

The Benefits of Rumah Pintar Bangjo Central Java toward The Independence of Street Children in Pungkuran Village, Semarang

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the benefits of instilling the value of independence in the assisted children of Rumah Pintar BangJo of IPPA Central Java. This research was conducted to discover the activities of children assisted by Rumah Pintar, which consist of street children, who were directly supervised by volunteers to prepare them to live independently so that they could leave street life. This study used qualitative research methods. The location of the research was at Kp. Pungkuran No. 403 Kauman, Semarang City. The data analysis techniques were inductive where the thinking patterns were repeated based on observing specific problems, then drawing general conclusions. The results showed that the implantation of independence by Rumah Pintar BangJo of IPPA Central Java was done through the activities of making headscarf accessories (brooches), key chains, soccer, futsal, study groups, coloring, singing, reading, and solving problems together. The hope of Rumah Pintar Bang Jo is to provide skills training to their children assisted so that these children do not depend on the streets for their lives.

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INTRODUCTION

Individuals who begin to develop or lead to maturity is one of the characteristics of independent children. An independent child is a pioneer to the birth of a new generation that will be the successor to the ideals of the nation's struggle and is a human resource for national development. Children are national assets; the future of the nation is also in the hands of children of the current generation. The better the child's personality is, the better the future life of the nation. In contrast, if the child's personality is bad, it will also badly impact the nation's future (Indah & Marjohan, 2013).

The nation's next-generation are children who can survive independently and are virtuous. As the nation's next-generation, street children need to be able to grow and develop into healthy adults who are physically and spiritually educated and have good morals. To realize the desired conditions, it is necessary to give affection and proper guidance. In this case, children who are less fortunate in getting guidance is, for example, street children. Therefore, these street children need to be provided with facilities to meet the needs they do not get in the family. Activities that can support to train street children so that they can live independently are very necessary for their daily activities and guidance from volunteers is also needed (Nugroho, 2014).

For children assisted by *Rumah Pintar* to work according to their expertise is one of the goals of *Rumah Pintar*. Work does not only involve what someone does but also involves the conditions underlying the work (Hardati, 2009). In today's society, work is an important thing that everyone must-have. Therefore, every child assisted by the Smart House is strived to be able to have a decent job to meet their daily needs.

Rumah Pintar has an essential role as a place for street children who do not get love, attention, education, and personality formation from their parents. *Rumah Pintar* is a group of child care volunteers under the auspices of the Indonesian Plan Parenthood Association (IPPA) Central Java. IPPA is located in a good and

supportive community environment so that *Rumah Pintar* can carry out its duties and functions properly. *Rumah Pintar* is a place for street children around Johar Market to express their creativity. *Rumah Pintar* funding itself originally came from PT Pertamina. However, in the past year, the funding has only come from IPPA and if there is an event, the management staff will look for sponsors to meet the needs of *Rumah Pintar*. In addition, *Rumah Pintar* can experience an increase if it gets the support and assistance from parties who have interests as well as the residents surrounding *Rumah Pintar* (IPPA Central Java, 2016).

Rumah Pintar's function as a place for expressing talent, education, and socialization can help street children to better display their social skills and practice their independence. Moreover, *Rumah Pintar BangJo* has a difference with other *Rumah Pintar*. This *Rumah Pintar* gives street children an understanding of the significance of education and skills. In addition, *Rumah Pintar BangJo* also provides and gives scholarships for street children to continue their education. Furthermore, *Rumah Pintar BangJo* provides skills training to produce hand-made handicrafts to street children and residents as provisions to set up businesses. Thus, this study aims to investigate the benefits of *Rumah Pintar BangJo* of IPPA Central Java for assisted children and street children around Johar Market. The purpose of this study was to examine the benefits of instilling the value of independence in the assisted children of *Rumah Pintar BangJo* of IPPA Central Java. The hope of *Rumah Pintar Bang Jo* is to provide skills training to their children assisted so that these children do not depend on the streets for their lives.

METHODS

Qualitative research has an inductive pattern, where the pattern of thinking is repeated and based on observing specific problems, and then draws conclusions that are general in nature (Moleong, 2007: 6).

On the other hand, research location is defined as a place where a researcher conducts research. The location used for this research is *Rumah Pintar BangJo* which is located in Pungkuran Village No. 403, Semarang.

In this study, the source of the data is the subject where the data can be obtained. One of the data sources is the informant. Data from informants used or needed in the research were reviewed from data sources, i.e. primary data. In this study, the data were obtained through direct interviews with the founder of *Rumah Pintar*, *Rumah Pintar* volunteers, children assisted by *Rumah Pintar*, and the community surrounding *Rumah Pintar BangJo* Semarang. While the secondary data in this study were in the form of documents. The documents used in this study were supporting documents obtained from informants or respondents.

This study used data collection methods through observation in the form of direct observation of the phenomenon to be studied. Researchers directly observed the community environment and conducted interviews with a specific purpose. The interviews were used in which the subjects knew that they were being interviewed and understood the purpose of the interview. Whereas documentation was used to collect additional data and information related to the research objective.

Triangulation is used to obtain data validity as a data checking technique. Triangulation is a data validity checking technique that utilizes something as a comparison of that data (Moleong, 2007: 178). Researchers can use source triangulation, technique triangulation, and time triangulation. Sugiyono (2013) stated that source triangulation was conducted to check several sources to test the credibility of the data. Researchers can find out the activities of street children in *Rumah Pintar* through *Rumah Pintar* companions, volunteers of *Rumah Pintar*, residents who live around *Rumah Pintar*, and the founder of *Rumah Pintar*.

Triangulation aims to check the same data source with different techniques to obtain data credibility. Researchers can compare

observational data and interview results, as well as related documentation. These activities can help researchers to answer and know the activities in *Rumah Pintar*. Researchers visited *Rumah Pintar* directly every time there is activity while following and accompanying the street children who are doing their activities. Also, the children assisted by *Rumah Pintar* were interviewed, as well as the founders, residents around *Rumah Pintar*, volunteers, and took pictures of the activities.

On the other hand, time triangulation is data collection methods conducted by researchers at different times with the same list of questions. This can affect the informants' answers. Time to conduct observations and interviews greatly affects the answers of informants. The researcher must be clever in finding time and loopholes so that the informant can straightforwardly answer all the questions raised. Triangulation can be done by checking the results of research from other research teams to collect more valid data. In this study, the researcher participated in all the activities of the assisted children so that the researcher could feel the activities they were doing; the aim was to attract the sympathy of the assisted children so that they were willing to answer the questions that the researcher gave.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The general intention of *Rumah Pintar BangJo* of IPPA Central Java is to fulfill the rights of street children in education and health services. Whereas the specific purpose is to improve access to alternative education and health services for street children, as well as increasing government and community support in efforts to fulfill the rights of street children.

Rumah Pintar has several ways to instill independence from the children they assist. The implantation of independence is conducted by volunteers. The activities are centered in Johar Market area which has a high potential for street children who have not been able to get the attention of street children care communities in Semarang. *Rumah Pintar* has routine activities

including early childhood education programs, study groups, libraries, and soccer practice. These activities are prevention activities so that street children assisted by *Rumah Pintar* can get their rights. The street children are mostly children who do not get affection from their parents because they are busy working in the market as well as children who want to live on the streets to become buskers. These activities are carried out routinely every week so that the assisted children can think and change their destiny and get out of the street life. *Rumah Pintar* around Johar Market has a positive impact on street children who want to get out of the street life. *Rumah Pintar* also looks for alternatives and solutions so that the lives of street children in the future can be directed toward the right path. On the other hand, the family environment can have a positive influence on street children's entrepreneurial interests. Thus, the family environment is very significant in fostering the entrepreneurial spirit of street children (Pujiati, 2016). The independence characteristics of street children that want to be realized include: a) being able to work individually; b) mastering expertise and skills following their work; c) respecting time; and d) being responsible (Gea et al, 2002: 145).

Children assisted by *Rumah Pintar* want a better future than their current street life. In general, Children assisted by *Rumah Pintar* who have grown up choose to leave the assistance of *Rumah Pintar*. They left *Rumah Pintar* to find work that is not a street child. Most of those who leave the assistance of *Rumah Pintar* work in a car repair shop and bike shop. A vehicle repair shop is a place where they make a living to leave street life because basically, they have the desire to improve themselves and their families. For those who are men are especially interested in working in a workshop.

Similar to boys who are assisted by *Rumah Pintar*, the girls who are assisted by *Rumah Pintar* also want to change their life by leaving the street life. If the boys assisted by *Rumah Pintar* choose to work in a vehicle repair shop, the girls assisted by *Rumah Pintar* choose to take sewing courses. This way,

they intend to develop themselves in their respective fields. Sewing is chosen because such work is needed in Johar Market area and their income can be used to meet their daily needs. In addition to these two jobs, some also opted to work as shop assistants in Johar Market.

Rumah Pintar does not yet have a private vehicle repair shop and sewing course program. However, they can facilitate their assisted children to find a place to work and study so they can live better lives and leave street life.

Rumah Pintar gives its assisted children the freedom to develop their hobbies through football and futsal which is done on a scheduled basis. The development of hobbies in *Rumah Pintar* is one of the efforts to improve the skills of children in their fields. The development of this hobby is carried out through various types of activities that children are interested in.

One of the activities that can support the ability of street children to socialize better is soccer because fundamentally, soccer can foster solidarity, togetherness, and help them spend their free time without doing anything against the norm. Soccer activities are held every Sunday afternoon at 15.00 GMT + 7 or after Asr prayer until 17.00 GMT + 7 before dusk. This activity that street children participated in was accompanied by *Rumah Pintar BangJo*. They practice soccer at Tri Muang Mugas Field, Semarang City. The location of soccer practice is quite far from *Rumah Pintar*. Therefore, before leaving, they gather first at *Rumah Pintar BangJo*. Their soccer shirts were also made by *Rumah Pintar*. They depart by taking public transportation provided by *Rumah Pintar*. In this soccer activity, they were accompanied by a trainer from the Faculty of Sport Sciences Universitas Negeri Semarang who was once a volunteer at *Rumah Pintar BangJo*.

These activities can make children feel more comfortable when they are under the shelter of *Rumah Pintar*. In addition, besides football, there are also other sports activities, such as futsal. This futsal activity is held once a month at the Futsal Stadium field, located near Kota Lama. Before departing, they gather first at *Rumah Pintar*. Usually, they play futsal from

19.00 GMT + 7 to 20.00 GMT + 7. They left for the Futsal Stadium on foot together with their companion or the volunteer. On the other hand, dance and music playing activities are also one of the activities aimed at increasing the creativity of street children in the arts and also training them to be courageous. These activities are held every time there is a competition event. Thus, the children were involved in the event so that they could show their courage by performing in front of many people.

Previously, this activity was held once a week, particularly on Sundays. This activity was followed by street children assisted by *Rumah Pintar* and carried out at *Rumah Pintar*. Meanwhile, only the guitar and keyboard are played. The instruments were brought by the volunteers themselves. This is because *Rumah Pintar* only has a guitar with limited quantity which can not meet the required amount. Nowadays, however, the music activities are abolished because volunteers who usually accompany the musical activities of street children have withdrawn from *Rumah Pintar*. This activity has not been done for a long time even though these children have a high interest in this activity because playing music is one of their jobs.

This activity aims to train self-confidence, cooperation between individuals, and cohesiveness of children assisted by *Rumah Pintar*. This activity was held to fill the spare time of children assisted by *Rumah Pintar* so that their time is not used for a negative activity.

The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System stated that national education is aimed at developing the potential of students to become people of faith and devotion to God Almighty, of good morality, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens toward their country.

Rumah Pintar also provides non-formal education for street children they assist. This non-formal education includes educational activities for children aged 4-6 years, commonly called early childhood education. The early

childhood education activities conducted by *Rumah Pintar* are unlike early childhood education schools in general. There is no playing equipment like in the early childhood education environment in general. This early childhood education is held in the afternoon at 17.00 GMT + 7 until sunset. The place also changes from one place to another; adjusting to the time availability of the street children. Typically, early childhood education activities are carried out in *Pasar Sayur* Kanjengan area and the area in front of the mosque at Johar Market.

On the other hand, education for children aged 7-12 years is called a study group by *Rumah Pintar*. This study group activity aims to provide educational development for children who are still in school or have dropped out of school. Furthermore, this activity is carried out twice a week, which is every Wednesday and Friday; similar time as with early childhood education activity. This study group was usually accompanied by 2 volunteers. They learn according to where the children gather. Usually, they gather next to the *Mberok* Bridge and at *Yaik*. Some of the children who take part in this study group are still in junior high school and there are also some school dropouts. If children who are still in school usually do homework, then street children who drop out of school will learn to count, write, and read.

Furthermore, a library development was organized by *Rumah Pintar* to enhance reading interest and widen insights and knowledge, both for children and the adult street community. The development of this library is open from noon to evening. This activity is also carried out routinely every day. Aside from that, most of the books displayed in the library of *Rumah Pintar* are magazines. The magazines are in the form of children's magazines, *Majalah Bobo*. *Majalah Bobo*, besides providing education through reading that contains elements of interesting games for children, also provides articles containing elementary school subjects from grade one to grade six. Also, the library of *Rumah Pintar* also has several comics. The comics in the library of *Rumah Pintar* are a collection of fictional stories. The comics are in

the form of fiction and cartoons because most of the readers are children. Even children who read are interested in visiting the library of *Rumah Pintar* because they prefer fiction.

However, the number of books in the library owned by *Rumah Pintar* is still very limited because there are approximately only around 300 books. The quality of books in the library of *Rumah Pintar* is also poor because those books mostly are old books and there needs to be an upgrade. Furthermore, the arrangement is not neat so it looks less attention-grabbing. In addition to being a place to read, the library also functions as a place to do homework for children who live around *Rumah Pintar*. Therefore, additional books are needed, especially textbooks and reading books for children.

On the other hand, according to Hurlock (in Joseph, 2009: 130), independence is defined as an independent attitude of individuals in ways of thinking and acting, able to make decisions, direct and develop themselves, and adjust themselves constructively to the norms prevailing in their environment. For volunteers to direct their assisted children, they make activities called outreach or mentoring. In the outreaching activity, children open up and tell stories about the events they experienced during the past week. The volunteers also directed the children to practice decision making.

These activities include activities that are routinely carried out once a week on Saturday nights at 19:00 GMT + 7 until finished. The execution adjusts to the place where the children usually gather. However, the location is still in the area of Johar Market.

This activity gives the assisted children trust toward the volunteers so that they can easily convey the problems they face. These problems include all the concerns that they have, such as problems with boyfriends, family, not getting along with their peers, or anything they can convey in these activities. This activity can provide opportunities for volunteers to advise children about things that need to be done after they are busking. Moreover, this activity can also help the children assisted by *Rumah*

Pintar to be brave in expressing the problems they encountered so that volunteers can help provide solutions.

After joining the assistance program from *Rumah Pintar*, street children are expected to be able to solve their problems wisely. Hence, this can have a positive impact on the surrounding environment. With this assistance, street children can differentiate between their good and bad actions so that they can improve and not repeat them later. This activity has a very good impact on the lives of street children assisted by *Rumah Pintar* because they can express their concerns and get solutions to their problems.

Life on the streets is not the final destination of the children assisted by *Rumah Pintar*. Their desire to survive properly is the biggest motivation in their lives. Therefore, they always try to be able to live an independent lifestyle so that they can survive without depending on others (Arsal, 2017).

Activities carried out at *Rumah Pintar* are activities that are routinely held as a means to practice the independence of the children they assist. These activities also aim to develop talents and interests following the abilities of the assisted children. There are elements of culture and habituation that underlie these activities which consist of: a) conditioning, the creation of conditions that support the implementation of character education; b) routine activities, which are activities carried out continuously and consistently at all times; and c) the role models, activities and attitudes of educators in providing examples of good actions so that they can be good role models (Daryanto, et al 2013: 75-76).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that *Rumah Pintar* has benefits to train the independence of street children, such as the ability to open business opportunities, a place to develop talents and interests, provide education for children aged 4-6 years called early childhood education, children's education ages 7-12 years called study groups, and library development. The research at *Rumah Pintar*

aimed to provide information to readers that all activities conducted at *Rumah Pintar* are routine activities to prepare the assisted children to be independent so that they can leave street life and choose to work as an entrepreneur.

On the other hand, there are obstacles experienced by *Rumah Pintar*, such as the limited number of volunteers. The number of volunteers available is still insufficient to meet the needs of the children they assist. In addition, *Rumah Pintar* also lacks volunteers who are proficient in their fields, such as dancing and playing music. Furthermore, another obstacle faced by *Rumah Pintar* is the habits of the assisted children that greatly affect their daily lives. Assisted children are accustomed to harsh street life, making it difficult to change their way of thinking. There are also no fixed schedules and planning on learning activities because they follow the wishes of the assisted children to learn. That is because if they set a definite schedule and planning, then the assisted children will find it difficult to participate in the activities conducted.

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