, even many people, especially in Ciseeng, have switched to cultivating koi fish, which were originally catfish farming, this was revealed by almost all informants as stated by Mr. Mista;

"Yes, it was originally planned for ornamental fish because catfish is more wasteful to eat"

Based on the above expression that the catfish business is not good enough and economically promising coupled with wasteful feed that must be provided by farmers or breeders, therefore switching to ornamental fish, koi fish is an option because it is easier and not wasteful of feed.

Not only that, the Koi fish business is quite stable, even during this pandemic, the farmers are not losing too much and some are even profiting as stated by Mr. Kholil;

"At the beginning of COVID, it was said that it was decreasing or not, it was said to be increasing or not. Yeah, that's normal."

Even the existence of covid-19 did not have too much impact on their prices and sales, this was also expressed by Mr. Kholil;

"Yeah, it doesn't really matter"

From the interview above, we can conclude that the presence of covid-19 does not have a significant effect on the sale of koi fish even according to one informant that the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic was patient in Indonesia and had a positive impact on the sale of koi fish because PSSB the community had to stay at home as a entertainment is to keep ornamental fish or koi fish.

There is no moral assistance or in the form of training, not even materially, this was revealed by one of the informants, Mr. Samsu, who has been running a koi fish business for the past 10 years, said that as long as he opened land for livestock or Koi fish business, he had never received any assistance or subsidies. have applied for assistance but have never received such assistance. (interview with Mr. Samsu). Not only did Mr. Samsu bring this up, but Mr. Ismed, who started his business since 2018, said;

"Yes, until now there has not been, if my proposal was made before Corona 2 years ago, but until now, I haven't"

In the midst of a fairly good and stable market potential, the government's attention should exist and be present in the community who have micro-scale businesses but in reality all farmers or fish ponds state that the government is not present at all even morally. This was revealed by all informants and Koi fish business actors in Ciseeng. In fact, if we look at Bogor Regency, it is one of the largest suppliers of ornamental fish exports, even in a 5-year period, namely from 2010 to 2014 the export value reached 46 billion.

The most important aspect in carrying out koi fish cultivation is the existence of land to be used as a place for fish development. Based on the results of interviews with researchers, that the majority of fish cultivators in Ciseeng are indeed the owners of the land as well as the manager of the place. Even so, there are also those who still use a contract system with land owners. In addition to the contract method, there are also those who use a system of cooperation with land owners. For the sales stage, the majority of cultivators will sell the fish to middlemen or collectors. Although indeed, based on the results of interviews, researchers found that there were also those who sold them to Ciseeng Market and Parung Market. Apart from conventional sales, there are no fish cultivators willing to sell online. Although indeed, researchers found that there were some cultivators who started trying to sell online. Based on the results of interviews with researchers, the majority of the reasons given were due to difficulties in doing so. In addition, another reason that the researchers found was that buyers only bought them individually. This is different if the cultivators sell them to collectors or middlemen who buy them in very large quantities. The absence of assistance from the government, whether in the form of subsidies for fish food or training, has made it difficult for the development of koi fish farming in Ciseeng to compete. This is reinforced by the results of interviews with researchers who state that there has been no training provided by the local government, even though there is a strong desire from the cultivators.

### **Koi Fish Entrepreneur Strategy During the Covid-19 Pandemic**

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a very significant impact on the economic sector in Indonesia, so many business sectors have been forced to lose business and even go out of business. Since Covid-19 was detected and infected the Indonesian people, the government adopted a Large-Scale Social Restriction (PSBB) policy to tackle the spread of the virus. PSSB policy is very influential on all types of businesses ranging from macro-scale to small and medium-sized enterprises. As a result, malls are closed and business actors are sluggish, the losses they have incurred have been calculated, even business actors have laid off their workers and some have even laid off their employees to cover the losses they bear. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, state losses reached 1.356 trillion in 2020. This was stated by the Indonesian finance minister Sri Mulyani, quoted from [kompas.com](https://kompas.com)

According to Selamat, ornamental fish cultivation is one of the fisheries business sectors, as quoted from [kkp.go.id](https://kkp.go.id), the Directorate General of Aquaculture, he said;

"If we estimate from the loss of our opportunity to achieve economic growth which in 2020, before Covid-19 was targeted at 5.3 percent, then ended -2 percent, then the economic value lost due to Covid-19 is estimated at Rp. 1,356 trillion," said Sri Mulyani. .

In the midst of uncertain economic conditions and the covid-19 pandemic, business actors are still not old enough to keep their business running and not go bankrupt, so they continue to try various things, from offering their business results from digital platforms to door to door. . However, there is one business sector that is believed to remain prudent and survive even during the pandemic and in the future will become a promising type of business, namely the ornamental fish business.

"As we all know, the Covid-19 pandemic has suppressed various business sectors, but has also opened up new business opportunities for some people. The ornamental fish farming business is one of the new business opportunities that many people are looking at because it promises big profits if it is occupied"

The same thing was expressed by Artati Widiarti, Director General of PDSPKP;

"In the future, the ornamental fish business will be one of the solutions that can be offered to overcome the demographic bonus. However, this business must be designed to be a large business and has a high economic value. Therefore, the actors must be equipped with qualified business managerial skills,"

Not only that, ornamental fish including Koi fish have become one of the prudent fisheries businesses and are able to survive during this pandemic. PSSB, many people are required to stay at home until there is a hashtag #dirumahaja so that caring for ornamental fish becomes a holiday or even a hobby that can be done and even able to eliminate boredom due to not being able to leave the house.

According to congratulations from the Directorate General of Aquaculture, quoted from kkp.go.id said;

"In addition to the economic benefits obtained, ornamental fish are also believed to be a stress reliever for the audience. This is important during the Covid-19 pandemic because it can help maintain the immunity and enthusiasm of the community in dealing with situations like now."

Therefore, it is not surprising if the ornamental business continues to develop in this Covid-19 pandemic condition. The development of ornamental fish cultivation, especially Koi fish, turned out to be not just a figment or an issue that developed and then just disappeared or even just a claim from the government, it turned out that this was also experienced by one of the fish farmers in Ciseeng, Bogor regency, Mr. Muhidin, that during the Covid-19 pandemic, The 19 sales of Koi fish that he has been working on have experienced an increase in sales, especially at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and the PSSB. Although not all farmers or Koi fish business owners are as lucky as Mr. Muhidin, their businesses tend to be stable and do not experience losses.

But even so, at this time the selling price has actually dropped from before the pandemic and the beginning of the pandemic the price is still stable at the price of 10,000 but currently it is only around 7000 this was expressed by Mr. more or faster profits to be sold and sought after by buyers and collectors, this was disclosed by Mr. Kholil;

"In order to sell quickly, the important thing is that the fish are big (big) quickly. The important thing is that it grows quickly with the quality. It's done quickly. If it's too slow, it's slow."

In contrast to what Mr. Mista said that during this pandemic he still sold the Koi fish he had in his pond with the excuse not to come out more because of the large amount of feed he had to give him, he said;

"I have endured - endured, yes indeed the price is that much too, if I don't sell my fish it won't sell - indeed, if it is detained the higher the price but empan also keeps increasing"

Different people have different ways of thinking and perspectives and ways of making decisions, in the cultivation of Koi fish too, with the pandemic coupled with the selling value of Koi fish also dropping by 30%, farmers try to take advantage of every opportunity, for example what is done by Mr. Muhidin. She is more focused on how to multiply parents so that they can lay eggs and then become aunts so they don't continue to buy seeds so that later they will only focus on feed. She said;

"At least this; more broodstock so we can spawn ourselves, no need to buy seeds from other farmers anymore. So the capital spent is only for bait fees."

Mr. Yudis did the same thing, that in the midst of a pandemic which is still unclear when it will end, plus the selling price and buyers are decreasing, Mr. Yudis continues to try to keep his business running, one of which is by holding or not selling Koi fish in his pond, as well as sorting and selecting fish. to get big quickly and quickly get buyers and the price can be higher. as he said;

"Detain first, if it's time to harvest, move again, separate so that it grows quickly, if there is a buyer, the price can go up"

In the midst of the uncertainty of the pandemic, there are many koi fish cultivators in Ciseeng, Bogor. Based on the results of interviews with researchers, apart from cultivating, the majority of Koi fish cultivators do other jobs. For example, as construction workers, cultivating other fish, and raising cattle. This is done to cover the necessities of life. However, in the midst of this uncertainty, the government was not present to provide assistance to farmers or cultivators. This pandemic period not only has an impact on the declining sales of Koi fish but also on fish feed which is increasingly expensive so that the results or profits obtained by cultivators are not large or only sufficient for their daily needs. Even to cover it all had to work odd jobs. Various efforts were made by cultivators in order to get the maximum profit. Apart from doing other jobs, fish cultivators also hold their products to the market. But in fact, even though it has been held for so long, in fact the market price of koi fish continues to decline. To avoid losses, cultivators continue to sell their products to the market and to collectors. The sale of fish to collectors is actually a last resort so that the ornamental fish they maintain and livestock sell and make a quick profit. Because the longer it takes to cultivate ornamental fish, the greater the costs incurred, especially for feed and maintenance. Not only that, selling to collectors is due to their lack of knowledge about koi fish marketing and not being digitally literate or what we often call digital marketing.

Therefore, one of the shortcuts to take is to sell to collectors even at prices below the standard. Apart from not understanding marketing and digital marketing, the community also does not have an official community. In the absence of a community, the cultivating community does not have a common price benchmark so that the collectors can freely offer prices that sometimes harm farmers or cultivators. This condition makes the farmers/cultivators unable to do much except hope for the government to attend and provide directly for example feed subsidies or provide direct assistance to small farmers/cultivators in the form of cash or fish feed. Seeing the conditions experienced by the community above, this is an economic and social gap that is quite alarming considering that Bogor Regency is a special area for ornamental fish cultivation and has even become an example for various regions in Indonesia.

### III. CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation, it can be concluded as follows:

1. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused farmers/cultivators to experience a decrease in selling prices of up to 30% even though at the beginning of the pandemic there had been an increase in sales. So that many farmers / cultivators complain about the price of koi fish coupled with rising feed prices so that the koi fish farming business is not optimal in the sense that it does not get maximum profit.
2. During the pandemic, koi fish cultivators in Cibogo Village, Ciseeng, Bogor Regency did side jobs to maintain and increase income. The side jobs carried out by the cultivators include being construction workers, as well as other fish farming.
3. During the pandemic, only one farmer tried to carry out an online marketing strategy, even though the results were not satisfactory. So that this has an impact on the ability of cultivators to improve the quality of koi fish sales.
4. The government's lack of attention to small farmers/cultivators, especially in Cibogo Village, Ciseeng, Bogor Regency, so that they are less able to make innovations both in the cultivation and marketing process.
5. Koi fish farmers/cultivators in Cibogo Village, Ciseeng, Bogor Regency really hope that there will be government assistance, both training and capital, to increase income from koi fish farming.

### IV. RECOMMENDATION

1. The Bogor Regency Government must be present, especially to provide counseling, training and technical guidance related to spawning, cultivation and marketing to farmers/cultivators of koi fish, especially for the people of Cibogo village, Ciseeng sub-district, generally Bogor Regency.
2. The Bogor Regency Government is said to provide feed subsidies or assistance to micro-scale koi farmers/cultivators, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic so that it can ease the burden on the community.

3. Community of Cibogo Village, Ciseeng, Bogor Regency. Should be digitally literate and try to learn so that they can compete at both national and international levels. And the government is present in providing the training

4. Community of Cibogo Village, Ciseeng, Bogor Regency. It is advisable to form a community of koi fish farmers/cultivators to control market prices so that they are able to understand the market situation and the games of the collectors.

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