

EDUGRAM: An Educational Assessment Model to Prevent Early School Dropout in Program Keluarga Harapan Beneficiary Students in Indonesia

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Abstract:

Introduction: School dropout among children in Indonesia's Family Hope Program (Program Keluarga Harapan) remains a critical issue. No assessment instrument currently exists to help facilitators detect dropout risks early.

Methods: This research and development study designed and tested Edugram, an assessment model inspired by genogram, ecomap, and culturagram. Data were collected from interviews, focus group discussions, and questionnaires involving 79 dropout cases from western, central, and eastern Indonesia.

Results: Three key social environments family, school, and peer groups contribute to dropout risks, along with personal issues such as low motivation, pregnancy, and trauma.

Discussion: Edugram effectively maps risk factors and is validated for use by family hope program facilitators to conduct early dropout assessments.

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Limitations: The model was tested in selected regions and may require further adaptation to diverse geographic and cultural settings.

Conclusions: Edugram is a viable tool for early intervention and supports future research in broader cultural and regional contexts.

Key words: educational assessment, school dropout, Family Hope Program, edugram, early detection.

Introduction

The Family Hope Program (Program Keluarga Harapan) is a conditional cash transfer initiative for poor families designated as beneficiary families of Family Hope Program. Family Hope Program has been implemented by the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia since 2007 as part of a poverty alleviation acceleration program. As a conditional assistance program, Family Hope Program facilitates access for low-income families especially children to utilize available educational services in their vicinity. The program aims to ensure that children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families can complete at least senior secondary education, whether through Senior High School (Sekolah Menengah Atas), Vocational High School (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan), or Islamic Senior Secondary School (Madrasah Aliya).

However, in practice, some children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families still drop out of school. Dropout cases involve children either not completing a certain level of schooling or not progressing to the next level. School dropout among Family Hope Program beneficiaries has implications, such as termination of educational assistance components for the family and hindering the government's effort to improve educational attainment among the poor.

Through Family Hope Program, low-income families are encouraged to access and utilize basic social services, including education, mentoring, and various complementary protection programs in a sustainable manner. The education component of Family Hope Program covers families with children in elementary school, junior high school, senior high school (SMA/MA/SMK), and children aged 6 to 21 who have not completed the 12-year compulsory education. Studies have shown that Family Hope Program helps families reduce education costs (Putri, 2020), supports low-income households in their children's education and daily needs (Kusumawardani, 2021), and increases school participation rates (Ningsih, 2022; Susanto, 2018). Another study explores educational construction among Family Hope Program families across four dimensions: education as social existence, economic access, vertical mobility, and legacy (Kustanto, 2019).

One pressing issue for the children of Family Hope Program beneficiary families is school dropout. According to the 2024 Welfare Statistics Indicators Report from Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik), dropout rates increased at all levels of education in the 2023/2024 academic year, except at the senior high school level. The dropout rate for elementary school rose from 0.17% to 0.19%, while the junior high school rate increased from 0.14% to 0.18%. At the senior high school level, there was a slight decrease from 0.20% to 0.19%, whereas vocational high school dropout rose from 0.23% to 0.28%. Although specific data on Family Hope Program children are unavailable, it is evident that a portion of these dropouts comes from Family Hope Program beneficiaries. Ideally, with educational support through Family Hope Program, no beneficiary children should drop out. In reality, however, almost every village and sub-district supervised by Family Hope Program Facilitators reports dropout cases.

School dropout is defined as the absence from formal schooling, even though a student may still attend other forms of educational institutions (Li et al., 2017). It is a critical issue in many countries with complex causes. Intelligence level and academic performance are significant predictors of dropout (Fried et al., 2012; Mahoney, 2018; Parr & Bonitz, 2015). Poor academic achievement can lead to frustration, while low academic self-efficacy results in school disengagement (Fan & Wolters, 2014; Jun et al., 2017). In addition to student-related factors, parental perceptions also influence school discontinuation (Krismiati et al., 2017; Ni & Nu Nu Aung, 2019).

Some children drop out or are deprived of school opportunities because they are required to care for younger siblings or contribute to family income due to poverty. Poverty encompasses both financial hardship and mindset, often leading to the neglect of children's rights. Parents with low educational backgrounds may fail to understand their children's rights and obligations. Family factors significantly contribute to dropout rates at the junior and senior high school levels. A study by Tsolou and Babalis (2020) found that children's engagement in parental work, lack of parental support for education, limited encouragement for academic success, inadequate parental understanding of children's social lives and poor communication between parents and schools all increase the risk of dropout.

The teacher-student relationship can also contribute to students dropping out of school. The impact of this relationship on students' decisions to leave school is reflected in their academic performance. When a student decides to drop out, it may indicate that the teacher-student relationship at school is not functioning well. Such social and personal relationships can lead to poor academic achievement. On the other hand, low academic performance can result in declining mental health, which, if not addressed promptly, may cause students to drop out (Krane et al., 2016). Peer relationships also play a critical role in

predicting students' retention in school. Students who drop out often exhibit bad and aggressive behavior and receive frequent suspensions. Deviant peer relationships are significant contributors to the development of antisocial behavior (Mahoney, 2018; McCaffrey et al., 2010). Moreover, peer bullying is a key factor influencing a child's desire to leave school (Cornell et al., 2013). The consequences of dropping out for elementary and secondary school-aged children include increased unemployment, a rise in uneducated labor, vulnerability to criminal groups, and threats to public safety (Masing & Astuti, 2022). Such dropout effects run contrary to the goals of social assistance, which aims to provide access to quality education. According to Rumberger (2004), there are potential predictors for dropping out of school, including problems faced by the student and their family, issues with teachers, and peer problems at school. These are then followed by broader contextual factors such as community environment, peer networks, and the labor market. There are also dropout-related variables that are unchangeable, such as demographic factors and other difficult-to-overcome risk factors like gender, race and ethnicity, parental education, income, property ownership and housing, and mother tongue. These factors create the impression that dropping out is, in part, a natural process literally a "loss" that is largely unaffected by intervention efforts (Finn, 1989; Appleton et al., 2008; Christenson et al., 2008). Dropping out of school is often seen as a failure either perceived or actual on the part of the student, the school, and the system. However, it should also be understood as an indication and root cause of deeper social injustice (Smeyers & Depaepe, 2006). The tendency to become involved in juvenile delinquency after dropping out of school early depends on the reasons for dropping out and the poverty status of the affected youth (Jarjoura, 1996).

Previous research has mostly focused on students in general, whereas this study specifically targets students from families receiving benefits from the Family Hope Program. Earlier studies also did not offer an instrument that could be used to assess dropout risks early. Research on assessment has touched on models such as the Additive Ratio Assessment (ARAS), which helps in selecting and identifying the best alternatives for Family Hope Program beneficiaries using specific criteria (Muttakin, 2021).

One of the responsibilities of Family Hope Program facilitators is to guide beneficiary families with school-aged children to comply with program requirements, such as ensuring that their children attend school and assisting them in obtaining support from other programs, like the Indonesia Smart Card (KIP). To ensure that children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families remain in school, Family Hope Program facilitators usually engage in communication and coordination with school officials. This communication is focused on Family Hope Program beneficiary students who have been absent for

several days, weeks, or even months. This is part of the verification activities carried out by Family Hope Program facilitators. Information obtained from schools is followed up with home visits to the beneficiary families. Subsequently, Family Hope Program facilitators coordinate with schools through visits to gather information on the causes of student absenteeism or dropout. If a child is unwilling to continue their education, social assistance will be terminated. To prevent children from Family Hope Program families from dropping out of school, it is ideal for Family Hope Program facilitators to conduct assessments on aspects that potentially lead to school dropout.

Based on field research, Family Hope Program facilitators currently do not have a standardized instrument for conducting early interventions to prevent school dropout among children from beneficiary families. This study aims to develop an educational assessment model that serves to prevent early school dropout among children in the Family Hope Program program. It is expected that this assessment model can be used by Family Hope Program facilitators across Indonesia. As a result, the Edugram model can serve as an instrument for early detection and prevention of school dropout among Family Hope Program beneficiary students. This study aligns closely with UNICEF's (2017) initiative to implement early warning systems for school dropout prevention. The Early Warning System is a tool designed to identify students at risk of dropping out, based on the presence of "red flags" specific factors that contribute to dropout.

1 Method

This study employs a research and development (R&D) approach, which aims to conduct research to obtain information that is subsequently developed based on the researcher's needs (Borg & Gall, 2007). The researcher's specific need in this context is to develop an assessment model for children from families receiving benefits from the Family Hope Program through an instrument called Edugram. This research method is used to design the assessment model and test its feasibility. The model in question is an educational assessment tool referred to as Edugram. The final outcome of this study is an Edugram assessment model for early detection of school dropout risks among children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families.

Primary data were obtained from interviews and focus group discussions with Family Hope Program facilitators, as well as trial questionnaires completed by these facilitators. Secondary data consisted of portfolios from Family Hope Program facilitators across three regions of Indonesia Western, Central, and Eastern comprising a total of 79 cases of school dropouts. These portfolios, used as analysis material, included case notes from Family Hope Program facilitators documenting dropout incidents involving children from beneficiary families.

The model was tested in three stages involving Family Hope Program facilitators, with two rounds of expert validation. The initial trial involved 9 Family Hope Program facilitators. A limited trial was then conducted with 29 respondents, followed by an extended trial with 59 respondents. The research steps included model design, prototype development, testing, and model refinement. Before being tested, the Edugram assessment instrument underwent expert validation to ensure its accuracy and relevance.

2 Results and discussion

2.1 Formulation and trial of the edugram model

Data collection was conducted through literature reviews and interviews related to educational issues faced by children from families receiving benefits under the Family Hope Program particularly those who had been absent from school for several weeks and were at risk of dropping out. Interviews with Family Hope Program facilitators focused on identifying the reasons behind school dropouts among beneficiary children. The purpose was to understand the dropout problems faced by children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families. Based on the literature review and interview findings, the research planning stage followed, including the design of an initial Edugram assessment model aimed at preventing school dropout.

At this stage, interviews were conducted with Family Hope Program supervisor facilitators and focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with Family Hope Program facilitators. The next step involved expert validation of the initial model draft. The validation score from the expert for the initial model draft was 88 (Feasible for Trial).

The first trial was then carried out, serving as the basis for revising the initial model draft. This limited trial involved a small group of Family Hope Program facilitators, and the result yielded a score of 82 (Good). Based on the results of the first trial, revisions were made to the Edugram assessment model, followed by a second round of expert validation. The second expert validation score was 90 (Feasible for Trial).

A second trial was then conducted with Family Hope Program facilitators, yielding a score of 84 (Good). Following the results of this second trial, further revisions were made to the Edugram assessment model in preparation for a third trial. Before this third trial, the revised model was validated by practitioners, producing a validation score of 85, indicating it was feasible for trial.

The third trial, or extended trial, was conducted with a broader group of Family Hope Program facilitators, resulting in a score of 86 (Good). Based on this third trial, final refinements were made to the model by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Edugram assessment model.

2.2 Edugram assessment for school dropout children

The Edugram assessment was inspired by several existing assessment instruments, namely the genogram, ecomap, and culturagram. A genogram is used to assess relational problems within a family across three generations. An ecomap is utilized to map out an individual's interactions with both family members and others outside the family. While both the ecomap (Hartman & Laird, 1983) and the genogram (McGoldrick, Gerson, & Schallenberg, 2007) are valuable tools for family assessment, they do not address the critical role of culture in understanding family dynamics. This limitation is addressed by the culturagram assessment model.

The culturagram was first developed (Congres, 1994, 1997) and later revised (Congres, 2002, 2008b) to help understand the influence of culture on families. It has been used to promote culturally competent practices (Lum, 2010) and to work with women who have experienced violence (Brownell & Congres, 1998), children (Webb, 1996), the elderly (Brownell, 1997; Brownell & Fenly, 2008), immigrant families, and families facing health challenges (Congres, 2004a,b). The culturagram, as a family assessment tool, serves to individualize culturally diverse families (Congres, 1994, 2002, 2008b).

Drawing on these existing assessment models, this study sought to develop the Edugram as a tool for the early prevention of school dropout among children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families. Based on data gathered through interviews, focus group discussions, and portfolios of Family Hope Program facilitators, it was found that the causes of school dropout stem from personal student issues, family environment, school environment, and community environment.

The study identified nine (9) contributing aspects to school dropout among children from Family Hope Program recipient families: (a) family-related issues impacting education, (b) low parental support, (c) working to help parents, (d) traumatic events involving peers at school, (e) learning difficulties at school, (f) conflicts with teachers, (g) peer influence, (h) societal perceptions of education, and (i) unequal access to educational facilities. These findings are in line with the study by Ula and Kurniawan (2023), which emphasized that the family, school, and community environments are determining forces for shaping civilization, knowledge, identity, and direction of progress.

2.3 Personal problems faced by students

Personal issues among students who dropped out of school include low motivation, pregnancy, and traumatic experiences.

2.4 Low motivation

Low school motivation can lead to school dropout. This was the case with FS (a 4th-grade student at a public elementary school in Kwala Village, Biru-biru Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency), who refused to attend school due to a lack of motivation. Claiming an inability to follow lessons, FS ultimately discontinued their education.

2.5 Student pregnancy

Pregnant students are often not accepted socially within their educational institutions and are thus expelled from school. Likewise, male students responsible for the pregnancy often face the same fate—school dropout. Expulsion due to pregnancy is a consequence that students must bear. Schools prefer to avoid reputational damage associated with student pregnancies (Anastasia, 2001; Dariyo, 2004; Stoner, 2019). This occurred in the case of DR (a high school student in Cibinong) who experienced an unwanted pregnancy and was expelled from school. Similarly, JC (a vocational high school student in Jombang) became pregnant as a result of casual sexual encounters with a schoolmate.

2.6 Traumatic experiences

Some students dropped out due to traumatic experiences related to the educational process. DK (a 5th-grade student at a public elementary school in Kwala Village, Biru-biru Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency) was frequently bullied by classmates, being called stupid because he couldn't read or do basic math. This trauma led DK to stop attending school. Another case was MW (a 7th-grade student at a public junior high school in Bojonegoro) who was often mocked by peers for wearing old or unattractive school uniforms, bags, and shoes.

2.7 Family environment

Students from families receiving benefits under the PKH (Program Keluarga Harapan) scheme generally come from low-income households, with parents working in the informal sector and some living in inadequate housing conditions. The issue of school dropout among children from these beneficiary families often stems from their family environment, which includes family problems affecting education, lack of parental/family support for education, and children having to work to help their parents.

2.8 Family problems affecting education

Children receiving Family Hope Program benefits, who come from socioeconomically disadvantaged households, are more likely to drop out of

school. This situation is often worsened by parental divorce, family conflicts, parents being separated due to work in other cities or countries, and household financial difficulties. For example, the mother of FW, a Family Hope Program beneficiary from Dolok Manampang Village, divorced her husband, which ultimately affected her child's continuation in elementary school. Similarly, YU (16 years old), a Family Hope Program beneficiary from Teluk Kailiy Subdistrict, Buru District, Maluku, chose not to continue school after her parents divorced and she decided to follow her father. DM (48), a Family Hope Program beneficiary from Lendong Village, Lembor Selatan Subdistrict, told her children AH (dropped out in 11th grade) and TN (dropped out in 10th grade) to stop going to school due to lack of funds. These children dropped out because their families could not afford to finance their education, even though they had received educational aid through the Family Hope Program program. In reality, this aid is often considered insufficient to cover the full educational needs of the children, such as school uniforms, bags, shoes, pocket money, school supplies, and more.

2.9 Parental/family support for children's education

A supportive family environment positively contributes to a student's academic achievement and educational aspirations. Conversely, lack of parental or family support for a child's education contributes to school dropout. This is especially true when children lack access to sufficient emotional support from their parents. Parents have varying levels of knowledge and experience regarding educational support. Although they face similar challenges in supporting their children's learning, they develop different strategies to cope, influenced by their social background, gender, and type of work. Informal education in the family plays a crucial role in a child's social and emotional development, better preparing them to face life's challenges. Family Hope Program beneficiary children often lack adequate parental support for their education. This situation was experienced by MY (a 7th-grade student at SMP Negeri 5 Tambang, Kampar District), who dropped out of school due to lack of support from her mother (N, a Family Hope Program beneficiary). N, who only completed elementary school, had little knowledge or understanding of the importance of education for her child. A similar situation occurred with UAP (a student at MTs BU in Lampung District), who dropped out due to lack of support and attention from his mother (SM, 40 years old and a Family Hope Program beneficiary). Another case involved P (a student at SMK Negeri 3 Bandar Lampung), who dropped out due to insufficient support from both parents. P's parents, both Family Hope Program beneficiaries, often subjected him to verbal and physical abuse. As a result, P felt uncomfortable living at home, and this directly affected his educational continuity.

2.10 Working to help parents

Some Family Hope Program beneficiary children drop out of school to help support their families financially. In urban areas, these children tend to work as street vendors, selling newspapers, food, or drinks, and even collecting recyclables. In rural areas, they often become farm laborers, herd livestock, or migrate to cities in search of work. This situation was observed with AR (14 years old, 8th-grade student at SMP Negeri 3 Tojo), who dropped out of school to work as a farm laborer alongside his parents. A similar case was found with R (a student at a Madrasah Aliyah in Probolinggo), who was forced to drop out of school to help his mother gather fodder for their livestock. R's mother (NH), a single parent and Family Hope Program beneficiary, was extremely poor and took on any available work, especially gathering animal feed, to support the family.

2.11 School environment

There are three aspects within the school environment that contribute to school dropout among students from families receiving the Family Hope Program benefits: traumatic experiences with peers, learning difficulties at school, and issues with teachers.

2.12 Traumatic experiences with peers at school

Some Family Hope Program beneficiary students who drop out of school have experienced traumatic events at school. These include being victims of bullying, getting into fights with classmates, and being ostracized by peers. Several bullying cases among Family Hope Program beneficiary students include: YS (a 6th-grade student at a public elementary school in Bojonegoro) who was frequently mocked by classmates for having worn-out shoes; RM (an 8th-grade student in Kupang) who stopped attending school because his white uniform had turned yellowish and his parents couldn't afford a new one; LM (a 7th-grade student in Pamekasan) who was involved in a fight and was beaten by classmates, which led to his fear of returning to school. Another case involved a vocational high school student in Soreang who dropped out after feeling socially excluded by their peers.

2.13 Learning difficulties at school

Learning difficulties, if not properly addressed, can develop into learning disorders. The minimum passing grade criteria in the education system worsen this issue. SP (a 6th-grade student at Public Elementary School 1 Pahoman, Bandar Lampung) experienced learning difficulties due to excessive gadget use, spending nearly all day on it. This habit affected SP's concentration, led to frequent absences, and was especially concerning as it occurred close to the final

exams. Another case involved CK (a 3rd-grade student at a public elementary school in Gelumbang, Muara Enim), who dropped out and did not continue to 4th grade due to an inability to follow lessons, difficulty concentrating, and a belief that they could no longer continue schooling. Accumulated learning difficulties over time can lead to a growing disconnection between students and the learning process. Low academic performance is identified as one of the most significant predictors of school dropout (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000). Numerous studies have also confirmed that students with low academic performance face a higher risk of dropping out (Archambault et al., 2009; Fall & Roberts, 2012; Fortin et al., 2006; Janosz et al., 1997; Janosz et al., 2000).

2.14 Issues with teachers

Some Family Hope Program beneficiary students drop out due to conflicts with their teachers. These issues stem from various factors, such as students' lack of discipline, unfriendly teachers, and poor communication between students and teachers. For example, MS (a vocational school student in Labuapi) dropped out after feeling humiliated by a teacher who repeatedly read aloud the names of students who had not paid school fees. This public embarrassment, combined with classmates mocking him, caused MS to feel ashamed and eventually stop attending school.

2.15 Community environment

The third social environment that contributes to school dropout among PKH beneficiary students is the community, which includes peer influence, societal perceptions of education, and unequal access to educational facilities. Peer influence plays a significant role in shaping students' attitudes toward schooling and can either discourage or encourage school attendance. The present work also confirms the role and importance of the family and socialisation environments, which can act as both deterrent and pull factors in students' educational continuity (Simándi, 2024).

Some students drop out of school due to negative peer influence. For example, PW (9 years old), a student at Dolok Manapang Public Elementary School, dropped out after spending more time playing in the rubber plantation with peers around the neighborhood than attending school. PW had low motivation to study, was introverted, struggled with self-control, experienced anxiety, tended to be resigned to circumstances, and was forced to become economically independent. Similarly, R (a 7th-grade student at a public junior high school in East Bekasi) frequently skipped school and was at risk of dropping out due to being influenced by peers who enjoyed riding empty cargo trucks. R's mother, a Family Hope Program beneficiary, felt powerless to stop her child from associating with these school dropouts. RI (a high school student in Sukolilo

Village) had not attended school for three months due to staying out late with peers. This caused RI to sleep in and skip school. His parents felt helpless in guiding him and worried that their Family Hope Program benefits would be cut off due to his prolonged absence from school.

2.16 Societal perceptions of education

Different communities have varying perceptions about the importance of education for their children. These perceptions are often influenced by cultural beliefs. For instance, some believe that girls do not need a high level of education since they will eventually become housewives and raise children. For them, it is enough if a girl can read and recite the Quran. In addition, certain cultural practices may also cause students to miss school. MN, a student at a public elementary school in Leuken, Samatiga Subdistrict, West Aceh, was taken by her mother (a Family Hope Program beneficiary) to attend a neighbor's traditional celebration that lasted up to a week, causing MN to miss school.

2.17 Unequal access to educational facilities

Some students drop out of school because they lack access to quality education facilities. In several regions of Indonesia, quality education and access to senior high schools or vocational schools are not evenly distributed. Not all districts have quality upper secondary schools. Long distances between students' homes and schools, along with the lack of adequate transportation, discourage Family Hope Program beneficiary children from continuing their education. For example, WW (an 8th-grade student in Lolomatua Subdistrict) had an attendance rate of over 80% but was at risk of dropping out. Coming from a poor family and being a PKH beneficiary, WW faced difficulty getting to school because the 4-kilometer journey could not be accessed by any vehicles, not even a bicycle. WW had to walk to school daily.

2.18 Edugram display

Based on the explanation above, the Edugram can be displayed in the form of Image 1 below. The Edugram consists of 12 (twelve) areas that can be used as instruments for early detection of school dropout, as shown in Figure 1 below.

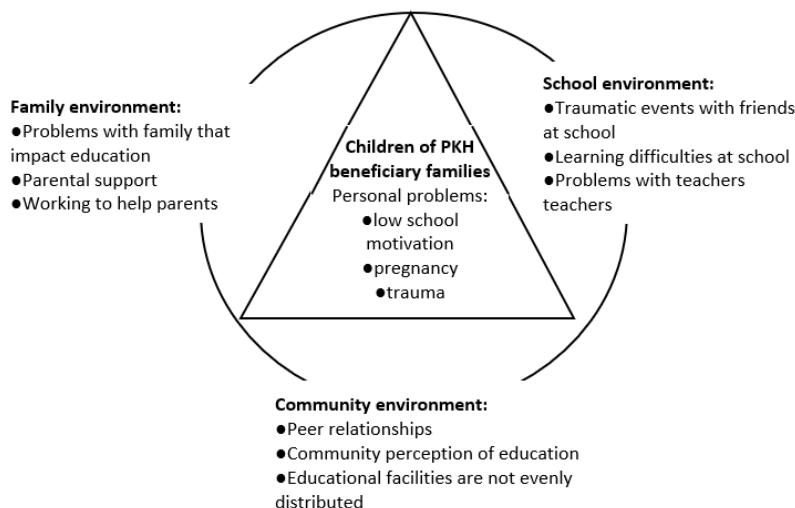


Figure 1. Edugram model.

Figure 1 above can be explained as follows. Children or students from families receiving Family Hope Program benefits face three personal issues that contribute to school dropout, namely low school motivation, unintended pregnancy, and traumatic experiences. There are three social environments that can influence school dropout, namely the family environment, the school environment, and the community environment. In the family environment, there are three issues that trigger school dropout, namely problems within the family that impact education, low family or parental support, and working to help the parents. The second social environment is the school, with three issues that can cause students from Family Hope Program beneficiary families to drop out, namely traumatic events with peers, difficulties in following lessons, and problems with teachers at school.

To apply this Edugram model for the early prevention of school dropout by Family Hope Program Facilitators, an Edugram assessment form is then created. The Edugram assessment format includes: the identity of the Family Hope Program beneficiary family; the student's identity; a description of the family, school, and community environments; analysis of vulnerability/potential for school dropout; recommendations; and follow-up actions.

Conclusions

The issue of potential school dropout among children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families originates from personal problems and three social environments: family, school, and community. From these four sources, 12 aspects were identified that contribute to the potential for school dropout. This Edugram assessment can be used by Family Hope Program Facilitators to detect potential school dropout early in children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families. The contribution provided by utilizing this Edugram is that Family Hope Program Facilitators can collaborate with family members and schools to give extra attention to students or children at risk of dropping out. The widespread use of the Edugram assessment can help the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to create a standardized format for recording and reporting when handling children at risk of school dropout. The implementation of the Edugram assessment among children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families is in line with UNICEF's (2017) goal to conduct early detection of school dropout for children in primary and secondary education. A recommendation for further research is to test the effectiveness of Edugram in the early prevention of school dropout among children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families. Qualitatively, the cultural aspects that contribute to school dropout among children from Family Hope Program beneficiary families could also be developed.

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