

Discussion Activities on Educational Problems at the Border of Nusa Tenggara Timur with Nusa Cendana University Students

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Abstract

This activity aims to deepen educational problems in Nusa Tenggara Timur Province (NTT) border between Indonesia and Timor Leste. The implementation of this activity is to conduct discussions to increase understanding of strategic issues regarding educational problems with lecturers and postgraduate students at Nusa Cendana University, Kupang NTT. The method of writing this paper is to use a qualitative approach by reviewing various kinds of literature and discussions carried out. The growth of education services in NTT is increasing in line with educational investments made by the government, such as increasing the number of classrooms in high schools, vocational schools, and universities/polytechnics. However, the average education rating in NTT is still the fourth lowest in Indonesia. The district with the worst conditions on the border is Malacca. The areas that need attention as the next priority are the districts of Kupang and Belu, which the State of Timor Leste borders.

Keywords: Educational Problems, Nusa Tenggara Timur, Indonesian Border.

A. INTRODUCTION

Disparities between regions are the main focus of Indonesia's current regional development framework. It can be seen in the current National Mid-Term Development Plan document, which states that the main national policy direction for regional development is focused on efforts to accelerate the reduction of regional development disparities by encouraging transformation and accelerating regional development. "Such as in Eastern Indonesia, namely Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Maluku, Nusa Tenggara, and Papua, while maintaining the growth momentum in the Java-Bali and Sumatra Regions" (RPJMN, 2015). Djojohadikusumo said, "Two of Indonesia's three long-term development problems are related to inequality, namely the imbalance in the balance of power between community groups and economic inequality between regions. One other problem is the problem of productive employment and unemployment. Understandably, the problem of inequality or disparity between regions has always been one of the main problems of regional development in Indonesia" (Djojohadikusumo, 1994).

The gap phenomenon occurs due to differences in allocating various economic growth factors. Hirschman in Nurzaman (2002) states, "Disparities occur not only in economic development between countries but also variations in regional development. If in this world there are developed countries and underdeveloped countries, then in a country there are developed areas and poor areas". "The origin of regional disparities or regional disparities is closely related to the capitalist system controlled by the profit motive. This motive encourages the centralization of development in areas that offer high-profit expectations, while regions that do not promise high profits will remain behind (Jinghan, 1990)". Williamson in Kuncoro (2004) states, "In the early stages of development, disparities between regions will be more significant. The development will be concentrated in certain areas. However, at a more mature stage of economic growth, there appears to be a balance between regions and a significantly

reduced gap." Williamson explicitly focuses on regional per capita income levels, not household income disparities. (Kennedy, 2019)

"Acceleration and transformation of regional development rest on increasing the capacity of human resources (HR), increasing productivity, efficiency and added value of natural resources (SDA), strengthening the role of science and technology, providing integrated and equitable infrastructure by taking into account the regional geostrategic position and global. Each region in Indonesia has different characteristics. Therefore, compiling the proposed program/activity to be formulated cannot be generalized and must use a different approach for each region. To formulate programs/activities that are by regional issues or problems, an in-depth and comprehensive study is needed in each region, especially those related to the main indicators of regional development." (Bappenas, 2017)

The Province of Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) is an area with a very low level of public education compared to other regions in Indonesia. It must address because human resource quality will affect how people think and innovate in managing natural resources and improving their standard of living. Thus, education programs need to be improved in all districts, especially in border areas that are sometimes not touched. "The border area in NTT is dominated by agriculture and animal husbandry. Barriers to developing the potential of natural resources in border areas often occur the low quality of human resources due to insufficient services and improving the quality of human resources. Programs related to training and education for border communities to improve skills/capabilities in managing the potential of natural resources in border areas are still very rare. The lack of educators/instructors in border areas has hampered services and improved the quality of human resources in border communities." (BNPP, 2015)

The not yet optimal development and utilization of basic facilities or infrastructure in border areas is a common problem that occurs in almost all border areas of Indonesia. "If the border area is left underdeveloped and isolated, the lack of accessibility, especially access to public services, causes people's welfare to be low. The quality of human resources and the uneven population distribution due to the geographical characteristics of the region also make a big contribution. Environmental damage due to uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources beyond its carrying capacity adds to the complexity of the problems faced by Indonesia's border areas" (Kennedy, 2020). From these explanations, it is necessary to look at regional issues or problems, especially the education problem in Indonesia's border areas in NTT Province. Thus, local governments can formulate programs/activities most aligned with their local wisdom.

B. IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS

This activity is carried out using the group discussion method, which is carried out with lecturers and with postgraduate students. The output target of this activity is to increase understanding of a topic or a problem. Community Service Activities are carried out at the Nusa Cendana University Kupang (Undana), which are discussions and exchanges of ideas regarding educational issues in the border area of NTT-RI and the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste (RDTL). The implementation can be done directly at the location because carried it out before the COVID-19 Pandemic. Implementation of the activity begins with planning, preparation, implementation, and evaluation meetings. The activity is carried out in 2 activities: The first is a discussion and exchange of ideas with the lecturers (10 lecturers); The second is to increase understanding and discussion with Undana Postgraduate students (totaling 25 students).



Figure 1. Team on site, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

State Border Area is the territory of a country that is geographically directly adjacent to a neighboring country, either on land, at sea, or in the air. The border area is very important for the functions of state defense and security, economic growth, community welfare, and environmental sustainability of a country. "NTT province is an area geographically and demographically bordering Timor Leste and Australia. The scope of the border areas of East Nusa Tenggara Province are land borders, sea borders, and the outermost islands, which include (BNPP, 2015):

The land border area with Timor Leste administratively covers four regencies, namely Kupang Regency, Timor Tengah Utara (TTU) Regency, Belu Regency, and Malaka Regency. The land boundary of the border area on the east section is located in the regencies of Belu and Malaka, with a line length of 149.1 km. The land boundary of the west segment is located in Kupang Regency with a line length of 15 km and in Timor Tengah Utara Regency with a borderline of 104.7 km.

The maritime border area in the NTT region with Timor Leste administratively covers 12 regencies, namely Kupang Regency, Belu Regency, Timor Tengah Utara, Malaka Regency, Alor Regency, South Middle East Regency, East Sumba Regency, Central Sumba Regency, Regency of West Sumba, Southwest Sumba Regency, Rote Regency, and Sabu Raijua Regency. Kupang, Alor, Belu, and Timor Tengah Utara regencies with Timor Leste and Rote Ndao bordering Australia.

The outermost islands owned are Alor Island in Alor Regency and Batek Island in Kupang Regency, which borders Timor Leste. Also, Ndana Island in Rote Ndao District borders Australia, Dana Island in Sabu Raijua Regency, and Mangkudu Island in Sumba Timur Regency facing the Indonesian Ocean. "

"The current condition of the border area, in general, has not received the same attention. It can be seen from the lack of available infrastructure in border areas, causing many problems such as changes in territorial boundaries, smuggling of goods and services, and transnational crimes. The general conditions of the economy in the border areas are as follows (Maulana, 2010):

- The location is relatively remote with a low level of accessibility.
- The low levels of education and public health.
- The low level of socio-economic welfare of border communities.
- Lack of information about government and community development in border areas."

Education is one of the fundamental areas of development because it is related to the preparation of quality human resource development. "Development is directed at expanding the opportunity to obtain superior and equitable education for all levels of society at every level of education. In addition, education development also needs to be directed at improving the quality and relevance of training to the development of the business world" (Maulana, 2010).



Figure 2. Discussion with Vice Rector IV, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang

The growth of education services in NTT is increasing in line with education investments made by the government. "Such as increasing the number of classrooms in high schools, vocational schools, and universities/polytechnics. In addition, there was an increase in classrooms and laboratories at universities/polytechnics in 2016. The main sectors that experienced acceleration were government administration and education services. However, the average education rating in NTT is still the fourth lowest in Indonesia." (Bappenas, 2017)



Figure 3. Discussion with the Dean and Postgraduate Lecturers, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang

From the discussion results, districts in border areas and their supporters who need to receive great attention related to education issues are Malaka District. The areas that need attention as the next priority are the districts of Kupang and Belu, which the State of Timor Leste borders. "The problems faced in the field of education that need to be handled properly in the border areas of NTT are (Bappenas, 2017):

- Facilities and Infrastructure: Lack of supporting facilities such as libraries, function rooms, laboratories, and sports rooms; School buildings need to be repaired immediately because most of the conditions are not suitable for use in the teaching and learning process; Lack of books to support the smooth learning process so that students get fewer books as reference material.
- Educators: Lack of qualified teachers for each subject; Teacher quality is not enough.
- Students: The limited ability of the community to pay for their children's education due to the low economic welfare of border communities in the interior and the small outermost islands. As a result, school-age children are often more empowered by their parents to help with their work to earn money; Students' abilities and skills are far from expected due to limited facilities and teaching staff.
- School management: School management is still not optimal, and there is still a lack of skills and knowledge in school management.
- Community participation: Less than optimal community involvement in developing partnerships to improve school performance. "



Figure 4. Discussion with Postgraduate Students, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang

D. CONCLUSION

In developing education in the border areas of Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT), it is necessary to pay attention to various factors that become the main priority. Among them are internal factors related to the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process, which is very dependent on the availability of learning facilities, quality and quantity, teaching methods, and education management. In addition, external factors must also be considered, which involve the role of parents, the community, and the government in supporting the development of quality education. The most important thing is the improvement of human resources itself, namely educators and students.

We can carry out this community service properly. The author and the team received an enthusiastic and friendly welcome from the lecturers, students, and leaders of the Nusa Cendana University Kupang. Discussions and ideas on educational issues in the NTT border area were friendly by exchanging information and knowledge. Giving understanding to students is also followed by enthusiasm. It can be seen from the many questions asked.

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