

Increase Students Interest and Confidence in Continuing Study in Higher Education

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Abstract

The education process in higher education is something that needs to be considered by all groups. Continuing education to a higher level will provide opportunities for students to improve their knowledge and skills, especially in the demands of the 21st century. The purpose of this activity is to social life and the university environment in order to increase student's interest and confidence in deciding to continue their education to a higher level. This activity is a form of community service carried out by Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela with the Mataram State Islamic University. The activity consists of three stages, namely preparation, implementation, and closing. The target of this activity is all class XII students at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela, with a total of 58 students. Based on the activities that have been carried out, it is known that the interest of class XII students to continue their education to higher education has increased compared to previous years with a percentage of 36% or 21 of 58 students.

Keywords: socialization activities, interests and confidence, higher education

Introduction

Education is a process to shape one's characteristics through a structured and systematic scheme (Nurhayati et al., 2021). In the education system, the learning process is the most important thing that must be considered. The importance of education is even one of the benchmarks for the level of success and progress of a country (Rizaldi et al., 2020b). According to Ekawati (2018), one way to improve the progress of a nation is to produce human resources through the educational process. Through the educational process, it is hoped that humans will be able to master the science and technological developments needed in society, especially in the current era.

Judging from the characteristics of the 21st century, the expected outcomes today are those who have broad skills and knowledge, especially those related to problem solving (Rizaldi et al., 2021a). The education system in Indonesia itself generally consists of several levels, namely Basic Education, Secondary Education, and Higher Education (Jolianis & Ramayani, 2020; Mahuda & Huda, 2021). These

various levels are forms of formal education obtained through an educational institution that is specifically designed for the learning process to occur.

One thing that is of particular concern for final grade students (XII) is that they are faced with choices in determining the continuation of their life in the future such as what to do after graduating from a madrasa or school (Endriani et al., 2020; Mufida & Effendi, 2019; Usman et al., 2021). Various options will arise such as participating in job training, working, being unemployed, or continuing the learning system to a higher level, namely higher education. Based on the current conditions, especially in the Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela educational institution, it can be seen that the tendency of students to continue their studies to university is still in the low category. Of course, this problem needs special attention for madrasas because by continuing to strive that basically the higher the level of education that is passed by students, the more opportunities they will be able to compete in society in the future. In general, the factors that cause the low level of student willingness to continue their studies to higher education can be classified into two, namely

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the interest factor and student confidence. Most of the students, especially grade XII at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela.

Objectives

The purpose of the activity is to provide initial information to class XII students to be able to continue their education to higher education. In addition, it provides information to readers, especially teachers, so that they can assist and direct students in making choices after completing education in high school.

Methodology

This socialization activity is a form of community service carried out by Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela together with the Mataram State Islamic University. This activity aims to introduce university life for students as prospective new students. The activity was carried out on Saturday, January 15, 2022 at 10.00 WITA for one face-to-face meeting.

Participants in the socialization activity were all 58 students of class XII majoring in Mathematics and Natural Sciences and Religion along with several representatives from the teaching teacher council at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela. Socialization activities are carried out through three stages, namely:

1. Preparation, starting from the process of determining the goals, schedule, targets, resource persons, and outcomes of the activities carried out at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela.
2. Implementation, carried out by delivering presentations and conducting discussion and question and answer sessions with students.
3. Closing, an evaluation process was carried out using a questionnaire to find out student responses related to the socialization activities that had been carried out.

Results and Discussion

Profile of Mataram State Islamic University

West Nusa Tenggara has many universities, both public and private. However, currently there are only two state universities in West Nusa Tenggara, namely Mataram University and Mataram State Islamic University. Mataram State Islamic University is the only Islamic State University in West Nusa Tenggara. The Mataram State Islamic University not only accepts Strata I (S1) students but also accepts Strata II (S2) and Strata III (S3) students. In its development, since its establishment until now, Mataram State Islamic University has had five faculties in Strata I (S1) namely the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, the Faculty of Sharia, the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Studies, the Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business, and the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Religious Studies. As for the Strata II (S2) and Strata III (S3) levels, there are seven majors including:

1. Master of Islamic Religious Education (S2)
2. Masters in Ahwal Al-Shakhshiyah (S2)
3. Master of Islamic Education Management (S2)
4. Master of Islamic Economics (S2)
5. Master of Arabic Language Education (S2)
6. Master of Islamic Broadcasting Communication (S2)
7. Doctor of Islamic Education (S3)

Mataram State Islamic University in its journey as a State University, has had many achievements in academic and non-academic fields both nationally and internationally. Meanwhile, the number of students enrolling at the Mataram State Islamic University is increasing every year. Various prospective students who register to be able to enter the Mataram State Islamic University are also very diverse, including those from the city of Bima, Dompu, Sumbawa, and also from others. Based on the interest data of prospective students, it is known that since the

establishment of the Mataram State Islamic University, it is dominated by indigenous students from Lombok Island.

Implementation of Socialization Activities

Preparation stage. The initial stage that was prepared in carrying out this activity was to ensure the schedule for the implementation of the socialization between the Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam and the students of the Mataram State Islamic University. This needs to be done because the implementation of socialization activities is carried out when the learning process is taking place at the madrasa. So that it does not harm all parties, especially teachers who will use their time for this activity, it is necessary to be informed earlier.

Based on the discussions that have been carried out together at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela, it was agreed that the participants in this socialization activity were all class XII Religion and Mathematics and Natural Sciences Department with a total of 58 students. In addition to the target participants, another agreement that was obtained was the schedule for the implementation of the activities, namely on Saturday, January 15, 2022 at 10:00 WITA in Class XII Department of Religion, Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela.

Figure 1

Mataram State Islamic University Student Socialization Brochure



Implementation stage. The stage of implementing the socialization activity is divided into two stages, namely Submission of material and Discussion / Questions and Answers. The first stage is the delivery of socialization materials by representatives of students receiving Smart Indonesia Card scholarships from the Mataram State Islamic University. There are several topics of material presented, including:

1. The importance of continuing education studies to university.
2. General profile of Mataram State Islamic University such as majors, study programs, and others.

3. Facilities to support the learning process such as infrastructure, scholarships, and others.
4. Professions/jobs that can be chosen after completing studies at the Mataram State Islamic University.
5. Tricks to be successful in participating in the university entrance selection

The various topics above are determined based on the information needs of students if they will continue their studies to a higher level (Harahap et al., 2020; Yunus et al., 2021). This socialization activity facilitates class XII students to have an open mind about the importance of continuing their education. The use of students as resource persons is expected to provide an illustration that student's lives after graduating from school do not always have to go straight to work. That way, students will see concrete examples from the lives of resource persons as new scholarship recipients at the Mataram State Islamic University (Rizaldi et al., 2021b). Someone tends to believe information if it is supported by real evidence or something they have seen first-hand (Rizaldi et al., 2020a).

Figure 2

Process of Submission of Information by Student Representatives of Mataram State Islamic University



Discussions stage. The next stage is conducting discussions or questions and answers related to various topics of material that have been presented previously. Based on the discussion, it can be seen that most of the students are very interested in being able to continue their studies to university but are hindered by costs or financial problems. One of the elements that can influence student's interest in diligently continuing their education to university is the social environment (Sari, 2015). Students stated that most parents felt they could not afford to pay tuition fees at the university level. In addition to economic problems, there are some students who are confused in determining the major or study program at university. Determination of majors is the most important part for students who will continue their education to university. Based on research that has been done by Wirastama (2013) that many students experience difficulties or obstacles when they start the lecture process. This is because many of the students are limited to following their close friends in choosing a major or university (Budiyono & Aji, 2021).

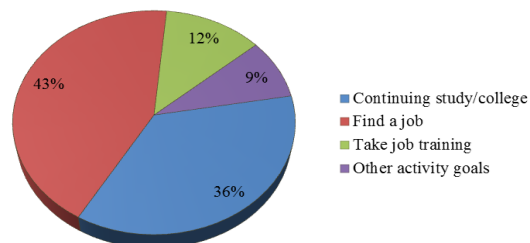
The various problems above certainly illustrate to the madrasah that it is important to carry out various activities aimed at introducing students to life or learning conditions at the tertiary level. In addition, one of the topics that students are very interested in is related to scholarships. This topic motivates students to continue their studies in higher education. Students tend to prefer universities that provide many scholarships to support activities in the lecture process (Amilia et al., 2020; Marlina et al., 2021). Therefore, currently many universities are trying to provide tuition assistance in the form of scholarships to attract student's attention.

Closing stage. The last stage in the socialization activity is to collect questionnaire data related to the plans of class XII students after completing the learning process at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela. This is done to find out the picture or perspective of

students regarding changes in mindset after participating in and receiving information from student representatives regarding the importance of continuing their studies in higher education. Based on the questionnaire data, the distribution of interest of class XII students at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam is as follows:

Figure 3

Percentage Level of Interest of Class XII Students of Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela

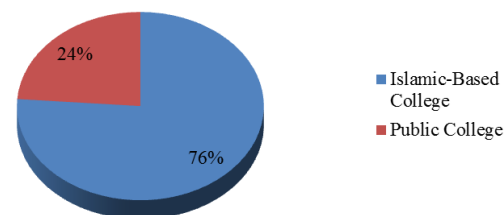


It can be seen from Figure 3, that the interest of class XII students at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela to continue their studies to higher education is still quite low. This is evident from only 36% or 21 of 58 students who want to keep trying to continue their education to university. This indicates that students have not been able to think further about the importance of increasing knowledge and skills, especially at the higher education level. However, this year's data is better when compared to the interest of students to continue their education at the tertiary level in the previous year whose percentage was not more than 10%.

The tendency of students to be not interested in continuing their education in higher education is because many think that looking for work is the main thing that is currently needed by students in meeting the needs of daily life. This perspective needs to be changed to students, especially class XII because in the future one of the benchmarks in the process of finding decent work is the abilities and skills of students (Mardhiyah et al., 2021; Zubaidah, 2016). So that the higher the student's knowledge, it is hoped that more and more skills in the form of hard and soft skills will be possessed. If referring to the distribution of universities that class XII students want to go to at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam, it is obtained as shown in the following graph:

Figure 4

Percentage Level of Higher Education Distribution Goals for Class XII Students of Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela



Based on Figure 4, of the 21 students who want to continue their studies to tertiary institutions, almost 76% or 16 students choose Islamic-based universities. This is certainly in accordance with the prediction that students who come from Islamic boarding schools or madrasah-based educational institutions tend to want to continue their education to Islamic universities. According to Nasution et al. (2021) stated that more graduates of Islamic boarding schools chose to continue to study at Islamic-based universities, and on the contrary

it was seen that few graduates chose and were accepted in public universities. Students are of the view that the theory or material they learn at the madrasah aliyah level can be deepened and expanded in Islamic universities when compared to public universities. However, it cannot be separated that there are some students who want to continue to Public Universities with the reason to gain new knowledge and experience.

Figure 5

Final Session of Socialization Activities in the form of Group Photos



One of the Islamic universities that are of interest to class XII students at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam is the State Islamic University of Mataram. Madrasas, as institutions of course fully support student's decisions to choose the destination university. This form of support is by assisting students in registering for registration and looking for information related to scholarships that can help students in the future.

In addition to the mentoring process, madrasas are also committed to providing information as early as possible regarding the importance of continuing their studies to higher education starting from grades X and XI. The more often the information is provided, the greater the opportunity for students to plan and determine the potential in each student in choosing a major or study program in higher education.

Conclusions

Based on the activities that have been carried out, it can be seen that students are very interested and enthusiastic in listening to various information submitted by student representatives regarding various topics about education in higher education. Socialization activities can certainly change the mindset of students about the importance of continuing education at the tertiary level. The madrasa hopes that this socialization activity will become an agenda that will continue to be carried out in the following year but not only focused on class XII students but can also be applied to students in class X and XI. This is so that students can as soon as possible have an idea to determine the potential of the majors that will be chosen after completing their education at Madrasah Aliyah Plus Nurul Islam Sekarbela.

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