

THE ROLE OF INTEREST AND TALENT GUIDANCE FOR PKH KPM CHILDREN IN INCREASING MOTIVATION TO CONTINUE TO HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the role of interest and talent guidance in helping to increase the motivation of children of Beneficiary Families (KPM) of the Family Hope Program (PKH) to continue their education to university. This study used a qualitative, descriptive approach. The subjects were PKH beneficiary families (KPM PKH). Data collection techniques were observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis used the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that before being provided with guidance, some PKH beneficiary children did not have a strong interest in continuing their education to university. This was indicated by some children preferring to work directly and experiencing confusion in determining further education options. This condition was influenced by a lack of information about universities, low motivation to continue their education, and economic factors. After the provision of interest and talent guidance, children began to show an increased understanding of their potential and an emerging interest in planning for higher education. Thus, interest and talent guidance plays a crucial role in helping PKH beneficiary children recognize their potential and increase their motivation to continue their education to university.

Keywords: Interest and talent guidance, Motivation, University, PKH beneficiary children.

A. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main foundations in the development of human resource quality (Suharti et al., 2025). Through education, individuals not only acquire academic knowledge, but are also shaped to develop thinking skills, practical abilities, and mental readiness in facing the dynamics of life. In the long term, education plays an important role in forming individuals who are more independent, adaptive, and capable of contributing positively to society (Jaya et al., 2023). Therefore, education cannot be viewed merely as a formal learning process, but rather as a strategic means of improving the overall quality of human life.

In a broader context, higher education holds a very important position as an advanced level of education that can open access to employment opportunities, social mobility, and improved welfare (Edo & Yasin, 2024). Higher education institutions are not only places to deepen

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knowledge in specific fields, but also spaces for self-development, expansion of social networks, and the formation of a more directed career orientation (Priatna A, 2025). With a higher education background, a person has a greater opportunity to increase competitiveness in an increasingly demanding labor market. In line with this, Slameto (2015) emphasizes that education is an important factor influencing individual development in achieving a better life.

However, the opportunity to continue to higher education is not equally available to all children. There are still certain groups that face various limitations, making access to higher education more difficult to attain. One of these groups is children from Beneficiary Families of the Family Hope Program (KPM PKH). In many cases, they face not only economic problems, but also limited information, low educational expectations, and environments that do not fully support the continuation of study to a higher level.

This condition indicates that the issue of continuing to higher education is not only related to academic ability, but is also influenced by social, economic, and environmental factors. Economic limitations often make higher education seem difficult to reach, while limited access to information means that children do not yet have a clear picture of opportunities, admission pathways, or the benefits of higher education for their future. On the other hand, the lack of environmental support also weakens children's motivation to aspire to a higher level of education. The Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2020) emphasizes that children from families receiving social assistance often face structural barriers that affect the continuity of their education. In this context, assistance, motivation, and guidance become important so that children from KPM PKH families continue to have hope and encouragement to pursue higher education.

In addition to external factors, there are also internal factors that are no less important in influencing a person's decision regarding their educational future. Two of these are the level of motivation and self-understanding possessed by the individual. In many cases, a person does not continue to higher education not merely because of economic limitations or lack of environmental support, but also because they do not yet have a strong inner drive. This condition shows that educational decisions are not only a matter of opportunity, but are also closely related to the individual's psychological readiness in viewing their future. Therefore, internal factors need serious attention because they greatly determine the direction of one's educational choices.

According to Uno (2016), motivation is an internal and external drive that influences a person in taking action, including in making decisions related to education. In this context, motivation acts as a driving force that gives individuals enthusiasm, goals, and persistence to achieve something they consider important. A person with high motivation tends to be more active in seeking information, more prepared to face challenges, and more serious in planning further education. On the contrary, when motivation is low, individuals are usually less driven to think seriously about the future, so the decision to continue studying often does not become a priority. In other words, motivation is one of the main foundations influencing the strength or weakness of a person's orientation toward higher education.

Low motivation often goes hand in hand with low self-understanding, namely a condition in which individuals have not clearly recognized their interests, talents, potential, and life goals

(br Harianja et al., 2025). As a result, a person may feel doubtful, confused, or even fail to see the importance of pursuing higher education. Individuals with low motivation tend to have less desire to grow, including improving their quality through higher education. In such situations, education is often seen not as a long-term necessity, but merely as an option that can be postponed or even abandoned. Therefore, efforts to improve motivation and self-understanding are essential so that individuals have a clearer direction in planning their educational future.

Based on interviews conducted with children from KPM PKH families, it was found that some of them did not yet have a strong interest in continuing to higher education. This condition was reflected in the fact that some children preferred to work immediately after graduating from school, while others still felt hesitant and confused in determining their next educational step. This confusion was not only related to the choice of major, but also to their understanding of the type of higher education institution that suited their circumstances and future goals. This situation shows that the decision to continue education has not been fully built on mature planning. In other words, there are still obstacles preventing children from viewing higher education as a clear and realistic option.

This low level of interest cannot be separated from the limited information children have about the world of higher education. Some of them have not yet gained sufficient insight into the benefits of attending college, the opportunities that may be achieved after graduation, or the pathways available to enter higher education (Marini M, 2024). On the other hand, they also do not yet fully understand their own potential, making it difficult for them to connect their personal abilities with further educational choices. As a result, the decisions they make are often influenced more by surrounding circumstances than by awareness of long-term goals. This condition shows that the issue lies not merely in whether or not there is a desire to attend college, but also in the fact that self-understanding and future orientation have not yet been properly formed.

In this regard, the ability of individuals to recognize their interests and talents becomes a very important aspect. Interests and talents play a major role in determining a person's educational and career direction, because both help individuals understand the fields most suited to their tendencies and potential. Holland, as cited in Santrock (2012), explains that the fit between an individual's interests and the field chosen will provide satisfaction while also increasing the chances of future success. This view emphasizes that educational choices should not be made randomly or merely by following the environment, but rather should be based on a deeper understanding of oneself. Therefore, introducing interests and talents from an early stage becomes an important step so that individuals are able to plan their future in a more directed and realistic way.

One effort that can be made to help children recognize their potential while also increasing their motivation to continue education is through interest and talent guidance. This guidance functions to provide individuals with an understanding of the strengths, tendencies, and abilities they possess, so that they are able to determine more suitable educational choices. Prayitno (2013) emphasizes that interest and talent guidance helps individuals understand their potential and direct their educational choices and self-development more appropriately. In the context of children from KPM PKH families, this kind of guidance becomes even more

important because they need support that is not only informative, but also motivational. Based on the explanation above, this study aims to examine the role of interest and talent guidance in helping increase the motivation of children from KPM PKH families to continue to higher education.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Holland's Theory of Career Choice

Holland's Theory explains that an individual's educational and career choices are strongly influenced by the congruence between personality, interests, and the environment they choose (Holland, 1997). According to this theory, individuals tend to feel more comfortable, motivated, and likely to develop when they are in a field that matches their interest profile. In the context of education, this theory helps explain that students' decisions to continue to higher education are closely related to the extent to which they recognize their own interest tendencies. For children from KPM PKH families, understanding their interests is important because they often face confusion in determining a major or direction for further education. Therefore, Holland's Theory is relevant for explaining that interest and talent guidance can help students find a match between their personal potential and the field of study they will pursue. **Indicators of**

Holland's Theory:

- Realistic
- Investigative
- Artistic
- Social
- Enterprising
- Conventional

Multiple Intelligences Theory

Multiple Intelligences Theory explains that each individual possesses diverse forms of intelligence and potential, so talent cannot be understood solely through a single measure of academic ability (Gardner, 2011). This theory emphasizes that children may demonstrate different strengths, such as in language, logic, art, social relationships, or self-understanding. In the context of interest and talent guidance, this theory is relevant because it helps teachers or counselors view children's potential more broadly and not be limited only to school achievement. For children from KPM PKH families, this approach is important because they often do not yet realize that they possess abilities that can be developed as the basis for future educational choices. Thus, this theory can be used to explain that interest and talent guidance plays a role in helping children recognize their strengths as a foundation for planning higher education. **Indicators of Multiple Intelligences Theory:**

- Linguistic intelligence
- Logical-mathematical intelligence
- Visual-spatial intelligence
- Kinesthetic intelligence
- Interpersonal intelligence
- Intrapersonal intelligence

Expectancy-Value

Theory

Expectancy-Value Theory explains that a person's motivation to engage in an activity is influenced by two main factors: the belief that they can succeed and the value they assign to the activity (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). In education, this theory shows that students are more encouraged to continue their studies if they feel they have a chance of succeeding and view college as something beneficial for their future. This theory is highly relevant for children from KPM PKH families because their decision to continue to higher education is often influenced by considerations of benefits, expectations of success, and barriers such as financial limitations or family conditions. When interest and talent guidance is provided appropriately, students can better understand their academic goals, strengthen their belief in their own abilities, and view higher education as a realistic and valuable option. Therefore, this theory is appropriate for explaining how guidance can enhance the motivation of children from KPM PKH families to continue their education to a higher level. Indicators of Expectancy-Value Theory:

- Expectancy for success
- Intrinsic value
- Utility value
- Attainment value
- Cost

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. According to Sugiyono (2018), qualitative research is research used to examine the natural conditions of an object, with the researcher as the primary instrument. This approach aims to understand and describe phenomena occurring in the field in depth, particularly regarding the role of interest and talent guidance in increasing the motivation of children from Beneficiary Families (KPM) of the Family Hope Program (PKH) to continue their education to college. The subjects in this study were PKH KPM children participating in interest and talent guidance activities. Subject selection was purposive, based on considerations of respondents' direct involvement in the activities and their relevance to the research focus.

Data collection techniques used included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to directly observe the interest and talent guidance process and participants' responses during the activities. Interviews with respondents were conducted to obtain information regarding their interests, talents, self-understanding, and motivation to continue their education to college. Documentation was used to support the research data in the form of activity notes and documentation of the guidance implementation in the field (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The data analysis in this study used the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman (2018), which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting data that aligns with the research focus. The data were then presented in descriptive form, and the final stage was drawing conclusions that illustrate the findings regarding the role of interest and talent guidance in increasing the motivation of PKH beneficiary children to continue their education to university.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews with children from KPM PKH families prior to the implementation of the interest and talent guidance program, it was evident that most participants still did not have a clear direction regarding their plans after graduating from school. Some children were not yet able to describe the educational or occupational goals they wished to achieve, while others showed a tendency to enter the workforce immediately without considering the possibility of continuing their education to higher education. This condition indicates that the decisions they were making were not yet fully based on a mature understanding of future options, but were instead more heavily influenced by the circumstances they were currently facing. In other words, their orientation toward further education was still relatively weak and had not yet been formed in a purposeful manner.

This situation shows that many children from KPM PKH families still face limitations, particularly in terms of access to information about higher education, study programs, scholarship opportunities, and long-term educational prospects. In addition, their ability to recognize their interests, talents, and personal potential had not yet developed optimally. As a result, they did not yet have a sufficiently strong foundation for making educational choices that matched their individual characteristics and abilities. In this context, limited knowledge about higher education not only creates confusion, but may also weaken their self-confidence in imagining themselves as part of higher education.

Furthermore, the lack of guidance and understanding regarding the importance of planning for one's educational future also affected their low motivation to continue their studies to a higher level. When participants did not have a clear picture of the goals they wanted to achieve, their drive to make an effort also became limited. They tended to view graduation from school as the end of the educational process, rather than as an initial stage in building a broader future. Therefore, this condition indicates that children from KPM PKH families need guidance that can help them understand their potential, broaden their educational perspectives, and foster motivation so that they can plan their educational steps in a more conscious, directed, and realistic manner.

To address these problems, an interest and talent guidance activity was carried out as an effort to help children recognize their potential, understand their tendencies in interests and talents, and broaden their understanding of the importance of higher education. This activity became important because some children did not yet have a clear direction regarding their educational plans after graduating from school. Under such conditions, guidance functioned not only as a means of providing information, but also as a process of assistance so that children could view their future in a more directed way. Through this guidance, participants were encouraged to understand that every individual has potential that can be developed through appropriate educational choices. Thus, the interest and talent guidance activity was intended to build self-awareness while also fostering motivation in planning further education.

The implementation of the activity was carried out through several stages, namely guidance, discussion, and interactive question-and-answer sessions. At the initial stage, participants were given an understanding of the concepts of interest and talent, including the

differences between the two and their influence on educational choices and future plans. This stage was important so that children would not view higher education as something distant or unattainable, but rather as an option that could be considered rationally according to each individual's potential. In addition, participants were also given an explanation of the importance of planning their education from an early stage so that they would have a clearer picture of the steps that need to be taken. This process helped participants build a more mature foundation for making decisions about further education.

At the discussion stage, participants were encouraged to actively explore themselves by identifying things they liked, hobbies they often engaged in, abilities they felt were prominent, and aspirations they wished to achieve in the future. This activity provided space for participants to reflect on their personal experiences and tendencies, so that they did not merely receive information passively, but were also directly involved in the self-recognition process. At this stage, the researcher also provided guidance so that participants could connect their interests and abilities with possible choices of majors in higher education. In addition, participants were also given information about various majors and future career opportunities, so that they gained a broader picture of the relationship between higher education and future life prospects. Through this process, the children began to see that choosing a field of study is not merely a formality, but an important part of planning a future that is in accordance with their potential.

After the implementation of the interest and talent guidance program, changes could be seen in the participants' understanding of themselves and their educational plans. The children began to show increased awareness of their potential and started to reconsider the option of continuing their education to higher education. Respondents who had previously been uninterested in continuing their studies began to show an interest in considering college as an attainable option. Meanwhile, respondents who had previously felt confused began to have an initial picture of majors that suited their interests. These changes indicate that interest and talent guidance not only helped participants understand themselves better, but also contributed to fostering motivation and confidence in planning education at a higher level.

These changes show that interest and talent guidance contributes to helping participants recognize themselves, broaden their perspectives, and improve their readiness in planning further education. This is in line with Slameto's (2015) view that interest is an individual's tendency toward something that encourages a person to engage in a particular activity. In addition, according to Uno (2016), motivation is an internal as well as external drive that influences a person in achieving goals. Thus, the low motivation previously possessed by the participants could be improved through an appropriate guidance process.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that interest and talent guidance plays an important role in helping children from KPM PKH families recognize their potential and increase their motivation to continue their education to higher education

E. CONCLUSION

Therefore, it can be concluded that interest and talent guidance plays a crucial role in the motivation of PKH beneficiary children. Prior to this guidance, PKH beneficiaries still had low

motivation to continue their education. This was indicated by some participants preferring to work immediately after graduating from school, and others remaining confused about their educational choices.

This low motivation was influenced by limited information about higher education and a suboptimal understanding of their interests and talents. This condition left participants without a clear direction in planning their future education. After receiving interest and talent guidance, changes occurred, including an increased understanding of their potential and a growing interest in continuing their education at a higher level. Therefore, interest and talent guidance plays a crucial role in helping PKH beneficiaries recognize their potential and increase their motivation to continue their education to a higher level.

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