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Exploring the High of School Dropout Rate: a Case Study on Bajo Tribe in South Sulawesi Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find out the high incidence of school dropout in recent times. A study was conducted in Bajo tribe, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The enrollment rate of children in primary school is lacking in this area. This research uses a qualitative case study approach in Bajo tribe to explore this phenomenon as clearly as possible. Observation, unstructured interviews with teachers, parent, and children and a review of official documents were used for data collection. The data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively. The results of this study, the high dropout rate for Bajo children were due to four main factors: for Bajo children: (1) cultural and environmental, (2) low family income, (3) school curriculum, classroom facilities, and teacher teaching methods, and (4) children's own life habits. In doing so, it is necessary to provide education services in a proportional way according to the characteristics and the natural of Bajo children. For further research is needed to do something about how to minimize the number of Bajo children who dropout

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the important parts that should be a concern for every community, including coastal communities, but the fact is very different. Coastal communities themselves lack motivation for their children to go to school (Ali, 2017; Mansyur, 2019). The majority of coastal communities believe that people's lives can be better without formal education (Bakti, 2009, Elisa, 2013). The education of parents who have only completed primary school or have not even completed secondary school. This greatly affects the way parents think about sending their children to school (Sakheraeni, 2012). Meanwhile, Dahuri (2006) states that 75 percent of large cities are located in coastal areas, with high levels of urbanization. In this area, there are 8,090 coastal villages inhabited by 16.42 million people.

According to the Bone Regency Education Office, in 2020, there are 5,673 children of primary school age who have dropped out of school (DrOS) in Bone Regency. The average level of education of Bajo communities stopped at primary school and only a few communities have Junior High School (Ali, 2017; Arisaputri et al, 2020). Dropping out of school leads to failures in social integration and, consequently, significantly reduces the chances of personal success in legal fields of activity. The prevention and reduction of this phenomenon is very difficult to achieve due to the high complexity of its causes (Gabriela, 2010). A fair identification and analysis of these factors will help identify the actions to be taken and ultimately lead to school decline and prevention. On the other hand, it affects the position of the Human Development Index in Bone Regency. Nationally, this condition is also a serious challenge to achieve the development goal of the RMTDP (National Medium Term Development Plan) 2020-2024 to improve the quality and competitiveness of human resources. This case is very important to be solved immediately.

The government has made several efforts to keep the Bajo children in school. They rents a place close to where they live and provides school uniforms and textbooks. Children who dropped out of public schools were invited to return to the

institutions of school places provided by the government. However, these efforts did not last long. The Bone District Children's Education Institute also intervened with a personnel approach, but these efforts were not sustainable. This is an interesting phenomenon to study, why do Bajo children DrOs so easily?

Several researchers had previously looked at this case, but research on Bajo children is unique. More ever, most of the researchers suggested natural schools. There has been no in-depth study on the reasons why Bajo children DrOS altogether. They teach children to nature or nature schools (Barrable and Booth, 2020). Teaching students in natural schools by implementing a spider web education system (Lendonovo, 2018: 53). However, these studies have not touched on the mental atmosphere of the children, how teachers deal with them, and how Bajo children learn. This research aims to uncover the reasons why the Bajo DrOS easily. Why could they not stay in school for long, either in primary school or secondary school? Based on my previous observations and interviews, we propose four hypotheses (Hp) research as follows:

Most of the Bajo tribe children dropout of school due to the following four factors:

Hp.1.Cultural and environmental factors surrounding the child.

Hp.2. Low family income

Hp.3. School curriculum classroom facilities, and teacher teaching methods

Hp.4. Children's own life habits

METHODS

Research Subject

This study uses a qualitative approach and through case study. This research was conducted on the Bajo tribe, Bone Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The research focused on Bajo children. The research subjects were five Bajo tribe children who have dropped out of school, four parents, one headmaster, and two teachers. The details of the research subjects are as follows.

Table 1. The Research Subjects

| Subject Code | Sex | Age (years) | Description of Subjects |
|--------------|-----|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NDA | M | 11 | NDA left the school since 5 th in primary school (PSc). He spent more time helping his parents go to sea, so he missed a lot of schools. He was ashamed to return to school |
| CIC | F | 10 | CIC dropped out of school in 3 rd PSc because he helped his mother dry fish almost every morning. |
| ARN | F | 9 | ARN left the school when he was in 3 rd grade because he himself went to school around his house |
| UMR | M | 9 | This child was tired of going to school every day. He though the school was not interesting. The school had a lot of rules. He left school in 2 nd , even semester of 2021/2022. |
| NMT | F | 8 | This child left the school because he followed his friends. The parents have persuaded him to return to school, but he still did not want to go. |
| MST | F | 58 | She is an elementary school headmaster. She has been a teacher in PSc since 34 years ago. He already has a teaching certificate. Although she is the principal, she sometimes teaches children in the classroom. |
| BNG | F | 52 | She is a 2 nd elementary school teacher. She has been a teacher since 1986 up to now. She also has a teaching certificate. |
| SHP | F | 48 | She teaches in 5 th . She has been teaching since 1990 up to now in Bajoe. She also has a teaching certificate. |
| DIP | M | 65 | He is the head of Bajo community |
| RMD | M | 60 | He is ARN's father. His daily work is helping the boss of the fishing boat. He only gets wage services from the boss who he follows. |
| ARF | M | 46 | He is a fisherman using a motorboat. Sometimes his motorboat was also rented out. |
| SJH | F | 43 | She is a housewife. She has six children. Sometimes, she helps her husband to sell the fish. |

Source: Interviews in the research field

These DrOS students were chosen because they are the main characters in the case of this research. They are wild. They did not like to be in a certain place to be talked to.

Data Collection Techniques and Sources

Data collection took five weeks. During this time, data collection depended on the arrival of the

parents and their children on land. Thus, the subjects of this study naturally consisted of two groups, namely those who went to the sea and those who did not go to the sea. Those who did not go to the sea are generally female. These two groups were observed and interviewed separately, regardless of which of them might be encountered (Christensen, et al.,

2014; Cohen, et al., 2005). In particular, coastal security officers and customary leaders of coastal communities need to be given permission..

Use of purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques (Cohen, et al, 2007; Christensen, et al., 2014) to identify informants. Data are in narrative form (Ylikoski and Zahle, 2019). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the research subjects to obtain complete information according to their needs. Observations were made about the life of the Bajo people, household conditions, conditions in the study area, and observations about children's habits in their activities, both inside and outside the study room.

Research Instruments and Data Analysis

The main instrument is the researcher himself (Cohen, et al., 2007; Creswell, 2014). Instruments in the form of a list of key questions and observation themes were used to collect data directly in the field. Documentation regarding the profile of coastal children also supported data from interviews and observations. For triangulation purposes (Creswell, 2014), the data sources were semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation. Active recording during interviews and field notes are on an ongoing basis. Narrative analysis of the informants' experiences of and the possibilities presented. Individual analyses were explored as a team (Stake, 2008), to increase reliability and develop a collective interpretation of the dataset. The variable studied was the participation of coastal children at Bajo Beach with a focus on four hypotheses research. An interpretive case study approach was used in which different methods were combining and analyzing (Yin, 2003).

Findings

Based on a documentation study owned by the director of a learning activity institution for children of the Bajo tribe, the attendance rate of the student is

between 10-25%, and sometimes 0% of the students were present in the classroom. This case showed that there was a dropout in the basic education institution. Using the method of observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, the research results were described based on the research hypotheses that have been mentioned above.

Hp.1. Cultural and environmental factors surrounding the child.

The observations regarding the natural physical environment of the coastal area of the Bajo tribe were so peaceful, cool, serene, and comfortable. There was an embankment along the coast where children often played. Natural conditions like this are very well used as a source of learning, especially for the Bajo Children Tribe (BCT). The courtyard of the Bajo tribe's home is not conducive to children's play. In addition, to the frequent exposure to the tides in the yards of these houses, the distance between the houses of the residents is also close. In the middle of the Bajo tribe village, there is a house on stilts, where the BTC went to school.

Residents of the Bajo tribe could already interact with the Bugis people who around them. The children could also socialize and play with other ethnic children. In their daily interactions, the BCT showed a responsible, athletic, and persistent attitude. It's just that most of them were primary school dropout. Such a social environment could not be expected to improve the BCT's education. A housewife with the initials SJH, a housewife from the Bajo tribe, revealed to the researchers, "*Girls here, when they grow up, they get married right away. They get someone to help them find food.*" This fact showed that the cultural environment does not support the BCT to continue their education. Thus, cultural and environmental factors are one of the causes of many BCT dropping out of school early.

Hp.2. Low family income

Bajo people live from the sea. Going to the sea is the only way for them to maintain life with their families. They abstain from working on land, so they lack of knowledge and experience to working other than at the sea. Their income average is 1,5-2 million rupiah per month. It is far below the minimum wage

- R : *All of your children go to school, right "?"*
RMD : *"My son, help me to the sea, Sir. If he did not like that... ..who else anyone wants to help me?"*
R : *What about is your daughter?"*
RMD : *"School, Sir! but she is very lazy go to school (while he nodded his head)*
(Interview, RMD. October, 09, 2022)

After hearing RMD's narrative, he pointed another person who could researcher meet at that

- ARF : *"He's been to school, but he left not long further. Not finish the school."*
R : *"What do you think, why does your child leave the school?"*
ARF. : *"Help Dad find money." (He looked a bit confused for a moment).*
(Interview, ARF. October, 09, 2022)

The RMD and ARF answers were very relevant to the following statements. *"Yes, some of children help their father in the sea. Including my children. They help me with any work."* (Interview, October, 09, 2022). DIP, the head of Bajo community, commented strongly by stating, *"Well, when boys grow up they have to help their father earn a living at the sea and that's all here, fishing is Sir."* (Interview. October, 20,2022)

Confirming of those parents' statements above, 1st Child, NDA, stated that he helped his father to the sea. Meanwhile, the 2nd child, UMR, answered non-verbally. He just nodding of his head (it's mean, he agree with dad's opinion). He said later that taking school was boring. *"Not happy there (school). No good!"* (Interview. NDA and UMR. September, 04, 2022). Meanwhile, CIC left the school because her mother often invited her to help dry some fishes. *"I help my mother dry fish,"* her said. Based on this

of South Sulawesi Province in 2022 of Rp3,165,876 per month. In fact, it will affect of family life. Excerpts from the results of the researcher's (R) interview with RMD, an informant and the father of a student.

time. He is ARF. Some questions is the same as a previous parents informant.

phenomenon, it is stated that one of the reasons why many Bajo children drop out of school are helping their fathers earn a living.

Hp.3. School curriculum, classroom facilities, and teacher teaching methods

Regarding the school curriculum, BCT found the subject matter difficult to understand and there were many lessons to learn. In addition, the study time is long and there is little time to play. "There are many lessons in school. It's also hard to understand and there's little time to play. BCT is not able to follow the ideal curriculum material that is formally implemented in public schools. BCT also do not like a lot of homework. Due to the method of teaching, BCT gets bored easily and does not like to follow the lessons. The researcher interviewed BNG. She said,

"I follow the subject matter as it is written in the textbook, sir. And I am consistent. So

I just teach according to the book. I don't develop the curriculum in the teaching and learning process, but through the students' homework, sir. That's it, sir. (Interview, October 20, 2022).

The statement above showed that the teachers did not develop the lesson material according to students abilities and their environmental conditions. By this condition, it can be stated that the curriculum used was not relevant to the BCT environment. This fact shows that teachers' pedagogical skills contribute to students' dislike of learning in school. In fact, teaching tools could encourage students' attention to learning. (Carstens, et al, 2021).

On other factors, based on the researcher's observations, the school facilities that BCT had visited were not suitable for educating children. BNG and SHP, the teachers of BCT's, admitted that the school does not have any attractive facilities to fight the students' boredom when they are at school. The size of desks and benches (for two people) is disproportionate, the blackboard is so narrow (about 1.20x80 cm), there are no child-friendly pictures, and there are no fiction books or picture books that children generally enjoy. We asked about government subsidies. "Yes, it is, sir. But it has its own post. Maybe next period, sir, for the learning facilities more," said MST briefly.

Hp.4. Children's own life habits

The BCT like to study in groups, whether they are of the same sex or not. It's just that when the teacher was explaining the lesson, they were often playing with each other. They did not pay attention to the lesson. They did not pay much attention, even though the teacher reminded them some times to be quiet. When the teacher distributed books to them, they looked at the pictures first. Then they talked to each other. But when class was over, they left the room cheerfully. When they came out of the

classroom, they seemed so happy. This case indicates that children want to learn freely, they want to learn independently, and they didn't like being strictly regulated. They wanted to learn in their own way. Students' learning styles are related to students' academic performance (Nursen, et al. 2018).

An important relationship exists between learning styles and students' motivation to learn. (Ghaedi & Jam, 2014). The BCT have very low motivation to learn. In fact, their motivation wanes, when confronted with the material. The BCT learner is predominantly kinesthetic. They have a preference for movement and play. Unfortunately, this habit was not exploited to the maximum in school, both in formal and non-formal schools.. Thus, many BCT dropped out of school because their habits in daily life were not conveyed by the learning activities at the school.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study clearly reveal the root cause of the High Rate of Dropout (HRD) of BCT to go to school. The BCT were too lazy to go to school. They preferred to work rather than study. They accompanied their parents went to sea for adding family income. The BCT were more worried about helping their parents than continuing their studies. They also felt that people work to earn some money and could lighten parents burden in their life. their parents did not pay much attention to continuing their children's schooling. Bajo community mindset that the sea is the best place to survive. On the other hand, the dropout variable is a "serious problem" not only for individuals, school systems and communities, but also for society (Gausel & Bourguignon, 2020; Berger, 2019). It is one of the expected when there is someone like the Bajo tribe, who appears to influence the community significantly to encourage children to enter the school

The study place condition is a variable that can be modified to attract students' attention. Having good school condition is a strong signal and it creates a positive social climate for student to encourage better student attendance. (Maxwell, 2018).

Conversely, negative perceptions of the school social climate is also contribute to high student absenteeism. The building, where BCT studies, actually invites negative perceptions of the students.

In addition, the learning places did not have any attractive to invite students attending in school. School was lacking facility, teachers' teaching methods and techniques did not various, subject matter was not contextual, it was difficult expected to carrying students' talents and potential to the fullest (Kim, et al. 2019). Places or classroom has less attractive to students, can affect students' interest in coming to school (Blatchford et al. 2009; Maringe & Sing, 2014). We know that the school raw input are children whose learning motivation are very low. Therefore, it is the best one if their learning environment made as attractive as possible.

The BCT want to be independent in learning. They were not comfortable when the subjects are narrow. They learn in their own way with their talents and abilities. The teacher must allow in interests the students to choose important thing. In this way, they are involved in important project work in the lessons (Kopzhassarova, et al, 2016). The research results indicate that the curriculum applied in BCT school is exactly similar to the curriculum of public schools. Perhaps there are similarities in some aspects, such as the expected competencies of students, but teachers need to adapt in content and methods in order to capture the competencies of BCT. The referenced national curriculum should only serve as a basis for compiling a more flexible, urgent, practical and useful syllabus. With such a syllabus, BTC could be facilitated to determine the materials they like and need very much. This is one of the best ways to improve their quality of life.

Teachers' teaching strategies were not strong enough to attract the attention of BCT for survival in schools. In fact, the attention factor is important in learning (Amjaha, 2014; Omairi & Balushi, 2015). The main focus of teachers is actually how to persuade the BCT so that they come to school with pleasure. When the BTC in school, teachers must make them happy and they want to survive in school

learning. For the BCT's condition, teachers do not need to pursue many things in relation to the curriculum. However, how to restore their attention and motivation to return them to school. Therefore, the teacher should first adapt the curriculum content to BCT's conditions before implementing. Good instruction must link local strengths so that children don't find the material presented alien (Viloriaa, et al., 2019).

Teaching and learning strategies and methods for BCT was very different from regular schools. These findings can be a source of inspiration and important data for the government and Bone Regency stakeholders to develop an education service program effectively, especially BCT. The strengths of this research are the data and information extracted from nature informants, actors, implementers, direct observations, and interview to various groups informants. However, it was only examines child who was registered at the Bajo beach education center. Researchers have not recorded yet how the existence of BCT are enrolled in public schools, both in primary and secondary education in Bajo mainland area.

CONCLUSION

Educating children should be tailored to their habits, needs and environment in which they live. Bajo children with their characteristics are not used to learning with strict rules at school, so they mostly drop out of school. Dropout means a student who leaves school before completing his or her education at a certain level of education. The four hypotheses that have been proposed are accepted. So, the number of Bajo children dropping out is caused by four factors: (1) Cultural and environmental, (2) low family income, (3) School curriculum, classroom facilities, and teacher teaching methods, and (4) Children's own life habits. There is a way for other researchers to continuing of this research by focus on: (1) Teaching materials that are related to the characteristics of the Bajo children, and (2) a practical, natural, and talent-based education for the

Bajo children. It is important to educate Bajo children in a different way from others.

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