

The Effectiveness of the Mentor-Mentee Program Under the Kedah State Development Board (KEDA)

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the effectiveness of the mentor-mentee program under the Kedah State Development Board (KEDA). In particular, this study is to examine the impact of the program on the economy for rural entrepreneurs and to identify the factors that influence the effectiveness of the program. This research method is qualitative with a case study design through in-depth interviews. The respondents of this study consist of rural residents who have participated in the programs. Overall, the results of the study found that the implementation of the programs has had a very positive impact on the socioeconomics of the rural population. This can be shown by the increase in income, reduction in the cost of living and the improvement in the standard of living achieved by rural residents. The results of the study also show that rural residents have practiced good values such as helping each other, trusting and tolerant of each other. This study has also identified issues and problems that arise during the implementation of the program. Accordingly, the suggestions for improvement presented should be considered in order to increase the effectiveness of the program to an optimal level in planning the implementation of the program in the future. Indirectly, will improve the overall performance of KEDA. This is because KEDA needs a comprehensive model to be used as a guide when planning a new human capital program in the future.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Mentor Mentee, Rural Area, Socioeconomic

Introduction

The Kedah Regional Development Authority (KEDA) was established to develop and strengthen the socioeconomic and infrastructure standards in the rural areas of the State of

Kedah. KEDA has implemented the Mentor-Mentee Program as an effort to improve the ability of rural entrepreneurs in the field of entrepreneurship, skills training and human capital development. The Mentor-Mentee program has shown a positive impact on the targeted group. However, there is no systematic and comprehensive study to measure the effectiveness of the human capital program implemented by KEDA which is able to have an impact on the economy and social well-being of rural residents.

The mentor-mentee method is a good way of developing human capital because human capital is the main source for the development of an organization. Human capital development is development that focuses on the development of individual capabilities and competitiveness (Marimuthu et al., 2009). The goal of human capital development is to increase and advance individuals to get returns either from the aspect of knowledge, skills or attitudes in the future. Human capital development is also related to the efforts to mobilize individual talent, competence and commitment in the organization.

The mentor-mentee program is able to provide a more effective impact in meeting the needs of rural communities conducted by government agencies (Ab. Latif, 2021). Rural communities are targeted to change from a set of thought patterns and actions through a set of systematic guidance. This can produce human capital that can add value to the economy and society. The method of mentor-mentee provides guidance to implement the planned program to the mentored party known as the mentee (Nearing et al., 2020).

An effective mentor needs to play the role of a teacher and be able to build a good relationship with the mentee so that the coaching session can be conducted more effectively and smoothly. Mentors are able to channel knowledge more effectively in a short time through the method of building good relationships in fostering a spirit of mutual trust in the guidance process.

In order to understand the rural community more effectively, underline there are at least five ways of the psychology profession as a mentor in dealing with a problem of the rural community. First, there is a need to determine the variables in the life of rural communities. Second, the need for research that can measure the behavior and emotions of rural communities. Third, the right method is necessary to encourage more mentors and mentees to commit and produce a more effective impact in each program held. Fourth, the mentors need a set of modules that are comprehensive and focus on basic issues in the area involved. Fifth, the self-awareness of the mentors and mentees is very necessary in promoting research results among the rural population (Harvey and Hodgson 1995; Lillemets et al., 2022).

Mentees from the results of the mentor-mentee program conducted are able to form a new mentor group in the future. The mentor-mentee program can empower the economy of the local population due to the migration of people to big cities such as Kuala Lumpur and Penang. The empowerment of this program is one of the best solutions to create job opportunities that can be worked on by local residents to ensure that the rate of migration to big cities can be reduced. the income equality of the population can also be balanced, further the urbanization of rural areas can be realized.

This mentor-mentee program is a method that can produce many mentees who have high competitiveness in creating job opportunities. This process is known as the process of rural urbanization. This rural urbanization according to Siciliano (2012) is the improvement and advancement of rural people's thinking patterns in the way they act to exploit land use. This action can change life based on subsistence farming or agro-ecosystems to economic resources that provide higher returns such as the development of downstream industries that can meet the needs of the people.

The result of this mentor-mentee program generates a variety of new ideas and actions that become variables in the efficiency of energy use, financial exploitation and systematic time management for local citizens. This new way of thinking will produce positive pressure in the community environment. This allows them to be able to manage their lives in a better and systematic way with the abundant surrounding resources, further generating multiple incomes for the family economy and local residents. High income will result in high purchasing power which can then be combined to compare different household typologies and different land use pattern policies from an integrated and focused perspective.

The results show that the urbanization strategy, which aims to change the local land use will not drive out the local residents but rather develop them from within (Dazhuan, 2020). The increase in economic efficiency is also associated with an increase in energy consumption in rural areas, indicating that the area is in a good urbanization trend that avoids rural migration to the city so that in the end the rural area itself becomes the new focal point of the surrounding community and become satellite cities in the future.

Based on all the observations that have been carried out, the KEDA mentee mentor program should meet all the aspects that have been described so that the effectiveness of the program is at a level that makes KPLB proud in general. Therefore, this study was carried out to identify the factors that affect the effectiveness of the program and the problems encountered during the implementation of the program as well as suggestions for improvement.

The effectiveness of a human capital program can be measured by assessing the extent to which the program's objectives can be achieved (Noe et al., 2014). Previous studies found that the effectiveness of human capital development is influenced by four factors, namely the organization, individuals, program characteristics and the environment (Pouryazdan et al., 2015; Noe et al., 2014). The main objective of this study is to measure the effectiveness of the Mentor-Mentee Program and its impact on rural entrepreneurs. While the special objectives of this study can be divided into two, namely:

1. Identify the impact of the mentor-mentee program on the economy for rural entrepreneurs.
2. Identify the factors that influence the effectiveness of the mentor-mentee program for rural entrepreneurs.

Methodology

This study uses a mix-method combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. There are two main stages in data collection. The first stage is the basis of the study which aims to develop research instruments, while the second stage is the collection of

primary and secondary data in the first stage aims to develop research instruments. This stage involves the process of interviews, discussions, reviewing the implementation papers of all KEDA Human Capital Programs involved in this study, reviewing annual reports and related documents.

This study has produced two types of instruments which are questionnaires and semi-structured interview questions. In the second stage, the research data collection work is divided into two (2) methods, namely (1) primary data collection through field research and data collection secondary. Primary data involves the collection of data directly from the study respondents using questionnaires while secondary data collection involves the collection of important information, namely all reports and documents related to KEDA as well as information from trainers and coaches to identify the study's problems.

The population of this study is participants who have participated in the KEDA Human Capital program. In total, there are a total of 13,448 people who have participated in the KEDA Human Capital program. Based on the population, an estimated 1500 respondents were involved in this study. In order to obtain information from respondents, this study uses probability sampling which is simple random sampling.

In this study, the measurement of research instruments for each KEDA human capital program is classified into four parts, namely respondent profile, program impact on the economy, and social or community development, program effectiveness factors, and program issues or problems.

For this study, the data collection method for all KEDA human capital programs was done using three methods, namely:

- a) Focus group discussion (focus group discussion). This method involves researchers meeting face-to-face with the residents of Keda Village to distribute questionnaires and hold joint discussions.
- b) Site Visit. This method involves data collection at the location where the respondent is located. Data was collected directly at the business location through interviews and the distribution of questionnaires for a total of 109 respondents who were involved in this method.
- c) Non-Face-o-Face Interview (Phone Call). The non-face-to-face interview procedure is a method of data collection carried out by researchers through interaction and communication mediums such as telephone and email. Only the PLKK program uses this method, a total of 28 alumni have been successfully contacted.

This study uses a mixed method where quantitative data is analyzed using SPSS software. As well as descriptive analysis such as percentage and frequency are used to study and summarize the demographic information of the study respondents. While the qualitative data, which is input from respondents regarding program issues and problems as well as suggestions for improvement, is analyzed with thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method used to identify, organize and provide understanding in the form of meaning (theme) for a set of data. This analysis allows researchers to identify and understand meaning and experience collectively (Barun & Clarke, 2006). In particular, this study uses the thematic coding method, where the process begins with certain data which is then transformed into categories and themes. Next, conclusions are made based on observations of the changed

data. Qualitative findings can provide a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the implementation of the KEDA Human Capital Program.

Results and Discussion

The research findings for the Mentor-Mentee Program have been analyzed based on the respondent's profile, quantitative and qualitative data that has been obtained from the study participants. The Mentor-Mentee Program has an economic impact on the participants through the role of mentors in selected fields such as tailoring, food industry, traditional cakes, laundry services and welding who act as guides, giving added value to the improvement of product quality and marketing agents to the mentees under their guidance. The mentee is selected to be matched with the mentor's business field.

The implementation of the Mentor-Mentee Program takes into account the business capabilities of the mentee who have the potential to be developed as well as the mentee who is willing to receive guidance, advisory services and establish business cooperation with the mentor. Among the 20 respondents involved in the study, 5% of the respondents were from Padang Terap Zone, followed by 40% of respondents from Pendang Zone, Kota Setar and Pokok Sena, 15% of respondents from Kulim, 30% of respondents from Kuala Muda and Yan and 10% of respondents from Kubang Pasu. The respondent's profile information is as shown in Table 1

Table 1
KEDA Mentor-Mentee Program Respondent Profile

| Details | N | % |
|---------------------------------|----|-------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 3 | 15.00 |
| Female | 17 | 85.00 |
| Age (Year) | | |
| Less 30 | 1 | 5.00 |
| 31-40 | 12 | 60.00 |
| 41-50 | 6 | 30.00 |
| More than 50 | 1 | 5.00 |
| Education Level | | |
| Bachelor | 2 | 10.00 |
| Diploma/Certificate | 4 | 20.00 |
| MCE/SPM/SPMV | 10 | 50.00 |
| SPR/PMR | 1 | 5.00 |
| Primary School | 3 | 15.00 |
| Zone | | |
| Padang Terap | 1 | 5.00 |
| Pendang, Pokok Sena, Kota Setar | 8 | 40.00 |
| Kulim | 3 | 15.00 |
| Kuala Muda, Yan | 6 | 30.00 |
| Kubang Pasu | 2 | 10.00 |

Program Impact on the Economy

The first objective of this study is to identify the impact of the mentor-mentee program on the economy for rural entrepreneurs. In general, the majority (85%) of the respondents stated that the Mentor-Mentee Program has successfully increased income. The findings of the study also show that the majority of participants agree that the Mentor-Mentee Program has succeeded in improving living standards and has created more job opportunities.

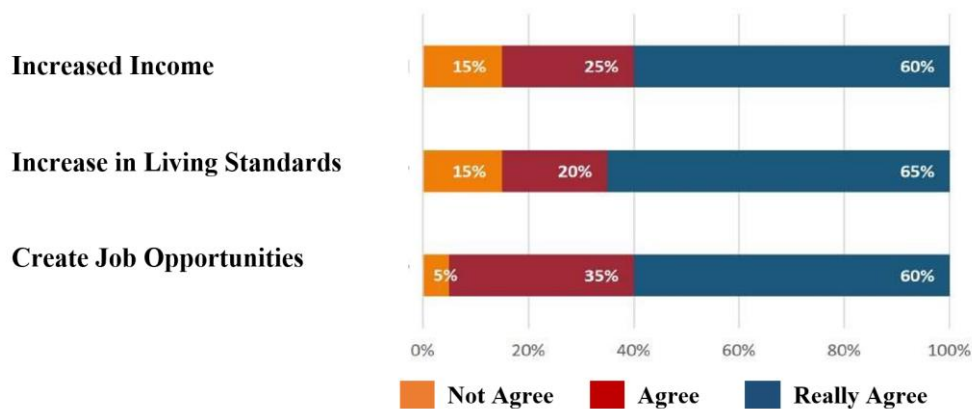


Figure 1: The Impact of the Mentor-Mentee Program on the Economy

The Mentor-Mentee program is a program that aims to increase the income of rural residents, especially among the extreme poor (Lillemets et al., 2022). Accordingly, the average income of respondents before and after participating in the Mentor-Mentee program was analyzed. The findings shown in Table 2 are quite encouraging. This is because the average income of Mentor-Mentee participants has increased from RM1,690.00 per month to RM5,890.00. This increase is seen as an indicator of the success of the program.

Table 2

Average Monthly Income

| Details | N | Minimun | Maximum | Mean |
|---|----|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Estimated income one month before joining the program | 20 | RM 0 | RM5,500.00 | RM1,690.00 |
| Estimated income per month after joining the program | 20 | RM 800.00 | RM32,000.00 | RM5,890.00 |

Referring to Figure 2, it clearly shows that the majority (80%) of the respondents have reached an income level of more than RM2000 per month after following the Mentor-Mentee Program. While there are 20% of the respondents who have managed to generate an income of more than RM6000 per month.

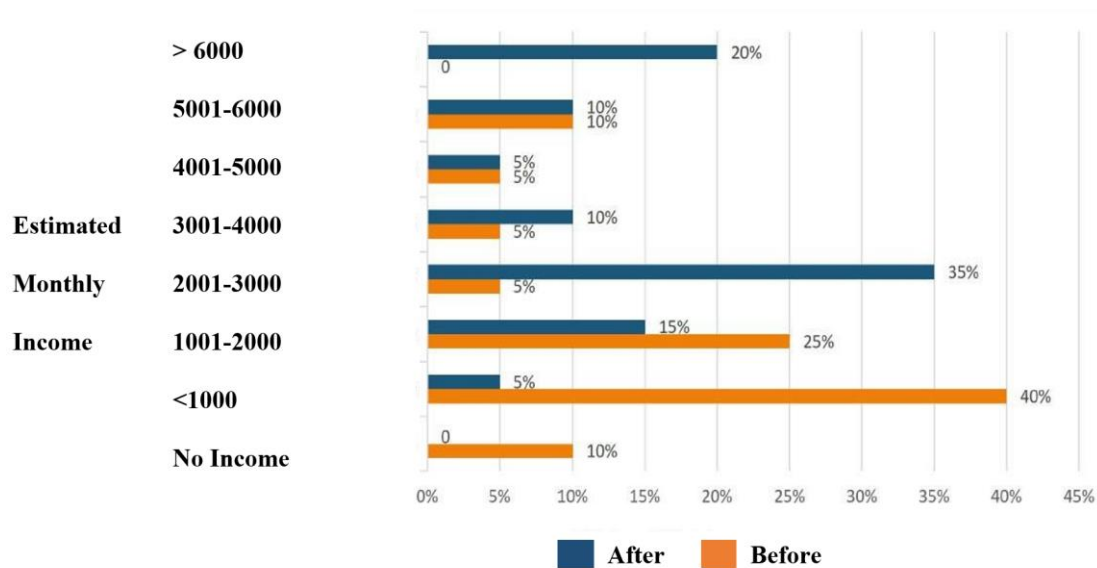


Figure 2: Income Category Before and After Following the Program

Respondents also acknowledged that there was an improvement in living standards after participating in the Mentor-Mentee Program, as illustrated in Figure 3. In general, the majority of respondents showed an improvement in terms of savings (80%), nutrition (65%), use of technology tools (60%) and also improvements in terms of home furnishings (60%).

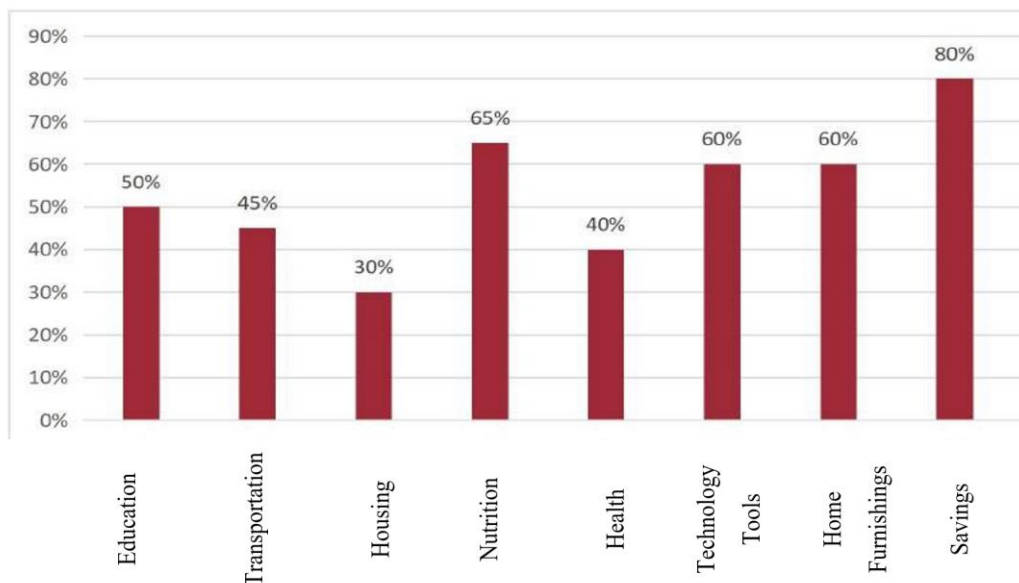


Figure 3: Types of Improvement in Living Standards

This program also succeeded in creating job opportunities for the local community. Figure 4 shows that 60% of the respondents have 1 to 5 employees. However, there are also a few (20%) of the respondents who do not have employees.

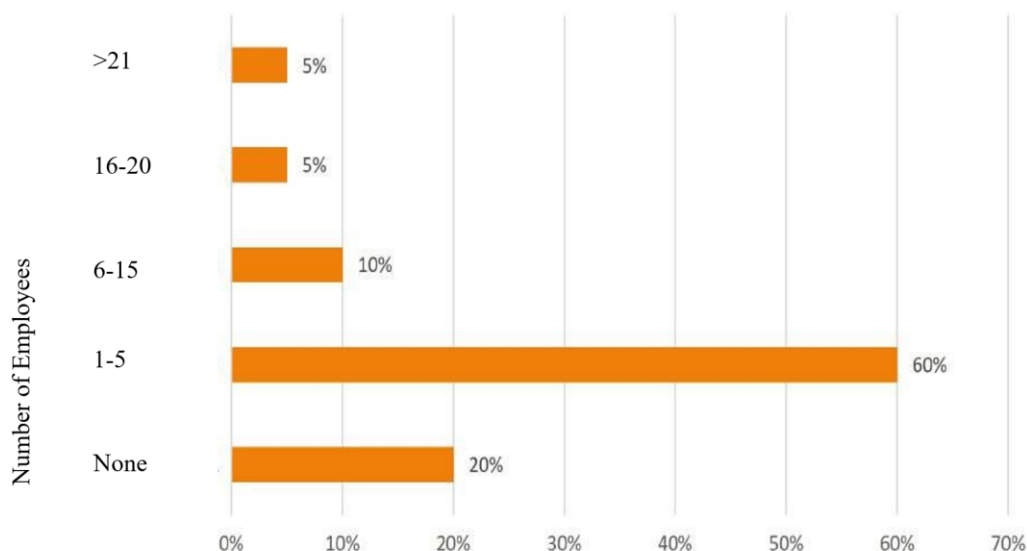


Figure 4: Number of Job Opportunities

This study also examines the impact of the program on the development of rural entrepreneurship. This aims to identify whether the Mentor-Mentee Program has a spill-over effect in the development of rural entrepreneurship. As illustrated in Figure 5, the results of the study show that the Mentor-Mentee Program has been successful:

1. Encouraging rural communities to see entrepreneurs as a career option.
2. Build a positive perception of the entrepreneur's career where the entrepreneur's career is seen. as a respected career.
3. Stimulate the interest of rural communities to engage in entrepreneurship.

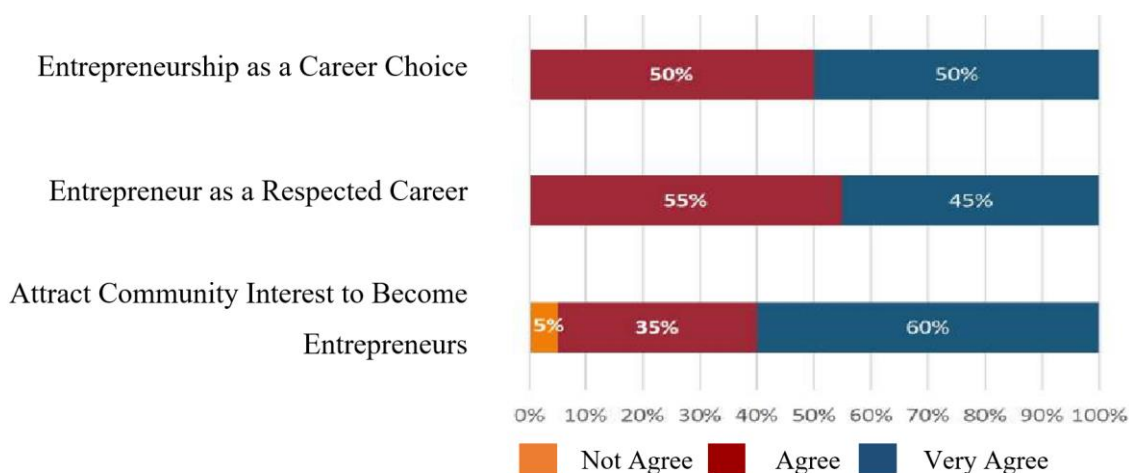


Figure 5: The Impact of the Program on the Development of KEDA's Non-Social Entrepreneurship

Factors Affecting Program Effectiveness

The second objective in this related study of the Mentor-Mentee Program is to identify the factors that influence the effectiveness of the Mentor-Mentee Program. The findings of the study, referring to Figure 6, explain the factors that influence the effectiveness of Mentor-Mentee are as follows:

1. Interest of Participants. Overall, all respondents admitted that the factor of interest in the field they are engaged in is the driving force for success in the business they are working on.
2. Training Assistance. The majority of the respondents stated that the program provides training and skills to run the business they are engaged in better. Among the trainings that have been attended are skill-based trainings related to their business.
3. Assistance of Machines, Equipment and Business Inputs. The help of machines, equipment and business inputs help increase the productivity of the products and services offered. Among the help received are sewing machines, cutters, refrigerators, toasters, and raw materials for massaging purposes.
4. Promotional Assistance. The majority of respondents informed that the factor of promotional assistance from mentors greatly contributed to the success of their business. Examples of promotional works for goods and services that have been carried out are online through social media and also promotions in sales expos held from time to time.
5. Chain of Business. The existence of a comprehensive business chain helps the mentee in their business. Examples of business chains created through the Mentor-Mentee Program are such as networking with customers and networking with raw material suppliers.

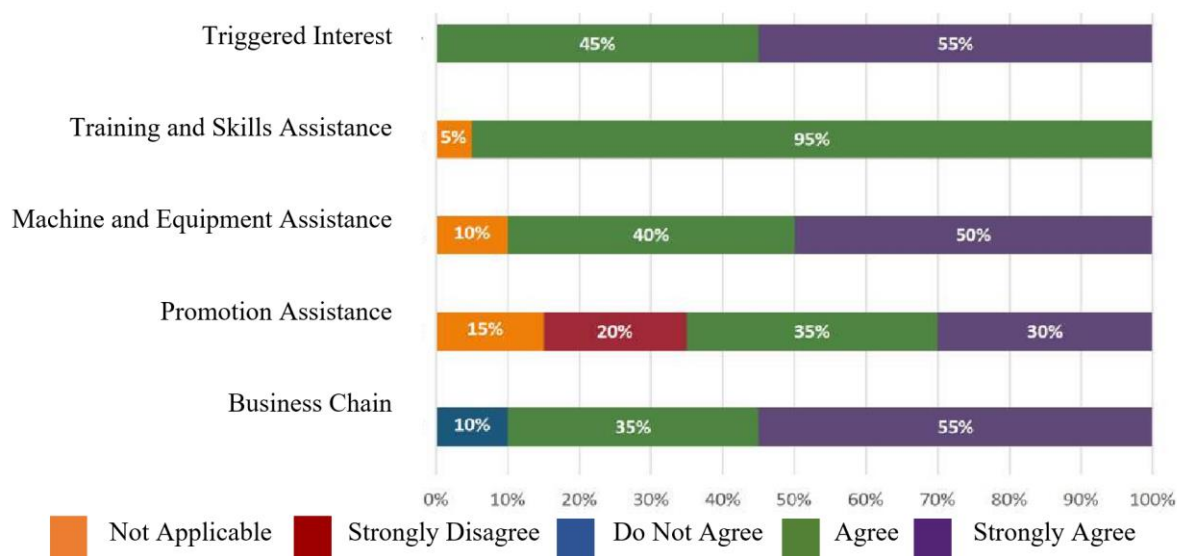


Figure 6: Factors Affecting Program Effectiveness

The mentor-mentee program run by KEDA is able to have a good impact on the community by ensuring that the mentors provided by KEDA have the ability to gain complete trust from the participants before a program is carried out.

Implications and Recommendations

In general, this study was carried out to measure the effectiveness of the Mentor Mentee Program implemented by KEDA. The effectiveness of the program is seen in terms of the program's impact on the economy and society (Lillemets et al., 2022). The Mentor-Mentee program has been categorized as a program that has an impact on the economy of the

participants. Overall, the Mentor-Mentee program has had a good impact and effect on the target group. This is evidenced by the majority of respondents stating that the Mentor-Mentee Program has successfully increased their income. The findings of the next study also show that the majority of participants have agreed that the Mentor-Mentee Program has successfully improved their standard of living and has created more job opportunities for them. The discussion of the findings is based on the objectives that have been implemented to realize the Mentor-Mentee Program, which is to generate interest in the mentee to venture into the field of entrepreneurship, provide skills training to the entrepreneur so that they can operate and manage the business more effectively, provide machine assistance and promotion to the mentee in order to increase productivity as well as developing and marketing products more systematically and inclusively, helping to create a business chain to facilitate the supply of raw materials or sales.

The Mentor-Mentee program has also encouraged and changed the perception of rural communities about entrepreneurs as one of the career opportunities. It needs to be strengthened so that the budding interest continues to grow where KEDA needs to continue to provide assistance and encouragement as well as consistent training. In addition to spiritual assistance, physical assistance in supplying equipment and facilities also needs to be improved. This is coordinated by giving encouragement and promotion routes either online, that is through social media and also promotions in sales expos held from time to time. Indirectly, the participants will continue to strengthen the efforts that have been made and give them confidence in further developing the business they venture into.

A good analysis can help KEDA identify programs that are suitable for today's economic and industrial needs. KEDA also needs to design a training program that suits the target group and current needs. The current program implementation methods may no longer be relevant and may not attract the interest of the younger generation of participants. Accordingly, a new approach needs to be applied in the implementation of the human capital program (Muduli, et al., 2022). Regular monitoring of entrepreneurs from the Mentor-Mentee program also needs to be carried out continuously. This is to ensure that the attendance and involvement of participants can be increased. This can also help KEDA identify the advantages and disadvantages of the program more accurately. Next, the results of this evaluation can also be used as a basis and input to KEDA for the purpose of improving the program in the future.

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