

EMPOWERMENT OF FOSTER PARENTS BASED ON TRANSFORMATIONAL PARENTING TO SUPPORT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE "BACK TO SCHOOL" (BTS) MOVEMENT FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE COASTAL AREA OF SDN 8 BILATO, GORONTALO REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

Background: The sustainability of the Back-to-School Movement (Gerakan Kembali Bersekolah/GKB) in coastal areas faces multidimensional challenges, particularly the low involvement and parenting capacity of foster parents. **Objective:** This community service aims to empower foster parents through the Transformational Parenting School (TPS) model to support the sustainability of GKB at SDN 8 Bilato, Gorontalo Regency, through the synergy of formal education management and primary school education. **Method:** The approach used was Participatory Action Research (PAR) incorporating education, clinical coaching, and the implementation of a learning monitoring card system. The targets were foster parents of children at risk of dropping out. Data were analyzed descriptively using qualitative approaches and quantitatively through the Gain Score test to measure the increase in partners' understanding. **Results:** The implementation of the TPS program successfully shifted the parenting paradigm from conventional-authoritarian to transformational. There was an **84%** increase in the cognitive understanding of foster parents regarding motivating and facilitating the psychological needs of primary school-aged children. Managerially, the structured partnership between the school and foster parents effectively reduced GKB student absenteeism by **90%** within the first two months. **Conclusion:** The integration of school-based transformational parenting contributes significantly as a preventive solution in maintaining the learning resilience of coastal children and ensuring the bottom-up sustainability of the GKB program.

Keywords: Transformational Parenting; Back-to-School Movement; Education Management; Primary School; Coastal Area.

INTRODUCTION

Basic education serves as a crucial foundation within the formal education system, determining the long-term quality of human resources. In the coastal areas of Gorontalo Regency, a major challenge in basic education management is the high rate of school dropouts and students failing to continue their education. To address this issue, the local government initiated the "Back to School" Movement (Gerakan Kembali Bersekolah/GKB). However, the effectiveness of the GKB cannot rely solely on school management; it requires

the active involvement of the ecosystem outside the school—particularly foster parents, who act as a vital support system for vulnerable children.

In the coastal area of Bilato District specifically around SDN 8 Bilato the parenting styles adopted by most guardians remain conventional and transactional. A lack of understanding regarding the importance of psychological motivation, emotional regulation, and academic support for primary school-aged children is a primary factor contributing to children's reluctance to attend school (Djafri, N., Isnanto, I., & Rahman, A., 2023). Consequently, a school based managerial intervention utilizing the concept of "Transformational Parenting" is required. Transformational parenting adapts principles from transformational leadership within educational management (Djafri, N., & Rahman, M., 2022), wherein guardians act as agents of change who provide idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration to primary school students. Through the synergy of school partnership management and school-governance-based empowerment, the sustainability of the GKB program in the coastal region can be optimally accelerated.

Partner Related Issues: Based on the situational analysis at SDN 8 Bilato, the primary challenges identified are: 1) Low Commitment to the Parenting Partnership: Guardians do not yet fully grasp their strategic role in supporting the administrative aspects and the home based learning environment associated with the child's formal education. 2) Limited Knowledge of Transformational Parenting: Predominant communication and parenting styles remain authoritarian or neglectful, failing to foster the intrinsic motivation children need to remain in school. 3) High Risk of School Dropout: The absence of a synergistic monitoring mechanism between primary school management and guardians to proactively ensure the continuity of the GKB program

Village Characteristics, Potential, and Strengths; 1) Village Characteristics: The village in the Bilato coastal area is geographically isolated from urban centers, with the majority of the population working as traditional fishermen and farm laborers. The formal education level of guardians is relatively low, which influences their perspective on the importance of basic education. 2) Potential and Strengths: The village possesses strong social cohesion and a culture of mutual cooperation (huyula). Furthermore, the full commitment of the SDN 8 Bilato administration and the local village government serves as significant social capital. The existence of a database on school dropouts maintained through the regional GKB program facilitates accurate and accountable targeting of beneficiaries.

Based on the identified issues and the school's potential and characteristics, the focus of this community service initiative is the empowerment of foster parents grounded in the principles of transformational parenting to support the sustainability of the "Back to School" (GKB) movement for elementary school students at SDN 8 Bilato, Gorontalo Regency.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Formal Education Management in Elementary Schools

Elementary school management requires an integrated governance approach that manages not only internal components such as teachers, the curriculum, and facilities but also external components, including the community and parents. School family partnerships constitute part of the implementation of management standards within the educational management framework. As the initial formal educational institution, elementary schools must be capable of creating an environment that accommodates children from coastal areas by aligning school programs with the socio-economic conditions of the surrounding community

Transformational Parenting in the Basic Education Ecosystem

Transformational Parenting is an adaptive parenting model oriented toward the holistic development of a child's potential and character (Harris, A., & Jones, M., 2021). This model emphasizes four key pillars: 1) Inspirational Motivation: Parents instill a clear vision of the future in the child regarding the importance of basic education. 2) Intellectual Stimulation: Parents stimulate the child's thinking skills, creativity, and problem-solving abilities in the context of learning. 3) Individualized Consideration: Parents understand the psychological uniqueness and emotional needs of primary school-aged children. 4) Idealized Influence: Parents act as role models who demonstrate consistent discipline and a commitment to lifelong learning

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The "Back-to-School" Movement (BtS) in Coastal Areas

The GKB is a policy intervention in education governance designed to ensure children's right to inclusive education. In coastal areas, the challenges facing the back-to-school movement are multidimensional—encompassing economic, cultural, and geographical factors ([4] Isnanto, I., & Rahman, M; 2024). The sustainability of the GKB depends heavily on the extent to which parents are able to transform the home into a conducive home-based learning environment

RESEARCH METHOD

Community Service Approach and Methods

This community service initiative employs a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach combined with the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) method. The program implementation is divided into three main stages: 1) Education/Workshop: Delivery of material on transformational parenting management. 2) Clinical Mentoring (Coaching):

Simulation and practice of therapeutic communication and the development of home study schedules for children. 3) Focus Group Discussion (FGD): Synchronization of monitoring control cards between the school and foster parents.

Target and Subject of Community Service; 1) Target: Foster parents of children benefiting from the Gerakan Kembali Bersekolah (GKB Back to School Movement) in the coastal area of Bilato. 2) Subject: Caregiving practices based on "transformational parenting" and partnership management at SDN 8 Bilato.

Implementation Steps; 1) Preparation Phase: Coordination with the Principal of SDN 8 Bilato, collection of secondary GKB data, and development of instruments/guidance modules for Transformational Parenting. 2) Implementation Phase: Conducting the Transformational Parenting School (TPS) over a structured timeframe, covering topics such as motivation, stress management in caregiving, and techniques for stimulating the intellectual development of elementary school children. 3) Evaluation & Sustainability Phase: Establishment of the Coastal Foster Parents Association and the launch of a student learning monitoring handbook

Data Analysis

The program's success was evaluated using a combination of descriptive qualitative analysis (to synthesize findings from interviews, observations, and focus group discussions regarding changes in caregiving behavior) and simple quantitative analysis (Gain Score Test) to measure improvements in foster parents' understanding (knowledge) before and after the intervention, based on pre-test and post-test results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Enhancing the Parenting Capacity of Foster Parents

The implementation of the Transformational Parenting School program at SDN 8 Bilato successfully shifted the foster parents' parenting paradigm from a traditional-authoritarian model to a transformational one. Evaluation results indicate an 84% increase in the partners' cognitive understanding regarding how to motivate primary school-aged children to develop mental resilience at school.

Foster parents are now able to apply "inspirational motivation" (Kurniati & Djafri, 2025) by setting aside at least 15 minutes each evening for reflective dialogue with the children about their school activities. The aspect of "intellectual stimulation" is realized through the provision of a simple study space at home, despite the limited facilities characteristic of coastal settlements.

Synergy Between School Management and Back to School Sustainability

From an educational management perspective, this community service initiative successfully established a formal partnership framework between the management of SDN 8 Bilato and the foster parent community. The immediate impact of this synergy was a drastic 90% reduction in the absenteeism rate of BtS students within the first two months following the intervention.

Through an integrated monitoring card system, school management can detect early signs of student learning burnout based on daily reports from foster parents. This synchronized governance demonstrates that the sustainability of the GKB program in coastal areas is no longer a top-down government initiative but is instead driven from the bottom up by strengthening the internal capacity of families. This reinforces theories regarding participatory school-community governance within effective formal primary education (Wilder, S; 2022).

CONCLUSION

The foster parent empowerment program based on "transformational parenting" at SDN 8 Bilato has proven to be an effective alternative solution for ensuring the success and sustainability of the "Back to School" Movement (GKB) in coastal areas. This intervention successfully integrated primary education aspects—specifically addressing children's psychological developmental needs—with educational management, particularly the governance of school-community relations. Significant improvements were observed in the understanding of parenting practices and the formation of partner associations, alongside a drastic reduction in the risk of school dropout among the target students.

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