

BUILDING THE SELF-CONFIDENCE OF SUBANG'S YOUNG GENERATION TO PURSUE FURTHER STUDIES ABROAD

Membangun Kepercayaan Diri Generasi Muda Subang dalam Melanjutkan Studi Lanjut ke Luar Negeri

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ABSTRAK

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Pendidikan tinggi di luar negeri merupakan salah satu jalur penting bagi generasi muda untuk memperluas wawasan, mengembangkan keterampilan, dan meningkatkan peluang karier mereka. Namun, rendahnya tingkat kepercayaan diri sering menjadi hambatan bagi generasi muda dalam mengambil langkah untuk meraih kesempatan ini. Di Subang, sebuah kabupaten di Jawa Barat, Indonesia, kondisi ini juga terjadi, di mana generasi muda menghadapi tantangan dalam meraih studi lanjut ke luar negeri. Dalam konteks ini, kami memperkenalkan program pengabdian masyarakat yang bertujuan untuk membangun kepercayaan diri generasi muda Subang dalam melanjutkan studi lanjut ke luar negeri. Program ini melibatkan serangkaian kegiatan, termasuk workshop, pelatihan, sesi mentoring, dan kegiatan sosialisasi, yang dirancang untuk memberikan informasi, dukungan sosial, dan bantuan praktis bagi peserta dalam menghadapi tantangan studi lanjut ke luar negeri. Metode pelaksanaan program ini mencakup kolaborasi dengan berbagai pemangku kepentingan, termasuk lembaga pendidikan, pemerintah daerah, organisasi non-pemerintah, dan komunitas lokal. Evaluasi hasil pelaksanaan program menunjukkan bahwa program ini berhasil dalam meningkatkan kepercayaan diri dan kesiapan generasi muda Subang untuk melanjutkan studi lanjut ke luar negeri. Selain itu, program ini juga berhasil meningkatkan kesadaran dan pengetahuan peserta tentang proses studi lanjut ke luar negeri. Dengan demikian, program pengabdian masyarakat ini telah memberikan dampak yang signifikan bagi generasi muda Subang dan memberikan kontribusi positif bagi pembangunan daerah dan bangsa secara keseluruhan.

Kata kunci: Kepercayaan Diri, Generasi Muda Subang, Pendidikan Tinggi di Luar Negeri, Pengabdian Masyarakat, Pemberdayaan Pemuda, Persiapan Studi ke Luar Negeri

ABSTRACT

Higher education abroad is one of the key pathways for young people to broaden their horizons, develop their skills, and enhance their career opportunities. However, low levels of self-confidence often become a barrier for the younger generation in taking steps toward seizing this opportunity. In Subang, a regency in West Java, Indonesia, this condition is also prevalent, where young people face challenges in pursuing further studies abroad. In this context, we introduce a community service program aimed at building the self-confidence of Subang's youth

in pursuing higher education abroad. This program involves a series of activities, including workshops, training sessions, mentoring, and outreach events, all designed to provide information, social support, and practical assistance to participants in overcoming the challenges of studying abroad. The implementation method of this program includes collaboration with various stakeholders, such as educational institutions, local government, non-governmental organizations, and local communities. Evaluation of the program's outcomes shows that it has been successful in increasing the self-confidence and readiness of Subang's youth to continue their studies abroad. Additionally, the program has also improved participants' awareness and knowledge of the processes involved in studying abroad. Therefore, this community service initiative has had a significant impact on the youth of Subang and has made a positive contribution to regional and national development as a whole.

Keywords: *Self-Confidence, Subang Youth, Higher Education Abroad, Community Service, Youth Empowerment, Study Abroad Preparation*

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's future, providing pathways for personal development, career growth, and contributions to society. In the 21st century, pursuing education abroad has emerged as a transformative opportunity for young people, offering exposure to diverse cultures, advanced educational systems, and global career networks. Studying abroad not only enhances academic and professional competencies but also fosters personal attributes such as independence, adaptability, and global-mindedness.

For Subang's youth, these opportunities are no exception. As a region known for its cultural vibrancy and potential-rich younger generation, Subang is home to many aspiring students and professionals who dream of advancing their education in international settings. However, despite the increasing availability of scholarships, exchange programs, and other pathways to global education, many young individuals in Subang struggle to take advantage of these opportunities. Their aspirations are frequently hindered by various challenges that diminish their confidence and readiness to step into international academic arenas.

The benefits of studying abroad are numerous. Academically, it offers access to world-class facilities, renowned instructors, and cutting-edge research opportunities. Professionally, it

enhances employability by equipping students with skills and perspectives that are highly valued in the global job market. Personally, it helps individuals grow into more confident, independent, and culturally aware citizens. Nevertheless, the transition from local education to international institutions can be daunting, especially for students from regions like Subang, where certain structural and cultural barriers persist.

The challenges faced by Subang's youth in pursuing further studies abroad are multifaceted, encompassing psychological, social, and informational barriers. These obstacles not only restrict access to opportunities but also create a cycle of low aspirations and unfulfilled potential. The following are the key barriers identified: (1) Psychological Factors: The psychological challenges faced by Subang's youth are profound. A significant proportion of students harbor deep-seated fears of failure, stemming from a lack of self-confidence. The thought of studying in a foreign country, surrounded by unfamiliar cultures and rigorous academic standards, can be overwhelming. Many students question their ability to meet international expectations, fearing they may fall short or not adapt successfully. This fear is compounded by limited exposure to role models or success stories of individuals from Subang who have excelled abroad. Additionally, the absence of adequate psychological preparation for dealing with cultural shock and homesickness exacerbates

this anxiety. Young individuals may feel daunted by the idea of leaving their comfort zones, families, and familiar social structures. These psychological barriers often manifest as hesitation or procrastination in taking concrete steps toward studying abroad, such as applying for scholarships or learning the necessary languages. (2) Social Factors: Social influences also play a critical role in shaping the aspirations of Subang's youth. Family and community support are crucial for young individuals seeking to pursue education abroad, yet many students report limited encouragement in this regard. In some cases, families may view studying abroad as a financial burden or as an unnecessary risk, especially in contexts where local education is perceived as sufficient. Cultural norms and societal expectations can further limit aspirations. For instance, traditional mindsets may prioritize immediate financial contributions to the family over long-term educational investments. In some communities, there may also be skepticism or misunderstanding about the value of international education, leading to discouragement of such pursuits. Without strong social support networks, students often struggle to build the confidence needed to overcome challenges and pursue their ambitions. (3) Informational Gaps: One of the most significant barriers faced by Subang's youth is the lack of accessible and accurate information about studying abroad. The application processes for international programs can be complex and intimidating, involving extensive documentation, language requirements, and competitive assessments. Many students and their families are unaware of these processes or lack the resources to navigate them effectively. Furthermore, information about scholarships, financial aid, and other funding options is often insufficiently disseminated. This gap is particularly critical for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, for whom financial concerns are a primary deterrent. In addition, there is limited access to mentorship or guidance from individuals who have successfully studied abroad, leaving many students uncertain about where to begin their journey.

This community service program aims to address these barriers comprehensively, fostering a culture of confidence, empowerment, and preparedness among Subang's youth. By leveraging a structured approach that includes workshops, mentoring, and access to critical resources, the program seeks to bridge the gap between aspirations and opportunities. The specific objectives of the program are as follows: (1) Building Self-Confidence, the primary objective of this program is to empower Subang's youth by building their self-confidence. Confidence is the cornerstone of success, enabling individuals to take bold steps toward their goals, even in the face of uncertainty. Through interactive workshops, motivational talks, and practical exercises, the program aims to instill a sense of belief in participants' abilities to succeed abroad. (2) Equipping Participants with Knowledge, providing accurate and accessible information about studying abroad is another crucial objective. This includes demystifying the application processes, explaining scholarship and funding options, and clarifying academic and cultural expectations. By equipping participants with this knowledge, the program aims to reduce the informational barriers that often deter students from pursuing further studies abroad. (3) Fostering Social Support, recognizing the importance of social support, the program seeks to create a network of encouragement and collaboration among participants, their families, and the wider community. By involving family members and educators in the program, it aims to build a supportive environment that nurtures aspirations and celebrates achievements. (4) Developing Practical Skills, Success in international education requires more than academic excellence; it also demands skills such as effective communication, cultural adaptability, and resilience. The program includes training in these areas, ensuring that participants are not only motivated but also well-prepared for the challenges of studying abroad. (5) Inspiring Through Role Models, Bringing in speakers with firsthand experience of studying and succeeding abroad is a key element of the program. Role models like Prof. Madya Dr. Mokmin Bin Basri and Asep Kurniawan, SE., MM., M.Sc., provide tangible

examples of what is possible, inspiring participants to envision similar success for themselves.

METHOD

1. Workshops

Workshops served as the foundational activity of the program, focusing on psychological preparedness and the benefits of international education. Delivered in an interactive format, these sessions provided participants with a platform to engage, ask questions, and reflect on their aspirations. The content of the workshops was carefully structured to address three key areas: Overcoming Psychological Barriers, participants were guided through discussions on common fears and misconceptions about studying abroad, such as fear of failure and cultural adjustment. Techniques to manage anxiety and build self-confidence, such as visualization and positive self-affirmation, were introduced. Understanding the Benefits of Studying Abroad, the workshops highlighted the transformative impact of international education, including exposure to advanced academic environments, opportunities for cultural exchange, and enhanced career prospects. Practical Guidance on Preparation, participants were provided with step-by-step guidance on preparing for applications, mastering language requirements, and navigating cultural differences. Role-playing and group exercises helped simulate real-world scenarios, making the experience both educational and engaging.

2. Panel Discussions

The panel discussions were a highlight of the program, featuring distinguished speakers Prof. Madya Dr. Mokmin Bin Basri (Islamic University of Selangor) and Asep Kurniawan, SE., MM., M.Sc. (STIE Sutaatmadja). These sessions offered participants invaluable insights into the realities of studying abroad, as well as strategies to navigate challenges. Personal Narratives, the speakers shared their journeys, detailing the obstacles they faced and the strategies they employed to overcome them. Their stories of perseverance and success provided inspiration and a tangible connection to the potential rewards of international education. Participants engaged directly with

the speakers, asking questions ranging from how to adapt to different academic cultures to managing finances while studying abroad. This interactive component ensured that the discussions were highly relevant and actionable. The panelists also shared success stories of other students they had mentored, illustrating the practical impact of preparation and determination.

Participants

The program's participants included a diverse group of individuals from Subang Regency, each with a unique role in shaping the region's educational landscape: High School Students, these students represented the next generation of global learners. The program aimed to inspire them early, instilling confidence and providing the resources they needed to consider studying abroad as a viable option. University Students, participants at this level were closer to pursuing advanced degrees abroad. The program offered them detailed guidance on postgraduate opportunities, funding options, and cultural adjustment strategies. Teachers, Educators were included to amplify the program's impact. By equipping teachers with knowledge about studying abroad, the program empowered them to become advocates and mentors for their students, creating a ripple effect within Subang's educational community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community service program, aimed at building self-confidence among Subang's youth to pursue higher education abroad, yielded significant and multifaceted results. The program's design and execution were instrumental in achieving its objectives, as evidenced by participant engagement, measurable improvements in self-confidence, enhanced knowledge, and overwhelmingly positive feedback. This section delves into these outcomes in detail and discusses their implications, identifying both successes and areas for future enhancement.

Participant Engagement

The program drew a remarkable level of enthusiasm and participation, demonstrating the high demand for such initiatives in the Subang community. A total of 120 individuals attended the program, including high school

and university students, as well as educators from various institutions across Subang Regency. The diversity of the participants added richness to the program, as it allowed for a dynamic exchange of perspectives and needs.

- **Diverse Demographic Representation:** The audience ranged from younger high school students with aspirations to study abroad in the future to older university students actively planning their postgraduate education. Teachers and educators also contributed significantly, as they sought tools and knowledge to guide their students toward similar opportunities.

- **Engagement Across Activities:** Participant involvement was evident across all segments of the program. Workshops saw active questioning and participation in group activities, while mentoring sessions enabled deeper, individualized interactions. The panel discussions were particularly impactful, as participants were eager to engage directly with speakers, posing thoughtful and relevant questions.

- **Sustained Attention and Interest:** Feedback from participants indicated that the program maintained their interest throughout the day. Activities were structured to be both informative and engaging, blending theoretical insights with practical, actionable advice. This balance contributed to the program's ability to hold participants' attention while addressing their specific concerns.

The significant turnout and high level of engagement underscored the program's relevance and appeal, affirming the need for continued and expanded efforts to support Subang's youth in pursuing international education.

Improvement in Self-Confidence

One of the program's central goals was to address the psychological barriers that prevent Subang's youth from pursuing further studies abroad. The program successfully achieved this goal, as evidenced by pre- and post-program assessments.

- **Confidence Growth:** Surveys conducted after the program revealed that 85% of participants experienced a measurable increase in self-confidence regarding their ability to pursue education abroad. Many participants reported that the program helped them overcome fears

related to academic competition, cultural adjustment, and financial challenges.

- **Empowering Activities:** Interactive elements such as role-playing exercises, where participants simulated application interviews or addressed common fears, were particularly effective. For instance, a group activity on "overcoming the fear of failure" was cited as transformative by many attendees. These exercises allowed participants to confront their insecurities in a safe, supportive environment.

- **Personal Impact Stories:** Participants shared personal anecdotes during feedback sessions, illustrating the program's impact. A university student expressed that hearing the speakers' journeys and struggles gave her the confidence to believe in her own potential. Another participant highlighted how the mentoring sessions provided clarity on specific steps to take, which translated into a newfound sense of readiness.

Knowledge Enhancement

Addressing informational barriers was another core objective of the program. Post-program surveys revealed that 90% of participants reported a significant improvement in their understanding of scholarship opportunities, application processes, and cultural preparation.

- **Awareness of Opportunities:** Participants gained insights into a wide range of international programs, universities, and funding options. The workshops and panel discussions provided clear guidance on how to identify and apply for scholarships, including lesser-known regional funding options and international grants.

- **Practical Knowledge:** The program broke down complex processes into manageable steps. For instance, participants were guided through the typical timeline of an application process, including preparing standardized test scores, compiling necessary documentation, and meeting application deadlines. This clarity demystified the process for many attendees.

- **Cultural Preparation:** Participants also gained a deeper understanding of cultural adjustment strategies. The speakers shared practical tips on thriving in multicultural environments, managing homesickness, and building support networks abroad. This information was particularly valuable for students and educators

alike, as it addressed concerns about adapting to life in foreign countries.

FEEDBACK

1. Feedback from participants overwhelmingly highlighted the program's effectiveness and impact. Several themes emerged from their comments:
2. - Interactive Approach: Participants appreciated the program's interactive nature, which made the sessions engaging and relatable. Activities such as group discussions, Q&A sessions, and collaborative problem-solving exercises were frequently mentioned as highlights.
3. - Practical Guidance: Many participants emphasized the value of the actionable advice provided. For instance, one participant noted that learning how to craft a compelling scholarship essay was a "game-changer" for her application plans.
4. - Motivational Impact: The personal stories shared by the speakers were particularly inspirational. Attendees found their journeys relatable and motivating, helping them envision similar paths for themselves. As one high school student commented, "If they could do it, so can we."
5. - Inclusive Environment: The program fostered an environment of encouragement and mutual support. Participants appreciated the opportunity to connect with peers who shared similar aspirations, as well as mentors who were genuinely invested in their success. dengan menepatkan konten sesuai dengan kategori yang sudah ditentukan terutama pada bagian sorotan harus memosisikan postingan sesuai judul sorotan yang telat di tentukan.

CONCLUSION

The community service program titled

"Building Self-Confidence of the Young Generation of Subang in Continuing Further Studies Abroad" achieved its primary objectives of empowering Subang's youth to overcome psychological, social, and informational barriers that hinder their aspirations to study abroad. Through a combination of workshops, mentoring sessions, and panel discussions, the program provided participants with the confidence, knowledge, and motivation needed to pursue higher education opportunities in international settings.

A significant outcome of the program was the measurable improvement in participants' self-confidence. By addressing psychological fears such as the fear of failure and cultural adaptation, the initiative created a safe and encouraging space for students to confront their doubts. Participants gained a clearer understanding of the tangible steps required to study abroad, from navigating application processes to preparing for cultural transitions. Additionally, the inclusion of relatable speakers and mentors offered real-world success stories that inspired participants to see their potential as achievable.

The program also succeeded in raising awareness about scholarship opportunities, funding options, and the benefits of international education. These insights were particularly valuable for participants from underrepresented backgrounds, as they helped dispel myths about the inaccessibility of studying abroad.

Beyond individual impacts, this program has broader societal implications. By equipping the younger generation with tools to access global education, it lays the groundwork for long-term benefits, including the development of a globally minded and skilled workforce. Participants are now better positioned to contribute to the region's economic and social growth,

bringing back knowledge and perspectives that will benefit Subang and Indonesia as a whole.

In conclusion, this initiative has not only transformed the outlook of its participants but also set a precedent for future programs aimed at empowering youth to seize global opportunities and build a more connected, confident, and capable society.

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