



ANTI-DRUG AMBASSADORS AS NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AGENTS: A STUDY OF ROLES AND STRATEGIES IN DRUG PREVENTION IN SAMARINDA

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ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 05-08-2025

Revised : 23-08-2025

Accepted : 26-08-2025

KEYWORDS

Anti-Drug Ambassador, Non-Formal Education, Peer Educator, Drug Prevention, Change Agent

ABSTRACT

Drug abuse among adolescents is a serious problem in Indonesia, with a trend of cases continuing to increase. In 2023, there were 2,464 cases of narcotics abuse, and until January 2024 this number rose to 3,873 cases, an increase of 57% compared to the previous year. In East Kalimantan, the drug prevalence rate reached 1.73%, with the highest spike in the productive age group of 15-64 years. In Samarinda, data from the BNN Tanah Merah Rehabilitation Center showed that of the 209 individuals undergoing rehabilitation, 22 of them were children and adolescents, illustrating the urgency of special treatment for this age group. One of the prevention efforts is carried out through the Anti-Drug Ambassador Program which involves adolescents as non-formal education agents based on *peer education*. This study aims to analyze the roles, strategies, and challenges of Anti-Drug Ambassadors in drug prevention in Samarinda. Using a phenomenological qualitative approach, data was collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies, and then analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that: (1) Anti-Drug Ambassadors play the role of peer educators, non-formal education agents, community facilitators, anti-drug advocates and agents of change; (2) The strategies used include persuasive communication, community-based approaches, collaboration with community leaders, interactive counseling, and the use of digital media; (3) The challenges faced include limited funds, weak commitment of members, and lack of budget support from local governments. Overall, the program is effective in shaping adolescents' resilience to drug harm through non-formal educational methods that are relevant to the local context.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Drug abuse is one of the challenges faced by the Indonesian nation. At the national level, the number of narcotics abuse cases in 2023 will reach 2,464 cases. Meanwhile, until January 2024, this number has increased to 3,873 cases. This shows a surge of 57% compared to the previous year (Nurbaliza et al, 2024). In 2023, it shows that the drug prevalence rate in East Kalimantan is 1.73%. The highest increase occurred in the productive age group, namely 15-64 years, both in the category of users in the past year and those who have used (Prabawati 2024). Adolescents are the most vulnerable age group to drug



abuse. This is because teenagers tend to want to try new things and risky behaviors (Lukman et al. 2021). Adolescence is a period when individuals are more active in their search for self-identity independently, often without the involvement of direct support from family or parents (Asyia et al. 2022). Drug abuse among teenagers has become a serious problem that threatens Indonesia's young generation. Teenagers who use drugs are the nation's generation, if they are damaged, the nation's future successors will also be damaged (Elisabet et al. 2022).

The context of Samarinda has its own uniqueness compared to other cities in Indonesia, so it requires special research attention. First, data from the BNN Tanah Merah Rehabilitation Center noted that of the 209 individuals undergoing rehabilitation, 22 of them were children and adolescents (Kartikasari 2025). This proportion shows that the problem of drug abuse among young people in Samarinda is quite prominent compared to other areas in East Kalimantan. Second, Samarinda has a demographic composition with a relatively large percentage of adolescent and early adult population, so that the peer group base that has the potential to be targets and perpetrators of drug abuse is also high. Third, geographically, Samarinda is located on a strategic route for the distribution of goods, including narcotics, from and to other Kalimantan regions. This position makes it not only a user area, but also a potential transit and circulation point, which increases the risk of drug exposure at the local level. Fourth, urbanization and high mobility, especially from surrounding mining and plantation areas, also influence adolescents' social interaction patterns, family supervision, and the formation of strong peer groups, factors that various studies suggest may increase the chances of involvement in risky behaviors. Finally, despite institutional steps such as the City Government's support through land grants for the expansion of the Rehabilitation Center, the implementation of the Prevention, Eradication, Abuse, and Illicit Drug Trafficking (P4GN) policy still faces challenges such as limited regional budgets and cross-sector coordination that is not optimal. This combination of demographic, geographical, and institutional factors makes Samarinda have a different level of vulnerability and complexity of handling than other cities.

The National Narcotics Agency (BNN) of Samarinda City handles drug abuse among adolescents through the Anti-Drug Ambassador program. The Anti-Drug Ambassador Program is one of the prevention initiatives that involves adolescents as agents of change in delivering education to peers. The program recruits and trains young people to become agents of change in educating peers about the dangers of drugs. These ambassadors come from high school students and college students aged 15-20 to deliver education through a more contextual and participatory approach. This approach is based on *peer educators* who explain that adolescents tend to be more receptive to information and influenced by fellow adolescents compared to adults. This condition is reflected in the fact that adolescents' daily activities are generally carried out outside the home, especially in social interactions with peer groups (Tianingrum and Nurjannah 2019). Anti-drug ambassadors from peers are expected to be more effective in conveying prevention messages because of the proximity of age, experience, and easier to understand communication methods.

However, the effectiveness of the role of anti-drug ambassadors in increasing awareness of drug abuse prevention among adolescents, especially in Samarinda City, has not been studied in depth. Some previous studies have mostly discussed the role of community elements in the prevention of drug abuse, or the campaign approach through the mass media in drug prevention. Research conducted by Erdiansyah et al. (2023) highlighting the importance of the involvement of community leaders in prevention efforts. On the other hand, Madhani, Ritonga, and Fatra Deni (2023) focus more on digital campaign strategies in anti-drug education. Meanwhile, studies that specifically examine the role of Anti-Drug Ambassadors in the local context, especially in Samarinda, are still very limited. Therefore, this study fills this gap by evaluating the roles, strategies, and challenges of Anti-Drug Ambassadors in raising awareness of drug abuse prevention among adolescents, through relevant and contextual non-formal education approaches. The results of the research are expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution to the development of drug prevention programs that are more targeted according to the psychosocial needs of the young generation of Samarinda.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach because it aims to understand in depth the social phenomenon regarding the role of Anti-Drug Ambassadors in drug prevention efforts. The qualitative approach is an approach in the social sciences that believes in direct observation of human beings in the context of their lives (Pupu 2009 dalam Syahrizal & Jailani, 2023). This

approach allows researchers to comprehensively examine how Anti-Drug Ambassadors play a role as non-formal educational agents. The type of research used is phenomenological research, which is an approach that focuses on the study of individual life experiences and the way they subjectively perceive and give meaning to a phenomenon (Waruwu 2024).

This research was carried out in the city of Samarinda, East Kalimantan, with the consideration that Samarinda is one of the cities with a significant level of drug circulation and marketing in the region. Specific locations include the Office of the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) of Samarinda City and the community environment that is the target of the program. The research time was carried out during the period from May 2025 to June 2025, taking into account the schedule of activities of the Anti-Drug Ambassador and the availability of key informants in the research. The resource persons for this research consisted of three informants representing each stakeholder. First, Ghazi (21 years old), a young boy, who had participated in anti-drug socialization activities organized by the Anti-Drug Ambassador of Samarinda City. Second, Nazwa (21 years old), a teenager who serves as a member of the Anti-Drug Ambassador. Third, a key informant, Mas Adit, an extension worker of P4GN BNNK Samarinda who has experience for approximately five years as well as a member of the implementation team for the election of Anti-Drug Ambassadors in Samarinda.

Data collection techniques in qualitative research generally include observation, interviews, and documentation studies (Romdona, Junista, and Gunawan 2025). In this study, the researcher used three data collection techniques to obtain comprehensive data, namely: (1) In-Depth Interview, which is a question and answer process between the researcher and the source to dig up information in more detail; (2) Participatory Observation, i.e. the researcher observes the activities carried out by the Anti-Drug Ambassadors, including their interaction with the target community and the community's response to non-formal educational activities (Wekke 2019); (3) Documentation, namely data collection in the form of educational materials, Anti-Drug Ambassador work programs, mass media publications, and visual documentation of activities that have been carried out.

After collecting data, the researcher conducts data analysis which is the process of processing and organizing data to deepen understanding of the research topic (Qomaruddin and Sa'diyah 2024). In this study, the technique used is qualitative data analysis which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Waruwu 2024). Data reduction is done by summarizing, coding, exploring themes, and grouping data according to the focus of the research (Kusyana 2023). After that, the data is presented in the form of narrative text, matrices, or charts to help researchers see the patterns, relationships, and meanings contained in the data (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024; Waruwu, 2024). The final stage is drawing conclusions based on findings and verifying data through confirmation to informants (*member check*) so that the research results are more accurate and valid.

To ensure the validity of the data in this study, the researcher used several techniques, namely: (1) Source Triangulation, which is comparing information from several sources such as Anti-Drug Ambassadors, peer communities, and Samarinda City BNN officers; (2) Technical Triangulation, which is comparing data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation to improve the reliability and objectivity of results; (3) *Member Checking*, confirming the results of interviews and temporary analysis to informants to obtain clarification or additional information (Candela 2019; Carlson 2010); (4) Audit Footprint, which is to record in detail the entire research process so that the results of the research can be accounted for scientifically and transparently.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study aims to analyze the role, strategies and challenges of Anti-Drug Ambassadors in drug prevention efforts through peer-education-based non-formal education. The results of the study were presented based on interview data with one of the Anti-Drug Ambassadors of Samarinda City, P4GN BNNK Samarinda Extension Staff, and the peer community. The following is a presentation of the data of the field findings:

1. The Role of Anti-Drug Ambassadors as Non-Formal Education Agents



Duta Ati Narkoba plays the role of a non-formal education agent who is able to actively reach adolescents and youth. This role emerged as a response to the high rate of drug abuse in Samarinda, which once ranked third highest in Indonesia. As explained by the extension staff of BNNK Samarinda with the following statement:

"The development of drugs in Samarinda a few years ago once reached the third highest in Indonesia, users, sellers. Until finally entering the top 10. Drugs in Samarinda exist because the prevention is not (optimal)."

This statement became the basis for the establishment of Anti-Drug Ambassadors as a local innovation of BNNK Samarinda to strengthen prevention efforts through a non-formal approach that is closer to young people. This is supported by a statement from Nazwa (21 years old) as one of the members of the Samarinda City Anti-Drug Ambassador in 2023, as follows:

"BNN is very helpful for the P4GN campaign... This Anti-Drug Ambassador can help to educate in schools, just 15-20 years old. If we can't socialize, we will socialize. We are the ones who accompany us."

From the statement, it can be seen that the ambassadors were chosen because of their age (15-20 years) who are close to the target group such as high school/vocational students and early semester students. This proximity facilitates two-way communication. In line with that, Ghazi as a student representing the peer community, stated as follows:

"In my opinion, of course, yes, it is better, it is smoother two-way communication, not afraid of being judged. Understand each other's feelings better."

This statement shows that the communication carried out by the Ambassador is felt to be more interactive and not rigid, so that the prevention message is easier to receive. This educational role is realized through BNNK Goes to School activities, which are visits to schools and campuses during the introduction period for new students/students, with the Ambassador as the main speaker. The documentation of these activities is as follows:



Figure 1. BNNK Goes to School

In addition to the educational environment, the Anti-Drug Ambassador is also involved in the Kelurahan Bersinar program, an initiative of BNNK Samarinda to create a drug-free environment. As conveyed by Nazwa as a member of the Anti-Drug Ambassador of Samarinda City, as follows:

"We have a Kelurahan Bersinar program, now it must involve RT/RW/, Babinsa, the ustad, the people of the surrounding sub-district... Ambassadors as facilitators."

In this program, the Ambassador not only conveys information, but also facilitates collaboration between BNNK and community leaders such as RT, RW, Babinsa, and religious leaders. This is also strengthened by statements from extension staff, as follows:

"We involve community leaders also in this Kelurahan Bersinar program, RT, Babinsa, the village head, usually as a supervisor, if this ambassador is the facilitator, the delivery of counseling material as well."

From these two statements, it can be seen that Duta plays an active role as a liaison between government agencies and local communities. The following are the results of the documentation study of the participation of the Anti-Drug Ambassador as a community facilitator in Kelurahan Bersinar:



Figure 2. Participation of Anti-Drug Ambassadors in the Kelurahan Bersinar Program

Anti-Drug Ambassadors also act as advocates and agents of change in anti-drug campaigns. As conveyed by Ghazi as a peer society, as follows:

"They are good at being a bridge of information, information about the dangers of drugs, the P4GN campaign is coming to us."

This statement shows that the ambassador has succeeded in bridging the information gap between institutions and society, especially young people. This is also strengthened by a statement from Nazwa who affirms their commitment to spreading anti-drug messages, as follows: "Definitely, if there is information about P4GN, we will definitely convey it, through social media, or directly."

This statement shows that anti-drug ambassadors are a closer and more accessible face than formal agencies, so that the message of preventing drug abuse becomes more appropriate and easy to understand. The results of the two speakers showed that the Anti-Drug Ambassador succeeded in playing a dual role as an advocate and agent of change in the social order of young people and communities. From the perspective of the peer community, the existence of Ambassadors is considered effective because they are able to convey information in language that is easy to understand and without a patronizing impression. Meanwhile, from the Ambassador's own side, they consciously carry out the mandate to actively spread the message of prevention, both through direct activities and social media.

2. Educational Strategies Used by Anti-Drug Ambassadors

In the implementation of his education, the Anti-Drug Ambassador uses a different strategy from formal extension workers from government agencies. They prioritize two-way communication, an emotional approach, a relaxed delivery of material, and the use of language that is familiar to the world of teenagers but informative. This approach creates an educational atmosphere that is comfortable, participatory, and does not seem patronizing. Ghazi as one of the resource persons who had participated in anti-drug counseling activities said that:

"In my opinion, of course, yes, it's better, two-way communication is smoother, not afraid of being judged. Understand each other's feelings better."

This statement shows that the communication carried out by the Anti-Drug Ambassador is felt to be easier to accept by young people because of its interactive and empathetic nature. The approach used also involves psychological aspects. This is also supported by a statement from Nazwa. The ambassadors also often use a psychological approach in delivering material such as the importance of loving oneself and building positive life motivation. Here is the statement:

"We often use psychological approaches, such as the importance of loving yourself and building positive life motivation."



He added that the educational strategy is adjusted to the characteristics of the target group. For the audience who are young and not yet married, the material focuses on self-development, while for the adult community, the focus shifts to family resilience. As explained by Nazwa, one of the ambassadors' members as follows:

"If you don't have a family, it's about life motivation, loving yourself, respecting yourself. Don't get close to drugs. For the adult community, we emphasize family resilience."

Nazwa explained that educational strategies are tailored to different age groups. From the statement, it can be seen that the Anti-Drug Ambassador applies a differentiated educational strategy, adapting the material and approach to the age and psychological condition of the audience. BNNK Samarinda extension staff also explained the importance of understanding the needs of the audience in the education process, as follows:

"Ambassadors must understand what is called needs analysis, so if we already understand the educational needs of peers, we will know what material will be delivered. When the educational material is appropriate, it will be much easier. Psychological also needs to be considered, for example, who are naughty friends, how to handle them, how quiet they are, who are a bit naughty, so there are different educational methods, not everyone is equalized."

This statement shows that the educational methods used by the Anti-Drug Ambassador are responsive and adaptive, non-uniform, and take into account the diversity of the participants' backgrounds and personalities. Ghazi from among the peer community stated that:

"Okay, I know a little, they are also fostered by BNN, information about the dangers of drugs, the P4GN campaign, it reaches us. They are good at being a bridge of information."

This shows that the existence of the Ambassador is considered effective in conveying messages from government institutions to young people in a more understandable way.

In the digital era, Anti-Drug Ambassadors also use social media as a means of education. They create creative content such as videos, posters, and online campaigns that fit the digital lifestyle of the younger generation. Nazwa, a member of the anti-drug ambassador explained that:

"We have an annual program called RAMADANS.... After that there are games, quizzes with prizes, preparing prizes for games in the orphanage."

The RAMADANS (Ramadan Together with Anti-Drug Ambassadors) program is a form of education that is creatively packaged, combining iftar together, games, and quizzes with prizes, with a slip of material about the dangers of drugs. This activity was carried out in various locations, including orphanages.

BNNK Samarinda extension staff explained the reasons for choosing ambassadors who are active on social media, as follows:

"We are looking for those who are indeed active in the community and able to establish relationships and wide followers on social media, so that efforts to spread education are wider in scope."

BNNK Samarinda extension staff explained that the use of social media by Anti-Drug Ambassadors is only a spontaneous action, but part of a strategy to expand the reach of drug abuse prevention campaigns. This statement shows that the use of social media by the Ambassador is not just a personal activity, but part of the planned educational communication strategy. From the community's side, the presence of Anti-Drug Ambassadors on social media is considered inspiring and motivating. Ghazi stated;

"I'm impressed, they're Ambassadors. Cool it seems. His enthusiasm as a young person who voices the dangers of drugs. Caring about their peers in particular motivates them."

This statement shows that the Ambassador is not only seen as a conveyor of information, but also as a positive role model and a figure who cares about the peer environment.

3. Challenges and Obstacles in Education Implementation

Although the Anti-Drug Ambassador program in Samarinda has shown quite good results, its implementation is not without challenges. One of the biggest obstacles faced is the limitation of financial resources. This program does not have a special budget from the government, so BNN has to seek support from private sponsors and community participation. To



overcome this, the Anti-Drug Ambassador Forum was formed as an independent body that is more flexible in seeking support. As conveyed by one of the P4GN extension workers of BNNK Samarinda as follows:

"We established the Anti-Drug Ambassador Forum as an independent forum to have a larger sender in gathering support, including looking for sponsors. Because as a government agency, BNN must not directly ask for financial support from external parties."

The resource person explained that the authority of government agencies in receiving funds from outside parties is the main reason for the formation of an independent forum. With independent status, the Anti-Drug Ambassador Forum can freely cooperate with the private sector, the community, or donors without violating state financial rules. This is also strengthened by a statement from one of the members of the Anti-Drug Ambassador who stated that:

"So there is a Forum, if you want to ask for sponsors, it's good, on behalf of the Anti-Drug Ambassador Forum." This forum establishment solution is a strategy that allows the sustainability of the program even without fixed budget support.

Other challenges faced are the limited number of members as well as the commitment of members. Although the total number of ambassador members reaches 24 people, some of them are less active due to academic or personal work this is recognized by the members of the anti-drug ambassador as follows:

"The lack of that person is definitely yes, actually... Their commitment is lacking, in the end, like it or not, there are people who always make sacrifices, even though there is a busy life too."

The resource person explained that although the ambassadors had been given an initial commitment, the reality of the hustle and bustle made their involvement inconsistent. However, there are still members who have a sense of responsibility with the collective effort to maintain the program.

Despite facing obstacles, the community's response to the activities of the Anti-Drug Ambassador tends to be positive. There was no rejection from the community to the counseling carried out even the audience was very enthusiastic. As acknowledged by the ambassador members as follows:

"So far, there are no people who refuse or there is no bad response, in fact they ask how to help friends who are affected by drug problems, how to find positive friends and others."

This statement shows that the audience not only receives information, but also shows social concern and a desire to be involved in the handling of drug problems. The peer community also gave a supportive response. The resource person stated that after attending the counseling, they "*became more aware, more open to my eyes*" and "*more concerned and alert*" to threats that included drugs. This shows that the message conveyed has made the public aware of the dangers of drugs.

To increase the effectiveness of the program, P4GN BNNK Samarinda extension staff provided important input regarding the educational approach, he stated that:

"Ambassadors must understand the need for analysis, so if we understand the educational needs of peers, we will know what material will be delivered. When the educational material is appropriate, it will be much easier. Psychological also needs to be considered, for example, who is naughty, how to handle it, how quiet it is, how to be a bit naughty, so there are different educational methods, not everyone is equal."

This statement emphasizes the importance of a differentiated and responsive approach to the psychological condition of the audience, so that educational communication is more targeted. The Anti-Drug Ambassador Program also involves a routine evaluation process every year to assess the effectiveness of activities and identify weaknesses that need to be improved.

Based on the results of interviews, observations and documentation studies, it can be concluded that despite facing structural challenges such as limited funding and fluctuations in member commitments, the program is still able to create a real positive impact among young people and the wider community.

Discussion

1. The Role of Anti-Drug Ambassadors as Non-Formal Education Agents

Samarinda once ranked third as the city with the highest number of drug users and dealers in Indonesia, so more massive prevention efforts are needed and closer to vulnerable groups, especially teenagers and youth. This program was designed as part of the P4GN (Prevention, Eradication, Abuse, and Illicit Drug Trafficking) strategy, with the aim of building public



awareness through informal approaches carried out by peers. By forming educational agents from teenagers and students, BNN hopes that anti-drug messages can be more easily accepted by the younger generation. The Anti-Drug Ambassador Program in Samarinda is one of the concrete implementations of the concept of non-formal education, namely educational pathways outside the school system that are flexible, responsive to local needs, and not tied to the formal curriculum (Mustangin, Akbar, and Sari 2021; Syaadah et al. 2022). Non-formal education targets include all levels of society regardless of age, gender, socioeconomic status and level of education (Wahyuni, 2021). As mentioned in the theoretical study, non-formal education has unique characteristics: planned, systematic, but still adaptive to the context of society (Ahmad et al., 2022). This is in line with the practice carried out by the ambassadors, who not only convey information in unison, but also engage participants in an interactive learning process. The ability of an education agent, especially an anti-drug ambassador, in managing his educational activities, is also shown by his ability to manage these learning activities, because learning cannot be carried out properly if, lack of motivation to learn from students, lack of learning activity, moral decline, the emergence of violent acts, and lack of concentration in learning (Wahyuni and Destia Fahira, 2023).

In the context of drug prevention, this approach is very effective because it places the community, especially the younger generation, as the main subject in the education process. As explained by Astikaningtyas, Rahman, and Trinugraha (2022) Non-formal education contains life skills learning that is designed to answer the real needs of the community. Thus, the anti-drug counseling carried out by the ambassadors is not only informing about the types of drugs, but also helping the audience in building mental and emotional resilience to reject the invitation to use it. The ambassadors are equipped with public speaking skills and a psychological approach in order to deliver material according to the needs of the audience. It becomes part of an effective non-formal education strategy because it integrates aspects of interpersonal communication and psychological understanding of the target audience.

The Anti-Drug Ambassador Program in Samarinda City not only functions as a competition, but also as a tangible form of community-based non-formal education. The ambassadors play five key roles, each with specific tasks that are implemented in real terms. First, as peer educators, the ambassadors convey anti-drug messages through a personal and communicative approach. The concept of peer educator or peer educator is the core of the Anti-Drug Ambassador program. According to Sinaga (2025), Peer educators play an important role as facilitators who are socially and psychologically closer to their peers, thus creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment. The ambassadors will carry out their role as peer educators when conducting anti-drug socialization on campus held by internal campus organizations or during the introduction of the school environment in the new school year in an activity called BNNK Samarinda Goes to School. In this context, Anti-Drug Ambassadors not only act as informants, but also facilitators who mobilize collective awareness in their circle of friends.

The existence of Anti-Drug Ambassadors is considered very relevant in the context of drug prevention education among adolescents, considering that they are more easily accepted and trusted by their peers. The proximity of age and social background between the ambassador and the audience creates a more intimate and open communication dynamic, so that the message conveyed becomes easier to understand and respond positively. Communication tends to use language that is relaxed, contextual, and culturally appropriate to adolescents, which also supports the creation of an interactive and non-patronizing dialogue atmosphere. This approach strengthens the effectiveness of counseling, as prevention messages are delivered in a more relatable form, so that they are able to penetrate psychological barriers such as fear, shame, or rejection that often arise in vertical communication between adults and adolescents. In this context, the educational communication carried out by the ambassadors places the audience as an active subject in the learning process, not just a recipient of information (Hapsari et al. 2024). The communication carried out by the ambassadors prioritizes audience participation. With a more personal and interactive approach, it is hoped that it can increase the resistance of young people to the invitation or temptation to use drugs. Resource persons from the ambassadors themselves stated that they often use psychological approaches such as self-love and self-reward to build positive life motivation for their peers. The ambassadors will provide material on how to love oneself or how to be a useful human being before delivering counseling on the dangers of drug abuse.

Second, the Anti-Drug Ambassador in Samarinda has a strategic role as a non-formal education agent in building self-resilience to the threat of drugs. Afifah, Hidayat, and Musa (2023) added that the peer tutor method is effectively used in community education because participants who have understood the material can share it with others optimally. The

educational activities carried out by the ambassadors are not only in the school environment, but also in the community. For example, the Anti-Drug Ambassador's visit to the Rehabilitation Center as a form of awareness education for drug users who are in the rehabilitation stage.

In addition, the Anti-Drug Ambassador also conducts counseling to sub-districts in Samarinda if they receive an invitation to become resource persons or presenters. Usually these activities are intended for people who are already married. In family counseling, the ambassador will provide awareness materials to parents that the closeness of children and parents has a great influence on the behavior and future of their children, especially those that cause adolescents to choose to use drugs illegally. This is in line with the basic principle of the Health Belief Model (HBM) theory, which is that individuals are more likely to engage in preventative behaviors if they feel vulnerable to a particular problem and believe that such actions will provide real benefits (Fransiska, Kusumaningtyas, and Gumanti 2022). The ambassadors have succeeded in building this perception through a personal approach that is relevant to the world of adolescents and parents.

In addition, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) explains that the intention to behave (in this case, refusing or using drugs) is influenced by three main factors: (1) Attitude towards behavior, positive/negative evaluation of action; (2) Subjective norms, social pressure from important people; and (3) control of perceived behavior, belief in one's ability to perform actions (Idram 2021). In this context, the role of Anti-Drug Ambassadors is very important in forming negative attitudes towards drugs, strengthening positive social norms in peer groups and society, and increasing self-control (self-eff content) to reject drug use.

Third, in their role as community facilitators, ambassadors play an active role in building collective awareness of the dangers of drugs in the surrounding environment. The ambassadors collaborated with surrounding communities such as youth organizations and student organizations to organize training, citizen discussions, and participation-based educational games. This reflects the characteristics of non-formal education that is flexible and based on local needs (Ahmad et al. 2022; Mustangin, Akbar, and Sari 2021). One of the real examples of Anti-Drug Ambassadors as community facilitators is their participation in the BNNK Samarinda program, namely the Kelurahan Bersinar (Bersih Narkoba/Clean Drugs). Facilitators contribute to community empowerment through socialization, facilitation, and program evaluation (Agustin 2017). In its implementation, the Ambassador is directly involved in counseling and socialization to the community at the village level. They act as facilitators who help mobilize public awareness, both among teenagers and the elderly. In addition, the ambassador also helps bridge information between BNN institutions and the community, so that the P4GN (Prevention and Eradication of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking) campaign is easier to understand and accept by the public.

Fourth, as anti-drug advocates, the ambassadors voice drug prevention issues in public forums, both online and offline. In addition to conducting direct counseling, the Anti-Drug Ambassador will utilize social media as a means of digital advocacy. Through this strategy, ambassadors are able to become an authoritative voice but close to young people, so that anti-drug messages are easier to receive and spread. In this case, an ambassador does not only play the role of a student or student, but also as an advocate (Ambassador) who carries out the role of an extension worker, role model, rehabilitation companion, and as a community liaison with BNNK Samarinda. In social role theory, Merton (1957) in Farida (2023) It is said that each individual performs various dual roles related to one social status (role set) or in various social contexts (multiple roles). This is also in line with research conducted by Elvira, Defitrian, and Dewinta (2023) which illustrates that every individual in society plays a role like an actor in the social stage, where the role contains a set of rights, obligations, and norms that are expected to be carried out in accordance with their social status.

Fifth, in the role of an agent of change, ambassadors use persuasive strategies to influence people's attitudes and behaviors. Members not only act as educators, but also as advocates, role models, and community movers. This makes them change agents who work on the mandate of institutions (BNN) to influence people's innovation decisions in terms of drug prevention (Rogers dalam Manaf et al., 2024). As agents of change, ambassadors must be able to strike a balance between social closeness and moral authority. This is in line with the characteristics of an ideal change agent, namely: (1) Understanding the needs of the audience; (2) Able to communicate effectively; (3) Trustworthy by the public; (4) Able to facilitate the process of change. Resource persons from the ambassadors stated that they often have to adjust communication to make it fun, so that the message can be conveyed without making the audience feel advised. This is what distinguishes

them from formal extension workers who are usually more authoritative. With a relaxed approach and humor, they are actually more acceptable to the 15–20 year old age group.

2. Educational Strategies Used by Anti-Drug Ambassadors

The educational strategy used by the Anti-Drug Ambassador is very much in accordance with the principle of persuasive communication, which is a form of communication that is not only informative, but also persuades and influences the attitudes and behaviors of the audience through personal appeal, credibility, and empathy (Suwandi et al. 2025). Resource persons from the ambassadors said that they often insert anti-drug materials when they are the moderators or MCs of events, so that the message can be conveyed naturally and does not seem forceful. In addition, programs such as "Kelurahan Bersinar" and "RAMADANS" show integration through community-based campaigns. Akmaliah and Indreswari (2025) said that the community-based approach is able to strengthen the sense of community ownership of the issues raised. In this case, collaboration with community leaders such as RT/RW, Babinsa, and religious leaders helps increase the legitimacy and reach of the campaign. The "RAMADANS" program, for example, has succeeded in combining friendship with education through iftar activities together in orphanages. In addition, games and quizzes with prizes are also inserted to increase children's participation. This is an example of the application of a holistic communication strategy, which is a strategy that not only builds a rational understanding, but also builds an emotional and social commitment to stay away from drugs.

The involvement of the program organizing institution, namely the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) of Samarinda City, is very important in facilitating interaction between Anti-Drug Ambassadors and the community. In addition, in the process of non-formal education to the community, the ambassadors involve community leaders, such as RT/RW, religious leaders and Babinsa. By involving community leaders, campaign and education efforts become more acceptable to the public. For example, in the "Kelurahan Bersinar" program, the Anti-Drug Ambassador not only provides counseling, but also coordinates with the local RT Chairman to invite residents. The presence of religious leaders in discussion forums or religious activities such as recitation also helps to strengthen moral messages about the dangers of drugs. This is in line with the theory of Diffusion of Innovation, where the existence of opinion leaders can accelerate the adoption of a new idea or behavior in society (Yuanita 2021).

In addition, the ambassadors also use social media as an educational strategy that is more reaching, flexible, and relevant to the lifestyle of the current young generation. Social media has become a major communication channel and source of information for young people, encouraging creativity and participation (Arianto 2021). This approach allows anti-drug messages to be delivered informally, attractively, and easily shared, so that they have viral potential and a wider reach than conventional face-to-face methods.

Through an educational approach carried out by peers, adolescents become more aware of various types of drugs, the negative impacts they have on physical and mental health, as well as the social and legal risks that can arise from direct or indirect interactions in drug use or trafficking. This deeper understanding has the potential to form an attitude of vigilance, criticism, and responsiveness to the threat of drugs in the surrounding environment. The peer education approach used is considered effective because it utilizes age proximity and more relatable communication, so that message prevention is easier to receive and internalize by adolescent audiences. Thus, this program not only plays a role in the dissemination of information, but also in shaping preventive behavior and collective awareness among the younger generation. This shows that the communication strategies carried out by the ambassadors are successful in forming negative perceptions of drugs, in accordance with the principles of the Health Belief Model which states that a person will be more likely to avoid risky behaviors if he feels vulnerable to the threat and believes that preventive measures will provide real benefits (Fransiska, Kusumaningtyas, and Gumanti 2022).

In addition to targeting teenagers directly, the Anti-Drug Ambassador is also active in educating families, especially parents. They view that a harmonious relationship between children and parents is an important foundation in building family resilience to the threat of drugs. In this context, the ambassadors delivered material that emphasized the importance of open communication, emotional closeness, and the active role of parents in guiding children. This approach is relevant to findings in research that suggest that a supportive family environment can be a key protective factor in preventing adolescent deviant behavior, including drug prevention (Bunsaman and Krisnani, 2020).

The materials for families are specifically designed to be different from those given to adolescents, with an emphasis on strengthening the role of parents as the frontline in drug prevention. Family education is seen as part of a holistic strategy to build a resilient environment against the threat of drugs. The involvement of families in programs such as Kelurahan Bersinar and counseling activities at the sub-district level reflects efforts to expand the reach of prevention from the individual level to the wider social realm.

Thus, the combination of education to adolescents through a peer approach and strengthening the role of the family reflects a comprehensive and multi-layered strategy. This approach not only aims to provide information, but also to build a support system that is able to prevent the introduction of drugs from an early age. The success in raising individual awareness and involving social structures such as the family is proof that Anti-Drug Ambassadors are able to carry out their role as effective agents of change in the context of non-formal education.

1. Challenges and Obstacles in Education Implementation

The Anti-Drug Ambassador Program in Samarinda has shown a positive contribution to drug prevention efforts, especially among the younger generation. Through a peer education approach, this program has succeeded in creating a space for dialogue that is closer and more relevant for young audiences. However, as revealed in the results of the study, the implementation of this program still faces a number of structural challenges that have an impact on its sustainability and effectiveness.

To overcome these limitations, the Anti-Drug Ambassador Forum was formed as an independent body that functions as an independent forum. The existence of this forum is a strategic solution that allows ambassadors to freely collaborate with the private sector, communities, and donors without violating the rules of state financial administration. As one of the ambassador members said, "So there is a Forum, if you want to ask for sponsorship, it's good, on behalf of the Anti-Drug Ambassador Forum." This shows that the forum not only plays a role as an administrative mechanism, but also as a means of empowerment and independence in maintaining the sustainability of the program.

In addition to financial challenges, the program also faces obstacles in terms of commitment and consistency of member participation. Of the total 24 members, not all can be actively involved due to the demands of the natural dual role. Most ambassadors are students or students who have to balance academic obligations, work, and responsibilities as ambassadors. This phenomenon can be explained by the theory of social role and the concept of multiple role from Merton (1957). Individuals, including ambassadors, carry out more than one social role at once, namely as students, ambassadors, and members of organizations, so that village

role conflicts occur. When the demands of roles are increasing and unbalanced, the commitment to carrying out duties as an Ambassador becomes inconsistent (Churiyah 2011).

In the midst of these various limitations, the community's response to this program tends to be positive. There was no rejection of counseling activities, even many audiences showed high enthusiasm and social concern, such as by asking questions about how to help friends involved in drugs or how to find a positive environment. This shows that educational messages are not only passively received, but also trigger critical awareness and active participation from young people. Responses such as "become more aware, more open my eyes" and "more concerned and alert" indicate the internalization of values and changes in perception as early indicators of behavior change.

To increase the effectiveness of the program, audience needs analysis is an important aspect that needs to be strengthened. As suggested by the P4GN BNNK Samarinda extension staff, ambassadors need to understand the psychological characteristics and background of the audience so that educational materials can be delivered in a targeted manner. A uniform approach is not effective because audiences have diversity in terms of personality, level of understanding, and learning style for example, a different approach is required for students who are quiet, who are active, or who tend to be "naughty." This approach to implementation is in line with the principles of audience-centric communication, which emphasizes the importance of tailoring messages based on the recipient's profile (Fatima and Sa'i 2025). Thus, education is not only informative, but also interactive and personal.

In addition, to improve digital-based communication strategies is important in educational efforts, especially in the context of preventing drug abuse among the younger generation. There is a need to strengthen the role of social media as a

means of delivering educational messages. This is in line with the fact that social media today is not only a communication tool, but also the main space for the younger generation to access information, express themselves, and engage in various forms of social participation. The development of digital technology has changed information consumption patterns, where engaging, interactive, and easily digestible content has a greater chance of being accepted by young audiences. Social media has become a major communication channel and source of information for young people, encouraging creativity and participation (Arianto 2021). Therefore, a rigid one-way approach needs to be replaced with a more dynamic, engaging, and appropriate communication strategy that is inherent in the daily lives of the younger generation.

Overall, the Anti-Drug Ambassador Program in Samarinda is a successful implementation of the concept of non-formal education and peer education. By utilizing the proximity of age, psychological approaches, and persuasive communication strategies, the ambassadors succeeded in becoming agents of change who were able to build awareness of the dangers of drugs in young people. Although it still faces obstacle challenges such as limited funds and time, the program has great potential to be further developed, especially through technology integration and strengthening the capacity of ambassadors in audience needs analysis.

It should be noted that this study has a number of limitations that need to be considered in the interpretation of the results. First, the number of resource persons involved is relatively limited, namely three main groups: Anti-Drug Ambassadors, BNNK Samarinda extension workers, and peer communities. Although the data obtained has reached saturation (information saturation), the limited number of informants affects the depth of perspective of other groups that are also involved in the drug prevention ecosystem, such as parents, teachers, or schools. Second, the short duration of the study limits observations of the long-term dynamics of the role and impact of Anti-Drug Ambassadors, so that the findings are more reflective of current conditions than the development of the program historically or longitudinally. Third, there is a potential for social desirability bias in interviews, especially from Anti-Drug Ambassadors and extension staff, who may tend to give a positive response or in accordance with the expectations of the institution. This can affect the objectivity of program performance evaluations. In addition, the geographic context focused only on Samarinda City limits the ability to generalize findings to other regions with different social, cultural, and policy conditions. Nevertheless, the research findings still provide valuable empirical insights into the roles, strategies, and challenges of Anti-Drug Ambassadors in their local contexts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of the research regarding the role of Anti-Drug Ambassadors in Samarinda, the following are the answers to the formulation of the problems proposed. First, Anti-Drug Ambassadors act as non-formal educational agents through psychological approaches, two-way communication, and the formation of audience resilience. The ambassadors not only convey information, but also become peer educators, community facilitators, anti-drug advocates, agents of change, and youth empowerment. Second, the strategies used by the Anti-Drug Ambassador in educating the public include persuasive communication, community-based approaches, collaboration with community leaders, interactive counseling, and education tailored to the lifestyle of the current young generation. Third, the challenges faced by the Anti-Drug Ambassadors include limited funds, weak member commitment, and lack of budget support from local governments. However, several efforts have been made to address this, such as the establishment of independent forums and recommendations for the use of digital strategies to reach more audiences. Overall, the program, Anti-Drug Ambassador in Samarinda succeeded in answering three research questions by providing a clear, theoretical overview of the roles, strategies, and challenges of ambassadors in drug prevention efforts among adolescents and youth.

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Sosioedukasi

JURNAL ILMIAH ILMU PENDIDIKAN DAN SOSIAL

ISSN: 2086-6135 E-ISSN: 2541-612x

Volume No. Month of Year

<https://ejournal.unibabwi.ac.id/index.php/sosioedukasi/index>

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