



Strategies to overcome problematic students at primary school in Indonesia

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to: (1) determine the condition of problematic children at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait Elementary School, Indonesia; (2) determine the supporting and inhibiting factors in handling children's problems at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait Elementary School, Indonesia; and (3) explore effective strategies for handling problem children at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait Elementary School, Indonesia.

This study used qualitative research methods. This study was carried out at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait Elementary School. The data subjects obtained were 2 school principals, 15 teachers, and 5 stakeholders from Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait Elementary School. Interviews, observation, and documentation were used to collect data. The data analysis techniques used were data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Furthermore, triangulation was used as a data validity technique.

The findings of this study indicate that: 1) the condition of problematic children at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait Elementary School, Indonesia, is considered good in handling problematic children; 2) constraining factors in dealing with problematic children include internal and external factors. Support from the school committee, church, local administration, and other stakeholders is crucial in dealing with problematic children/students. Aside from that, a lack of collaboration has an impact on the tactics used to deal with difficult children/students; and 3) effective strategies for dealing with problematic children/students at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait Elementary School include: a) taking a persuasive and family approach with students to provide support and strength as well as persuade and invite children/students to attend school, b) providing motivation to problematic children/students with the goal of instilling in them a sense of desire, willingness, and future responsibility, c) visiting problematic children/students' home to communicate directly with their parents and determine the true source of their difficulties, and d) managing problematic children/students' difficulties by involving numerous institutional elements to resolve their problems more successfully.

Keywords: Strategy, problematic children, elementary school

Introduction

As stated in Article 1, Point 1 of Chapter I (General Provisions) of Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, "Education is a deliberate and purposeful endeavor to establish an environment and process conducive to learning, wherein pupils actively cultivate their inherent capabilities, including but not limited to religious and spiritual fortitude, self-discipline, intellect, noble character, and proficiencies that are indispensable for the betterment of oneself, society, the nation, and state." Education is the most fundamental need that is accessible to all, since it cannot perform its intended purpose if it is cut off from its surroundings.

Education is the endeavor of individuals to cultivate acknowledged potential through the acquisition of knowledge. In accordance with Law No. 20 of 2003 Concerning the National Education System, the government, in its capacity as the provider of education, established a national education system. The National Education System is organized in accordance with the values of the Indonesian nation, Pancasila, and the Constitution of 1945, which are both rooted in Indonesian culture.

Educational institutions, including schools, encompass a multitude of interconnected and complementary facets where teaching and learning activities are conducted with the aim of enhancing students' potential and overall quality of life. Institutions of higher learning are entrusted with the

responsibility of instructing and guiding students whose socioeconomic status falls below that of their families. The majority of the development of intelligence, interests, and attitudes as components of personality formation occurs within the school environment. Ultimately, the purpose of education is to humanize individuals by classifying or treating them in accordance with their inherent characteristics.

Teaching and learning activities comprise teacher-student interactions designed to impart instructional materials and accomplish teaching goals (Suryasubroto, 2009) [27]. Instructors and learners constitute the fundamental elements of educational endeavors. The teaching and learning process can be effectively executed with the presence of these two elements. The absence of any component will result in the failure to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Consequently, the process of imparting knowledge to pupils is impeded. Considering this perspective, it is evident that the inclusion of fundamental elements in the course of educational endeavors is of the utmost importance.

As an educational leader, the principal bears the greatest responsibility for the academic achievement of his institution. The principal is concerned with leadership in the execution of responsibilities and interpersonal relationships. Additionally, establishing positive relationships with all school personnel is a skill that the school principal must possess (Muhhroji, 2004). The school principal must have the ability to transform the institution into a child-friendly

environment and enhance teacher proficiency in order to elevate the quality and enjoyment of the learning process for all students.

The institution of learning, school, and the challenges faced by children are inextricably linked. For instance, parental support for education is cited as the reason for 25% of children in Asmat Regency's 136 elementary schools being absent from class (Dapodik Kemendikbudristek, 2022/2023), which demonstrates a lack of enthusiasm for learning. Elementary school pupils, who are expected to be in class, are required to accompany their parents on a two-month-long search for gaharu trees. This diversionary activity results in students being absent from school and falling significantly behind in the curriculum. If this issue is not promptly resolved, it may lead to an increase in the number of children attending school because their parents will fail to recognize the value of education. Additionally, the lack of reading proficiency among children in Asmat Regency is a concern that demands particular attention. According to data obtained from *Tribun Papua.com* in 2023, 123 elementary school students in Asmat Regency, or 58% of the population, are illiterate. The data were obtained through the administration of reading, writing, and arithmetic assessments carried out by the Education and Culture Service of South Papua Province. As the current issue persists, an ascertainable reduction in human resources is imminent in Asmat Regency. This issue is extremely complex and cannot be resolved solely by educational institutions; rather, it requires the participation of numerous sectors. Effective resolution of issues involving children requires the collaboration of the school committee, principal, teacher council, parents, and other constituents. In light of the aforementioned context, the purpose of this study is to investigate the state of children who are experiencing difficulties, as well as the factors that facilitate or impede their progress, and to propose approaches for managing these children at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School in Agats City, Asmat Regency. The researcher wishes to investigate "Strategies for Handling Problematic Children at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School in Agats City, Indonesia."

The objective of this study is to ascertain the following regarding children experiencing academic difficulties at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School: (1) the state of these children; (2) factors that supporting or inhibiting the management of challenging students at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School in the Asmat district of Agats city; and (3) strategies that are effective in managing challenging students at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School, Indonesia.

Research method

A. Research Design

The present study employs a qualitative research design. The objective of this study is to assess the state of problematic children at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School, as well as the endeavors of school committees, principals, and stakeholders in managing these children. The research will also examine the factors that facilitate or impede the progress of problematic children, with a particular emphasis on strategies to address and resolve child absences. This study implements

qualitative research, which entails investigation via interviews and observations in order to comprehend the circumstances or phenomena encountered by subjects in prior research.

B. Research Time and Location

Research was conducted at two elementary schools in Indonesia, namely Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School, from January to March 2024.

C. Data Sources

Primary data consists of information acquired directly from the source, whereas secondary data comprises information gathered from prior sources. The data gathered for this study pertains to the approaches taken by school committees, stakeholders, and principals at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School to address the issue of student absences. In order to acquire information and data that are reliable, precise, and valid in light of this research. The research utilizes the school principal, school committee, stakeholders, and teacher council as data sources.

D. Research Instruments

The data collected is primary data directly obtained from the source and secondary data is data collected from previous data. The data collected in this research is data related to the strategies of school principals, school committees and stakeholders in efforts to overcome children's absences at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School. To obtain valid, accurate and convincing data and information based on this research. The data sources in this research consist of the school principal, school committee, stakeholders, and teacher council.

1. Observation

At various points in time, researchers conducted observations at two schools, SD Inpres Syuru and SD Negeri Mbait. While there, they examined the state of the schools and the surrounding environment, which offered valuable insights into the living conditions of school children.

2. Interview

In this case, the research conducted interviews with direct questions and answers with the principal of SD Inpres Syuru, the Principal of Mbait State School, the Committee Chairs from both schools and also Stakeholders and the teacher council who could be sources for researchers.

3. Documentation

An evaluation of numerous documents pertaining to this research, including those of school principals, school committees, and stakeholders, was conducted in addition to interviews and observations in an effort to collect the data and information required for this study. Supporting documentation for this research comprises a range of photographs and letters obtained from the two research institutions, SD Inpres Syuru and SD Negeri Mbait.

E. Data Analysis Technique

As planned, data analysis starts with gathering information in the field through interviews, observations, and written records. The data is then compiled and shown as it is in the

field. The next step is to reduce the amount of data that is already there. The researcher then presents the data. The next step is to analyze the data and have a discussion about it. The last step is to come up with a conclusion as the researcher's answer.

Findings and discussion

1. The Condition of Problematic Children

a. Issues that have arisen at the Inpres Syuru Elementary School

According to the findings of the research, a considerable number of students continue to miss classes for a variety of reasons. In schools, problematic students are no longer frowned upon. Hence, it is not unusual to encounter numerous grievances lodged by educators, school administrators, and potentially members of the community regarding challenging students. A multitude of factors contribute to the development of problematic children.

Based on the findings of interviews with six teachers and principals conducted by researchers, it can be concluded that, on average, educators at Inpres Syuru Elementary School genuinely concern themselves with students' education and growth. As stated by one of the teachers in an interview, although their absence from school is emphasized more than the children or students who are experiencing difficulties, the subject matter of every teacher council meeting is such. Multiple factors contribute to this, and the educational institution has made significant endeavors to surmount it.

Additional sources stated in interviews that student absences were the most significant and challenging challenges for educators to address. Despite the efforts of the teachers, particularly the homeroom teacher who also serves as a supervising teacher, to engage in dialogue with the student, no progress has been made. In fact, we consulted with the parents of the students prior to the distribution of the grade promotion report cards, but the outcome remained unchanged. Parents are unconcerned, and to make matters worse, they frequently place the responsibility on school personnel who are incapable of resolving these issues.

b. Issues that have arisen at the Mbait Elementary School

The findings of the conducted research revealed that the challenges faced by students at Mbait State Elementary School were remarkably similar to those encountered by students at Inpres Syuru Elementary School. It can be concluded, based on the findings of the researcher's interviews with resource persons, that all educators are fundamentally devoted to instructing, educating, and advising pupils, particularly those who are experiencing difficulties. According to a number of educators, the most challenging and complex issue to resolve is the issue of children's absence from school. The alpha factor (without explanation) accounts for over 900 students' absences each month; economic and low interest in school are additional significant contributors.

A teacher once remarked that students tended to miss two to three months of classes following the start of the academic year. The absence of parental support and tedium during school activities contribute to this. Some instructors also assert that while a significant number of students enroll and attend class diligently during the initial months of the

academic year, by October, a considerable number of students have ceased attending.

2. Supporting Factors

a. Teachers

Teachers serve as educators whom their students look up to and strive to emulate, thus making them role models. Educators exert a significant impact on the realm of learning. According to interviews conducted in the field at Inpres Syuru Elementary School, it was determined that every teacher possesses a bachelor's degree in education. Twenty-one instructors from PGSD S1 and six instructors from S1 Education in the discipline of study are specified. This factor unquestionably facilitates the teaching and learning process and can assist students with their difficulties.

Educators at Mbait State Elementary School fulfill the prerequisites and credentials of professional educators. Furthermore, according to the findings of the conducted interviews, the teacher council at Mbait State Elementary School consistently stays informed about educational advancements by participating in professional development programs designed to enhance their teaching capabilities. Additionally, they must always be capable of resolving pupil issues at school.

b. School Committee

A school committee is an autonomous organization established in accordance with Decree Number 044/U/2002 of the Minister of National Education to facilitate community engagement in the enhancement of pre-school education management's quality, equity, and efficiency, as well as school and non-school education pathways.

A school committee is an institution or body that operates independently of the school. As per the provisions outlined in Law No. 20 of 2003 pertaining to the National Education System, the school committee functions as an autonomous entity that facilitates community engagement with the aim of enhancing the management of preschool, primary, and secondary education with regard to quality, equity, and efficiency.

The School Committee is responsible for the following: (1) Formulating school strategic plans. This entails formulating a school development strategy with a timeframe of three to four years. (2) Annual school planning preparation, which is a collaborative effort involving school strategic planning. (3) Conduct prearranged meetings to address and accommodate a range of prevailing issues and requirements. (4) Contemplating potential initiatives to enhance the educational institution, with a particular focus on the adequacy of facilities, educational provisions, and financing of educational expenses, in order to cultivate the institution's competitive and comparative advantages. (5) Suggest that educational institutions conduct internal monitoring and self-evaluation, and provide a forum for the school committee to discuss the findings. (6) Analyze the outcomes of standardized assessments administered by external organizations or agencies with the aim of upholding quality assurance and ensuring that educational environments adhere to the minimum requirements for student competence.

c. Stakeholder

Educational stakeholders are an additional group that exists within the realm of education. Entities impacted by educational policies and activities are stakeholders in education. Regarding stakeholders in education, the following distinctions are made between internal and external school stakeholders: External education stakeholders comprise groups or organizations from outside the school, such as government, regional social institutions, communities, and course and training institutions. Internal education stakeholders comprise teachers, students, parents, and school administration staff.

Parents, the government, the church, and the village are stakeholders at Inpres Syuru Elementary School. School developments and issues are of concern to all stakeholders. Inpres Syuru Elementary School's interview results support the conclusion that stakeholders play an exceptionally valuable role in the institution's collaborative efforts. Even though they are not ideal, stakeholders also contribute to the resolution of issues in schools.

Parental and guardian guardians, the Catholic church, the village government, and individuals interested in Papuan education were identified as stakeholders in the Mbait State Elementary School, according to the findings of an interview with one of the instructors. The school is aided in a unique way by each stakeholder. Additionally, the village government, traditional elders, merchants, and proprietors of entertainment venues have labored in tandem with Mbait State Elementary School. Student absenteeism decreased as a consequence of this occurrence. Additionally, the educational institution engages in a partnership with the Catholic church, specifically the parish pastor, in order to foster parental comprehension and compassion regarding the critical nature of education. Pupils at Mbait State Elementary School, where parental ignorance regarding their children's or students' education causes adversity for the average Papuan child, is perpetually in the church's thoughts and concerns.

3. Inhibiting Factors

Every school undoubtedly faces impediments in the realm of education, which manifest as challenges that require collaborative resolution. Student absenteeism constituted nearly identical challenges at both Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School, according to research. Internal and external factors are identified as impediments to effectively managing challenging children, according to the interview findings.

a. Internal Factors

Internal factors are those that are present within the learner. (1) Compulsively using the internet and television until midnight are elements that contribute to the absence of students with academic difficulties. (2) Students lack the inclination to acquire knowledge. (3) The elimination of the PMAS program, which diminishes students' incentive to attend class.

In accordance with the findings of an interview conducted with the principal of SD Inpres Syuru, two factors prevent students from attending class: tardiness in arising and environmental influences exerted by parents and local peers. A comparable statement was additionally expressed by an educator at Mbait State Elementary School. The student was still asleep when the instructors arrived at his residence; he

had stayed up until midnight watching television at a friend's residence. Even more astonishing was the fact that the student's guardians failed to wake him up for school.

b. External Factors

External factors are environmental elements that have the potential to impact an individual. The following external factors exert an influence on children who are troubled and therefore absent from school: (1) The familial milieu. (2) It is not uncommon for parents to instruct their children to watch over their younger siblings while they are at home. (3) Homework is completed by students during school hours. (4) An economic family. (5) Environmental influences, such as staying up late browsing the internet or inviting friends over to play PlayStation. (6) Assisting merchants with cart pushing during school hours. The fundamental sources of impediments for troubled students are the students themselves, their parents, and their surroundings.

4. Strategies to Overcome Problematic Children

Problematic pupils will inevitably coexist within an educational institution. Self-destructive tendencies are not invariably indicative of a problematic pupil being present in the classroom. However, children can develop into problematic pupils due to the substantial impact of certain causal factors.

Two factors contribute to the occurrence of difficulties in adolescents, according to Putriana and Moes (2015). Family and school environments are the initial and subsequent determinants, respectively. The family is the primary influence, followed by the institution. Problematic as the child may be, both of which fail to exert a positive influence on the child. Ensuring that children develop into decent individuals requires that parents and schools collaborate to establish a positive environment.

The author devised an effective strategy to address challenging students at Inpres Syuru Elementary School and Mbait State Elementary School in Agats city, Asmat district, based on the problem formulation discussed in the introduction. The subsequent procedures are implemented when addressing children who present challenges.

- a. Employ a family communication and persuasion strategy when dealing with challenging children or pupils.
- b. Foster motivation among students experiencing difficulties.
- c. Visit the residence of a troubled child.
- d. Depending on the root cause, collaborate with affiliated institutions to resolve student issues.

Conclusions and suggestions

a. Conclusions

1. The Condition of Problematic Children

The state of troublesome pupils at Syuru Presidential Instruction and Mbait State Elementary School can be attributed to a variety of internal and external factors. With regard to the former, internal factors include students who miss school due to delayed awakenings, diminished study motivation, and the elimination of the PMAS program, which severely diminished students' desire to attend. In the interim, the external factors include the following: parents frequently assign their children domestic responsibilities such as cooking, washing, and caring for younger siblings;

children accompany their parents into the forest in search of food and fishing in the sea; and children assist others; these actions have a negative impact on the family economy. Old stevedores assisting merchants with cart pushing during school hours and loading products at the port. These various factors exert influence on the academic progress of children, resulting in a significant number of children falling behind and developing feelings of inferiority. As a result of experiencing feelings of inferiority, children lose interest in attending school. Students or children who fail to address their concerns in a serious manner may be forced to withdraw from school.

2. Supporting Factors and Inhibiting Factors for Problematic Children

The impediments faced by both educational institutions encompass both internal and external factors. Internal factors include excessive screen time and late-night internet usage, a lack of motivation among children, and the elimination of the PMAS program, which significantly diminishes the motivation of students and children to attend class. The family environment constitutes an external factor; parents frequently instruct their children to watch over their younger siblings at home. The two institutions rely on the support of their respective school committees and stakeholders.

3. Strategies to Overcome Problematic Children

Both educational institutions employ a persuasive and familial communication approach when dealing with challenging students. Educators are additionally anticipated to inspire children who are experiencing difficulties, pay visits to the residences of such children, and collaboratively resolve issues involving students or children and their parents. Subsequently, educational institutions are required to engage in cross-sector collaboration with a multitude of interconnected entities, including but not limited to the civil service police, village, sub-district, and district governments, police, *babinsa*, and education services.

b. Suggestions

1. For School

The principal together with the teacher's council in dealing with problematic children should:

- a. Fostering effective student communication entails the principal and instructors inquiring about students' well-being and encouraging them to share insights gained during meetings.
- b. Demonstrate active listening skills towards students facing challenges. If a student appears disheartened or unmotivated, initiate a conversation with them and inquire about their emotions; this will alleviate their gloomy demeanor. Additionally, the instructor should possess good listening skills to enable students to feel at ease when expressing the contents of their hearts.
- c. Foster student motivation when principals and instructors meet with struggling children or students; use words that inspire students' enthusiasm; and offer encouragement for every constructive endeavor that students aspire to accomplish. So that students perceive that the principal and instructors care about and adore them.
- d. Pay a home visit to a child or student who is experiencing difficulties so that you may ascertain the

precise nature of the issues present and devise a resolution.

- e. The school should strive to schedule joint appointments with parents on a regular basis to provide updates on the progress of the child or student.

2. School Committee

As representatives of parents and the community, the school committee should establish communication and collaborate with the school principal and the teacher council to overcome problems that occur in the school. Because the school committee is a supporting institution both financially, thinking and manpower in providing education in the educational unit.

3. Future Researchers

Obviously, this research should continue with more in-depth and extensive investigations to identify a variety of strategies to increase school commitment in order to handle problematic children/students more effectively. Future researchers will have the ability to develop a strategy to increase collective commitment by consulting sources in the field that provide more detailed information. through the implementation of more suitable methodologies and the allocation of additional time for research preparation.

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