

**Enhancing Community Capacity through Adaptive English Education
and Social Engagement: A Community Service Program in
Bukit Sofa Village**

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ABSTRACT

The Community Service Program (PEMA), held from July 13 to 21, 2025, in Bukit Sofa Village, Pematangsiantar, represents the implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, particularly in the area of community engagement. Ten students from the English Education Department actively participated in a series of educational and social programs including teaching English and religious studies at MTs and MDTA Al-Khairiyah and assisting in Posyandu (Integrated Health Services Post) operations. This service not only contributed to the local community but also enhanced students' leadership, communication, and empathy. This article elaborates on the program's objectives, scope, methodology, outcomes, and challenges, with the hope of providing a reflective and informative example for similar initiatives.

Keywords: *Community Service, Education, Student Empowerment, Health Outreach, Rural Engagement*

ABSTRAK

Program Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat (PEMA) yang diselenggarakan pada tanggal 13 hingga 21 Juli 2025 di Desa Sofa Bukit, Pematangsiantar, merupakan implementasi Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi, khususnya di bidang keterlibatan masyarakat. Sepuluh mahasiswa dari Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris aktif berpartisipasi dalam serangkaian program pendidikan dan sosial termasuk mengajar bahasa Inggris dan studi agama di MTs dan MDTA Al-Khairiyah serta membantu operasional Posyandu (Pos Pelayanan Kesehatan Terpadu). Layanan ini tidak hanya berkontribusi pada masyarakat setempat tetapi juga meningkatkan kepemimpinan, komunikasi, dan empati siswa. Artikel ini menguraikan tujuan, ruang lingkup, metodologi, hasil, dan tantangan program, dengan harapan dapat memberikan contoh reflektif dan informatif untuk inisiatif serupa.

Kata kunci: Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat, Pendidikan, Pemberdayaan Mahasiswa, Penjangkauan Kesehatan, Keterlibatan Pedesaan

INTRODUCTION

Community Service (Pengabdian Masyarakat) is one of the pillars of Indonesia's Tri Dharma of Higher Education, aimed at ensuring students not only excel academically but also engage meaningfully with society. Through service programs, students are expected to implement their knowledge and skills in real-world contexts, fostering a sense of responsibility and care toward the community.

Bukit Sofa Village in Pematangsiantar was selected for this program due to its educational limitations and social dynamics, which align with the competencies of the participating students. One of the group members is a native of the village, which greatly facilitated communication and coordination with local institutions.

Educational institutions such as MTs and MDTA Al-Khairiyah are key elements of the village but face significant limitations, ranging from lack of teachers, limited learning resources, to monotonous teaching approaches. The group responded to these challenges with enthusiasm, contributing through basic English lessons, Islamic studies, and health-related activities via the village Posyandu. This program became a platform not only to serve but also to learn and grow, both personally and academically.

METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation followed a participatory and structured model, adapted to community needs and daily dynamics. Roles were assigned clearly among ten students and activities were conducted under the supervision of both school teachers and the village administration.

a. Teaching English at MTs Al-Khairiyah

Students designed lesson plans using the school's textbooks, complemented with visual aids and games. Lessons were made engaging with group work, interactive quizzes, role-play, and vocabulary building sessions. The main aim was to reduce language anxiety and improve students' confidence.

b. Religious Education at MDTA Al-Khairiyah

In the afternoons, students conducted Quran reading sessions and taught basic Islamic knowledge including Fiqh, Akhlaq, and Islamic History. The delivery used storytelling, discussions, and contextual examples, making the learning environment friendly and responsive.

c. Posyandu Involvement

Students rotated in groups to assist health workers with Posyandu activities handling data logs, weighing babies, and engaging mothers in short health awareness chats. This provided valuable insights into grassroots health systems and community-based care.

d. Daily Evaluation and Team Reflection

Each night, all members gathered for a reflective session to assess progress, discuss obstacles, and suggest improvements. This daily practice helped strengthen teamwork and ensured activity continuity despite challenges.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The program produced several notable outcomes, both for the community and for the participating students. These outcomes were observed through daily interaction, participant reflections, and informal feedback from local residents and educators.

a. Educational Impact at MTs Al-Khairiyah

Students at MTs Al-Khairiyah responded positively to the English lessons. Initially, many students were shy and reluctant to speak. However, as the activities became more interactive through games, role-play, and fun competitions which make confidence levels increased. Students began to volunteer, use basic vocabulary in context, and show genuine curiosity in learning English. This indicated that exposure to varied learning methods helped break the routine and stimulate motivation.

b. Religious Learning at MDTA Al-Khairiyah

The santri (Islamic students) at MDTA displayed high enthusiasm during Quran recitation and religious sessions. Since the MDTA faced a shortage of teachers, the involvement of university students allowed for more personalized attention. The friendly and story-based approach encouraged active discussion even in religious topics, making students feel more connected to the values being taught.

c. Social Engagement through Posyandu

Many participants experienced Posyandu for the first time. They engaged in infant weighing, health recording, and casual communication with mothers. This hands-on experience allowed students to develop social sensitivity and awareness of public health practices at the village level. The trust shown by community members, especially mothers, became one of the most heartwarming aspects of the entire experience.

d. Student Development and Reflection

Through this program, students enhanced their soft skills: communication, adaptability, teamwork, and responsibility. Living together at the basecamp and engaging with the community daily created a real-life learning lab. Their ability to plan, coordinate, adapt, and reflect improved significantly. This is skills that are crucial in the field of education.

While the program achieved its intended goals, several challenges arose, such as:

- Time constraints: The eight-day timeline was tight, requiring some plans to be adjusted or combined. For example, some students had to divide their time between Posyandu and school teaching on the same day.
- Coordination among team members: Balancing teaching responsibilities, lesson planning, logistics, and social tasks required strong internal communication. Daily meetings became essential to clarify tasks and maintain team spirit.
- Resource limitations: Teaching with minimal media and working in unfamiliar environments challenged students to improvise creatively using simple tools like whiteboards, hand-drawn flashcards, or verbal games.

However, the challenges can be solved by these solutions:

- Holding consistent evening evaluations.
- Delegating specific roles (e.g., media prep, teaching lead, documentation).
- Relying on peer support and group reflection to overcome fatigue and uncertainty.

CONCLUSION

The Community Service Program (PEMA) conducted in Bukit Sofa Village served as an impactful initiative for both the community and the participating students. Through teaching, social engagement, and health support, students became more than just providers of knowledge, they became listeners, facilitators, and learners.

The program nurtured values such as empathy, collaboration, adaptability, and civic responsibility, values that are difficult to cultivate through classroom learning alone. The spirit of togetherness among group members and the genuine warmth from the local community strengthened the meaningfulness of the program.

Although some limitations were present, the overall experience proved successful and transformative. It is our hope that the seeds planted during this brief yet powerful program will continue to grow in the hearts of the community members and the students alike.

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