

Optimizing the Quality of Education in Realizing Sustainable Development Goals through the Leader Scholarship LAZ Sukoharjo

Amining Rahmasiwi^{1*} 
Andalusia Ajeng Fitriana² 
Itsnindar Nur Huda³ 
Novi Widhyastuti⁴ 
Giswa Aria Nanda⁵ 

¹⁻⁵Faculty of Tarbiyah Sainces, UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Sukoharjo, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

The absence of coaching and empowerment of scholarships on campus, especially in academic and non-academic scholarships, has a bad impact on the quality of education in realizing the SDGs in Indonesia. Leader Scholarship is a solution from LAZ Sukoharjo which has optimized coaching and empowerment for its scholarship recipients to assist the government in realizing the SDGs in Indonesia. The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative to describe the coaching and empowerment management of LAZ Sukoharjo. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 5 Scholarship Leader recipients and LAZ Sukoharjo. The results of the interview show that the Leadership Scholarship management has been optimal with the existence of coaching in the form of synergy classes for the development of *soft skills* which can then be implemented directly in the LAZ Sukoharjo program as a form of empowerment.

KEYWORDS

Sustainable Development Goals;
Coaching, Empowerment;
Education Management
Optimization

Received: 1 November 2022
Accepted: 30 November 2022
Published: 30 January 2023

Introduction

The high quality of education is a benchmark for progress and development in a country. Even its human resources are determined by the high low quality of education in the country. The low quality of education in Indonesia has become a problem a few years ago, exacerbated by changes in the learning system due to the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. The results of PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) which is a reference in assessing the quality of education in the world in the fields of reading, mathematics, and science, in this case, Indonesia ranked 72nd out of 77 countries in 2019. The results of another PISA study stated that Indonesia got the numbers 371 for the reading category, 379 for mathematics, and 396 for science (science). Indonesia lags behind Malaysia which is ranked 56th, with scores of 415 for reading, 440 for mathematics, and 438 for science.

The low quality of education in Indonesia is caused by several problems in its education system (Baidi et al., 2020; Fernando et al., 2022). First, is the lack of equitable distribution of educational opportunities. Reporting from IAIN Tuban, Kominfo said that areas such as the isolated islands of Meulingga, Rinon, Lapeng, and Ulee Paya were difficult to reach high school and resulted in many children being reluctant to continue to the high school level. In addition, inadequate facilities and infrastructure at SDN Jampang 2, Mount Sindur, Bogor Regency. Students study indoors with poor classroom conditions and a lack of teaching materials, tools, and media. Second, is the low level of relevance of education to the needs of the world of work. This is shown by the number of hundreds of thousands of unemployed tiggy college graduates. Kemenristek-Dikti also said that there are research results in Europe showing that campus graduates who are ready to work are less than 50%. Third, is the low quality of education. This can be seen in the ranking of the 2021 *world population review* which puts Indonesia in 54th place out of 78 countries that are included in the world education ranking style (Sambo, 2022). The data above shows that the root problem of the low quality of education in Indonesia is suboptimal education management. This is in line with the results of the analysis in Alvira's research which shows that the low education system in Indonesia can be seen from the weak sector of education (Safitri et al., 2022).

The development of education as it is today is a challenge for several countries in the world including Indonesia to build a quality education system, humanize people, and learning that is easily accessible and equitable, considering that the education system in Indonesia until now is still not optimal and there are still many people who have not

fulfilled their rights in obtaining education and a decent life. With the presence of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been set by the United Nations General Assembly in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, it is hoped that it can overcome problems in the field of education in Indonesia.

The SDGs have a balanced role in the quality of education in Indonesia. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a program in development efforts to maintain the improvement of economic welfare and the quality of life of the community which is closely related to the field of education. The purpose of education is used as a foothold to encourage the goals and targets of this SDGs program.

Improving the quality of education needs to be carried out to realize efforts to achieve educational goals effectively and efficiently which will have a significant impact on the progress of the nation, especially in the world of education. According to Tilaar, the educational crisis we face today revolves around a management crisis (Mustari et al., 2014). From the various educational crises faced in Indonesia, the implementation of scholarships with coaching and empowerment is one of the right solutions.

The scholarship program held in Indonesia has different goals and backgrounds, both at the elementary school to tertiary level. One of the main objectives of this scholarship is to help the community to continue their education and improve the quality of human resources. Based on researchers' observations, there are scholarships at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, including academic and non-academic scholarships. The recipients of the scholarship are students who excel in academic and non-academic fields. One of the efforts to improve the quality of education is to provide coaching and empowerment for scholarship recipients. However, UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta has not provided coaching and empowerment for the recipients of the two scholarships. The reason is, that coaching and empowerment are very important factors to help students in self-development.

Leader Scholarship is one of the solutions initiated by LAZ Sukoharjo as a form of concern for future leaders and to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. This scholarship is open to students who need assistance with tuition fees and have a high willingness to hone *their skills* by actively participating in each LAZ Sukoharjo program. Coaching and empowerment are one of the keys to achieving the goals of the *Leader Scholarship* scholarship so that strong morals and leadership are formed, and a sense of concern for the condition of the community is embedded, especially in terms of social and educational matters.

In line with the opinion (Safitri et al., 2021) that education that is a benchmark is not only in formal education but what is intended is education that must also be able to change the thinking patterns and points of view of the nation's children who will become successors someday. Similar to the research conducted by Syubhan Annur entitled "Sustainable Development Goals and Improving the Quality of Education" which examines Indonesia's readiness for the SDGs program to improve the quality of education. The quality of education not only requires the support of teachers, but the role of the government to commit to improving the quality of education is also very important. Moreover, to achieve the goals of the SDGs, namely equitable distribution of education (Annur et al., 2018).

From various existing studies, the focus of the research studied is related to optimizing the quality of education through scholarship programs in realizing sustainable development goals in Indonesia, which is a forum that has not been done much by previous researchers. Meanwhile, in this study, researchers found the role of community institutions that actively participate in the equal distribution of education. The findings of this study state that the quality of education depends on the role of the government in increasing community participation to realize equitable education with the existence of guidance and empowerment in a program (Annur et al., 2018), especially the scholarship program.

Some of the things above raise a purpose of this study, namely to determine the optimization of the quality of education in realizing Sustainable Development Goals through the Leader Scholarship from LAZ Sukoharjo so that at any time it can be a solution for a party or educational institution that needs to improve the quality of education, especially in terms of management.

Literature review

Departing from the data that there is no coaching and empowerment for scholarship recipients at one of the universities, namely UIN Raden Mas Surakarta, where coaching and empowerment have a big role in realizing the SDGs in Indonesia, especially in the education sector. Researchers found that the Leader Scholarship program from LAZ Sukoharjo could be a solution with its activities that provide education in the form of morals, leadership, and social. Education that is a benchmark is not only in formal education but what is intended is education that must also be able to change the thinking patterns and points of view of the nation's children who will become successors someday (Safitri et al., 2022).

Methods

This research uses descriptive research with a qualitative approach. Descriptive means research that seeks to describe phenomena that occur in real, realistic, actual, real, and at present, because this research is to make a description, picture or painting systematically, factually, and accurately regarding the facts, properties, and relationships between the phenomena investigated (Sugiyono, 2017). This study aims to describe a phenomenon obtained from the subject of research on optimizing the quality of education through the Leader Scholarship from

LAZ Sukoharjo. The subject of this study was the recipient of the Leader Scholarship and the administrator of LAZ Sukoharjo.

Data collection in this study was obtained in several stages. First, with a document containing the Leader Scholarship activity program and a pre-research interview with one of the scholarship recipients on campus as well as one of the LAZ Sukoharjo scholarship recipients. Second, semi-structured interviews with 5 scholarship recipients of the Leader Scholarship and LAZ Sukoharjo Management, using purposive sampling techniques (Sugiyono, 2017).

Furthermore, the implementation and discussion of the results of this study are supported by theoretical studies and relevant data through literature review and documentation, so that the analysis of research results is by research problems and can be carried out accurately.

Results

Leader Scholarship Recruitment Process

The Leader Scholarship registration process is carried out transparently and professionally. The registration time begins with the beginning of publication through several media such as Instagram and WhatsApp. Then several stages must be passed, first, the prospective recipients are directed to register through a google form, by attaching the files needed for administrative selection.

The recipient of the leader scholarship who has passed the administrative selection then gets a call to make the next selection, namely an interview as well as collecting printed files. Through these two stages, it will then be published who is entitled to the Leader Scholarship. Then, is followed by the signing of the MoU (Memorandum of Understanding).

The motivation of Leader Scholarship Applicants

From the collected interview data, researchers can find out the motivation of scholarship recipients to take part in this scholarship program, including financial factors as taught by Octavia Tri Utami,

"My motivation for participating in this Leader Scholarship was because I wanted to try new things and also because of financial factors to be able to continue my studies".

Likewise, as revealed by Rifky Aditya,

"My motivation for taking this Leader Scholarship is because I want to ease the burden on parents, especially in paying ukt college, I am also interested in several training and coaching programs held by LAZ Sukoharjo".

In addition, the motivation of scholarship recipients to take part in the Leader Scholarship scholarship is because they want to upgrade themselves and can contribute to society through volunteering programs. This is similar to what Diina said,

"My motivation for participating in this scholarship was because I wanted to upgrade myself, explore knowledge that I didn't get in college, one of which was volunteering because the orientation of accepting this scholarship was volunteering."

This was also said by Siddiq,

"From the beginning, I was not looking for scholarships that only assisted in the form of funds, but there were programs to develop my skills".

Likewise with Riana Mega Safitri who has the motivation to be able to provide benefits for others,

"My motivation for participating in this scholarship is to benefit the community."

Leader Scholarship Coaching Program

Educating the Indonesian nation is one of the goals of LAZ Sukoharjo as revealed by Anshorullah, one of the administrators of LAZ Sukoharjo who holds a position in the program division. To achieve this goal, coaching and empowerment were held for LAZ Sukoharjo volunteers, especially for the Recipients of the Leader Scholarship.

Synergy Class

Synergy class is a form of coaching for Leader Scholarship recipients which are carried out regularly three times a month. This class is held twice online and once offline. The material and habituation obtained from the synergy class are not just a formality but are truly accounted for. This is in line with what Rifky Aditya said,

"as for the habituation we do, including reading the Qur'an every night after prayers are attempted five sheets, devout prayers at least one week twice, and fasting sunnah and dhikr. The habituation will be reported at every class meeting"

In line with what Octavia Tri Utami said,

"Coaching in the form of leadership training, volunteering, and providing material in synergy classes. This aims to shape the personality of the participants to have a noble character and add religious insight."

Volunteer Constraints

When scholarship recipients (volunteers) are assigned to the community as a form of empowerment carried out by LAZ Sukoharjo, the Leaders have various obstacles in it. Difficulty in managing time, as Diina said,

"The obstacle obtained when entering the field is the difficulty in dividing time which often coincides with activities on campus".

A similar obstacle that Sidiq said and experienced was an activity that coincided with activities on campus.

"Constraints are normal. For example, at the Tourism Program with Orphans event, we hold the event. While we don't understand the condition of the team yet. Although not entirely hands-off administrators. On the other hand, there are obstacles when in the synergy class, but these obstacles exist because of our background as students who have to go to college and also the organizational agenda on campus."

Another obstacle experienced by Rifky Aditya is a distant place of activity.

Volunteer Responses to Leader Scholarship Management

The results of interviews with several management-related speakers in the Leader Scholarship program are very diverse, but the point is that they are on one positive view. Octavia Tri Utami revealed,

"The education management at LAZ Sukoharjo is good, the strategy is neatly arranged and mature."

Likewise, Riana Mega Safitri revealed,

"With the programs that have been organized, volunteers are directed to follow programs that have been implemented for a long time. The management of its empowerment is through that synergy class. Then, it is said that the management is pretty good."

Sidiq Dwi Prasetyo also agreed that this coaching and empowerment makes the program more organized.

"This scholarship is a new program. However, the existence of mentoring and work for scholarship recipients make the course of the program more organized. Two activities are handled directly by volunteers, one has been carried out and one will be carried out in the next few months. Volunteers are asked to participate in each program and that affects the points and as a form of ignition for us."

Discussion

Synergy class activities are carried out to foster volunteers, then they are empowered to be involved in helping the community as an output. They are empowered in several activities, such as tour with orphans program, qurban programs, and volunteers. From coaching activities to empowerment, all of them have a major contribution to realizing quality education in the SDGs in Indonesia.

Analysis of Optimizing The Quality of Education with The Coaching and Empowering Program of Leaders Scholarship

Tour with Orphans Program

Every month of Muharram, LAZ Sukoharjo holds a prayer event with orphans with an event as usual. This time, LAZ Sukoharjo conceptualized the event with a different program. The program is called Tour with Orphans. This program is a Leader Scholarship program that is handled directly by scholarship recipients as a form of empowerment. In addition, the launch of the program, which was carried out on Sunday, August 21, aimed to provide compensation to orphans who were conceptualized to be happy and fun. This is to the words of Anshorullah who said,

"We thought, can we take the orphans on a different event? Perhaps they rarely go on excursions, rarely have fun together".

The purpose of this Tourism Program with Orphans can be said to be successful based on what an orphan said at the end of the event, at the time of conveying impressions and messages and distributing door prizes.

"Brothers and sisters, hold activities like this again tomorrow, okay"

The phrase shows that the existence of this program is so expected of orphans.

Blessing Friday Program

One of the leader scholarship empowerment programs implemented by LAZ Sukoharjo, including the Friday blessing program where scholarship recipients (volunteers) are directed to go directly to the surrounding community to help and distribute necessities to people in need. This supports the SDGs program which refers to the goal of not being poverty and hunger, as well as realizing a healthy and prosperous life.

Qurban Program

At the Qurban event, volunteers were deployed directly to remote areas to help the community in sacrificial animal slaughter activities with their potential, as explained by Retno Listy Kurniawan one of the administrators of LAZ Sukoharjo,

"Our scholarship recipients participated in the Qurban activity last month. we are involved in a community that needs the talents of volunteers."

This activity can improve the social spirit and potential of the volunteers. In this activity, the role of young people is needed to balance the needs of society by contributing to it. This supports the SDGs program in realizing quality education because the existence of this qurban volunteering program can implement character and religious education directly in the community, as well as provide new experiences for volunteers.

Volunteers Teach the Al-Qur'an

The characteristic of the empowerment of LAZ Sukoharjo is empowerment in terms of religious understanding and character education that can increase self-value regarding religious knowledge. In the LAZ Sukoharjo empowerment program in the field of education, one of which is the reviewing volunteer program carried out in the village of Rusunawa Sukoharjo, this was revealed by one of the administrators of LAZ Sukoharjo, Anshorulloh,

"Alhamdulillah, we were able to spread a container for alms there, we did not expect that in the Rusunawa, which is a community with a low economy, be willing to learn almsgiving. And alhamdulillah, the volunteers have begun to be active again to teach the younger siblings to recite the Quran".

It is also similar to what Octavia Tri Utami said,

"In this Leader scholarship empowerment program, we are deployed directly in the community to teach us to read the Qur'an".

Conclusion

The coaching and empowerment activities provided by LAZ Sukoharjo to the Leader Scholarship volunteers with the goals that have been achieved and the benefits felt by the volunteers, the management of the Leader Scholarship is considered to have been optimal and contributes to realizing quality education in sustainable development goals in Indonesia. Coaching and empowerment activities within institutions that provide scholarships are important to improve the quality of their human beings, in addition to realizing equality in getting the right to education. With the discovery of this institution, researchers hope that LAZ Sukoharjo can be an inspiration and solution for all universities and all agencies in Indonesia, especially educational institutions that provide scholarships to provide a coaching and empowerment program to optimize the quality of education in Indonesia.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all parties who support this research, including lecturers at the Faculty of Tarbiyah Sciences UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, relevant research, and LAZ Sukoharjo who provide opportunities for researchers to be used as research objects.

References

- Annur, S., Wati, M., Mahtari, S., & Prastika, M. D. prastika. (2018). *SDGs dan Peningkatan Kualitas Pendidikan.pdf*.
- Baidi, Pembangunan, H. R. P., & Junaidah. (2020). The effect of leadership style and work motivation on work productivity for teachers in all state junior high schools of surakarta. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(3D), 67-72. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.081710>
- Fernando, R., Hasanuddin, T., Rangga, K. K., & Utama, D. D. P. (2022). Professional Mosque Management Model Based on Religious and Academic Activities in the Community. *Khalifa: Journal of Islamic Education*, 6(2), 196-216.
- Mustari, M., Ph, D., Rahman, M. T., & Ph, D. (2014). Manajemen Pendidikan. In *RajaGrafiKa Persada*.
- Safitri, A. O., Dewi, D. A., & Furnamasari, Y. F. (2021). Peran Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan dalam Membentuk Pribadi yang Berkarakter Pada Anak Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 5(6), 5328-5335. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v5i6.1632>

- Safitri, A. O., Yunianti, V. D., & Rostika, D. (2022). Upaya Peningkatan Pendidikan Berkualitas di Indonesia: Analisis Pencapaian Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(4), 7096–7106.
<https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i4.3296>
- Sambo, M. (2022). *Membenahi Kualitas Pendidikan Kita*.
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung : CV. Alfabeta.