Socialization on the Use of the School Activity and Budget Plan Application (ARKAS) for PAUD School Principals in Sentani District, Jayapura Regency

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the impact of socialization on the use of the School Activity Plan and Budget Application (ARKAS) for PAUD principals in Sentani District, Jayapura Regency. Socialization methods included intensive training in the use of ARKAS for budget planning, activity monitoring, and school financial reporting. Data was collected through direct observation and interviews with socialization participants. The results showed significant improvements in principals' understanding and skills in using ARKAS, as well as improvements in the efficiency of school budget management. The conclusion of this study is that the implementation of ARKAS effectively supports transparency and accountability in the management of PAUD school funds, with positive implications for the quality of education in Sentani District. The study recommends widespread implementation of ARKAS in PAUD schools as a step towards more structured and efficient education management.

Keywords: *ARKAS, Formatting, Article*

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Sentani District, Jayapura Regency, is an integral part of the education system aimed at providing a solid foundation for children's development from an early age. Therefore, there is a need for encouragement from the central and local governments to take concrete actions in realizing higher quality education for the community However, there are still many challenges faced. These challenges are related to limited funding available for education, disparities in educational opportunities, and low educational quality. Upon further examination, the most significant challenge is the limited budget for educational implementation. The constrained budget also impacts schools' capability to meet their needs, resulting in unfulfilled school programs. Therefore, schools need to reconsider financial management to ensure effective implementation of teaching and learning activities [1] .

In managing educational budgets, good planning is crucial. Planning as the initial process of activities or operations in management significantly influences the implementation of any activity. Through thorough, optimal, and detailed planning, decision-makers or implementation teams will find it easier to execute activities (Lukman et al., 2024). Therefore, the success or failure of a program largely depends on how its planning is conducted. However, budget management and activity planning in ECE schools often face significant challenges (Ningsi et al., 2022). The use of manual methods in budget management is often inefficient and lacks transparency, leading to uncontrolled or suboptimal expenditures [2] .

Management of public funds in ECE schools requires a high level of transparency and accountability to ensure that every expenditure aligns with the desired educational objectives. Limitations in existing management methods often hinder transparency and accountability in school fund utilization. Parents and the general public have the right to know and understand how school funds are used to support children's education. The School Budget Work Plan Application (ARKAS) is introduced as a solution to enhance this transparency and accountability by providing a more structured and integrated tool for budget planning and activity reporting [3]. The ARKAS application ensures transparency in fund management to all school stakeholders Schools are required to use ARKAS as a guide in fund management to ensure education funds are managed accountably and transparently, thus supporting school management [4] .In 2022, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) together with the Ministry of Home Affairs (Kemendagri) agreed to issue a Joint Circular (SEB) to integrate the education

budget management system with the local government financial management system (Doke et al., 2023). This initiative aligns with the provisions outlined in Ministerial Regulation No. 2 of 2022. The key points of the SEB include the implementation of the School Budget Work Plan Application (**A**plikasi **R**encana **K**egiatan **A**nggran **S**ekolah) as the single application for schools in planning and reporting the use of School Operational Assistance (BOS) funds. Therefore, all school budget management will be conducted through the ARKAS application, starting with BOS funds in 2022. Similarly, this approach will be applied to Operational Assistance Funds (BOP) starting from 2023. Previously, the management systems for educational unit budgets were separate from local government financial management systems. Schools had to manually input budget planning and reporting data into both the local and central government systems, leading to excessive time and effort spent on administrative tasks.

Several tools have been utilized, such as the School Activity Planning and Budgeting Application (ARKAS), developed by the Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education (Dikdasmen), starting in 2018. SIBOS (School Management) has been managed by the BPD since 2017, and BOS (bos.Kemendikbud.go.id). There are several systems developed by Dikdasmen since 2018; firstly, there is SIPLAH (School Procurement Information System) managed by the Bureau. Then there is ARKAS (School Activity and Budget Planning Application), which is essentially a national RKAS application (ARKAS). The function of the RKAS (ARKAS) application is to assist schools in planning their budgets and school management from manual to digital. This also facilitates schools in reporting and being accountable for their school business support funds.

Based on the interview and field observations conducted by researchers regarding the use of the RKAS (ARKAS) application in early childhood education (PAUD) schools in the Sentani district of Jayapura Regency, it is evident that these schools are unable to effectively implement or use it. The emergence of issues such as personnel skill imbalances has resulted in schools lacking teachers with IT or financial skills, leading them to directly hire external volunteer teachers. Furthermore, many users of the RKAS (ARKAS) application in these schools, including school principals, treasurers, and other administrators, have not fully understood how PAUD schools should utilize the application. Consequently, several guidelines developed by the government have not sufficiently assisted PAUD schools in implementing the use of ARKAS, necessitating evaluation before further use. The schools' inability to use the application disrupts the reporting process for budget management, including delaying the submission of school-reported data to the Department of Education.

Based on this background, the author has made efforts to improve the capacity for planning and budget management among PAUD school principals in the Sentani district, Jayapura Regency, through Community Service with the theme "Socialization of the Use of the School Activity Plan and Budget Application (ARKAS) for PAUD School Principals in Sentani District, Jayapura Regency." This socialization activity aims to provide direct experience to school principals and teachers in utilizing a data-based planning platform, conducting structured reflection identification, and formulating appropriate and effective RKT (School Activity Plans) and budgets to address root problems in each PAUD unit [5]

.The objectives of the ARKAS utilization socialization in Sentani District, Jayapura Regency are:

1. Ensuring that PAUD school principals have a deep understanding of ARKAS features and can implement them in daily management.
2. Using ARKAS to improve budget planning processes, monitor activity implementation, and report outcomes in real-time.
3. Strengthening transparency and accountability in school fund utilization, which is a key aspect in building community trust in school management.

Through the implementation of ARKAS, several significant benefits are expected to be achieved:

1. Reducing the time and effort required to prepare budgets and report activities,

allowing administrative staff to focus more on educational activities.

2. Ensuring that every school fund expenditure is accurately documented and aligned with the established educational goals.
3. Through better fund management, schools can enhance the quality of education offered to children in the Sentani Distric

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

Before conducting the socialization, an initial survey was conducted to identify the training needs of PAUD school principals in the Sentani District regarding the use of ARKAS. This survey revealed that the majority of school principals were not familiar with ARKAS and required basic to intermediate training. Therefore, the content for the socialization was developed based on these identified needs. The materials include an introduction to ARKAS, usage tutorials, and practical case studies. Step-by-step guides and video tutorials were also prepared to assist participants in understanding and independently using the application after the training. The socialization was carried out using a combination of presentation methods and direct demonstrations. This approach was chosen to ensure that participants not only grasp the concepts but also can apply them in their daily tasks. The socialization was scheduled for a full day, divided into two sessions: an introduction session covering the main features of ARKAS and a demonstration session showcasing the application's usage. The venue for the socialization was the GKI Reveil Kemiri Sentani Church building, equipped with laptops, projectors, and internet access.

The socialization began with an opening speech from the head of the Early Childhood Education Department at the State Christian Protestant College in Sentani, introducing the objectives and agenda of the socialization. Moving on to the core session, the speakers emphasized the importance of ARKAS in school budget management and activity planning. They delivered a presentation on ARKAS's key features and its benefits for school management. The demonstration of ARKAS included basic steps in operating the application, such as data input, budget planning, and report generation. During the open discussion session, participants were able to share their experiences and ask questions. The speakers provided practical solutions and tips based on the participants' questions and issues.Furthermore, to evaluate the implementation of the socialization activities, at the end of the event, participants were given an evaluation questionnaire. This questionnaire aims to assess the effectiveness of the socialization. Additionally, to support continuous learning, supplementary materials and online resources are provided. Follow-up sessions or mentoring are also planned to assist participants who still encounter difficulties in using ARKAS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The socialization of the use of the School Activity and Budget Plan Application (ARKAS) for early childhood education (PAUD) school principals in Sentani District, Jayapura Regency, was conducted in several stages including planning, implementation, and evaluation. The planning stage involved determining the timing, participants, and speakers. The socialization took place on May 10, 2024, at GKI Refeil Kemiri Sentani Church. Evaluation was done through distributing questionnaires to the participants.The event was attended by a total of 30 people, comprising 20 participants, 3 speakers, and 7 committee members. About 20% or 5 of the invited 25 participants did not attend. The speakers were from the Jayapura District Education Office. The schedule of the socialization activities for PAUD school principals in Sentani District, Jayapura Regency, is presented in Table

Tabel 1. Schedule of Socialization Event Activities

No	Tahap	Kegiatan	Narasumber
1	Introduction	Prayer	Team
		"The Chairman's Address and Presentation of the Vision-Mission of the Early Childhood Education Department at STAKPN Sentani."	Dr. Evelin F. Ugadje, M.Pd. (Ketua Panitia)
2.	Main activities	"Material 1: Religious Moderation"	Dr. Fredrik Warwer, M.Th. (Ketua STAKPN Sentani)
		"Material 2: Career Development for Early Childhood Education Teachers"	Amelia Ibo, M.Pd. (Kepala Bidang Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini dan Pendidikan Masyarakat Kabupaten Jayapura)
		"Material 3: Utilization of School Activity and Budget Plan Application (ARKAS)"	Amirikus Liburseran, S.Pd. (Admin BOSP Kabupaten Jayapura)
3.	Evaluation	"Distribution of Participant Response Questionnaires"	Panitia
4.	Closing	Prayer	Panitia

Pic 1. Presentation of PKM Material to Participants"

Participants initially had a low understanding of ARKAS, indicating a knowledge gap before the socialization. However, after the session, there was a significant improvement, although some areas, such as understanding advanced features of ARKAS, still require further improvement. Participant engagement during the Q&A sessions and discussions was notably active. This was evidenced by their consistent interaction with the presenters during both Q&A sessions.

The use of interactive methods and guided practical exercises by experienced facilitators were crucial factors contributing to the success of this socialization. Throughout the event, there were no significant technical or non-technical challenges encountered. However, time constraints and varying levels of technological understanding among participants posed challenges. For future sessions, extending the training duration and providing additional supporting materials are recommended

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Table 2. PKM Evaluation Questionnaire Results

NO	STATEMENT	SCORE RANGE			
		4	3	2	1
1.	The materials presented during the conducted service activities.	20	0	0	0
2.	Your response to the materials presented during the conducted service activities.	16	3	1	0
3.	Your feedback on the effectiveness of the conducted service activities	17	3	0	0
4.	The service activities that have been conducted can be continued by the service partners.	17	2	1	0
5.	The methods or delivery approach used by the speakers during the conducted service activities.	14	4	2	0
6.	The time allocated for delivering the materials during the conducted service activities.	17	3	0	0
7.	The clarity of the materials.	14	6	0	0
8.	Your interest in the conducted activities.	20	0	0	0
9.	Your satisfaction with the implementation of the service activities conducted by the PKAUD team at STAKPN Sentani.	18	1	1	0

The results of the service activities, based on the evaluation questionnaires from the participants regarding the materials, delivery, and relevance of the socialization, can be seen in Table 2. Table 2 shows that 100% of the participants were very satisfied with the materials presented in the conducted service activities; 80% of the participants strongly agreed with the materials presented in the conducted service activities; 85% of the participants found the service activities to be very beneficial; 85% of the participants strongly agreed that the service activities could be continued by the service partners; 70% of the participants were very satisfied with the method or delivery approach used by the speakers in the conducted service activities; 85% of the participants were very satisfied with the duration of time used for delivering the materials in the conducted service activities; 70% of the participants were very satisfied with the clarity of the materials; 100% of the participants were very interested in the activities that were conducted; 90% of the participants were very satisfied with the implementation of the service activities conducted by the PKAUD team at STAKPN Sentani. Based on these evaluation results, it can be concluded that the service activity with the theme "Socialization of the Use of the School Activity and Budget Plan Application (ARKAS)

for PAUD School Heads in Sentani District, Jayapura Regency" was successfully conducted.

Based on the evaluation above, these community engagement activities can be classified as effective because they have successfully helped early childhood education (PAUD) schools achieve good planning and budgeting for school activities. This finding is supported by Lukman et al. (2024), which indicates that if a community engagement activity achieves an 87% attainment rate based on community indicators, it is considered effective and in line with the plan. Therefore, it can be concluded that the entire series of community engagement activities, especially in supporting the development of high-quality early childhood education, can be categorized as effective. Additionally, the perspective from Doke et al. (2023) also suggests that the implementation of the School Activity and Budget Plan Application (ARKAS) can enhance the school's financial management capabilities according to technical guidelines. The improvement in these capabilities is evident from the evaluation, which shows a shift from a lower category to a significantly improved category after two cycles of implementation. This indicates that the community engagement and ARKAS socialization activities have had a significant positive impact on improving the quality of planning and financial management in

PAUD schools in Sentani District, Jayapura Regency.

Pic 2. Participants in Community Service Activities (PKM) when listening to the speaker's presentation.

In addition, the socialization activities on the use of the School Activity and Budget Plan Application (ARKAS) provide knowledge for PAUD school principals to prepare budgets in accordance with applicable guidelines, procedures, and valid data. This aligns with the view of that Data-Driven Planning activities have a positive impact on school principals and school operators. According to [6] when school principals and operators understand how to analyze data in educational reports and use it to develop school programs, the planned programs should meet the school's needs, especially those of the students. Therefore, training in data-driven planning can assist schools in correctly and effectively developing school programs based on valid data. Furthermore, [7] demonstrate that community service activities conducted by service teams, in collaboration with PAUD school administrators, related to the preparation of the School Budget Plan (RAPBS), are efforts aimed at enhancing knowledge and capabilities of both administrators and educators in presenting RAPBS in accordance with regulations. Additionally, they provide solutions to address existing issues and improve the current operational systems.

With enhanced proficiency in using ARKAS, it is anticipated that budget

CONCLUSION

Socialization of the use of the School Activity Plan and Budget Application (ARKAS) to PAUD school principals in the Sentani District, Jayapura Regency has proven effective in increasing participants' understanding and

management and activity planning in PAUD schools will achieve greater transparency and accountability. ARKAS facilitates clearer and more timely budget planning and reporting for school principals. Furthermore, effective utilization of ARKAS can help schools allocate funds more efficiently, ensuring that available resources are optimally utilized to support educational activities. The knowledge and skills acquired from this socialization are expected to be applied in the day-to-day financial management of PAUD schools. Over time, this will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of school budget management. Improved budget management enables schools to enhance educational facilities and resources, thereby enhancing the quality of education in PAUD.

Based on participant evaluation results, it is recommended to extend the training duration, utilize more interactive technologies, and provide additional materials such as video tutorials and step-by-step guides. This approach would enhance the socialization program and allow for expansion to other districts or educational levels to achieve broader impact. Collaboration with local government and other educational institutions can facilitate the dissemination of ARKAS benefits

skills. Increasing the ability of school principals to use ARKAS is expected to increase transparency and accountability in managing school budgets and activities. With ARKAS, financial planning and reporting becomes more structured and timely. Using ARKAS allows for more efficient and effective fund management.

School principals can now plan, allocate and report budget use better, which ultimately supports improving the quality of education in PAUD. This socialization will not only have a short-term impact in terms of improving skills,

SUGGESTION

It is recommended to increase the duration and intensity of training so that participants can delve deeper into the material and practice the use of ARKAS more effectively. Additionally, providing supplementary materials such as video tutorials, step-by-step guides, and extra Q&A sessions can strengthen participants' understanding and skills. Post-socialization, a mentoring and coaching program is needed to assist school principals in implementing ARKAS in their daily practices. This ongoing support will ensure that PAUD schools can overcome any challenges that may arise. Collaboration with the Jayapura Regency government and the education department can expand the reach of the

but is also expected to have a long-term impact in better school financial management. This will support the sustainability of higher quality education programs.

socialization to other schools within the same district or other districts. Higher education institutions like STAKPN Sentani can provide advanced training and technical support for PAUD school principals in this regard.

THANK-YOU NOTE

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