

## THE INVOLVEMENT OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS “AKU BELAJAR”: MARGINALIZED CHILDREN MOTIVATION AND AWARENESS BACK TO SCHOOL

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### Abstract

This article examines the involvement of young volunteers in "Aku Belajar" to regain marginalized children's motivation and awareness. The marginal life of scavenger children has made the children's interest and motivation to study decline. Thus, they need support from young volunteers like "Aku Belajar." In this research context, the data was gathered by interviewing and observing the volunteers and the scavenger children. The results indicated that the young volunteers successfully motivated the scavenger children after using three main strategies: guiding, facilitating, and motivating them to regain their study passion. The research focused on the "Aku Belajar" program, initiated by the young volunteers. This program is entirely free of charge and offers the children's time flexibility. It positively affects parents and children who join the program. This research believes that such a volunteer program can serve as a benchmark for other communities to conduct similar strategies to improve and assist low-income and marginalized children. This article contributes to solving discrimination issues in education through youth empowerment efforts in the volunteering program. In addition, it encourages practitioners and academia to play a more significant role in improving education for the low-income community

**Keywords:** *Volunteers, Social Work, Civic Engagement, Aku Belajar.*

### INTRODUCTION

Volunteering has emerged as a result of government policy which is continuously developing in public (Prasetyo et al., 2019). The government policy encourages the youths to participate as young volunteers who play a critical role in society and humanity (Martono et al., 2021). Serving as a volunteer allows the youth to take the five benefits of volunteer activity, such as increasing participation as a citizen, reducing anti-social behavior, improving physical health, enhancing better mental health, and developing human self-empathy (Adha et al., 2019). In the volunteer community, they even exchange information regarding volunteer projects, which is a good potential for individuals to find solutions to social problems (Cacmino & Zeldin, 2002), increase active youth involvement (Ganson et al., 2022), and develop self-identity in young communities (Ganson et al., 2022). Moreover, negative stigma is rarely heard from this volunteer community. In general, volunteer activities have a significant impact in several ways, including individual physical and mental health, capital as a human being (good social bonds and interactions), and social capital, such as networking and 'soft' interpersonal skills (Karliani et al., 2019).

Social problem issues related to children still occur in many parts of the world. Indonesia is one of them as the country experiences social problems and poverty. One of the major reasons

includes abandoned children and the homeless. The abandoned children refer to those whose needs are not met physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially. This issue is one of the social issues that remain unresolved until the present. According to Tempo.com, in 2021, there were 4.1 million abandoned children in Indonesia. In addition, 350.000 children were exploited, and 18.000 others became victims of physical, social, and sexual exploitation as released by the KPAI of Indonesia. This triggers the emergence of community social institutions or social organizations that care about meeting the needs of marginalized children, especially the need for education. Education is considered powerful to explore and develop children’s potential to help them improve and cut poverty (Casma et al., 2022).

Scholars assert that the mechanism of solving poverty issues is by “developing human capital especially through education and health” (Anup et al., 2015; Lee & Lee, 2018). It can be used to cut the poverty line in a region. It then becomes the basis for establishing the volunteer organization “Aku Belajar (AB).” This organization was founded on January 17, 2013, and engaged in education with young communities as volunteers. The organization provides an accessible learning movement for homeless children as their primary vision. They have trained 40-50 scavenger children living in the landfill area in Batu Layang. The management has reached 25 people and involved 8 batches of young volunteers. This research focuses on studying how far the involvement of the young volunteers of AB regarding their roles as a learning initiator to regain scavenger and homeless children’s motivation to study. Current literature claims that the youth’s direct involvement in volunteering activities positively affects their attitude and mentality (Chetty & Bhagwan, 2021). Martono et al. (2021) add that volunteerism that grows from a high sense of empathy and solidarity will create individuals who have broad social views. The involvement of teacher volunteers means carrying out the role of a teacher. The teacher acts as a motivator, corrector, informer, inspiration, organizer, initiator, facilitator, mentor, demonstrator, class manager, mediator, supervisor, and evaluator (Mac Dermott & Campbell, 2016). However, this research only focuses on the three roles of volunteers as teachers, namely, as mentors, motivators, and facilitators.

“Aku Belajar” is an independent organization aiming to prepare marginalized children who do not have access to education so that they can have a proper education. The organization has a main dream to help the nation's generation have the same access to education as children in general. The volunteers are a group of young people who are serious about supporting education in Indonesia, especially in children's interest in learning. Samsul, the head of the neighborhood, commented, "The children here have difficulty learning because they have to help their parents, so they are tired. They do not have time to study. They have no motivation or interest in learning (Interview on July 29, 2020).

Based on the above interview, this research formulated a research question:

1. How does the involvement of “Aku Belajar” volunteers as Mentors, Motivators, and Facilitators support the scavenger children’s interest in studying at non-formal school learning?

This research aims to determine the involvement of a volunteer organization as a

supervisor, motivator, and facilitator of the scavenger children’s interest in studying at non-formal school learning. The researcher hopes that this research can benefit all concerned parties, especially in theoretical and practical benefits.

## **Method**

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method which will be conducted in 2022. This research will refer to the role of volunteers from the organization in increasing the interest in learning of scavenger children, especially at the Garbage Final Disposal Site in Batu Layang, Pontianak City. This study involved 3 volunteer informants as informants in the organization. In determining informants, the technique for determining informants was based on a purposive sampling technique with the criterion that each selected informant had gone through the stages of observation by us, and the selected informants were also in accordance with the field they were engaged in. The informants who will be interviewed have obtained permission to be interviewed.

In research procedures, we seek information through literature studies related to literature related to the activities carried out by the organization, in the form of archives owned by the organization. Furthermore, we observed and observed every activity of the organization to see the role of volunteers in increasing the interest in learning of scavenger children at the Batu Layang landfill. Data were obtained through semi-structured interviews, observation, and literature (document) studies. The use of various methods and informants helps triangulate data thereby increasing the validation of data findings (Denzin, 2009). The research instrument was developed according to the research questions after the authors reviewed the results of previous research and preliminary studies which included initial observations at the research location. Some of the initial information is combined with research-related information related to the organization. Thus, the author has had initial insights about the volunteer organization in carrying out this research. The author conducts direct interviews with informants in the agreed areas and before conducting interviews, we have made an agreement and we have observed every background of each existing informant. This method is carried out with the intention that we can make direct observations regarding the activities carried out related to the volunteer organization. Before conducting interviews, the authors asked for the willingness of each informant and explained the guarantee of identity confidentiality. The focus of the interview questions was based on a main point, namely the involvement of volunteers as mentors, motivators, and facilitators to support the interest of scavenger children to study in non-formal school learning. Data collection requires support from literature studies (documents), especially to capture information relating to developments and activities in the organization. The entire data collected was then analyzed using data coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) which included the process of coding, re-reading, and grouping the findings so that a group of data was obtained according to the category. The limitations of the study were carried out in accordance with the aim of explaining how the involvement of volunteers as mentors, motivators and facilitators in supporting the interest of scavenger children to study in non-formal school learning.

## Young Volunteer Background

### *The Nonprofit Organization (NPO) “Aku Belajar”*

“*Aku Belajar*” started with the 1 Book-100 Smiles movement, a movement to collect book donations at the Miftahulsulolihin Islamic Elementary School in 2011. The public warmly welcomed this movement. However, because many children still could not read, the movement's initiators finally had the idea to create a program that could motivate children to learn. A group of young people, who are not only from the teaching faculty, dedicate themselves to being young volunteers for education. They formed an association that aims to educate marginalized children to have a free and decent education. Since then, to streamline these activities, they have carried out a social movement campaign of teaching children in the suburbs of Pontianak, which is called *Aku Belajar* or literally translated as I Learn. The organization has a chairperson, secretary, treasurer, public relations division, media and publication division, business fund division, and program division.

Since 2013, *Aku Belajar* has been engaged in various educational-social activities to help overcome educational problems in the suburbs of Pontianak City. The program's track record began in 2013 when 11 young people gathered and declared this nonprofit organization as the first organization in West Kalimantan Province that was engaged in social and educational programs. The young volunteers serve as the spearhead of the movement for marginalized children. In 2014, they started to recruit 12 young people to contribute to teaching children residing in the landfill area of Pontianak. They did unpaid teaching for six months and created a mini library as a learning center for children in that area. In 2015, having seen the situation and condition of the children on the outskirts of the Kapuas River and areas close to socially vulnerable issues, and based on residents' requests, the volunteers served the same program in the East Pontianak sub-district in Tembelan Sampit.

### **Figure 1.**

In 2016, they were still working in the same location with complex problems, such as cases of childhood abuse and drop-out students, because they must work to meet their daily needs. This program was committed to continuing in the same location with the assistance of several parties, including the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. Then, in 2017, the organization was again targeting the outskirts of the Kapuas river, precisely at the city border, TPI (Fish Auction Place) area, which is located in small alleys. Moral degradation and child prostitution have moved this volunteer to motivate the children in that location to learn. *Aku Belajar* partnered with several institutions to procure library logistics, such as the Language Center of Tanjungpura University and *GEMAR Membaca (GEMA)* community. This movement was returned to the TPA (Final Disposal Site) with the support of local officials, including the Camat and Lurah, with a neater, more focused system and a security guarantee. *Aku Belajar* program focused not only on children but also provided services to parents with empowerment programs that were appropriate to the local context in the area see **Figure 1**.

*Aku Belajar* is a non-profit organization that has been legally validated as a foundation that contains volunteer programs and facilitates youth to train leadership, hone awareness, initiative, and dedicate themselves to selected communities. The organization takes an active role in gathering the potential of young people in West Kalimantan. A non-profit Organization (NPO) can be interpreted as a tax-free organization created for the purpose of serving the public interest. This sort of organization carries out activities such as charity, education, scientific, literary, or religion (Carroll, 2018). Having excellent programs, NPO *Aku Belajar* consists of several programs, called Dimension Space and Charity Day. The second major program is a learning library which is usually integrated into the volunteer program of *Aku Belajar*.

*Aku Belajar* is a program that involves volunteers to become unpaid teaching staff at predetermined locations. Volunteering can be interpreted as a willingness to involve in free-time activities. Each individual has the flexibility to accept or refuse on the terms or the individual's own will, with an emphasis on feeling the absence of coercion, morals, or otherwise, to be involved in an activity (Liu et al., 2017). Volunteers of *Aku Belajar* are recruited by the organization's management. Before being deployed to the selected location, each volunteer will be equipped with several pieces of training, such as teaching training, team building, and self-building. After completing the training, the volunteers are allowed to teach children in a predetermined location. An interview with an informant, PH (21 years old) - one of the 7th batch of volunteers, revealed that:

*"I enrolled as a volunteer at AB after reading information through social media. When I registered, I met the administrative requirement and was declared to have passed the administration and interview stages. All volunteers were given training before we taught in the landfill area".* The program ran for six months, encouraging the children to learn reading and writing. The program also offers dimensional space and Charity Day see **Figure 3**. The dimensional space is a monthly program that is conducted at least once a month. This program invites inspiring figures. These inspirational figures come from various professions like writers, reporters, doctors, firefighters, and so forth. The program aims to motivate the children about various professions to encourage them to dream for the future. Additionally, the charity day is the final activity of a series of the programs. This activity requires cooperation between volunteers and their fostered children. On peak night, they will perform a drama in front of invited guests and donors. The next big program is the learning library. This program is usually integrated with the organization volunteer program. It is actually the first program or the forerunner of the *Aku Belajar* activity. It begins with the concerns of the children's condition of various regions, especially the areas where they donate books and create mini-libraries. The children cannot read and write. Hence, the book distribution program will be in vain fee if children cannot read and understand what they read. Finally, this program was developed and added to the teaching activities brought by university students known as *Aku Belajar* volunteers. This is carried out to realize the vision of the organization, i.e., to create a sustainable educational transformation and the quality of volunteerism-based education. It aims to empower youth to create an equal distribution of education in West Kalimantan.

**Figure 3.**

The duties of a volunteer include directing children to achieve learning goals. The volunteer is responsible for motivating and helping children choose and find learning resources or materials. They also help the children overcome learning difficulties and solve problems that cause them to have difficulty learning. Moreover, they should connect learning materials with children's needs provide learning facilities such as reading books, stationery, and other learning equipment. Finally, they must create a pleasant atmosphere by making children learning partners. This is described as follows:

***Directing the children to achieve their learning goals while giving motivation***

The volunteers direct the children to achieve learning goals, for example, to be able to read correctly or understand the meaning of a reading text. They provide strategies and direct children to make it easier for them to achieve learning goals at that time. Further, all volunteers always motivate the children through nice words. This was acknowledged by one of the informants, namely ST (12 years), who said:

*"Brothers and sisters teach well, (they) want to accompany us when we study, then before learning, we are usually given motivating words."*

One of the volunteers, AL (22 years old), added that:

*"As volunteers, apart from giving direction to our children, we also motivate them; for example, if you want to be a great person, then read many books."*

***Helping children choose and find learning resources and materials***

Volunteers provide or facilitate children with textbooks or things that support the teaching and learning process and help children choose and find their learning resources. Thus, the children are interested in learning, especially reading books. In addition, the volunteers guide the children to find useful books and support the children's learning process. The children are hoped to be able to distinguish which reading materials are specifically to help the learning process or books that increase knowledge and which books are just for entertainment. That is why a mini library was established in Batu Layang with the aim that if children can read correctly and are able to understand what they are reading, it is hoped that the available books will not only foster interest in reading but also help them in the teaching and learning process.

***Help them overcome learning difficulties***

All volunteers also help overcome children's learning difficulties. For example, children have difficulty understanding the material being taught. One of the reasons is that children are not able to read properly and correctly, so they cannot understand the material that is read and taught because mothers volunteers help overcome these difficulties by giving tips and tricks to make it easy for children to understand a material related to the subject matter. They believe that if the teachers are interested in learning, the children are also interested in reading. This is supported by a participant's comment, PH (21 years old), who said:

*“To help children solve their learning problems, of course, we have to know the cause or root of their learning difficulties. Usually, elementary and junior high school children have difficulty understanding reading. This, of course, has an impact on the material they will learn. If you do not understand the meaning of reading, especially related to learning material, it will be difficult for children to continue learning, and it affects their learning outcomes.”*

Participant AL (21 years old) added, *“Therefore, we, volunteers, will provide tips and tricks to children on how to understand the literature they read so that it will be easier for them to learn and it is hoped that it will increase their interest in learning and reading.”*

In addition, one of the children also admitted that it was difficult for him to understand a reading before. However, after being given tips and tricks to easily understand reading and take the essence or concept of reading, it is much easier for him to understand the material and work on the questions.

### ***Creating a fun atmosphere by making children learning partners***

The results of interviews and observations revealed that the implementation of the *Aku Belajar* program consists of two, namely, volunteers of “*Aku Belajar*” and a learning library. Additionally, there are two other activities: the dimensional space (sitting to inspire) and the charity day. These activities teach the children to give a stage performance art. Volunteering of the organization is where the scavengers get motivated to learn. The children are also open about their learning conditions and difficulties so that the volunteers can help solve the learning problems they face.

### ***Provide learning facilities to support the learning process***

Based on the results of interviews with the management of *Aku Belajar*, there is a learning library that aims to improve the literacy of abandoned children. In this program, they collect used books that are suitable for reading and suitable for use for children. As a result, a mini library is built for these children in Batu Layang. The aim is to help and make it easier for children to find their learning resources. Hence, it will foster interest in learning and reading for the abandoned children at the Batu Layang TPAS.

### **The Life of A Scavenger Kid**

This research was conducted on April 27-30, 2021, located in the Final Disposal Site (TPAS) of Batu Layang see **Figure 1**. The research found interesting evidence, such as the lives of children living in that area. The location where this research was conducted is a slum settlement filled with garbage that causes an unpleasant odor, which is a characteristic of the Final Disposal Site (TPAS) area. Final Waste Disposal Site (TPAS) is an activity of landfilling or final disposal of waste even when there are other options such as recycling or volume reduction. This waste disposal method is a method generally used by developing countries because it requires a low cost

(Agamuthu, 2013). When entering the landfill area, the children look to play together near the pile of garbage. Some sit and look after their little brother while others study in groups on the house's terrace. Several children sat reading books provided by volunteers in the *Surau* (a small mosque). In addition, some children do not play or study, but they help their parents separate the used goods from scavenging. Thus, this activity is considered an activity that creates a broad informal sector from scavengers who collect to recycle each collected item (Gutberlet & Uddin, 2018).

Scavengers can be referred to as individuals or groups of people whose purpose is to fulfill their needs by collecting or looking for used goods that have been wasted or disposed of in landfills (Asliati, 2017). They are not only defined as people who save valuable materials or items (Al-Khatib et al., 2020) that can be reused or recycled for sale or for personal consumption (Owusu-Sekyere, 2014) but also provide contributions to existing environmental management (Rockson et al., 2019). Scavengers are divided into two, namely free scavengers and permanent scavengers. Free scavengers or itinerant scavengers are scavengers who live on the streets without a place to live. On the contrary, permanent scavengers are those who have residences located around the TPA or around stalls where they sell used goods (Asliati, 2017). In this research, the scavengers referred to permanent scavengers who have children. Their children also participate in scavenging or just helping parents sort out the scavenged goods before handing them over to large-scale collectors. Scavengers are usually characterized by employment opportunities for the poor and lowly (Nyathi et al., 2018). Insufficient income of parents requires the children to help their parents work. In fact, this activity may endanger their health (Malik et al., 2020). This job is associated with a part of the socio-economic structure (Igwe et al., 2018). Besides, scavengers are also identified with poor working conditions mainly because they have to work in landfill areas (Afon, 2012). Generally, scavengers face very difficult working conditions and, in many cases, have little or no support from the local government (Dias, 2012). This activity causes health problems that are often faced by scavengers, including respiratory diseases, parasitic infections, fever, nausea, vomiting, anemia, allergies, skin diseases, hair loss, meningitis, dysentery, diarrhea, indigestion, jaundice, trachoma, typhoid, cholera, malaria, tuberculosis, cardiovascular problems, and musculoskeletal disorders (Dubey & Murphy, 2020).

In addition, infections susceptible to manual scavengers include hepatitis A, E. coli, leptospirosis, *Helicobacter pylori*, rotavirus, norovirus, and pinworms (Goswami, 2018; Pradhan & Mittal, 2020). Even so, the scavenger ignores this condition because they will obtain more profits when they collect more items. Consequently, many children are more concerned with making money by scavenging than studying. This is one social problem among children that has not been resolved until now (Efendi et al., 2020). In addition, it is worsened by the fact that parents do not motivate their children to focus on their studies. Moreover, they have a low financial condition which eventually forms the children's mindset to only think about money by working rather than studying. As a result, many scavenger children must drop out of school due to poor economic conditions. This condition motivates these children to scavenge (Sisyanti et al., 2019). Although scavenging is a low-risk job, an individual will still pose a huge risk to health if they are not careful. Also, it hinders children from having the opportunity to receive the formal education



that children should get (Aljaradin et al., 2015), while they are the hope for the future of a nation and become the successor of future generations. Therefore, it is imperative to pay attention to the children's needs, especially in receiving an education so that children can grow and develop well and become physically and spiritually healthy (Anzanie et al., 2020).

A child is considered to have a background, not only because he/she no longer has one parent or both parents. It also refers to the child's right to grow and develop naturally, to obtain a proper education and health services, which is not fulfilled due to the parent's negligence, lack of understanding, and incompetence or willfulness. Poverty is not the only cause of children's negligence because low-income families do not always abandon their children. However, it must be admitted that the pressures of poverty and the economic vulnerability of families will affect their ability to provide facilities and meet the needs of their children with minimal rights (Ocktilia, 2020). The children of waste scavengers, for example, can be considered as neglected children because their rights cannot be fulfilled, most of which are related to meeting educational needs. In fact, Education plays an important role in life (Efendi et al., 2020). Due to poverty, the scavenger children help their parents in meeting the everyday need of their family. By working together, the children can help reduce the parents' burden in the obligation to support the family. In fact, the children who should receive a proper education are not supposed to share in the family. They need to be prepared and directed from childhood. By doing so, the children can grow and develop physically and mentally healthy to become quality human resources and can face challenges in the future (Hilda, 2017).

For that reason, there is a need for education. Human life cannot be separated from education, particularly formal education. Formal education is a structured and tiered educational path consisting of basic education, secondary education, and higher education (Soetrisnaadisendjaja, 2019). Talking about the reality of education in Indonesia today, this country is still experiencing many educational-related problems (Usman, 2018). One of the scavengers who take part in the program, MM (11 years old), said that:

*"He once accidentally stepped on broken glass and rusty nails while helping his parents look for used goods. Because of the ignorance of the parents and the child's awareness about health, such accidents can cause even greater difficulties. This makes education necessary at various levels, in particular for scavenger children, so that they can overcome the problems they face in the right way."*

Some children scavengers in TPAS Batu Layang go to school from elementary school to high school. Unfortunately, not all parents motivate their children to study and go to school due to the pressures of poverty they experience. The parents are more focused on making money to meet their daily needs. An interview with MM parents, named FZ (46 years old), explained that *"the important thing is that my child can write, read, count, that's enough."* Fortunately, there are still parents who do not demand their children to work. They are more concerned with their children's education. For example, MK (48 years old) said that *"even though my children help me scavenge, they must keep learning and to school or even get to college."* This makes the children have two responsibilities, namely to be able to balance between helping parents and learning.

The mindset of parents towards children's education also needs to be changed little by little. Therefore, the Nonprofit Organization is present not only to teach children to read, write, play but also to open the eyes of parents to change their mindset regarding their children's education. The organization believes that through education, the children will be able to develop their potential, interests, and talents so that they have the capital and ability to be able to improve their lives out of poverty. Jeffrey Sachs said that to solve the problem of poverty, we should develop human capital, especially through education and health. In other words, developing human resources through education and providing health services will be able to reduce poverty (Ustama, 2009).

Human capital is defined by the OECD (2001) as the competencies, skills, knowledge, and attributes possessed by individuals that enable them to create social, personal, and economic value. Human capital is an important aspect in the workforce and production, so they need to have formal learning to gain knowledge, job training to gain skills and competencies to do work, and leadership qualifications (Khayinga & Muathe, 2018). Human capital is also defined as a combination of knowledge, skills, talents, capacities, and abilities that empowers individuals to achieve results using available energy and time (Brenda & Amah, 2019). It is related to motivation and arises from each individual due to a stimulus or encouragement from a certain goal (Jusriadi & Tiara, 2021), one of which is learning motivation. Learning motivation is an effort from each individual that leads to action, namely learning activities. The learning activities can provide goals so that the desired goals can be achieved. This motivation is a non-intellectual factor and acts as motivation in learning for individuals (Oktiani, 2017).

A lack of motivation in learning among children may also cause their mindset blurred about the future. They even think that they do not have a better future. The interviews with several scavenger children at the Batu Layang TPA revealed that they had no aspirations and did not know where to go after school. What they knew was that when they finished school, they would work like their parents, such as being scavengers or housemaids. There are even children who think that they do not want to go to school and want to become female workers in Malaysia. FH (15 years old) admitted that "after middle school, she does not want to go to high school. It's better to work, I want to be a female worker like my mum".

Children at the TPA of Batu Layang are also often associated with unruly neighborhoods. The children not only interact with their peers but also interact with the garbage truck drivers, as well as other adults both from the landfill environment and those coming from outside the landfill environment. As a result, some children imitate negative behavior things when communicating. For example, they communicate using inappropriate words and harsh tones. Sometimes, they mock each other, which leads to fights between them. Unfortunately, the parents are too focused on working and earning money to meet the needs of family life. Hence, they do not pay too much attention to their children's neighborhood. There are no adults who direct children to do the right things. Although teachers at school may direct the children to do so, the neighborhood where they live and their parents do not really give such direction. The scavenger activities, who just play and help their parents after school, leave them not having time to study and read lessons again.

Some children who were already in the school reported not being able to read and write,

thus making them less understanding of the material taught at school. It makes the learning outcomes of the scavenger children in the Batu Layang TPA low. Further, the children's interest in reading and learning is also very low. Even though Rosyidi said that high reading interest is a situation that can provide great hope for one's learning outcomes and success at that time or in the future (Musdalifah & Sihaloho, 2019). In addition, someone who does not have a high interest in reading will have difficulty in the teaching and learning process (AR et al., 2017). The low interest in reading children is caused by their inability to recognize letters properly and correctly. Therefore, it will have an impact on educational outcomes and even shows that the quality of education is also low.

Quality of education is the implementation of education in an institution. It assures how far the education at the institution has achieved success, as well as the ability of educational institutions to utilize educational resources to improve learning abilities as optimally as possible. In this case, it refers to the educational process and educational outcomes. (Prabowo, 2019). Education is claimed to have a certain quality if it can meet expectations and fulfill the wants and needs of the community to realize the expectations of every individual in society (Aziz, 2015). Efforts to achieve a quality education do not only fulfill the input and output aspects. Most importantly, it fulfills the process aspect, which means decision making, program management, institutional management processes, teaching and learning processes, and monitoring and evaluation processes. Further, the teaching and learning process has the highest importance compared to other processes (Mulyasa, 2011). Education should be able to empower every individual. On the other hand, persistent inequalities in educational systems and outcomes are a major concern in most countries (Muttaqin, 2018). This condition makes the scavenger children in the final waste dumps are increasingly deprived. The economic conditions make them have to help their parents and also carry out their obligations as students who must study and obtain satisfactory learning outcomes. On the other hand, they have limitations in understanding complex learning material due to their lack of reading ability.

### **Aku Belajar program and the awareness of scavengers to go back to school**

Implementation is a process in the form of a series of activities, which starts from a policy carried out in order to achieve a goal. Therefore, the policy was derived from a program and project (Adisasmita, 2011). The implementation of the Aku Belajar program was driven by several students in West Kalimantan who were concerned about the condition of education in West Kalimantan, especially for the marginalized. They plan the program by making the best scenario in order to achieve the goals they want. The program was implemented at several locations in Pontianak, one of which was in Batu Layang. In this case, the implements a process of leadership, guidance, and motivation for the workforce so that they can work effectively and efficiently in achieving goals. In addition, they provide regular tasks and explanations regarding work. They also explain the established policies and the program implementation process that must be carried out properly by all parties in the organization, as well as the motivating process. Hence, all parties

can carry out their responsibilities with full awareness and high productivity.

The program is divided into several programs, for instance, a six-month volunteering program which is divided into two activities, namely the dimension room and charity day. Aku Belajar also has a mini library and other volunteer activities. The activity implementation was mainly promoted through social media such as social media, Instagram, Facebook, and mass media like newspapers. The promotional activities aim to inform the community about the development of Aku Belajar as they have made some changes in marginal areas and communities. Therefore, Aku Belajar will not only become a Nonprofit Organization (NPO) who are trying to educate the nation's life but every individual changes their mindset and is moved to participate in volunteer activities, especially in the field of education. In addition, a program that is planned and implemented properly and achieves the objectives of the program will increase the level of confidence of the donors that the funds they spend can help make the program a success in the field of education and are able to obtain success for equal distribution of education.

Synergize existing work programs with related parties, such as the ministry of youth and sports (Kemenpora), the Ministry of Social Affairs (Kemensos), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Smart Healthy Generation (GSC), the West Kalimantan Regional Library Unit, Purna Caraka Muda Indonesia (PCMI), and other communities in West Kalimantan, have made the organization successfully implemented their program. This partnership will increase the integrity of the organization and expand to other relationships, which will impact increasing the number of points of educational equity program activities. It is possible that the success of the program at the Batu Layang Final Disposal Site (TPA) will encourage other marginalized areas to change their lives through education independently. Those marginal areas will even become the next target after the TPA of Batu Layang. Therefore, every planned program must be implemented so that we can find out whether the program can be successful or not or whether the program needs additional or needs improvement. Surely, it will be known when each program has been implemented.

## Figure 2

As mentioned earlier, one of the programs of organization includes the dimension activity, where every month, they invite inspiring figures to encourage children in the community. This activity provides an overview of the various professions that exist today. It is expected to motivate children to be better than their current condition. Meanwhile, the charity day is an art performance to foster the creativity of scavenger children. The management of organization deliberately created this activity to establish closeness between the fostered children and their teaching brothers and sisters. Then, the learning library program is a program that aims to foster children's interest in reading. This activity starts from collecting used books that are worth reading. This learning library is the beginning of the formation of other programs, such as the volunteer of organization see **Figure 2**. The implementation of community empowerment aims to ensure that scavenger children have the right to learn through the organization. It serves as a solution to the illiteracy problem faced by scavengers in Batu Layang. Additionally, it aims to increase children's literacy and learning motivation by utilizing youth or students as teaching staff for their voluntary work. Thus,

the community empowerment can be directed according to its objectives, where empowerment makes social learning by appreciating the initiative and creativity of the community towards the needs and existing. Further, the community can independently help themselves in meeting basic needs and be able to solve problems, as well as summarize existing values in society in building a new paradigm in development that is focused on the community (Noor, 2011).

## Conclusion

This research reports the implementation of organization in improving the literacy of scavenger children in Batu Layang. It found interesting evidence after doing an observation where the organization can motivate and direct children to achieve learning goals and help facilitate children to choose and find learning resources/materials. Additionally, the program helps overcome children's learning difficulties and helps solve problems faced by children that cause learning difficulties and illiteracy. These activities have been implemented by the volunteers of organization so as to improve children's literacy. In improving the literacy of children, and the program builds a mini library for scavengers. It should be noted that a school that can facilitate the students to acquire all the useful skills for their life and life can be perceived as a literacy school. One of which is a literacy facility, namely a library and educators to teach children to read and write.

This research also documented that the learning interest of the scavenger children who have been fostered has increased. This is shown by the attention of the children while learning, where the foster children focus on the lesson and are serious when the volunteers provide direction on learning objectives, explain the material, and solve their learning difficulties in a unique and easy manner. The children also listened to the volunteers' directions to select and find learning resources. The child's attention is meant as a concentration or the soul activity towards observation and understanding, to the exclusion of others than that. Children have an interest in certain objects, leading them to pay close attention to these objects. When the volunteers carry out learning and dimension activities, children who were previously illiterate can read and obtain good results and achievements both at the organization and school. This makes the children gain a sense of pride and satisfaction.

The organization of “*Aku Belajar*” always utilizes available facilities to support learning. The three informants also said that the existing facilities made it easy for them to learn. Student interest is closely related to the driving force that encourages them to feel attracted to people, objects, activities or can be in the form of affective experiences stimulated by the activity. This means that the facilities provided by the volunteers can stimulate the children to learn because it facilitates the learning activities. With this facility, the scavenger children become more independent and aware of learning. Most of the children in the TPA are then able to recognize letters and read correctly, as evidenced by several activities such as the Charity Day activity where the scavenger children and volunteers performed a musical drama. On top of that, the performance can be successful because the children already understand the drama scenario, plus the collaboration between the children and volunteers. Therefore, their hard work and learning make

satisfactory results that can be watched by many people. In addition, the learning outcomes have also increased, which is known based on the results of interviews and research observations. Actually, Aku Belajar can be used as a form and example for young volunteers who have good competence in education and science. Thus, this can be adopted as a model for other countries and cities in Indonesia that are experiencing education and poverty crises.

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**Figure 1**



Figure 2.



Figure 3

