

Developing the Potential of Street Children through Creative Learning at Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the development of street children's potential through creative learning at the Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation. The background of this study is poverty and other factors that cause children to live on the streets, thus requiring effective interventions to improve their quality of life. Yayasan Aulia Qurrota Aini provides various programs such as halfway houses, skills training, and nonformal education specifically designed to meet the needs of street children. The creative learning applied in these programs aims to stimulate children's creativity and imagination, help them develop practical skills, and increase productivity and self development. The purpose of this research is to understand the learning needs of street children and identify the challenges they face, this research focuses on developing the potential of street children through creative learning and skills training provided by Yayasan Aulia Qurrota Aini. The research method used is qualitative, with in depth interviews and participatory observation to understand the learning needs of street children and identify the challenges they face. The results show that the halfway house program provides protection and basic needs that are urgently needed by street children. Skills training and non-formal education help them develop skills that can be used to find jobs or start their own businesses in the future. Creative learning has also proven effective in helping street children overcome trauma and develop social skills. This research provides policy recommendations to improve the effectiveness of street children empowerment programs, including the expansion of shelter home programs, improving the quality of nonformal education, and integrating creative learning methods into the curriculum. With the right support, street children can have a brighter future and contribute positively to society.

Keywords: *Street children, Empowerment, Creative learning, Halfway house*

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a social problem faced by almost all countries in the world, especially developing countries, including Indonesia. Poverty is a major problem for Indonesia and needs to be considered and addressed appropriately. Government efforts to alleviate poverty must be innovative, touch on the real causes of the problem and be consistent with developing values. Poverty can occur when people's living conditions are unable to fulfill their basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, employment, a healthy lifestyle, and educational needs. Poverty in urban areas is generally caused by the economic situation of families who are below the poverty line.

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics of Banten Province, there was a decrease in the poverty rate in the March 2023 period of 6.17%, a decrease of 0.07%. The impacts of poverty generally include poor health, poor living conditions, lack of education, and inadequate public services. Indonesia is also one of the developing countries that experience this situation. Rural areas in Indonesia are also not spared from the impact of unemployment. Based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), Banten is the province with the highest published unemployment rate. The

unemployment rate in Banten Province is 7.52%. One of the causes of the problem of high unemployment is the lack of employment, business opportunities, urbanization, and others. Many aspects cause the lack of employment and business opportunities, one example is the aspect of government policy. Government policy is an important aspect because politics is a form of government intervention in what is under its authority.

Children are the most beautiful gift that God gives to families, and a child's behavior can reflect the character of his or her parents. Some parents hope that the presence of children will add to family happiness. In general, parents look after, care for, love, and always try to fulfill their children's needs. Children are said to be the next generation of the nation and must be prepared to become quality human resources and play an active role in the development of the country (Susanto, 2021). The presence of street children in Serang, Banten Province, is a complex social problem. Being a street child is not a desirable choice. Street children are placed in situations and situations that are considered bad and their presence often causes problems for many parties, families, communities and countries.

Street children are one of the neglected children who should be protected based on Article 34 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution (UD 1945), which states that "the poor and neglected children shall be cared for by the state" It is stipulated that means, the state is responsible for the care and upbringing of neglected children, including street children.

Factors that lead to children living on the streets include economic hardship or the stress of poverty in the family, family conflict between parents, and specific problems relating to the relationship between the child and parents. The combination of these factors often forces children to voluntarily earn a living or live independently on the streets. In some cases, the influence of friends and relatives can determine whether or not a person will live on the streets. There are many reasons why children take to the streets. But the main reason is poverty, which leads parents to exploitative behavior towards their children. But poverty is not the only reason why children live and work on the streets.

All children are entitled to services that help them develop their skills and social life. Through education, children can develop their skills. According to Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System, Chapter 4 Article 6 Paragraph 1, all citizens between the ages of 7 and 15 are required to obtain basic education. Basic education is organized to develop attitudes and skills, provide basic knowledge and skills needed for social life, and prepare learners to meet the requirements of secondary education. Education units include not only formal education, but also non-formal education. Non-formal education is an educational pathway outside of formal education that can be implemented systematically and gradually.

Many people have a negative view of street children. Because street children are synonymous with uneducated wild children, their lives are full of difficulties, and the demands of work are very important to them. Education can be a solution to eliminate discrimination and unequal treatment against them. Education can be implemented formally or non-formally, providing comprehensive insights to street children and providing opportunities for street children to gain knowledge. Street children do not receive special treatment but most of their time must work to carry out daily activities on the streets. Currently, the number of street children is decreasing due to the existence of a forum for organizing street children such as the Street Children's Social Foundation.

One way to reduce the number of street children is to establish a halfway house. The Ministry of Social Affairs states that "Rumah Singgah" is a program that provides various services to street children such as services such as shelter, food, education, and skills so that they can learn social values and norms that act as facilitators to support children. Understand the norms that apply in society. Skills and training at the Halfway House are honed through empowerment practices. Ideally empowerment involves community participation by increasing the capacity and potential of the community (Lestari and Suminar, 2020).

A Child Social Welfare Institution (LKSA) is a foundation that focuses on providing care for children who require care outside of their family environment. These social facilities for children are commonly known as halfway houses or other facilities. Child welfare organizations are often a last resort, with a dual role as an educational institution and a think tank for street children. Many children

in child welfare facilities actually have parents. They enter the facility due to economic limitations that prevent them from continuing their education.

Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation provides learning activities for street children and the underprivileged. In addition to academic education, the foundation also offers lessons on children's creativity with the aim of helping street children abandon bad habits and increase productivity through self-development. In addition, Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation provides skills training such as screen printing, sewing, handicrafts, and making crafts from used waste. This training aims to develop children's skills so that they are ready to adapt after completing training at the foundation.

Elements are needed to strengthen the empowerment of street children and help them reach the stage of social transformation. The Child Social Welfare Institution (LKSA) has an important role in empowering street children. It is one of the supporting elements that will help street children reach a higher stage of empowerment. Street children empowerment programs, such as learning, health, economic, and protection programs, have been an element in helping street children reach a higher level of self-determination. The objective of this research is to understand the social, economic and psychological context of street children and identify in-depth their learning needs to identify the challenges and barriers they face in their daily lives. Develop policy recommendations that can improve the effectiveness of street children empowerment programs and provide greater support to street children in building a better future.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses descriptive qualitative research because the problems that researchers discuss are not related to numbers, but involve describing, describing, and describing the process of empowering street children through social entrepreneurship at the Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation shelter in Serang City.

According to Sugiyono (2021), qualitative research methods are research methods that study natural object conditions based on the philosophy of postpositivism / interpretive, where the researcher is the main instrument and the data collection method is done by triangulation used to understand the meaning and uniqueness of the object.

Rifa'i (2023) also explains that qualitative research methods are a research approach that aims to understand and explain phenomena in depth through the collection, analysis, and interpretation of non-numerical data. In the research process carried out, researchers use grids and guidelines.

The research location was carried out at the Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation, Serang City, researchers chose this location because of the existence of a shelter for street children which functions to empower street children. Activities carried out include raising awareness through arts and crafts, screen printing, sewing training, electric welding training, etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The understanding that parenting plays an important role in creating a supportive educational environment has focused attention on implementing parenting programs as a proactive strategy to reduce dropout rates. In addition, the role of parents has a significant influence on behavior because it becomes the foundation of that behavior (Yustika Rini, Fikri Tanzil, et al, 2022: 227).

Halfway houses are present as a temporary solution to provide protection, guidance and education to street children. Creative learning is an approach that focuses on developing critical thinking, problem-solving and social skills through innovative and fun methods. It can be an effective tool to help street children discover and develop their potential. The Halfway House is a non-formal forum that provides a framework to resocialize street children to the values and social standards of the community. The Halfway House is a safe, interesting and fun place for street children. The aim of the halfway house is to help children solve problems and find solutions to their needs.

The Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation Halfway House finds that street children are often caused by poor family economic factors. Related to social welfare issues, street children are fostered by the Social Welfare Problem Persons (PMKS)/PPKS by referral, data collection, and treated in orphanages. The foundation's targets include activities in the village / kelurahan, such as garbage collectors, shoe polishers, and street buskers.

Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation cares for 132 children who have completed their service and continued their schooling, while 59 children have not continued their schooling. As a form of support for street children, the Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation implements a program that is integrated with the Ministry of Social Affairs. As for the street children themselves, the Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation does not cover cases that lead to the silver man or Punks, but treats them as a reference.

Yayasan Aulia Qurrota Aini has 15 assistants who each take care of 10 street children. The support program provided by this foundation consists of TEPAK (Temu Penguatan Anak) where street children are given education and motivation regarding mental, physical and spiritual problems. Not only street children, but their parents also participate fairly in the coaching process by providing child development education. In addition to non-formal education, the Child Social Welfare Institution (LKSA) Yayasan Aulia Qurrota Aini Kramatwatu provides a skills training program for street children in their care. This competency program is sewing training and electric welding training.

Although the sewing program targets female street children, many male street children are also interested in participating in sewing training activities. During its implementation, meetings will be held twice a month, namely on the first and third week. The sewing machines provided by the Aulia Qurrota Aini foundation consist of seven sewing machines that are used alternately.

The electric welding training program is the largest and most popular among street children, especially boys. This training is highly anticipated because it can help street boys enter the world of work with more focus and confidence thanks to the knowledge of electric welding. The training is only open to children aged 17 and above, as the risk is too high for children below that age who have not met the requirements. The schedule for the electric welding training is held once every 1-2 months, as this activity takes place outside the Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation. Usually, the training is held at the Industrial Work Training Center (BLKI) in Serang City. This allows the street children who take part in the electric welding training to have more space and adequate access to the equipment needed.

Street children are a group of people who require special attention. They often live in unstable conditions that are less supportive of their personal and educational development. In Indonesia, the number of street children is significant, and many of them do not have access to formal education and experience various social and economic challenges. For economic reasons, many of them are forced to drop out of school and work on the streets. This creates new problems in the form of unfulfilled rights, such as lack of access to schools, health services, and protection services (Multasih & Suryadi, 2019).

Qurrota Aini Foundation launched a recycling training program to improve street children's skills in making various useful items from wood and paper waste. Street children will develop skills and personal qualities through the knowledge and activities they gain through this program. The purpose of this street children training program is to develop the skills and abilities of street children and improve their personal qualities, and so that street children are no longer accustomed to living, living and earning money on the streets.

The empowerment of street children is to overcome the social problems of street children. This initiative aims to improve the abilities of street children through various activities such as education, skills training, and moral education. The goal is to stimulate and encourage street children to exercise their basic rights such as a decent life, protection and the ability to demonstrate positive behavior in accordance with the norms and ethics prevailing in society. The Halfway House provides freedom for street children to stay temporarily or simply participate in activities (Sagita, Zulkarnain, and Sofino 2021). It serves as a center of activity, a source of information, and an entry point to all events inside and outside the Halfway House.

Developing street children's potential through creative learning in a halfway house is an effective approach to help them gain useful skills and knowledge for their future. Some of the strategies and methods that can be applied are by taking a holistic approach that pays attention to all aspects of child development, including physical, emotional, social and intellectual. This strategy not only provides formal education, but also equips street children with a comprehensive education. This reflects a commitment to providing solutions (Sukma and Jatningsih 2022).

Flexible and engaging learning, combining a variety of creative and interactive learning methods, art activities such as drawing, painting and handicrafts can help develop creativity and fine motor skills. Contextualized learning connects learning materials to children's everyday experiences, making learning more relevant and engaging. Project-based learning engages children in real projects that require cooperation and problem solving. Invite children to design and run small projects such as making and selling crafts.

CONCLUSIONS

Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation plays an important role in empowering street children through various programs such as shelter homes, skills training and non-formal education. The creative learning implemented by this foundation helps street children increase their productivity and develop themselves. This research highlights the importance of understanding the learning needs of street children and the challenges they face to design more effective policies in empowerment programs. Thus, the programs run by Yayasan Aulia Qurrota Aini not only provide direct assistance but also open up better access to education and employment opportunities, ultimately improving the quality of life of street children. One aspect that stands out from the programs run by the Aulia Qurrota Aini Foundation is the use of creative learning methods. This creative learning involves a variety of activities designed to stimulate the creativity and imagination of street children. Creative learning also helps to improve the social and emotional skills of street children, which is crucial for their future success.

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