

THE GUMREGAH BUNGAH PROGRAM'S INNOVATION IN ADDRESSING OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN IN MAGELANG REGENCY (CASE STUDY OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN AWWALIYAH TEGALREJO ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL AND TAMAN DEWANTA COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe and analyze the handling of Out-of-School Children before the Gumregah Bungah Program, the form of program innovation, the collaboration between the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School and the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center (CLC), and the program's impact on handling Out-of-School Children in Magelang Regency. The study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. Research subjects include program managers, Islamic boarding school caretakers, CLC tutors, and Out-of-School Children students. Data collection techniques were conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data validity employed triangulation of sources, techniques, and time, while analysis used the Miles and Huberman model through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results show that before the Gumregah Bungah Program, handling of Out-of-School Children remained administrative and had not addressed students' social and psychological needs. The Gumregah Bungah Program emerged as a community-based educational innovation integrating Islamic boarding schools and CLC in equivalency education and character building. Collaboration occurs through role division between Islamic boarding schools as centers for moral and social development and CLC as equivalency education providers. The program positively increased educational access, learning motivation, social behavior, self-confidence, and character development among students. Practically, the program offers a replicable collaborative model for local governments and non-formal education institutions to develop inclusive, community-based strategies for addressing Out-of-School Children. Its integrated approach strengthens stakeholder participation, optimizes existing community resources, supports educational reintegration, and encourages sustainable partnerships between religious institutions, families, and education providers. Overall, the Gumregah Bungah Program serves as a collaborative, humanistic, and inclusive model for Magelang Regency.

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INTRODUCTION

Out-of-school children remain a serious concern in education development, both internationally, nationally, and locally, including in Magelang Regency. Globally, UNICEF estimates that by 2025, 234 million children worldwide will need support to access quality education (Maliki et al., 2021). This figure has increased by 35 million in the past three years. Of these, 85 million children are out of school altogether, with 52% being girls, 17% being refugee children, and more than 20% being children with disabilities. This data demonstrates that the challenge of access to and equity in education remains a crucial global issue. At the national level, the problem of out-of-school children also remains high. Based on the meeting notes of the Education Working Committee in the 3T regions with Commission X of the Indonesian House of Representatives on July 19, 2025, it was recorded that 3.9 million children in Indonesia were out of school. In detail, 881,168 children dropped out of school, 1,027,014 children graduated but did not continue their education, and 2,077,596 children had never attended school at all (Setjen et al., 2021). The contributing factors are diverse, ranging from limited funds (25.55%), work (21.64%), feeling that education is sufficient (9.77%), disability (3.64%), long school distance (2.61%), and bullying (0.48%) (Suminar et al., 2025). These figures indicate that economic and social issues remain major barriers to access to education in Indonesia. In Central Java Province, the number of out-of-school children in 2025 was recorded at between 1,100 and 1,379 children (Astuti, 2024). The Central Java Provincial Government is working to address this problem through a 3% affirmative action quota policy in the New Student Admissions Selection, data-based management, and scholarships to encourage children to return to school. As of the second quarter of 2024, 105 children had been successfully returned to school. Data shows that approximately 200 children were from high school, 803 from vocational high school, and 7 from special needs schools, which are prioritized for treatment.

Meanwhile, in Magelang Regency, the problem of out-of-school children is quite concerning. According to data from the Magelang Regency Education and Culture Office, as of December 2024, 6,187 children aged 7–18 were out of school. This number consisted of 861 children who dropped out of school, 2,391 children who graduated but did not continue, and 2,935 children who had never attended school (Primadewi et al., 2025). Data from relevant agencies indicates that the number of out-of-school children in several sub-districts remains quite high, particularly in the elementary and secondary school age groups. Based on data by name by address (BNBA), 2,280 children are recorded as out of school in Magelang Regency, consisting of 900 girls and the rest are boys (Subchi, 2024). They are spread across 97 villages in 21 sub-districts, indicating that this problem is not concentrated in one region, but rather widespread across various levels of society. This condition is influenced by family economic factors, low motivation to learn, limited access to education, minimal parental support, and socio-cultural conditions that hinder the continuity of education. In rural areas of Magelang, limited formal education options are also one of the causes of children being vulnerable to being cut off from the learning process (Imaniar et al., 2025).

In response to the high number of out-of-school children, various parties are being urged to play a strategic role in expanding equitable access to education (I. K. A. J. Artha et al., 2022). Religious institutions such as Islamic boarding school, particularly traditional Islamic boarding schools, have significant potential as alternative spaces for fostering education close to the community. On National Education Day, the Regent of Magelang launched the Gumeграh Bungah Program, inspired by the "Magelang Gumregah Mlebu Ning Sekolah" movement, seeking to re-educate out-of-school children into education through a more flexible, humanistic, and community-based approach (Dharmawan, 2023). This program combines the capacity of Islamic boarding schools as safe, nurturing, and directed spaces for previously out-of-school youth with the role of Community Learning Centers (CLC) as structured, state-recognized providers of general education services (Feriska et al., 2025). Through this partnership, out-of-school children not only gain previously interrupted access to education but also receive a caring and supportive learning environment (I. Artha et al., 2023).

The approach used in this program goes beyond mere academics. Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) provide a religious atmosphere, values of simplicity, and consistent moral development, enabling students to experience mental and spiritual recovery after experiencing a phase of instability in their education (Arif, 2025). Meanwhile, CLC fulfills the cognitive needs and basic competencies necessary to return to formal education or continue to the next

stage (Umami et al., 2025). Thus, this synergy not only addresses the issue of educational access but also addresses the moral, spiritual, and social dimensions that are crucial in rebuilding students' motivation to learn, self-confidence, and character, which serve as valuable foundations for their future (Palit et al., 2025).

Islamic boarding schools are known for their focus on religious education, moral development, and spiritual discipline (Fahham, 2020). However, because they do not provide general education, they cannot directly meet the academic needs of out-of-school children who require equivalent education services or a general curriculum equivalent to formal education. Given these limitations, collaboration between institutions is crucial. This is where innovations such as the Gumegrah Bungah Program play a significant role. This program is a partnership between the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School and the Community Learning Center, which provides equivalency education packages A, B, and C. This collaboration allows out-of-school children to re-access general education services without having to leave the safe and familiar environment of the Islamic boarding school. Using a holistic approach, the Islamic boarding school provides spiritual and moral guidance, while the PKBM ensures that participants' rights to a legitimate, structured, and government-standard general education are fulfilled (Nasith & Bashith, 2023); (Cahyani et al., 2025)

This program is interesting to study because it offers an innovative collaborative model between traditional institutions (Salaf Islamic boarding schools) and non-formal educational institutions. This collaboration demonstrates how Islamic boarding schools can transform into an integral part of the solution to addressing out-of-school children, while also becoming active partners with local governments in implementing the program. Furthermore, the program's humanistic values, such as personal mentoring, moral development, and a supportive community environment, make it relevant for academic study. However, the implementation of this innovation still requires in-depth study. Questions related to the effectiveness of collaboration patterns, Islamic boarding school strategies in reaching and retaining out-of-school children, the dynamics of program implementation, and its impact on participants are aspects that need to be uncovered. Therefore, this research is important to understand how the collaboration between Islamic boarding schools and PKBM in the Gumegrah Bungah Program can be an effective model for handling out-of-school children in Magelang Regency, specifically through a case study of the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative case study design, focusing on the innovation of the Gumregah Bungah Program in addressing out-of-school children in Magelang Regency. A qualitative approach was selected to enable an in-depth exploration of the social dynamics, institutional collaboration, and educational practices that emerged during program implementation (Weil, 2025). This study specifically examines the innovation and collaboration between the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School and the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center (PKBM) in addressing out-of-school children through the Gumregah Bungah Program. The research aims to describe and analyze the program's innovation process, the forms of collaboration between institutions, and the program's impact on out-of-school students in Magelang Regency.

The research subjects consisted of Gumregah Bungah Program managers, Islamic boarding school administrators, tutors or teachers from partner PKBMs, and students or out-of-school children participating in the program. The research location was the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School in Magelang Regency, which serves as the center for implementing collaborative programs between the Islamic boarding school and the Community Learning Center (PKBM). Data sources for this study were divided into three categories: (1) Persons, including program managers, Islamic boarding school supervisors, PKBM tutors, and out-of-school students; (2) Place, including institutional conditions, facilities and infrastructure, learning activities, and the implementation of the equivalency education program; and (3) Paper, including program documents, archived data on out-of-school children, activity reports, photographs, and other supporting documents.

Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to directly examine learning activities, student development, and the implementation of the Gumregah Bungah Program within the Islamic boarding school and PKBM settings. In-depth interviews were conducted with research

informants to gather information regarding their experiences, perspectives, and institutional roles within the collaborative program. Documentation was used to complement field data through archives, activity photographs, program reports, and administrative records related to the management of out-of-school children.

The validity of the data was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and time triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from program managers, Islamic boarding school caretakers, PKBM tutors, and participating students. Technique triangulation was conducted by comparing findings from observation, interviews, and documentation concerning the same phenomenon. Time triangulation involved collecting and verifying data at different periods to ensure information consistency and credibility.

Data analysis employed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction was conducted continuously throughout the study by selecting, coding, categorizing, and focusing field data relevant to the research objectives, particularly concerning program innovation, institutional collaboration, and student development. During this stage, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentation were reviewed to identify recurring themes and significant patterns. Data display was carried out through organized narrative descriptions and thematic grouping, enabling the researcher to interpret relationships among actors, activities, and institutional roles within the Gumregah Bungah Program. Conclusion drawing and verification were undertaken iteratively by comparing emerging findings across data sources and triangulation results, allowing the researcher to confirm the credibility and consistency of interpretations until valid conclusions were obtained regarding the innovation and collaboration of the Gumregah Bungah Program in handling out-of-school children in Magelang Regency.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Addressing Out-of-School Children in Magelang Regency Before the Gumregah Bungah Program

Based on research conducted by researchers in Magelang Regency, the situation of out-of-school children before the Gumregah Bungah Program still faced various complex issues. The problem of out-of-school children is not only related to access to education, but is also influenced by economic factors, social environment, family circumstances, low motivation to learn, and limited educational approaches appropriate to the child's characteristics. Prior to this program, addressing out-of-school children tended to be carried out partially and did not involve strong collaboration between local governments, non-formal educational institutions, and community-based institutions such as Islamic boarding schools.

Interviews with the managers of the Gumregah Bungah Program revealed that prior to the program's implementation, out-of-school children were primarily focused on administrative data collection and community outreach on the importance of education. However, in practice, many out-of-school children remained difficult to reach because they had been out of school for a considerable period of time. Some children even felt embarrassed to return to learning alongside younger students. One informant explained: "Before Gumregah Bungah, the approach to dealing with out-of-school children was mostly limited to encouraging children to return to school. But the reality is that it's not easy, because many children already feel inferior, embarrassed, and lack the confidence to return to formal school. Some are already comfortable working, making it difficult to encourage them to study again."

This statement demonstrates that the problem of out-of-school children cannot be solved simply by providing access to education; it also requires a social and psychological approach that can rebuild children's motivation to learn. Many out-of-school children experience a loss of self-confidence due to previous experiences of failure in school. This makes them afraid of being stigmatized by their environment when they return to school.

Interviews with the caretakers of the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School also indicate that most out-of-school children come from families with lower-middle incomes. Many parents prefer their children to help with household chores rather than continuing their education. Furthermore, some children come from broken homes, thus receiving less attention and support in their education. An informant stated: "Some children drop out of school due to

family circumstances. Some have divorced parents, some have to help support their families financially, and some even received insufficient educational attention at home from an early age. So when they drop out of school, there's no one to encourage them to return to learning."

In addition to economic and family factors, the social environment also contributes to the high number of out-of-school children in Magelang Regency. Based on interviews with tutors from the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center (PKBM), some out-of-school children prefer to work at a young age due to the influence of their social environment and economic demands. Some children also feel that education is no longer important because they see many of their peers working without continuing their education. The PKBM tutor explained: "Sometimes children see their friends working and then follow suit. They think school isn't that important because they can earn money right away. However, they don't consider the long-term impact."

Researchers also found that prior to the Gumregah Bungah Program, inter-agency coordination in addressing out-of-school children was suboptimal. The local government, through the education office, had collected data on out-of-school children, but follow-up was limited. Community Learning Centers (PKBM) operated independently in providing equivalency education services, while Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) had not been actively involved in the out-of-school children management program.

Based on field observations, researchers observed that some out-of-school children in rural areas of Magelang Regency had limited access to education. The distance to formal schools was relatively long, especially for children living in remote areas. Furthermore, transportation and family economic conditions led some children to choose to drop out of school rather than continue their education. Observations conducted by researchers in several communities around the Awwaliyah Tegalorejo Islamic Boarding School revealed that school-age children spent more time helping their parents in the fields, trading, or working odd jobs than participating in learning activities. This situation indicates that education is not yet a top priority for some families in rural areas.

Furthermore, observations indicate that prior to the Gumregah Bungah Program, there was no structured support system for out-of-school children. Dropouts were generally left without further educational guidance. This lack of support led many out-of-school children to lose motivation and direction for their future. Some children even experienced changes in social behavior due to being outside the educational environment for too long. Researchers also found that previous formal educational approaches were inadequate in accommodating the needs of out-of-school children from diverse backgrounds. Some out-of-school children felt the school system was too rigid, too rule-laden, and did not provide space for those who had experienced academic failure. This led to children feeling alienated from the educational environment. One out-of-school student stated: "I used to drop out of school because I felt uncomfortable. I often fell behind in my studies and felt embarrassed by my friends. In the end, I chose to drop out of school and work to help support my family." This statement indicates that psychological factors are one of the main causes of children dropping out of school. Inability to keep up with learning, low social support, and negative experiences at school lead children to choose to leave education.

The research documentation also shows that the number of out-of-school children in Magelang Regency before the Gumregah Bungah Program was relatively high. According to documents from the Magelang Regency Education and Culture Office, thousands of school-age children are classified as dropouts, graduates who did not continue their education, and those who have never attended school. This data is spread across various sub-districts, with a predominance of rural areas. Archival documents on out-of-school child care activities prior to the Gumregah Bungah Program indicate that the previous program focused primarily on educational outreach, data collection on out-of-school children, and motivational support for parents. However, these activities lacked a sustainable development system, resulting in suboptimal outcomes in returning children to education. Researchers also obtained documentation in the form of photographs of out-of-school child care activities conducted by the local government and Community Learning Centers (PKBM). The documentation reveals that the care process is still administrative in nature and does not address character development or psychosocial support for children. This contrasts with the approach later developed in the Gumregah Bungah Program, which combines equivalency education with Islamic boarding school-based development.

The Gumregah Bungah Program Innovation in Magelang Regency

Based on research conducted by researchers, the Gumregah Bungah Program is a form of community-based educational innovation developed by the Magelang Regency Government to address out-of-school children. This program was created in response to the high number of out-of-school children in Magelang Regency, which has not been optimally addressed through formal education alone. The innovation offered in this program not only focuses on returning children to school but also emphasizes a humanistic, flexible, community-based approach and character building through collaboration between Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and community-based learning (PKBM).

According to interviews with the Gumregah Bungah Program administrators, this program arose from the need to create a model for addressing out-of-school children that more closely aligns with the social conditions of rural communities in Magelang Regency. Prior to this program, many out-of-school children found it difficult to return to formal school due to discomfort, insecurity, and social pressure. Therefore, the local government is attempting to introduce a new, more child-friendly approach through Islamic boarding schools and non-formal education. The informant explained: "The Gumregah Bungah Program was actually born because previous efforts to address out-of-school children were not optimal. Many children refused to return to formal school. Finally, a new approach was created through Islamic boarding schools and community development groups (PKBM) so that children felt more comfortable, less embarrassed, and could still receive an education."

This statement indicates that the main innovation of the Gumregah Bungah Program lies in the shift in approach to addressing out-of-school children. While previously focused on returning children to formal school, this program focuses on creating an alternative learning environment that is more flexible and tailored to the psychological needs of the students.

Interviews with the caretakers of the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School indicate that the program's innovation is also evident in the use of the Islamic boarding school as an alternative educational space for out-of-school children. The Islamic boarding school serves not only as a place for religious learning, but also as a space for character development, discipline, and mental recovery for children who have previously experienced educational failure.

The informant said: "Usually, Islamic boarding schools only focus on religious education, but in the Gumregah Bungah Program, Islamic boarding schools also provide support for dropouts. They are given moral guidance, their enthusiasm for learning is rebuilt, and they are guided to have a future." Through this innovation, Islamic boarding schools have a broader function as social educational institutions that assist the government in addressing the issue of out-of-school children. The religious and family-like approach implemented in Islamic boarding schools is considered to be able to help students feel more accepted and comfortable compared to returning directly to formal schools.

Furthermore, the innovation of the Gumregah Bungah Program is evident in the integration of equivalency education with Islamic boarding school-based guidance. Interviews with tutors at the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center (PKBM) revealed that students not only receive academic learning through Packages A, B, and C, but also receive spiritual and social guidance. The tutor explained: "What distinguishes this program from regular equivalency education is the inclusion of Islamic boarding school guidance. So, the children not only learn general subjects, but also develop their character and discipline." This integration is one of the program's strengths, as it addresses the needs of out-of-school children more comprehensively. Children not only receive equivalency education certificates but also receive moral, spiritual, and social guidance that helps them rebuild their self-confidence and motivation to learn.

Based on observations by researchers at the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School, the innovation of the Gumregah Bungah Program is evident in the more flexible and humane learning environment. Researchers found that the learning process is conducted using a less formal approach, making students appear more comfortable participating in learning activities. The relationship between tutors, Islamic boarding school supervisors, and students is also close and familial. During the observations, researchers observed that students not only attended academic lessons but also engaged in religious activities, discipline development, social cooperation, and daily activities within

the Islamic boarding school environment. This created a more holistic learning environment than traditional formal education.

Researchers also found that the program provided a space for out-of-school children to restart their education without negative stigma. Many students felt more confident because they were surrounded by people with similar experiences. This approach is an important social innovation because it reduced feelings of shame and psychological stress among students. One out-of-school student stated: "Here I feel more comfortable because I'm not looked down upon. I used to be embarrassed about returning to formal school. But at this Islamic boarding school, I can slowly learn again."

Beyond the learning approach, the innovation of the Gumregah Bungah Program is also evident in the cross-institutional collaboration system it has established. Based on interviews with program managers, the local government does not work alone but involves Islamic boarding schools, community development groups (PKBM), community leaders, and the surrounding community in supporting the program's success.

The informant explained: "This program cannot run on its own. There must be collaboration with Islamic boarding schools, community development groups (PKBM), the community, and families so that children can truly return to learning." This collaboration represents an innovative approach to community-based education governance. The program is not only implemented administratively but also involves the social forces of the community in supporting the sustainability of the education of out-of-school children.

Research documentation reveals various activities in the Gumregah Bungah Program, demonstrating the program's innovation. Photographic documentation demonstrates equivalency education learning conducted within the Islamic boarding school environment, character development activities, mentoring of out-of-school students, and religious activities integrated with non-formal education. Furthermore, program documentation demonstrates that Gumregah Bungah is part of the "Magelang Gumregah Mlebu Ning Sekolah" movement developed by the Magelang Regency Government to reduce the number of out-of-school children through a community-based approach and local wisdom. The documentation also demonstrates cross-sectoral involvement in program implementation, including the local government, Islamic boarding schools, PKBM, and the surrounding community.

Based on observations and documentation, researchers also found that the Gumregah Bungah Program's innovation lies in its ability to create a more inclusive education system for out-of-school children. The program, regardless of student background, provides a second chance for children who previously lost access to education. This approach makes education more open and adaptive to community needs.

Collaboration in the Gumregah Bungah Program between the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School and the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center (PKBM) in Addressing Out-of-School Children

Based on research conducted by researchers, the collaboration between the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School and the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center (PKBM) in the Gumregah Bungah Program represents a community-based educational partnership aimed at addressing out-of-school children more comprehensively. This collaboration is based on a shared goal of providing access to education, character development, and social support to children who have dropped out of school. In practice, the Awwaliyah Islamic Boarding School plays a role in fostering the moral, spiritual, and social development of students, while the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center (PKBM) is responsible for administering Packages A, B, and C equivalent education.

According to interviews with the managers of the Gumregah Bungah Program, the collaboration between the Islamic boarding school and the PKBM emerged from the need to create an education system that can more flexibly address the needs of out-of-school children. The local government sees that Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) offer a strong development environment, while community-based learning centers (PKBM) have legal standing and a state-recognized equivalent education system. Therefore, the two institutions were combined to complement each other. An informant explained: "Pesantren are strong in character and discipline development, while PKBM have authority in equivalent education. Therefore, the two are synergized so that out-of-school children receive not only academic education but also moral and mental development."

This statement demonstrates that the collaboration is not merely administrative, but rather an integration of formal, non-formal, and socio-religious education functions within a single educational service system for out-of-school children.

Interviews with the caretakers of the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School indicate that the boarding school fully supports the implementation of the Gumregah Bungah Program by providing a safe and comfortable learning environment for out-of-school students. The boarding school provides accommodation, daily life guidance, religious activities, and character development for students. The Islamic boarding school caretaker said: "These out-of-school children not only need a school, but also a place that can accept them. At the Islamic boarding school, they are guided religiously, accustomed to discipline, and encouraged to live together, so that they gradually develop a passion for learning again." In practice, guidance at the Islamic boarding school is carried out through congregational worship activities, religious studies, habituation to disciplined living, social cooperation, and daily mentoring by the caretaker and senior students. This approach is an important part of helping the mental and social recovery of out-of-school students who have previously experienced educational failure.

Meanwhile, based on interviews with tutors at the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center (PKBM), the collaboration between the PKBM and the students focuses more on providing equivalency education. The PKBM provides tutors, curriculum, educational administration, learning evaluation, and the issuance of equivalency education diplomas for out-of-school students.

The PKBM tutor explained: "We at the PKBM are tasked with providing Package A, B, and C educational services to students at Islamic boarding schools. So, academic learning continues according to the curriculum, but the learning environment is more flexible and adapts to the students' individual needs."

Based on the researcher's observations, the equivalency education learning process takes place at the Awwaliyah Islamic Boarding School, in a more relaxed atmosphere than in formal schools. The researcher observed that the PKBM tutors strive to build close communication with the students, making the children appear more comfortable participating in the learning.

The Impact of the Gumregah Bungah Program on Addressing Out-of-School Children

Based on research conducted by researchers, the Gumregah Bungah Program has had a significant impact on addressing out-of-school children in Magelang Regency. This impact is evident not only in increased access to education for out-of-school children, but also in changes in attitudes, learning motivation, character development, and the social conditions of students after participating in the program. The program provides a more flexible and humane alternative educational space for children who have previously dropped out of school and lost their educational direction.

According to interviews with the Gumregah Bungah Program administrators, one of the program's main impacts is the increase in the number of out-of-school children returning to school. Before the program, many children were difficult to reach and refused to return to school due to feelings of shame or discomfort with the formal school system. However, after the introduction of the Islamic boarding school-based approach and equivalency education, children began to gain the courage to return to their education. An informant explained: "The most visible impact is that children who previously refused to go to school are now willing to return. They feel more comfortable because the system is different from traditional formal schools."

This statement demonstrates that the approach used in the Gumregah Bungah Program is able to create a learning environment that is more welcoming for out-of-school children. This program not only restores access to education but also rebuilds the self-confidence of students who have previously experienced educational failure.

Interviews with the caretakers of the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School indicate that this program also impacts changes in students' behavior and character. Children who were previously undisciplined, withdrawn, or lost their direction in life began to show positive changes after participating in the guidance program at the Islamic boarding school.

The caretaker stated: "Children who were previously difficult to manage are now becoming accustomed to discipline. They participate in worship activities, study together, and are beginning to have a purpose in life again."

The changes are visible in their daily behavior." During the guidance program at the Islamic boarding school, students are accustomed to participating in religious activities, living independently, valuing time, and building social relationships with their surroundings. This guidance helps students reshape their character and adopt a more positive lifestyle.

Furthermore, based on interviews with tutors at the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center (PKBM), the program has had an impact on the learning motivation of out-of-school students. Many students who initially felt unable to keep up with the lessons began to show enthusiasm for learning after receiving more personalized guidance and a less stressful learning environment. The tutor explained: "Initially, many children felt inferior because they felt they were falling behind in their studies. But after studying here, they began to regain their confidence because the tutors and caregivers always provided support." This statement indicates that a flexible and supportive learning approach is a crucial factor in increasing the learning motivation of out-of-school students. The close relationship between tutors, caregivers, and students helps create a more comfortable learning environment than their previous experiences in formal schools.

Based on researchers' observations at the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School, the impact of the Gumregah Bungah Program is evident in the increased student involvement in learning and social activities within the boarding school environment. Researchers observed that students began to actively participate in equivalency education lessons, religious activities, social cooperation, and daily boarding school activities. During the observations, researchers also found that social relationships among students appeared quite good. Children who previously tended to be withdrawn began to interact more openly with their peers and the Islamic boarding school administrators. The family-like environment of the Islamic boarding school helped students feel accepted and less stigmatized as dropouts.

Researchers also observed a change in students' mindsets regarding the importance of education. Some students began to develop a desire to continue their education to a higher level or work with better skills after participating in the program. One Out-of-School student stated: "I used to think school was no longer important because I dropped out. But after participating in this program, I want to get a diploma and move on with a better life."

In addition to its impact on students, the Gumregah Bungah Program also positively impacted Islamic boarding schools and community development groups (PKBM). Based on interviews with program managers, this collaboration has enabled Islamic boarding schools to play a broader social role in society, not only as religious educational institutions but also as part of the community's educational solutions. The informant explained: "Now, Islamic boarding schools are not only known as places to study religion, but also as places to help solve social and educational problems in society." Meanwhile, PKBM (Community Learning Centers) have been strengthened in implementing equivalency education because they have a more conducive learning environment integrated with character development. This collaboration has made non-formal education services more acceptable to the community.

DISCUSSION

Handling Out-of-School Children in Magelang Regency Before the Gumregah Bungah Program

This research finding aligns with Waldfogel, (2012), who stated that the problem of out-of-school children is not solely influenced by economic factors, but also by low educational awareness, family conditions, social environments, and weak support for alternative education tailored to the children's needs. This study found that most out-of-school children experienced feelings of inferiority, shame, and trauma regarding the formal school environment due to previous experiences of learning failure (Hargreaves et al., 2026). These conditions make the approach of returning children to formal school less effective if not accompanied by social and psychological support. From the perspective of Abraham Maslow's theory of needs, the condition of out-of-school children before the Gumregah Bungah Program demonstrated that students' basic needs were not being optimally met, particularly the needs for safety, esteem, and self-actualization (Hlojeng & Makura, 2020). Maslow explained that individuals will struggle to develop if their basic needs remain unmet. Many out-of-school children in Magelang Regency come from families with low economic status, lack parental attention, and even experience social pressure within their communities (Aria

& Khozin, 2025). As a result, they lose their sense of security and the confidence to continue their education. This finding is evident from interviews, which indicate that some out-of-school children fear being looked down upon when returning to formal school (Baker & Bishop, 2015).

Furthermore, based on humanistic learning theory, the educational process should not only emphasize academic aspects but also address the emotional development and full potential of individuals (Khatib et al., 2013). However, before the Gumregah Bungah Program, the management of out-of-school children focused primarily on restoring access to education without providing adequate support for students' mental and social well-being. This led many out-of-school children to remain outside the education system.

The Gumregah Bungah Program's Innovation in Magelang Regency

Research results indicate that the Gumregah Bungah Program is a form of community-based educational innovation developed by the Magelang Regency Government to address out-of-school children through a more flexible, humane, and collaborative approach. This program's innovation is evident in the utilization of Islamic boarding schools as alternative educational spaces, combined with equivalency education services from Community Learning Centers. This approach represents a renewal in the out-of-school child management system, emphasizing not only academic aspects but also the moral, spiritual, and social development of students (Fursykova et al., 2022). The findings of this study align with innovation theory, which explains that innovation is a new idea or practice that provides benefits in solving a problem. The Gumregah Bungah Program can be categorized as a social educational innovation because it presents a model for addressing out-of-school children that differs from previous approaches. While previously out-of-school children were redirected back to formal schools, this program instead presents an education system that is more adaptive to the students' circumstances through the Islamic boarding school environment and non-formal education.

In the context of innovation theory, the Gumregah Bungah Program possesses an element of novelty because it integrates traditional Islamic boarding schools with community-based learning centers within a single educational service system. This collaboration is unique because the pesantren, which previously focused on religious education, now also plays a role in addressing social and educational issues in the community, particularly those of out-of-school children. Furthermore, the program also possesses an element of expediency, or usefulness, as it provides a more comfortable educational environment for students who have previously experienced educational failure (Abdigapbarova et al., 2025). Research also shows that the program's innovation lies not only in the learning system but also in the humanistic approach used. The familial environment of the pesantren helps students feel accepted without the negative stigma of being a school dropout. This condition aligns with Abraham Maslow's humanistic theory, which emphasizes the importance of fulfilling the needs for safety, esteem, and self-actualization in the learning process. Through the pesantren approach, students receive not only academic education but also emotional and social support that helps rebuild their self-confidence.

Collaboration in the Gumregah Bungah Program between the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School and the Taman Dewanta Community Learning Center

The collaboration between the Islamic boarding school and the CLC demonstrates a mutually supportive integration of educational resources. The Islamic boarding school has strengths in character development and a religious social environment, while the CLC has the legal status of equivalency education and a formal learning system recognized by the state. This synergy creates a more comprehensive alternative education system for out-of-school children. Research also shows that collaboration extends beyond administrative aspects to student mentoring (Maxwell et al., 2025). PKBM tutors and Islamic boarding school administrators regularly communicate regarding students' learning progress, behavior, and psychological well-being (Najib, 2025). This demonstrates that collaboration is participatory and focused on student needs.

From the perspective of Albert Bandura's social learning theory, the social environment has a significant influence on the formation of individual behavior (Rumjaun & Narod, 2025). The religious and supportive Islamic boarding school environment provides a social learning platform for out-of-school students, helping them rebuild positive behavior, discipline, and motivation to learn (Rumjaun & Narod, 2025). Students learn through observing

caregivers, tutors, and peers within the Islamic boarding school environment. Furthermore, this collaboration demonstrates the importance of community-based education in addressing social issues. Addressing out-of-school children cannot be addressed solely by the government but requires the collective involvement of educational institutions, community leaders, and the social environment. The Gumregah Bungah program exemplifies how cross-institutional collaboration can create a more inclusive and responsive education system to community needs.

The Impact of the Gumregah Bungah Program on the Management of Out-of-School Children

Research results indicate that the Gumregah Bungah Program has had a positive impact on the management of out-of-school children in Magelang Regency. This impact is evident in increased access to education, increased student motivation to learn, changes in social behavior, and increased self-confidence after participating in the program. Research findings indicate that students who previously refused to return to school began to feel enthusiastic about continuing their education because they felt more comfortable in the Islamic boarding school environment and in the equivalent education. This situation demonstrates that the program's humanistic and flexible approach can help restore the psychological well-being of out-of-school students (Muzingili, 2025).

From the perspective of Maslow's theory of needs, the Gumregah Bungah Program successfully helps meet the needs for safety, esteem, and self-actualization of students. The Islamic boarding school environment provides a sense of acceptance and appreciation, so students no longer feel inferior as dropouts (Nasruddin, 2026). Once these needs are met, students begin to develop their potential and develop a clearer sense of purpose in life. Furthermore, based on humanistic theory, good education must foster holistic human development, both intellectually and emotionally. The Gumregah Bungah Program not only provides academic education but also fosters character and social development in students. This is evident in the behavioral changes in students, who become more disciplined, independent, and active in social and religious activities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion regarding the innovation of the Gumregah Bungah Program in handling out-of-school children in Magelang Regency, it can be concluded that before the Gumregah Bungah Program, the handling of out-of-school children in Magelang Regency still faced various limitations. The handling carried out tended to be administrative in nature through data collection and educational socialization, but was not able to reach the social, psychological, and character needs of students comprehensively. Low learning motivation, family economic factors, social environmental conditions, and the lack of a humanistic approach made it difficult for many out-of-school children to return to formal education. The Gumregah Bungah Program is present as a form of community-based educational innovation in handling out-of-school children in Magelang Regency. The program innovation is seen in the integration of equivalency education services through PKBM with moral, spiritual, and social development based on Islamic boarding schools. This program presents an educational approach that is more flexible, humanistic, and adaptive to the conditions of out-of-school students so as to create a more comfortable and inclusive learning environment. The form of collaboration between the Awwaliyah Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School and PKBM Taman Dewanta is carried out through a division of complementary roles. Islamic boarding schools play a role in fostering character, discipline, and social life of students, while PKBM is responsible for organizing equivalency education Packages A, B, and C. This collaboration runs in a participatory manner through communication and joint mentoring for the development of out-of-school students. The Gumregah Bungah Program has a positive impact on the management of out-of-school children in Magelang Regency. This impact is seen in increased access to education for out-of-school children, the revitalization of student learning motivation, increased self-confidence, and changes in social behavior and character of students to be more positive. In addition, this program also strengthens the role of Islamic boarding schools and PKBM as community-based educational institutions that are able to collaborate in solving social educational problems. Thus, the Gumregah Bungah Program can be a model for the management of out-of-school children that is humanistic, inclusive, and based on community collaboration in supporting the expansion of access to education in rural areas.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that local governments, non-formal education institutions, and community-based organizations strengthen collaborative approaches in addressing out-of-school children through integrated and humanistic educational models. The Gumregah Bungah Program demonstrates that collaboration between Islamic boarding schools and Community Learning Centers (PKBM) can effectively expand educational access while simultaneously addressing students' academic, social, and character development needs. Therefore, similar programs should be supported through policy reinforcement, sustainable funding, institutional capacity building, and cross-sector partnerships involving families, communities, and educational stakeholders. Furthermore, future program development is recommended to include broader outreach strategies and continuous mentoring mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of educational reintegration and to strengthen community-based solutions for handling out-of-school children, particularly in rural and socially vulnerable areas.

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