Implementatin of the Undergraduate Coastal Program for Students at Risk of
Dropping Out of School: Case Study at Kutai Kartanegara, East Kalimantan

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Abstract

Bachelor of Costal Education is a mentoring activity for children with a lower middle-class economy in coastal villages who wish to continue their education at tertiary institutions. The purpose of this study is to describe the use of coastal undergraduate mentoring in reducing dropout rates. The research was conducted using a descriptive-qualitative approach with the case study method. The research subjects were 53 high school students in coastal villages. The research was conducted for 3 years in 4 coastal villages in Kutai Kartanegara, East Kalimantan. The results showed that this assistance was well received by the community, as evidenced by the enthusiasm of the community in the second and third years of the program. Furthermore, the success of implementing this program can contribute to reducing the dropout rate because it has enabled children who were threatened with dropping out of school to continue their tertiary education. With details, namely, in the 1st year, there were 8 people; in the 2nd year, there were 8 people; and in the 3rd year, there were 26 people who went on to college with scholarships from the government and BUMN. Program integration is carried out through academic, motivational, and technical assistance periodically for 6 months. However, the implementation of the program should not only focus on students who are continuing their studies at tertiary institutions but also provide other skills for those who are more interested in working directly so that they still meet standards in the labor market.

Keywords: Education, Coastal Villages, and School Dropout Indonesia

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Introduction

Indonesia will experience a golden age in 2045, at the age of 100 years since Indonesia's independence. In the series towards the golden age, Indonesia is also predicted to experience a demographic bonus. According to Bank Indonesia (2020), a demographic bonus is a condition where there are benefits that can be enjoyed by a country from the large proportion of the productive age population in the 15-64 year range. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development of Developed Countries (OECD) also predicts that in 2045 Indonesia's finances will reach US$ 8.89 trillion, making it the 4th largest economy in the world. This is based on the description of the composition of Indonesia's population, which in 2030–2040 will be dominated by people of productive age, accounting for as much as 64% of the total population of around 297 million people. Under these conditions, Indonesia has a strategic strength, which is to become one of the largest active markets in the world. Demographic bonuses are like a coin that has two sides. If human resources are managed properly, the things that have been predicted above will happen. However, if management is not implemented effectively and efficiently, it will create new problems, namely unemployment, which results in reduced purchasing power for the people. When that happens, poverty will increase; the situation is like a cycle of poverty that is difficult to complete.

Of all that, the main key to success in welcoming the demographic bonus is how to manage human resources properly and appropriately. Education is a sector that has a vital role in preparing human resources who will later serve in other life-support fields. This is reinforced by the preamble of the 1945 Constitution, which explicitly states how intelligent individuals and social life are very important. However, the available data shows that there is a significant disparity. First, data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology for the 2020–2021 school year shows that there are around 83,700 thousand children who have dropped out of school across Indonesia. From the elementary level, there were 44,516 people: 11,378 junior high school students, 13,879 high school students, and 13,950 vocational high school students. This number is calculated both publicly and privately. Second, the Higher Education Gross Enrollment Rate is still low; in 2019, it was 30.28, in 2020 it was 30.85, and in 2021 it was around 31.19. Third, according to the Central Statistics Agency, the number of unemployed in 2020 will still be high, reaching 6.88 million people, dominated by vocational high schools, or SMKs. According to additional data from the Ministry of Manpower, there are 2.8 million people affected by COVID-19. Particularly in the Kutai Kartanegara area, where this study was conducted, the dropout rate for the last five years has reached more than 6,000 people. This is sad considering that Kutai Kartanegara is one of the districts that contributes the most to the economy in East Kalimantan Province.

Since the study was conducted, the dropout rate for the last five years has reached more than 6,000 people. This is sad considering that Kutai Kartanegara is one of the districts that contributes the So far, the government has implemented several programs, such as the Family Hope Program (PKH), School Operational Assistance (BOS), Poor Student Assistance Program (BSM), Community Health Insurance Program (JAMKESMAS), Rice Program for Poor Families (RASKIN), People's Business Credit (KUR), and the latest, the Smart Indonesia Card (KIP), which is intended for elementary, secondary, and tertiary schools. However, in reality, it is still not able to bring significant changes to the Indonesian nation. Whether we realize it or not, so far, the approach taken by the government has tended to only focus on the concept of an economic approach. Indeed, in the short term, the provision of

assistance is economically beneficial. However, if in the long run the poverty alleviation scheme is still like this, it will not be able to solve the problem completely but will create people's dependence on the government. Therefore, what the community needs is not just physical assistance but also the ability to use this assistance in an appropriate manner.

Observation

Observing these conditions and problems, the Coastal Undergraduate Program for Students (PSPBS) is a community initiative run by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and State-Owned Enterprises (BUMN) in areas around the coast that have difficulty accessing affordability. This program is a mentoring activity with a focus on helping students from the lower middle class continue their education up to the undergraduate level. According to Eero (2019), education is one of the best paths a person can take to live a decent life. This assistance is carried out both academically, motivationally, and technically in relation to university admissions and government scholarships. Based on the explanation above, the purpose of writing this article is to find out how collaboration is carried out by NGOs and SOEs in managing human resources so that they can reduce dropout rates in order to take advantage of the demographic bonus momentum. Furthermore, it is hoped that this article can serve as reference material for making strategies to improve the quality of Indonesian society.

Conclusion

Education is a fundamental right of every individual that offers a clear path to sustainable economic and social growth (Gretchenko et al., 2018). We will achieve zero welfare if there are still many people who do not have an education and the majority of their children do not go to school. In line with the opinion of Geven and Hasan's (2020) in their research, which states that inequality in society increases due to the unavailability of equal education. For people who come from the lower middle class economy, education is the only hope for a better life so as to guarantee socio-economic progress. However, in the development of this concept, it did not run ideally, there were many things that made students not focus in school until they experienced dropping out at the extreme stage. Dropping out of school itself is a multifactorial phenomenon that is complex and has become an emergency social and economic problem in many countries (Srairi, 2021). Several researchers classify dropouts based on certain conditions and criteria, including firstly students who do not attend school, secondly students who drop out of school before the official school age, not because they die or are accepted at another school (Mughal, 2020). Shuja et al. (2021) in his research revealed that financial conditions, the effects of isolation, ways of learning, government policies, fear of death, the souls of parents, socio-cultural effects, the role of teachers and administrators are the reasons students drop out of school. Furthermore, Davies and Guppy (1997) explain the prolonged effect of dropping out of school, which is marked by simple financial barriers and donations from social backgrounds with a moderate rate.

Among the ways to deal with dropping out of school are to encourage a change in the mindset of parents, build the will so that their children do not drop out of school, and stimulate an increase in the role of teachers and school administration in understanding individuals in depth (Shuja, 2021). Personalization is a fundamental function in studying analytical research and applications (Papamitsiou & Economides, 2014; Siemens & Baker, 2012), where this method is able to help teachers and those involved in understanding students comprehensively so as to be able to develop appropriate solutions to help students who are vulnerable to dropping out of school. Middle-class students who get preparation for

tertiary education, including assistance with scholastic talents, interests, and socio-economic backgrounds, are more successful than those who do not get this preparation. This success is seen in the aspects of values obtained, intellectual characteristics, citizenship in the college community, and the achievement of personal goals (Beckner and Cornett, 1972). The majority of the factors that cause students to drop out of school so that they do not intend to continue their education to a higher level are economic conditions. Students who have their advantages are safer in getting an education than students who are less fortunate. Socioeconomically advantaged students in the United States are able to invest their budgets in "shadow education," which is meant for college preparatory courses or tutoring. The goal is to get high college entrance test scores in order to guarantee access to higher education, especially elite institutions (Buchmann et al., 2010).

Furthermore, based on previous research studies, many explain the causes and effects of dropping out of school. Dropping out of school is a big problem with various factors, both internal and external. These factors include the financial condition of a household and the economy of a country, the effects of isolation, ways of learning, government policies, fear of death, the soul of parents, socio-cultural effects, the role of teachers and administrators, and gender. With research results showing that males drop out of school more than females, this is due to differences in psychological and biological factors and characteristics that correlate with achievement. In addition, institutional factors also contribute to dropping out of school; the higher the teaching quality performance at the institution, the lower the tendency of students to drop out of school. However, there is a finding that reveals that students from good economic backgrounds are far less likely to drop out of school despite having experienced academic failure than students who are less fortunate. These results also apply to high-achieving high school graduates. This emphasizes the importance of taking into account the interaction between social origin and academic achievement during higher education to reduce dropout behavior. In reducing dropouts, this can be done by making predictions and then giving special personalized attention to students who are prone to dropping out of school (Herbaut, 2020; Xing and Du2, 2018; Shuja, 2022; Srairi, 2021).

Based on the research objectives that describe the benefits of implementing the Coastal Undergraduate Program for Students (PSPBS) carried out by NGOs together with the community in tackling students who are threatened with dropping out of school due to socio-economic consequences in Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, East Kalimantan, it can be explained through several facts as follows:

1. The role of the assistant in the implementation of the Undergraduate Coastal Program for Students (PSPBS)
    - Facilitative roles and skills. The role of the companion of the Coastal Undergraduate Program for Students (PSPBS), based on the concept of the role of the community worker put forward by Habibullah (2011), is the role and skills of facilitating, which is a role related to providing motivation, opportunities, and support for the community. In carrying out this role, one of the supporting actors, namely NGOs, remembers that they have more optimal facilitation abilities than other supporting actors, as evidenced by their experience and participation in various pieces of training related to facilitation. This actor acts as a project leader who has the duty to provide facilitation guidelines for the parties involved in the assistance. This guide aims to support the ability of other supporting actors to be able to carry out effective assistance with certain training facilities that have been adapted to the needs of program implementation. The following supporting actors

are involved in the facilitator: 1) alumni students participating in coastal undergraduates; 2) local teachers; 3) selected students; and 4) village strategic parties.

- Roles and skills as educators, Roles, and skills in educating, Facilitators play an active role in providing positive and guiding input based on their knowledge and experience, sharing ideas with the knowledge and experience of the community they support, increasing community awareness, and providing information and training to community organizers. This is in accordance with the goals of social work expressed by Damanik (2008), which state that the purpose of social work is to improve a person's ability to solve problems, deal with difficulties, and deal with life's tasks effectively. To achieve this goal, social workers overcome barriers that limit clients' ability to fulfill their life goals. Executing this role consists of teachers and students who have the ability and experience in the field of written examinations so that they are able to provide material assistance in accordance with national exam standards set by the government so that the academic quality of students will increase.

- Role and skills As a community representative, this role is related to the companion's relationship with outsiders who represent the interests of the community they assist. Facilitators carry out their role as community representatives by visiting several places that support the smooth running of this mentoring program, such as the education office, schools, or universities. Activities that can be carried out include searching for information, confirming and validating information or sources, and establishing partnerships or networks that will assist in anticipating or minimizing program failures. In the end, what this assistant does will have an impact on the smooth process of community assistance (Hermawati, 2001).

- Roles and technical skills; registration of participants to enter tertiary institutions assisted by teachers and facilitators so that they are able to register coastal undergraduate participants independently so that they can take part in the first selection, namely the invitation route, which is held nationally by the government; then the writing track; and the second track, namely the selection independently carried out by each campus. Fourth, work with facilitators and core communities, such as village heads and village secretaries, in order to accelerate the collection of scholarship files.

2. Change of agent due to the assistance of the Undergraduate Coastal Program for Students (PSPBS)
   - Unconscious motives or cognitions
     Unconscious motives or cognitions are desires or needs that have the potential to direct action. Most of the agents' daily actions are not directly motivated by any particular motivation. At this stage, the assisted families do not yet understand the importance of investing in their children's education, so they assume that college is only for people with an upper-middle-class economy.
   - Practical awareness
     Practical awareness refers to aspects of knowledge that cannot always be defined. What do actors know or believe about social conditions, especially about the conditions of their own actions? But actors cannot express it logically. In this second phase, the assisted families already understand the investment in education and have the mindset that college is not only for those with upper middle incomes but for anyone who is serious and is one of the ways to improve family life.

- Discursive awareness
  Discursive awareness is the capacity of assisted families to reflect and provide detailed explanations of their actions regarding their verbal expression skills, social conditions, and relation to the conditions of their own actions. Simply put, the awareness of this stage is an awareness that has a discursive form. The application is where students and their families share the same understanding of education and the benefits of mentoring. They are also always at the stage of being able to motivate not only their children but other families to be open about educational investments that contribute to creating student well-being for their children.

3. This program already has 3 batches, namely in 2020, where there are 8 children from coastal villages who have studied at PTN East Kalimantan, with 4 of them using KIP-College scholarships and 2 using PHM scholarships. Then in the second wave, namely in 2021, there will also be 8 children from coastal villages, 5 of whom will receive KIP-K scholarships. Then, in the third year of 2022, there were 51 candidates for "Bachelor of Coastal Studies #3" who registered, and 38 participants passed for us to accompany. Participants who pass are those who have fulfilled the mentoring requirements properly and correctly and those who really have the motivation to continue their higher education. To carry out this assistance, it requires a work plan that has been adjusted to the needs in the field. Supporting actors such as local teachers, students outside the program, students as program alumni, village governments, and NGOs are social workers or community workers. They are people who, through education, have acquired expertise and experience in administering various social services. A companion is a key party that bridges beneficiaries with other parties involved. Ministry of Social Affairs (2009) states that assistance is the process of providing facilities provided by partners for customers to identify needs and solve problems and encourage the growth of initiatives in the decision-making process so that customer independence can continue to be realized.

Based on these conclusions, there are several recommendations that can be made in this study, namely that for the government, it is hoped that the methods and forms of intervention carried out by NGOs and the community can inspire and serve as a reference that carrying out a movement to push for a policy does not have to be top-down. Furthermore, students who have successfully participated in this program should not forget the noble goal of making limitations extraordinary so that they can contribute to the implementation of the next program. As well as for other communities, they can continue to work, serve, and innovate in implementing their programs so that villages, especially in the 3T (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost) areas, can improve the quality of their human resources in order to realize educational equity.

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