

Qualitative Study on the Dynamics of Social Interaction Between Boarding Students and the Local Community

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the social behavior of boarding (kost) students towards the community in Ngestiharjo Village. Using a qualitative method and involving 10 informants, the study reveals that the social behavior of students is influenced by differences in ethnicity, race, and religion. When supervision is lacking, students tend to exhibit deviant behavior, particularly due to the boarding environment's insufficient attention to their activities. In addition to their behavior in the boarding area, students often seek an escape outside the campus to overcome boredom and experience freedom. These findings highlight the importance of better management and supervision of the boarding environment to minimize deviant behavior and enhance positive interactions between students and the local community

INTRODUCTION

In the era of rapid globalization and urbanization, the phenomenon of boarding (kost) students away from home has become an important part of urban life in Indonesia. Globalization facilitates high population mobility, including among students who come from various regions to pursue education at universities spread across the country (Sidhu et al., 2021). According to Curci et al. (2023), universities located in urban centers have become magnets for students from diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. These students arrive not only to gain an education but also to seek better opportunities for the future. However, one of the common challenges faced by these out-of-town students is the need for temporary housing. Renting kost becomes a common solution for students living far from home, offering an environment different from their homes, where they must learn to adapt to independent living (Sukino et al., 2021).

The presence of kost students not only affects their internal dynamics, such as adapting to independent living, time management, and personal responsibility, but also has a significant impact on the local community (Inuaeyen et al., 2024). According to Nasriandi et al. (2023) and Pisriwati et al. (2024), students, as a new social group in an area, often bring values, cultures, and habits that differ from the local community. These differences can spark various forms of social interaction, both positive and negative. The presence of kost students in a neighborhood has the potential to alter the social order of the community, from social and cultural aspects to economic ones. For example, areas that were previously quiet may become livelier with the presence of students, and the local economy may grow due to student demand for various daily needs.

The social interaction between kost students and the surrounding community plays a key role in fostering harmony and social cohesion in the neighborhood (Törnquist-Plewa & Pietraszewski, 2023). The presence of students can bring benefits, such as cultural and knowledge exchange, as well as the potential for local economic development. On the other hand, if not properly managed, these interactions can lead to friction. As agents of social change, students often bring new perspectives that may conflict with the long-held norms and values of the local community. This creates a dynamic interaction between students trying to adjust to their new environment and the local residents who are attempting to accept their presence (Donham et al., 2022; Pisriwati et al., 2024). Therefore, it is important for both parties to understand each other in order to build a harmonious and mutually beneficial relationship.

Previous studies, such as Guillén et al. (2022) and Putri & Siswanto (2024), have extensively discussed various aspects of students' social behavior, ranging from cultural adaptation and interpersonal interactions to the influence of the campus environment on student development. In this context, student social behavior is often linked to their academic lives, such as how they interact with professors, fellow students, or campus staff. However, research specifically highlighting the interaction between kost students and the surrounding community remains limited. Most studies tend to focus on students' experiences within the academic environment, while their lives outside campus, particularly

in the context of relationships with the surrounding community, receive less attention.

The presence of kost students often presents unique challenges for the local community (Hidayah, 2023). Lifestyle differences between students and local residents can trigger social conflict, especially if there is a lack of good communication between them. One common example is the difference in daily routines. Students tend to have different schedules from local residents, often being more active at night, while the local community typically follows a more regular lifestyle with earlier rest times (Wiguna et al., 2024; Maretha, et al., 2024). This can lead to disturbances, such as noise, which may eventually cause tension between the two parties. Additionally, kost students who do not engage with their neighbors are often perceived as indifferent to the surrounding environment, widening the social gap between them and the local community.

Cultural and social background differences between students and the local community can also become a source of tension. Students from various regions in Indonesia bring their own cultural values, which may differ from the norms and customs of the local community (Putri et al., 2024). For example, students from certain areas may have more open interactions or different ways of dressing, which could be seen as inappropriate by the local community. However, on the other hand, this diversity also presents an opportunity for the local community to learn about other cultures and broaden their horizons through interaction with students. Socialization and adaptation processes are key to forming harmonious social relationships between kost students and the local community.

A deep understanding of the social behavior of kost students towards the surrounding community can provide significant benefits in the development of policies and programs aimed at improving the quality of life in these communities. By identifying the factors that influence social interaction between students and local residents, relevant parties, such as local governments, kost managers, and universities, can design appropriate interventions. For example, programs that encourage dialogue and cooperation between students and the community can help mitigate potential conflicts and strengthen relationships among residents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Interaction

Social interaction is the core of community life, where individuals connect and influence each other in various contexts. According to Schaft et al. (2020), social interaction is a dynamic relationship that occurs between two or more individuals, involving reciprocal influence. This process encompasses communication, cooperation, and conflict, which are fundamental elements of every social relationship. Social interaction serves as the foundation for the formation of social structures, where societal norms and values are established and maintained through interactions among community members.

Various sociological theories underpin the understanding of social interaction. Symbolic interactionism, pioneered by George Herbert Mead, emphasizes the importance of symbols and language in social interaction. According to this theory, the meanings generated from symbolic interaction enable individuals to comprehend and respond to their social environment. On the other hand, social exchange theory focuses on the dynamics of rewards and costs in social interactions, where individuals tend to engage in interactions that provide them with benefits (Zhou et al., 2024).

Social interaction also influences the formation of individual and group identities (Astiwi et al., 2024). Through interaction, individuals not only adapt to social roles but also shape their self-concept based on others' responses to their actions. Additionally, positive social relationships can improve individuals' quality of life and well-being, while problematic interactions may lead to alienation or conflict.

Kost Students

Kost students are those who choose to live outside their family homes, usually in areas surrounding the campus, to support their academic journey. This arrangement is often the choice of students from regions outside the campus location. Based on research by Henríquez & Urzúa (2023), kost students frequently face adaptation challenges related to their new environment, time management, and financial management. Living in kost encourages students to be more independent in organizing their daily activities, including managing meals, maintaining cleanliness, and balancing academic and social responsibilities.

In addition, kost living affects students' social and emotional development. In a study by Scholz et al. (2023), kost students generally find it easier to build friendships with other students due to more intense interactions within the shared living environment. They also often engage in social activities around their kost, such as community events or campus activities. However, kost students are at risk of experiencing feelings of loneliness or isolation, especially if they are far from family or struggle to adapt to their new surroundings.

From a psychological perspective, kost life offers students the opportunity to develop soft skills such as stress management, conflict resolution, and more independent decision-making. In a study by Eryilmaz et al. (2023), kost students were reported to have higher levels of independence compared to those living with family. However, challenges such as financial difficulties, limited facilities,

and instability in the kost environment can also impact academic performance and students' mental well-being.

Local Community

Local communities often play a central role in maintaining social, economic, and environmental sustainability. According to Bang et al. (2016), these communities are deeply connected to the physical and cultural environments where they live, shaped by values, norms, and traditions passed down through generations. Their local wisdom frequently serves as the foundation for collective decision-making concerning resource management, cultural preservation, and the fostering of social cohesion. In this way, local communities act as both custodians of tradition and adaptive agents capable of responding to environmental changes.

However, globalization and modernization have significantly impacted local communities. Abbas & Shamim (2023) notes that globalization often pressures these communities to adapt to external influences introduced through media, technology, and economic forces. This can lead to the erosion of local identity and the loss of local wisdom that previously guided their way of life. Local communities face a dilemma: to preserve their traditions and identity or adjust to modern demands. Literature suggests that their ability to adapt to these changes will determine whether they endure or become marginalized. Through active participation in policy formulation and implementation, local communities can foster more inclusive and sustainable development aligned with their specific needs.

METHODOLOGY

This research utilizes a qualitative method with a descriptive approach aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon based on the perspectives of the research subjects. The study was conducted in Ngestiharjo Village, where the local community serves as the object of observation. This method was chosen as it allows researchers to engage directly with the community and understand their socio-cultural context. According to Moleong (2006) and Siswanto et al. (2024), qualitative research does not begin without a foundation but is based on the researcher's perception of a specific issue that later becomes the main focus. This focus narrows the scope of the study, ensuring it remains targeted and helps filter relevant information. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation, where the collected data is analyzed through stages of data gathering, reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing to comprehensively understand the studied phenomenon.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Student Brawls

Brawls or clashes are one of the negative phenomena often seen in society, involving various groups, including students. Fights between students are disgraceful acts that not only harm those involved but also the surrounding community. The damages can include the destruction of public facilities and private property. Furthermore, brawls can result in injuries and, in some cases, fatalities due to misdirected violence. This situation creates an unsafe environment and disrupts public order, instilling fear and trauma in witnesses or those involved in the incident.

Another negative impact of brawls is the degradation of social values, where acts of violence can set a bad example for children or other young people. If these brawls continue to happen, it can erode mutual respect and foster a culture of violence within society. If left unchecked, this phenomenon can instill aggressive behavior in children who may imitate these negative actions, which could potentially affect their mental and emotional development in the long term.

Littering

The habit of littering is still common among students, where it is often seen as a trivial act rather than something wrong. Many students fail to realize the long-term consequences of this behavior on the environment and the surrounding community. Such disregard reflects a lack of awareness of the importance of maintaining a clean environment, especially in densely populated areas like Ngestiharjo Village. Littering in streets, rivers, or open spaces damages the aesthetics of the area, making the surroundings unpleasant to look at, generating foul odors, and reducing the quality of life for the local residents due to the lack of environmental upkeep.

The more serious impacts of this behavior include potential disasters and health issues for the community. Poorly managed waste can block drainage systems, leading to floods, especially during the rainy season. Additionally, piles of trash become breeding grounds for various diseases, such as dengue fever and respiratory infections caused by air pollution. The polluted environment will result in declining public health in Ngestiharjo Village, eventually leading to higher healthcare costs and reduced productivity. Therefore, joint efforts are needed from both students and local governments to raise awareness of the importance of environmental cleanliness for the overall well-being of the community.

Lack of Etiquette

Etiquette plays a crucial role in daily life, serving as a guide for behavior that not only creates a positive impression but also makes others feel comfortable and respected when around us. When etiquette is properly observed, it supports harmonious social interactions filled with mutual respect. Etiquette encompasses various aspects of behavior, such as how we speak, share space, and demonstrate politeness in social interactions, all of which contribute to creating a pleasant and respectful atmosphere.

However, in Ngestiharjo Village, it seems that some students have yet to fully practice good etiquette in their daily behavior. They often make inappropriate jokes or greet passersby with disrespectful or provocative remarks. Such actions disturb the peace and create an uncomfortable environment for those around them. This lack of etiquette among students negatively affects the quality of social interactions and disrupts the harmony of the community in Ngestiharjo Village. Therefore, raising awareness about the importance of proper etiquette is essential. By educating and instilling good manners, interpersonal relationships can become more harmonious, and the community will feel more comfortable and valued in their surroundings.

Alcohol Consumption

The issue of alcohol consumption among students is a serious problem that has negative consequences for society, especially in Ngestiharjo Village, where this habit has become common. Students who engage in this behavior often do so to alleviate boredom, stress, or anxiety. Although they may believe that alcohol helps ease emotional issues, excessive drinking can worsen the situation.

In addition to its harmful effects on the students' health, alcohol consumption also causes unrest in the community. Intoxicated students are prone to negative behaviors such as violence or criminal acts, which harm not only themselves but also the surrounding environment. This creates discomfort and insecurity among local residents, highlighting the need for preventive measures and education to curb this bad habit among students.

Noise at Night

Noise is an unwanted sound that can disturb someone's comfort, not only limited to high-pressure or high-frequency sounds. In Ngestiharjo Village, noise is a frequent complaint, especially related to the behavior of students living in boarding houses. The sounds of racing motorbike exhausts, loud music, and students' laughter and shouting late at night disturb the peace during rest hours. This creates an uncomfortable environment for neighbors, particularly when they are trying to rest at night.

Such disturbances can affect the quality of sleep and mental health of the surrounding residents, who strive to enjoy quiet rest periods. This type of noise not only ruins nighttime tranquility but also causes prolonged discomfort. Therefore, it is important to raise students' awareness about the impact of noise on the community and seek solutions to reduce such disturbances, ensuring that the environment in Ngestiharjo Village becomes more harmonious and comfortable for all residents.

Offering Alcohol

Alcohol consumption has become a common habit for some people and even part of the culture in certain communities in Ngestiharjo Village. Alcohol is often served at various events, making it a common and accepted part of social life. However, it has been observed that some students, particularly those living in boarding houses, have engaged in inappropriate behavior by offering alcohol to minors. This is an unacceptable act, especially for individuals who are supposed to be role models.

This issue is not limited to students; adults also frequently consume alcohol in front of minors. This behavior can spark curiosity and interest in children to try alcohol, negatively affecting their development. When children witness such behavior being normalized, they are more likely to imitate it, potentially leading to bad habits in the future. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness and foster responsibility among students and the broader community about the impact of alcohol consumption, particularly in the context of its influence on younger generations.

Noise Pollution (Motor Vehicles)

Recently, residents living along the main roads of Ngestiharjo Village have been disturbed by the noise of motor vehicles with non-standard exhaust systems. Racing exhausts, known for producing extremely loud sounds, have become a serious issue affecting the comfort of the local community. The noise from these exhausts disrupts peace, especially at night when residents are trying to rest. In addition to causing discomfort, excessive noise can lead to stress and other health problems, such as hearing loss and elevated blood pressure, further deteriorating the environment's comfort.

Moreover, the use of racing exhausts has negative environmental consequences. These exhausts emit harmful gases that are not properly filtered, leading to air pollution and increasing health risks, particularly for those with respiratory issues such as asthma. The rise in air pollution caused by these exhaust fumes reduces the quality of life for local residents, diminishes environmental cleanliness, and disrupts the balance of ecosystems. Therefore, the use of racing exhausts not only contributes to noise pollution but also endangers public health and environmental sustainability.

Cultural, Ethnic, and Racial Differences

The cultural, ethnic, and racial differences among the boarding students in Ngestiharjo Village often show that they possess a relatively high level of tolerance toward one another. Despite coming from different backgrounds, these students tend to accept and appreciate the diversity in their surroundings without comparing one group to another. Their interactions demonstrate mutual respect, as reflected in their habitual greetings to local residents and participation in the community's social activities.

Students also show an interest in learning about local culture through active participation, such as learning traditional musical instruments and dances from the local community. This attitude not only reflects their openness to cultural diversity but also highlights their efforts to better understand and appreciate the traditions of Ngestiharjo Village. Thus, despite differences in background, these students contribute to creating a harmonious and respectful atmosphere in their environment.

Premarital Cohabitation

The issue of premarital cohabitation, where a man and a woman live together without a legally recognized marriage, often sparks various problems and controversy in society. This practice, which has become a habit for some, frequently disregards existing social norms and moral values. The consequences of this behavior include an increase in cases of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and sexual harassment, negatively affecting both the individuals involved and society at large.

Society often overlooks or normalizes premarital cohabitation, failing to consider the long-term impact it can have. The rise in out-of-wedlock pregnancies reflects a lack of understanding or awareness regarding the responsibilities and consequences of such relationships. Furthermore, the high incidence of sexual harassment related to premarital cohabitation indicates a larger issue of inadequate protection and respect for individual rights. Therefore, a more serious approach and effective education on moral values and the social consequences of such relationships are needed to address this growing problem in society.

Discussion

Student brawls represent a phenomenon that reflects a serious issue in society, particularly in Ngestiharjo Village. Conflicts involving students not only damage public facilities and personal property but also pose a threat to the safety of local residents, with the potential for minor or even severe injuries. In addition to the physical impact, such brawls create an uncondusive atmosphere and increase fear and trauma among the community (Siswanto, Alghiffari, et al., 2024). Furthermore, these acts of violence can undermine social values and foster aggressive behavior patterns that may spread to children and young people. This aligns with research findings Ramkissoon (2023), which indicate that brawls are not only a problem for those directly involved but also have the potential to deteriorate the overall quality of social life in the community.

Meanwhile, the prevalent habit among students of littering indicates a low awareness of the importance of environmental cleanliness. This behavior not only damages the aesthetic value of the environment but also poses health risks and potential hazards such as flooding due to clogged drainage. Additionally, accumulated waste can become a breeding ground for various diseases, which in turn can reduce the quality of life for residents and increase healthcare costs. This corresponds with research conducted Suryawan & Lee (2023), which suggests that effective preventive measures require active participation from students and local authorities to raise awareness and implement concrete steps in waste management.

On the other hand, the lack of manners among students also disrupts the comfort of the community. Poor manners, such as inappropriate jokes and teasing remarks, create an unpleasant atmosphere and damage harmonious social interactions. This is consistent with research Seneru et al. (2024), where damaged social interactions negatively affect the quality of interpersonal relationships and disrupt community harmony. Therefore, raising awareness about the importance of manners is essential for creating a more comfortable and respectful environment.

The prevalent behavior of excessive drinking among students adds complexity to the social issues at hand. This habit not only adversely affects the health of the students themselves but also causes distress in the community. Drunk students are often involved in negative behaviors, such as violence, which exacerbates discomfort and insecurity in the surrounding environment. Addressing this issue requires adequate preventive measures and education about the negative effects of alcohol, as well as efforts to reduce this harmful habit among students.

The noise caused by racing motorcycle exhausts and loud student activities at night also adds to the discomfort for residents. This disruption not only damages the tranquility of the night but can also affect the mental and physical health of the community. This is in line with findings Nnaji et al. (2023) and Tanikawa et al. (2024). Additionally, harmful emissions from racing exhausts pollute the air and damage environmental quality. Awareness of the impacts of noise and air pollution needs to be raised among students, and effective solutions must be implemented to mitigate these negative effects.

Differences in ethnicity, race, and culture among students indicate that tolerance and appreciation of cultural diversity are well-maintained. Students show mutual respect and actively learn about local cultures, such as traditional musical instruments and dances, contributing to a harmonious environment. This is consistent with findings Mpuangnan & Ntombela (2024), which reflect that diversity can be a strength when managed well, and efforts to understand and appreciate local traditions can strengthen social relations in the community.

The issue of premarital sex or relationships without legitimate marriage bonds demonstrates non-compliance with social norms and moral values. This practice often results in unintended pregnancies and sexual harassment, negatively impacting both individuals and society. The lack of awareness regarding the responsibilities and social consequences of such behavior adds to the complexity of the problem. This is in line with findings Iksal et al. (2024), which highlight the need for effective educational approaches related to moral values and the consequences of such relationships. Therefore, an effective educational approach is required to address the growing issue of premarital sex in society.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the research discussion indicate that various social issues involving students in Ngestiharjo Village have a significant impact on the quality of community life. Student brawls create an uncondusive atmosphere, increase fear and trauma, and undermine social values. Another issue requiring attention is the habit of littering, which reflects a low awareness of environmental cleanliness. The lack of manners among students also disrupts social harmony, while excessive drinking adds complexity to social problems with negative impacts on individual and community health. Noise from racing motorcycle exhausts and student activities at night further contributes to discomfort and air pollution. Conversely, tolerance and appreciation of cultural diversity among students show that differences in ethnicity, race, and culture can be well-managed, contributing to a harmonious environment. The issue of premarital sex indicates non-compliance with social norms and moral values. Effective education is needed to address these various issues and improve the quality of community life.

Based on the findings and discussion, it is recommended that students' parents choose safe boarding houses with strict regulations to prevent deviant behavior, given that students are often bold and may engage in undesirable actions if given the opportunity. Boarding house owners are also expected to regularly supervise and control the students residing in their facilities, as frequent monitoring will reduce the likelihood of deviant behavior. Additionally, cooperation between boarding house owners and local residents is crucial to address deviant behavior among students. Students need to be aware of their responsibility to honor their parents, nation, and country, and adhere to religious teachings as a guide in their lives. Character education through advice and guidance from lecturers, parents, and elders is essential to help students behave well and avoid negative actions.

FURTHER STUDY

Based on the research findings, recommendations for future researchers include the development of a prevention program for student brawls, involving training in conflict resolution and collaboration with local security forces, and engaging students in this process. Further research is advised to design awareness campaigns on environmental cleanliness among students, including educational programs about the impacts of littering and waste management solutions. To address issues of manners, it is important to develop social etiquette training modules and assess their impact. Research should also explore effective prevention methods for excessive drinking, including education on the risks of alcohol and community support. Focusing on noise control and air pollution through the development of local regulations and awareness programs is also crucial, as well as strengthening tolerance and appreciation of cultural diversity among students. Finally, evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs on social and moral norms to address the issue of premarital sex is necessary.

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