

## Research Article

# Connecting the "Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka" and Village Law Policies: Possible Contribution of College Students in Indonesia's Coastal Rural Development

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Indonesian college students (mahasiswa) have a long tradition of participating in Indonesia's rural development. Initiated in early 1971 by three national universities, the Kuliah Kerja Nyata program has served rural development by sending mass college students to participate in rural community service agendas. The ministry of education's recent implementation of "Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka" policies has expanded students' opportunities to experience the learning process outside of universities. On the other hand, contemporary rural policies, through the implementation of Village Law 2014, have established village autonomy, thus creating a new space for various actors to participate and collaborate with the village government to conduct development programs. The paper argues that both policies have simultaneously emerged to connect each agenda, which could establish cooperation related to rural development. Here we intend to track and identify what and how students can participate in the rural development agenda by analyzing two different policies specifically in the east coast community of Lampung Province. It is expected that the policy analysis result could decipher various corridors and regulations that could support college students' involvement in developing rural Indonesia.

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## 1. Introduction

Sustainable development was first introduced by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in our common future which is defined as development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (1). The development paradigm is contained in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) document which was agreed by 193 United Nations countries which aims to continue and strengthen the MDGs achievements so that they are sustainable. Global development lags are described in the SDGs which contain 17 goals and 169 development targets which are the integration of national

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development (2). The SDGs are inclusive, namely specifically targeting the vulnerable, including efforts in rural development.

Indonesia as a developing country, efforts to realize rural development are regulated in Village Law number 6 of 2014 with the allocation of village funds given periodically every year using the APBN with priority use to fulfill the quality of life, realize the improvement of village community welfare, poverty alleviation, and improvement of public services. The social, economic, ecological, geographical conditions, and the level of vulnerability to disasters in each village are different, of course the priority of using village funds will also vary.

Labuhan Maringgai District, East Lampung Regency, which is located on the east coast. Several villages in Labuhan Maringgai Subdistrict are located on the beach. This geographical location causes the threat of natural disasters to Labuhan Maringgai District. Dilemmas related to the potential for regional development and challenges to disaster risk exist in various places, one of which is in Odisha, India, namely between energy access, rural development, climate adaptation challenges and disaster management. One of the villages in Labuhan Maringgai District, which is right on the beach, is Marga Sari Village. Margasari Village has great potential for economic development both in terms of marine catch production and tourism. Because of this potential condition, a clear and strong regulation is needed for village development (3). Regulations regarding village potential should refer to policies related to development planning that already exist at both the village level and the higher administrative area level. The definition of policy is an action step that is deliberately carried out by an actor or a number of actors regarding the existence of a particular problem or problem faced (4). This is supported by (5) policy is the establishment of a decision characterized by consistent and repetitive behavior that makes it and the good people on the part of those who comply.

Answering the dilemma between development development opportunities and the existence of disaster risk, it is necessary to have a policy in the form of adaptive and anticipatory development planning to disaster risk. There are there needs to be self-insurance and self-protection given to the building codes they make. This is a form of guarantee that the buildings they build can minimize the risk when a disaster strikes. Another form of strategy in minimizing disaster risk is the existence of a recommended scenario regarding the direction of development of disaster-prone areas that require development restrictions as one of the disaster relief efforts.

As we all know, state intervention in the development of villages is through the Village Fund. Villages are able to build with budget support and of course create empowerment

for their communities. the archetype of the empowerment movement mandates the need for power and alignment with powerless groups. Therefore empowerment is a process of giving power to the weak (powerless) and reducing power (disempowered) to those who are too powerful (powerful) so that there is a balance. Community empowerment will create sustainable development (6).

The village fund program is currently in the implementation stage, meaning that the community is carrying out development. Village funds are given every year with clear and targeted utilization planning, therefore this research is important as a double-edged sword, namely as an evaluation of the management of village funds in the previous year and as planning for the coming year in the form of an opportunity or opportunity to create a policy model. partnership in the management of Village Funds.

This village fund is expected to be used by the village government to finance governance, development, and empowerment of village communities. In the implementation of the Village Fund management, there are still many challenges and problems, both internal to the village and externally. So far, there are also parties who have provided guidance and assistance for community empowerment from local governments, NGOs, the private sector and universities.

In the world of higher education, where science and technology influence each other and change rapidly, the Independent Learning Campus Merdeka (MBKM) program appears which is expected to be able to respond to social changes that have arisen in society, including rural communities. Indonesia can give birth to a superior generation, education development policies are needed as investments for the future (7). The results of Higher Education's Tri Dharma activities must provide benefits to the wider community. The MBKM program forms include teaching campuses, internships, independent studies, independent student exchanges, independent entrepreneurs, Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards, teaching practitioners, Bangkit by Google, GoTo, and Traveloka, and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources - GERILYA (8).

The main objective of the MBKM program is to prepare the best competence of university graduates to be able to compete in the world of work and be able to be involved in massive development. Apart from that, it also spurs the creation of quality and character human resources (9). So far, several student activities at the University of Lampung have supported village development, including by involving students in KKN, internships, street vendors, MBKM village projects and various thesis / dissertation research. Thus the performance of graduates can increase by getting a decent job.

In supporting the Main Performance Indicators (KPI) of Higher Education, especially IKU 1, namely graduates getting decent jobs and KPI 2 students getting experience outside of campus, the opportunity to develop a partnership strategy for managing village funds is one of the collaborative efforts between parties in accelerating village development.

Based on the description above, the purpose of this article is to describe the efforts and roles of educational institutions, especially students, in carrying out academic services in rural integration as an effort to encourage the performance of higher education graduates through partnerships in managing village funds and village development.

This research is expected to provide an overview of the decision-making process in rural development planning through the management of village funds. It is important to see to what extent rural development is effective and efficient for the community. The Village Fund management partnership model will strengthen village institutions and accelerate village development. As partners, universities also have an interest in improving the performance of their graduates and students are able to gain experience outside of campus as part of learning.

## 2. Methods

This research approach uses qualitative research by combining literature studies and field studies. Library studies are first carried out, then carry out field studies (10). The product of this research is a model of partnership policy in the management of Village Funds involving students so that it has an impact on the performance of university graduates. This research was conducted in Marga Sari Village, Labuhan Maringgai District, East Lampung Regency. The selection of Marga Sari Village is because this village is a fostered village at the University of Lampung, there is assistance in empowerment programs from NGO institutions, and this village is also fostered by several related agencies.

The type of data used in this study consisted of primary data and secondary data. Primary data comes from in-depth interviews, observations and focus group discussions (FGD) consisting of village officials, institutions that provide assistance for empowerment programs, CSR providers and Lampung University academics. Main data collection using interviews, observation, documentation, literature studies and FGD techniques. First, the interview technique is open and structured. This technique is used to obtain various information according to the needs of the research objectives. Second, the

observation technique is a detailed observation of spatial locations, landscapes, socio-economic activities and community interactions. The three documentation techniques are intended to obtain a large number of facts and data stored in materials in the form of documents. Most of the available data is in the form of letters, reports, minutes and clippings. Fourth, namely literature study techniques that come from scientific reading books, journals and proceedings. The five FGDs are small group discussions to identify variables and scenarios for rural development planning. FGDs were conducted to collect qualitative data, especially widely used in the field of social science studies (11). The implementation of this FGD was carried out in a directed manner by using an FGD guide or instrument.

Data analysis was carried out before entering/plunging into the field, while in the field and after finishing in the field. The analysis in this study uses more interpretation. As we know that interpretive is a method of analysis which is widely used by constructivists in order to get the meaning or value of a phenomenon that occurs (12). Analysis has been started since formulating and explaining the problem, before going into the field and continues until the writing of the research results. In this research, data analysis is more focused during the process in the field along with data collection, processing and after in the field. The stages of data analysis follow the process of data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions and verification.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Characteristics of Research Area

Margasari Village is one of the villages in the east coast area in Labuhan Maringgai Subdistrict, East Lampung Regency, which was opened in 1975. According to village elders, Margasari Village is the expansion of Sri Minosari Village, Sri Gading Village and Karang Anyar Village by people from the Metro Area, Cilacap, South Sulawesi and Java. And the Margasari Village was initiated on February 2, 1981, after Margasari Village officially became a village, the first person who became the Head of Margasari Village was Mr. Sukara in 1981 to 1990. Then from 1990 to 1993 the Head of Margasari Village was held by Mr. Samiharja, as PJS Head of Margasari Village. In connection with the implementation of the first Village Head Election in 1993, the community formed a Village Head election committee. Among them 1. Mr. Sukara. 2. Mr. Khomarudin. And 3. Mr. Sukimin. And after the implementation of the Village Head election by direct

election by the community, the one who was elected as the Head of Margasari Village was Mr. Sukimin.

After Mr. Sukimin was inaugurated as Head of Margasari Village, Labuhan Maringgai District, Central Lampung Regency from 1993 to 2001, he just pioneered the developments in Margasari Village from time to time so that Margasari Village could catch up with other villages that located in Labuhan Maringgai District. After the end of Mr. Sukimin's term of office, Mr. Satijan.BP was appointed as Acting Village Head. from 2001 to 2003.

In 2003, the second Village Head election was held again, the community again formed a Village Head election committee and opened the registration of prospective Village Head candidates, after selecting the files and requirements, there were 3 (three) Village Head candidates including 1. Mr. Sukimin. 2. Mr. Hi. Awing, and 3. Mr. Pujo Handoko. In the election, Mr. Sukimin won. So Mr. Sukimin served as Village Head for the second time based on the results of direct elections by the community by way of voting, after Mr. Sukimin was appointed as Head of Margasari Village for the period 2003 to 2009. However, in 2007 Mr. Sukimin, Head of Margasari Village, died at the age of 53 years , then the Sub-district Head of Labuhan Maringgai assigned Mr. Nanang Suryadi to be the day-to-day executor of the Margasari Village Head. In 2007, Margasari Village re-elected the Village Head for the third time, after registration and selection of files it was declared that 2 (two) people had passed to become Village Head candidates, including 1. Aria Shahdi. 2. Nyoto Suwoyo. Finally won by Mr. Nyoto Suwoyo. The period 2007 to 2013, until 2018, then resigned and Wahyu Jaya was appointed as the Executive until now.

### **3.2. Opportunities for village development collaboration with external groups**

Based on the identification of the actors involved in village development, it can be seen that there are opportunities or possibilities for collaboration between actors in planning and implementing village development. Several village development actors in Margasari village include the village government, business groups, companies that have working areas in the village, cooperatives, NGOs and universities. The aim of village development collaboration is to create an independent village and there have been many good practices in Indonesia (13). One good example of collaborative development actors in the village is in Bongki Lengkesse Village, which takes the form of mutual

cooperation which has an impact on social resilience but has not shown an impact on economic security, especially food and energy independence (14).

Several opportunities for village development collaboration that have emerged in Margasari village that have been carried out and are even currently running are as follows:

1. There are NGOs providing assistance in order to increase the capacity of fishermen's families, so that it has an impact on improving the economy of fishermen's families.
2. There is guidance from tertiary institutions that carry out Tri Dharma activities (student activities, research and lecturer service)
3. There is implementation of programs/activities from related regional governments

Cooperation in financing a program and activity is very possible using village funds related to the budget that has been planned by the village. Funding for activities that have been carried out so far has mostly used financing from external parties who already have programs in Margasari village. For example, the assistance activities (development program – conservation) carried out by NGOs (EDF & Starling) seem to have more of an impact on increasing the individual leadership capacity of local communities and governance (socially organizing) of problem objects (fisheries). The University of Lampung's mangrove program is still not optimal because more interventions are carried out at the start. The form of activity is planting and monitoring only, without considering the sustainability or development of the program. Obstacles in implementing village development collaboration are still event-based, so they have not had an impact on sustainable development. Meanwhile the MBKM program is very possible and has great opportunities to collaborate with related parties in Masrgasari Village to support village development.

### **3.3. The Role of Students and Universities in Margasari**

Social, economic and political changes led to changes in the village order and development in the village. This portrait is the turning point for the transformation in the world of education, especially higher education through MBKM, so that they are competent and adaptable to changing times, especially in preparing graduates who are superior, competent and cultured (15). Several universities that have carried out Community Service Program (KKN) activities in Margasari Village are Raden Intan State Islamic University, Nahdlatul Ulama University, Lampung University, Alifah Midwifery (Pringsewu), Muhammadiyah Metro University, Middle School of Fisheries Business (SUPM).

Real Work Lecture (KKN) is a form of extracurricular activity from tertiary institutions which combines the implementation of the Tri Dharma with the method of providing learning and work experience in society (16). Most of the activities carried out by tertiary institutions in Margasari village are KKN programs and activities brought by students through KKN and adapted to their respective fields and studies, for example aspects of education, health, fish management, machine utilization, and environmental hygiene.

In the KKN program run by students in Margasari Village, it also adapts to the needs of the village, for example by asking students to help socialize it to the community in order to raise awareness of environmental cleanliness. In addition, students also help with administration at the Margasari Village office to provide examples of the preparation of correspondence and population data management. Basically, KKN students have counseling or outreach skills because of their field of study and are supported by organizational experience. Students who have experience in organizing can form student soft skills, some of the benefits obtained from participating in organizations include improving leadership, communication, working in teams, networking and management and analysis of conflict management (17).

Another form of activity carried out by KKN students in Margasari Village is religious activities such as joining mosque activist volunteers conducted by Muhammadiyah Metro University. Religious activities are very beneficial for the village community and encourage development in the village of Margasari. As we know, the administrative area of the Village is still very thick with religious and cultural traditions which are carried out together.

The presence of KKN students from various universities brings expectations to the village, namely emphasizing activities that are 'real' (impact) and sustainable. Thus, its activities are felt for the village community. Socialization carried out by students as well as assistance provided by NGOs has had a positive impact, one of which is on awareness of organization for fishermen. The aim is to fight for the interests of crab fishermen after participating in a program implemented by the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and the University of Lampung.

The social problem of fishermen is that small fishermen are entangled in debt relations with bosses (boat owners, collectors) and supervisors (collectors above the boss, those who supply crabs to miniplants). Furthermore, the experience of interacting with the Unila people began when the crab data was collected. The Unila people involved were lecturers and students from the Department of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs which started in 2017. Initially the local fishing community was not interested in the data collection activity because they did not see the benefits of data collection activities.



The community thought that this data collection activity did not bring any assistance, that time was up for answering questions, and they did not know what the purpose of the data collection was.

The next activity held by Unila was planting mangroves with fishermen and students. Apart from that, Unila students also teach elementary and junior high school children to plant mangroves. Students/children of Unila's Community Service Program seem less likely to work when they live in a fishing village. Come to school more often. So fishermen feel that student activities don't really have an impact on their interests as fishermen.

Meanwhile, the assistance activities carried out by the NGO EDF and Bentala Partners are more relevant to the fishing community. It is acknowledged that because of the activities with the two organizations, fishermen feel they are able to have the courage to speak in front of forums, have the courage to express their opinions, and start to have the courage to organize. A fisherman named Miswa is now the chairman of the crab fishing KUB and often serves as a delegate for activities at the provincial or national level.

### **3.4. Expectations of future activities of the university**

The student approach is expected to directly interact with fishermen and be able to familiarize themselves with the community. The hope is that environmental management activities are related to waste and general environmental hygiene. Because when the environment is dirty, it becomes a breeding ground for diseases, mosquitoes and rats, and a bad view. Based on observations that fishing villages look dirtier than "land" villages, garbage is scattered in various corners, especially on riverside roads where fish are unloaded and trashed, water used to hold fish trash is scattered, flooded, and becomes a source of odors and flies. .

So that Unila supports the sustainability of small fishermen; protect and support the interests of small fishermen. Aspirations of crab fishermen: need to take action and regulate trawling fishermen (cantrang). Because, due to the trawling operation, 1) the crab fishermen lost their fishing gear because they were dragged by the trawling, 2) the crab habitat was damaged due to trawling. Furthermore, students who do KKN in Margasari village are expected to help develop tourism potential in Margasari village, especially students who have the following abilities:

1. Need ideas and innovation in tourism development and management
2. To promote village tourism

### 3. Helping school children while still in school from home

The activities carried out by the university, involving students and lecturers, both in research and service agendas as well as KKN or PKL interventions on problems and subjects seem fragmented, fragmented. The initiation of mangroves in Margasari was initiated by Unila with several planting activities carried out in collaboration with the previous Head of Village (before Kades Bu Wahyu). The role of Unila is to carry out monitoring and supervision.

Unila activities in Margasari: 1) mangroves, 2) swimming crab data collection, 3) Community Service Program. However, the informant said that it was also impressed that the involvement of Unila students through KKN tended to revolve around the village elite (village officials, hamlet heads) and formal activities, such as participating in teaching in elementary schools.

The form of activity that is actually more engaged with village residents (Karang Taruna) is a literacy activity initiative from the Lampung Ngopi Community which is led by UIN Radin Inten students. So it is considered as a student activity of UIN, even though it is community-based, informal, voluntary, and self-funded. As a result, they set up bookshops, firstly, on the mangrove beach, secondly, in hamlet 11. They, apart from distributing books obtained from community networks and self-financing, also took access to formal institutions such as the Education and Culture Office to get book donations. Ubay is enthusiastic about sharing its experience in interacting with UIN students through this literacy activity, which started in 2019.

There are two campuses that send students to do activities in Margasari, namely Unila and UIN Raden Intan. Unila sends students through the Community Service Program and other programs related to the development of mangrove areas, both almost every year. While the arrival of the most memorable UIN students was through the literacy community activities of Lampung Ngopi.

### 3.5. Expectations of the university and students

1. It is hoped that capacity building activities or training for villagers, for them what is more important than 'making something (goods)' is how the business continues – it is necessary to pay attention to product marketing.
2. mentoring activities need to pay attention to continuity, don't break up in the middle of the road

3. Women's groups need to increase their economic contribution to the household – this is men's perspective
4. Developments that are felt to be urgent are the construction of provincial roads + regulating the loading and unloading areas of trash fish
5. It is necessary to develop sanitation, healthy latrines, especially in fishing hamlets
6. It would be good if the university had a program to make products whose ingredients are available in the village (local source) and the market is also in the village so that it can save villagers' household expenses.
7. One of the activities from Unila that was very useful in Margasari Village was the Margasari mangrove tourism website that had been carried out by lecturers and students. This website really helps Tarka to understand how the web works and about tourism marketing. This activity is in the form of training conducted in the mangrove hall.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the identification of development actors in this village, planning, implementation of activities and monitoring evaluation are partial and stand separately. There is no planned collaborative action yet. The approach used is the interests of each activity program. In conclusion, there has been no intervention from any party in the planning and management capacity of village funds, causing difficulties in developing innovation from various perspectives of other parties. The MBKM program makes it possible to collaborate with related development actors in Margasari Village. The collaboration that has been carried out so far between tertiary institutions and the government of Margasari Village is a collaboration in the form of carrying out activities while funding is still sourced from activity organizers. The informal social approach, in the context of voluntaristic relation-based activities, brought by UIN students is more attached to the young age group in Margasari Village than the formal approach in the context of official activities such as KKN. Based on the findings of this study, it is hoped that there will be research related to the multi-stakeholder collaboration model in village development, even though NGOs and KKN students have a program and funding approach but the planning and implementation of integrated activities.

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