



RETHINKING HIGHER EDUCATION AMONG RURAL YOUTH: BRIDGING AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOODS AND EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS THROUGH A FIELD STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Education is an important part of improving the quality of human resources, including for rural communities. This study aims to find out the reason for the low interest of the young generation in Batuampa Village to continue their education to higher education and prefer to work in the plantation sector. Using a qualitative descriptive method, research data was obtained through interviews and direct observation. The results of the study showed that low interest in studying was influenced by the comfort of working in the garden, own land ownership, low academic confidence, flexibility of working hours, and lack of university socialization and scholarship information. In addition, higher education is still considered less relevant to the practical needs of society. This study confirms that the integration of higher education with the plantation sector has the potential to increase the interest of the younger generation if education is understood as a means to improve knowledge, skills, and sustainability of plantation businesses.

Kata kunci :

Pendidikan Tinggi, Minat Kuliah, Generasi Muda, Preferensi Berkebun,

ABSTRAK

Pendidikan merupakan bagian penting dalam meningkatkan kualitas sumber daya manusia, termasuk bagi masyarakat pedesaan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui alasan rendahnya minat generasi muda di Desa Batuampa untuk melanjutkan pendidikan ke perguruan tinggi dan lebih memilih bekerja di bidang perkebunan. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, data penelitian



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diperoleh melalui wawancara dan observasi langsung. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa rendahnya minat kuliah dipengaruhi oleh kenyamanan bekerja di kebun, kepemilikan lahan sendiri, rendahnya kepercayaan diri akademik, fleksibilitas waktu kerja, serta minimnya sosialisasi perguruan tinggi dan informasi beasiswa. Selain itu, pendidikan tinggi masih dianggap kurang relevan dengan kebutuhan praktis masyarakat. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa integrasi pendidikan tinggi dengan sektor perkebunan berpotensi meningkatkan minat kuliah generasi muda apabila pendidikan dipahami sebagai sarana untuk meningkatkan pengetahuan, keterampilan, dan keberlanjutan usaha perkebunan.

A. INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in establishing a strong foundation for individuals while providing tangible benefits in everyday life (Solikah, 2023). The younger generation plays a significant role in social and economic development, as they constitute a productive group with substantial potential to promote innovation, develop skills, and advance education. Higher education not only provides academic knowledge but also develops critical thinking abilities, problem-solving skills, and the readiness of young people to face challenges in the workforce. In addition, higher education provides opportunities to build extensive social networks, understand the complexities of society, and improve quality of life in a sustainable manner (Kamakaula, 2023). Therefore, higher education plays a crucial role in producing competent, innovative, and adaptable human resources capable of responding to the changing demands of the times.

However, in Batuampa Village, young people's interest in pursuing higher education remains relatively low. Most of them prefer to work in the plantation sector, which is perceived not only as a source of immediate income but also as part of their social identity and family heritage that should be preserved. This situation gives rise to several important issues. First, the low motivation among young people to pursue higher education stems from their perception that academic pathways do not provide economic benefits as quickly as working on plantations. Consequently, education is often considered less relevant to their practical and everyday needs. Second, limited access to information, guidance, and financial support concerning higher education opportunities discourages young people from leaving their familiar and comfortable environment.

The research site reflects this issue through the large number of young people in Batuampa Village who prefer working in plantations rather than pursuing higher education. This situation occurs because plantation work has become the primary source of livelihood as well as an established practice passed down through generations in the community. As a result, higher education has not yet been perceived as an important or urgent investment for the future. This condition contributes to the low aspirations of young people to continue their studies at the higher education level, despite the significant role of education in improving the quality of human resources. This situation indicates the strong influence of social and cultural factors on young people's educational choices. Therefore, further research is needed to understand the

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relationship between the tendency to work in the plantation sector and the low interest in pursuing higher education in Batuampa Village.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to examine in depth the various factors contributing to the low interest of young people in Batuampa Village in pursuing higher education, particularly those related to their preference for working in the plantation sector. The study focuses on understanding the influence of social and cultural factors in shaping young people's perceptions of higher education and their educational decision-making. Through this research, it is expected that a clear and comprehensive understanding can be obtained, which may serve as a basis for the government, educational institutions, and local communities in developing appropriate strategies to increase young people's motivation and participation in higher education while continuing to respect local values and the living conditions of rural communities.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a descriptive method. Descriptive qualitative research is conducted to describe the research object as it naturally occurs, without manipulating the variables under investigation. Data were collected through interviews, direct observation, and documentation (Yuliani & Siliwangi, 2018). In this study, the researcher directly visited Batuampa Village to observe actual conditions in the field and interact with the research participants.

The research subjects consisted of young people in Batuampa Village who did not continue their education to higher education, while additional informants included parents and community leaders who played a role in educational decision-making concerning young people. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and documentation.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted using a previously prepared interview guide containing key questions concerning young people's interest in higher education, their perceptions of plantation work, economic conditions, family and social environmental influences, and access to information about higher education institutions and scholarship opportunities. Although the main questions had been prepared in advance, the researcher allowed participants and informants to provide broader responses and elaborate on their experiences, perspectives, and reasons for choosing not to pursue higher education.

Observation was conducted to examine the activities of young people, particularly their involvement in plantation work, as well as their attitudes and behavior toward higher education. Documentation was used to complement and strengthen the research findings and included field notes, photographs, and relevant documents concerning educational activities and employment within the village community. Interview, observation, and documentation guidelines served as supporting instruments to maintain consistency and accuracy throughout the data collection process.

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C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Young People and Interest in Pursuing Higher Education

From an academic perspective, young people constitute an age group undergoing a transition from childhood to adulthood. During this developmental stage, individuals experience significant changes in terms of physical and emotional development, cognitive abilities, and social relationships. These processes contribute to the formation of their identity and social roles within the community.

Interest in pursuing higher education is shaped through the interaction of various factors, including learning experiences, family conditions, the social environment, and individuals' perceptions of the benefits of higher education for self-development and quality-of-life improvement (Matondang, 2018). Based on the observations conducted in this study, most young people in Batuampa Village choose to work in plantations because such work is perceived as providing income more quickly and does not require a lengthy process comparable to higher education. In addition, plantation work has become an intergenerational activity that is regarded as the primary occupation of the family and an identity that should be passed down to future generations. This finding is reinforced by an interview with Rahman, who stated:

“On average, boys who graduate from senior high school or vocational high school prefer to work in the plantations rather than attend college because it is easier and allows them to earn money more quickly. Therefore, it can be concluded that many young people in Batuampa Village prefer working to pursuing higher education.”¹

The phenomenon of low interest among young people in Batuampa Village in pursuing higher education can be understood from several theoretical perspectives. One relevant perspective is the *human capital theory* proposed by Becker (1994), which views education as an investment that requires the expenditure of time and financial resources in the present in order to obtain economic and non-economic benefits in the future. Within this framework, the decision of young people in Batuampa Village to work in plantations rather than pursue higher education can be understood as a rational calculation of *opportunity costs*. When income from plantation work can be obtained immediately and with relatively greater certainty, whereas the benefits of higher education are delayed and uncertain, choosing to remain employed may appear to be a more rational option in the short term.

Beyond the economic dimension, the concepts of *social capital* and *cultural capital* developed by Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988) are also relevant for explaining this pattern. The cultural capital of farming families, transmitted through everyday practices, values, and work orientations, tends to direct young people toward life trajectories similar to those of their parents. Meanwhile, limited social capital, particularly limited networks with individuals who have pursued higher education, may further reduce opportunities for the development of academic aspirations. Thus, low interest in pursuing higher education in Batuampa Village is not merely a matter of individual willingness; rather, it results from the interaction between

¹Rahman (55years old), Head of Batuampa Village, Batuampa, December 16, 2025

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family economic structures, inherited cultural capital, and the limited social capital available within the rural environment.

From the perspective of developmental psychology, these findings are also consistent with the characteristics of adolescence described (Izzani et al., 2024), who explain that individuals at this developmental stage are engaged in a process of identity formation while simultaneously adapting to the demands of their surrounding social environment. The process of identity formation is strongly influenced by the immediate environment, including parenting patterns and prevailing social norms. In the context of Batuampa Village, an environment that consistently portrays economic success through plantation activities contributes to shaping young people's identities toward agricultural occupations. Consequently, the decision to work in plantations is not merely a short-term economic choice but also forms part of the process through which young people construct their social identities as members of a farming community.

2. Factors Contributing to Low Interest in Pursuing Higher Education

a. Comfort in Working on Family-Owned Plantation Land

The work environment encompasses everything surrounding workers that may influence their performance in carrying out their duties (Hanafie et al., 2021). In the context of plantation work, the work environment includes the condition of the plantation land, the availability of work equipment, and the overall working atmosphere. A comfortable work environment can increase workers' enthusiasm and motivation, as individuals are more likely to remain in a workplace where they feel comfortable and supported. Conversely, even when a job offers a high income, an unfavorable work environment may encourage workers to leave rather than remain in the workplace (Septiani & Saputra, 2022). This condition helps explain why many young people in Batuampa Village choose plantation work, particularly because they already own or have access to their own plantation land, which provides them with greater autonomy in managing their work. Based on an interview with Fadli, a young farmer in Batuampa Village, the low interest in pursuing higher education can be clearly observed:

*"I choose to work on the plantation because I have been accustomed to it for a long time, and I feel that the income from plantation work is sufficient to meet my daily needs. Many young people here do not continue their education to higher education, not necessarily because of economic problems, but because they already have their own plantations and feel more comfortable working than returning to college."*²

In Fadli's case, ownership of his own plantation land provides him with a sense of economic security that makes him feel that he does not need to pursue further education to secure his livelihood. The land he owns and can manage directly is perceived as a productive asset capable of generating sufficient income to meet his daily needs. This condition indicates that, for Fadli, plantation work not only provides comfort in terms of working conditions but also serves as a source of livelihood that he considers sufficient to meet his economic needs. Therefore, this finding is more appropriately understood as a reflection of the individual

²Fadli (20 years old), petani, batuampaTahun), farmer, Batuampa Village, December 16, 2025.

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experience and considerations of the informant in choosing to work in the plantation sector rather than pursue higher education, rather than as a general pattern applicable to all young people in Batuampa Village.

Land that has been inherited across generations functions as a productive asset that can be directly cultivated without requiring formal educational qualifications. Consequently, higher education may be perceived as an investment whose benefits are less certain compared with the tangible returns generated by land that is already owned. Such a perspective may reinforce the tendency of some young people to maintain their family's traditional livelihood rather than take the risks associated with pursuing an educational pathway whose benefits may only be realized over a longer period.

b. Lack of Academic Self-Confidence

According to Lauster, self-confidence refers to an individual's belief in their own capacity or abilities, enabling them to act according to their own intentions, feel independent, remain optimistic, demonstrate self-respect, and take responsibility. Lauster further explains that self-confidence is associated with an individual's belief in their ability to perform a task successfully. A lack of self-confidence may cause individuals to doubt themselves, become less effective, and lose confidence in their own potential (Simar et al., 2025). This is reflected in the statement of Irham, a young person from Batuampa Village, who said : “I know that college is important, but I feel that my mind is no longer capable of it”³

This statement indicates that the informant recognizes the importance of higher education but lacks confidence in his academic abilities. Combined with his comfort in working on the plantation, higher education is therefore perceived as an unsuitable option for him. He also considers plantation work more advantageous because it provides income more quickly. This finding further indicates that low interest in pursuing higher education is influenced by work habits developed from an early age. Since junior high school, Irham has been involved in plantation activities, making this occupation an integral part of his life and shaping a mindset that prioritizes immediate income over long-term educational investment.

Irham's experience is consistent with the concept of self-efficacy developed by Bandura (1997), which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to successfully complete a task or achieve a particular goal. According to Bandura, self-efficacy is developed through four primary sources: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion from the surrounding environment, and individuals' psychological and emotional states. Young people in Batuampa Village who have limited experiences of academic success and receive insufficient encouraging verbal support from their surroundings tend to develop lower levels of academic self-efficacy. This may subsequently lead to doubts about their ability to pursue higher education.

³Irham (23 years old), farmer, Batuampa Village, December 16, 2025.

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This finding is consistent with Rokhimah (2015), who found a positive relationship between self-efficacy and students' interest in continuing their education to higher education. It is also in line with Sasmi et al. (2021), who demonstrated that self-efficacy contributes to mediating the influence of the school environment on students' interest in continuing their studies. Thus, low academic self-confidence is not merely an individual psychological issue but also reflects the limited reinforcement of self-efficacy that should ideally be developed from the school years onward through positive learning experiences and support from teachers and significant others.

Nevertheless, low academic self-confidence is not necessarily a permanent condition. Kusuma and Halimah (2022) found that students' learning interest can be strengthened through engaging learning strategies that are relevant to their needs and supported by positive teacher-student interactions. This finding has important implications for the young people of Batuampa Village, including Irham, as their low academic self-confidence may be improved if they are provided with meaningful and supportive learning experiences rather than being treated as individuals with unchangeable limitations.

c. Flexibility in Managing Working Time

In plantation work, farmers are generally not bound by fixed working hours in the same way as employees in formal occupations. Farmers can determine their own working hours, rest periods, and even whether they wish to work on a particular day. This flexibility can be particularly attractive to young people who value freedom in managing their daily activities (Rofiduddin & Kristina, 2022). This is consistent with the statement made by Haedir Fitra:

“Why do I choose plantation work rather than college? Because I want to be free to go wherever I want and take a day off whenever I want. I also prefer working independently without pressure from a supervisor. In addition, I do not choose college because the price of the cocoa I grow is more promising than going to college.”⁴

(Rofiduddin & Kristina, 2022). For young people who have grown up within an informal work culture such as plantation farming, the freedom to determine their own work rhythm may be perceived as more valuable than the relatively rigid schedules associated with higher education or formal employment. Therefore, remaining in plantation work can be understood as a rational choice when viewed from the perspective of the need for autonomy.

d. Limited Outreach on Higher Education and Scholarship Opportunities

Higher education plays an important role in improving the quality of human resources. Through higher education, individuals can develop their capabilities, overcome educational disadvantages, and prepare themselves to become agents of social change and development. Therefore, the progress of a country is closely related to the quality of its human resources. Education is expected to produce competent, reliable, and highly competitive human resources (Suhendra et al., 2022). For this reason, planned, systematic, and continuous educational outreach is necessary as a strategic effort to increase public awareness of the value and benefits

⁴Haedir Fitra (30 yaers old) petani, batuampaTahun) farmer, Batuampa Village, December 17, 2025.

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of higher education. However, based on an interview with Riswan Rasyid, a teacher in Batuampa Village, the limited dissemination of information about higher education and scholarships remains an obstacle:

*“There is not enough outreach from universities, which has reduced young people's interest in pursuing higher education. In addition, we also have difficulty obtaining information about scholarships.”*⁵

The limited dissemination of information is part of the broader phenomenon of information asymmetry, which is commonly found in rural communities in Indonesia. Several studies indicate that information about higher education institutions and scholarship programs tends to be concentrated in urban areas and has not been distributed evenly to remote regions (Masnawati, 2024). The limited dissemination of information is part of the broader phenomenon of information asymmetry, which is commonly found in rural communities in Indonesia. Several studies indicate that information about higher education institutions and scholarship programs tends to be concentrated in urban areas and has not been distributed evenly to remote regions. Setiaji and Rachmawati (2017) further emphasize that access to higher education information is an important determinant in shaping students' interest in continuing their studies, alongside motivation and family economic conditions. Therefore, this information gap requires more active involvement from higher education institutions, local governments, and schools to expand the reach of higher education outreach programs to rural areas such as Batuampa Village.

3. Integration of Higher Education with Plantation Work

Higher education can be integrated with plantation work, which has long been an integral part of the lives of young people in the community. Pursuing higher education does not necessarily have to be understood as a step toward leaving plantation work; rather, it can serve as an opportunity to acquire additional knowledge and skills that can contribute to more effective management of plantation enterprises. Through higher education, young people can develop a better understanding of effective cultivation techniques, proper crop maintenance, optimal post-harvest processing, and effective marketing strategies to increase the economic value of plantation products. (Madawu et al., 2024). Thus, higher education can serve as an important foundation for improving the quality and sustainability of the plantation businesses in which young people are engaged. From this perspective, pursuing higher education can be viewed as an investment in knowledge that can contribute to increasing plantation productivity and improving future income. If young people recognize that higher education can help them become more skilled, innovative, and independent farmers, their interest in pursuing higher education may increase because education is perceived as relevant to their daily lives and livelihoods. (Prayoga et al., 2024). Based on an interview with one of the informants, Nur Anti, she also expressed the following view:

⁵Riswan Rasyid (44 years old), teacher, Batuampa Village, December 17, 2025.

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“Higher education can be integrated with modern agricultural development to generate more tangible and sustainable outcomes. Furthermore, this approach can help change the community’s perception and strengthen the understanding that higher education is important.”⁶

This perspective is consistent with the concept of human capital in the agricultural sector, in which education is viewed as an instrument for increasing productivity and adding value to farming activities, rather than as a pathway for leaving the agricultural sector itself (Becker, 1994). Farmers with higher levels of education tend to be more adaptive in adopting modern agricultural technologies, managing farm finances, and implementing more effective strategies for marketing agricultural products. Therefore, strengthening the perception that higher education and agriculture are not mutually exclusive choices but rather two domains that can complement and reinforce one another is an important strategy for increasing young people's interest in pursuing higher education in Batuampa Village without undermining their identity as members of an agrarian community.

The need for skilled human resources in the agricultural sector is also reflected in the findings of Rofiduddin and Kristina (2022) concerning the need for agricultural labor in rain-fed farming in Lembor Village, Lamongan. Their study found that agricultural productivity is strongly influenced by farmers' ability to apply technical knowledge concerning land management and appropriate cropping patterns. Such knowledge is generally acquired through formal education and further training, thereby strengthening the argument that higher education can serve as a strategic partner in sustaining plantation-based livelihoods rather than as a competing pathway that distances young people from the agricultural sector. This synergy is increasingly relevant in light of the findings of Madawu et al. (2024) and Prayoga et al. (2024), both of which emphasize the importance of agricultural extension services and education on modern farming practices in fostering young people's interest in a more productive and sustainable agricultural sector.

4. The Role of Parents in Providing Understanding of Higher Education

The role of parents in their children's educational process extends beyond providing physical needs or taking their children to school. It also includes providing understanding and motivation to support their children's decisions regarding further education, including pursuing higher education. Parents are key figures and often serve as the primary source of information about the importance of higher education and its potential impact on their children's future (Mayang, 2018). Parental support and guidance can help children understand the benefits of pursuing higher education, including the development of skills, better employment opportunities, and broader opportunities for personal development.

Within the family environment, the pattern of communication between parents and children has a significant influence on how children perceive education. Parents who actively discuss educational goals, career prospects, and learning experiences in higher education with their children tend to foster stronger educational aspirations. In addition, emotional

⁶Nur Anti (29 years old), teacher, Batuampa Village, December 16, 2025

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encouragement and parents' belief that higher education represents a long-term investment can contribute to increasing children's willingness to continue their studies (Syatifa et al., 2025). Previous research has shown that parental involvement in children's education is positively associated with children's motivation and academic achievement, as such involvement enables children to feel supported and understood throughout their learning process.

In the context of young people's interest in higher education in Batuampa Village, the role of parents in providing an understanding of higher education is particularly important in challenging the perception that higher education is irrelevant to their lives. With adequate understanding and support from their parents, young people may come to view higher education as a means of strengthening their knowledge and capabilities, including their ability to manage the livelihoods and economic activities they are already engaged in, rather than merely as an obligation or burden.

This phenomenon can be explained through the concept of *family social capital* proposed by (Coleman, 1988), which emphasizes that relationships and interactions between parents and children—including parental attention, communication, and supervision of children's learning—constitute important resources that can support children's educational achievement. The stronger the social capital developed within the family, the greater the likelihood that children will develop higher educational aspirations. Research by (Tan et al., 2023) in China further demonstrates that family capital, including cultural, social, and economic capital, directly influences children's opportunities to access higher education. Similarly, research by (Utami et al., 2025) in Indonesia found that the family environment contributes significantly to students' interest in pursuing higher education.

More specifically, (Mayang, 2018) found that the forms of parental support most influential in shaping interest in continuing education are not limited to financial support but also include emotional support and consistent encouragement for learning in children's daily lives. This suggests that parents in Batuampa Village do not necessarily need substantial financial resources to encourage their children to pursue higher education. Rather, they can contribute by establishing warm communication and providing continuous moral support. Such support is consistent with the strategy described by (Syatifa et al., 2025), which emphasizes the importance of parental involvement in developing children's self-confidence from an early age. This, in turn, can establish a stronger foundation for academic self-confidence when children reach adolescence and face decisions regarding whether to continue their education to higher education.

Based on the discussion above, the low interest among young people in Batuampa Village in pursuing higher education can be understood as a multidimensional issue involving economic, psychological, social, and institutional factors simultaneously. Consequently, efforts to increase interest in higher education cannot be addressed through a single intervention but require an integrated approach involving the village government, schools, higher education institutions, and families.

From an institutional perspective, higher education institutions and the local education authorities need to expand the dissemination of information about academic programs and scholarship opportunities to Batuampa Village. This recommendation is directly related to the

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interview finding from Riswan Rasyid, who reported that limited outreach from higher education institutions contributed to declining interest among young people in pursuing higher education, while information about scholarship opportunities was also difficult to obtain. Therefore, higher education institutions and local governments should consider conducting direct outreach through visits to villages, collaborating with village authorities and schools, and utilizing social media as a means of disseminating information about academic programs, educational costs, and scholarship opportunities. Such efforts could help reduce the information gap identified as one of the obstacles faced by young people in Batuampa Village when considering higher education.

From a psychological perspective, schools and non-formal educational institutions in Batuampa Village need to provide support that can strengthen young people's academic self-efficacy. This recommendation is related to the interview finding involving Irham, who acknowledged the importance of higher education but expressed doubts about his academic ability to pursue it. His statement indicates a lack of confidence in his own academic capabilities, which may constitute an obstacle to the decision to pursue higher education. Therefore, learning assistance, motivational programs, educational guidance, and opportunities to experience academic success should be strengthened from the school years onward. Such efforts may help young people develop greater confidence in their abilities. consistent with (Bandura, 1997) concept of self-efficacy, so that higher education is no longer perceived as an option beyond their capabilities.

Third, from an economic perspective, educational models should be developed that explicitly connect academic knowledge with the plantation sector. Such models could include vocational agricultural programs, agricultural extension activities, or flexible and part-time study arrangements that allow young people to continue working on their plantations while pursuing higher education. This recommendation is relevant to the finding that plantation work provides young people with immediate income, flexibility, and a sense of economic security. Integrating higher education with agricultural livelihoods may therefore help reduce the perception that pursuing higher education necessarily requires young people to abandon their existing livelihoods.(Coleman, 1988). This can be pursued through educational outreach, parental mentoring, and the involvement of parents in school activities and community engagement programs conducted by nearby higher education institutions. Strengthening parental understanding is particularly relevant given the finding that limited parental experience with higher education may restrict the information and guidance available to young people when making educational decisions.

Through these complementary approaches, higher education is expected to no longer be perceived as an option that conflicts with the agrarian way of life in Batuampa Village. Instead, it can be understood as an educational resource that may strengthen the sustainability and welfare of the community in the future. Based on the findings concerning limited access to educational information, family economic considerations, the strong orientation toward plantation work, and limited experience and educational networks within the social environment of young people in Batuampa Village, this study formulates several recommendations. These recommendations are primarily grounded in the findings obtained

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through interviews and field observations, while the proposed actions and strategies represent the authors' practical suggestions derived from those findings. Accordingly, the recommendations are not intended as generalizations or prescriptive policies, but rather as alternatives that may be considered by relevant stakeholders in accordance with the specific conditions and needs of the local community.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the low interest among young people in Batuampa Village in pursuing higher education is influenced by various interrelated factors. Many young people prefer to work in the plantation sector because it is perceived as a means of earning income more quickly, does not require a lengthy period of preparation, and has become a family tradition passed down from one generation to the next. In addition to economic considerations, this choice is influenced by the family and social environment, limited access to information about higher education, and the prevailing orientation of community life toward plantation-based livelihoods.

The comfort associated with plantation work, ownership of plantation land, and the flexibility to manage working hours make plantation work an attractive alternative to pursuing higher education. In addition, limited confidence in academic abilities and the habit of working from school age contribute to a stronger focus on short-term income. Limited outreach concerning higher education and insufficient information about scholarship opportunities also make it difficult for young people to develop a clear understanding of the potential benefits and opportunities associated with higher education.

Nevertheless, higher education can be integrated with plantation work as a means of improving knowledge and skills in agricultural management. Higher education can contribute to improving the quality, productivity, and sustainability of plantation-based livelihoods, as well as increasing the market value of plantation products. Therefore, pursuing higher education does not necessarily require young people to abandon their existing livelihoods; rather, education can serve as a means of strengthening and developing the agricultural activities they already undertake.

Parental support and understanding also play an important role in shaping positive perceptions of higher education. Thus, the low interest of young people in Batuampa Village in pursuing higher education is not solely determined by economic factors but also involves cultural, social, and psychological dimensions. Efforts to increase interest in higher education therefore need to be undertaken collaboratively by families, schools, higher education institutions, and the wider community while taking into account the local potential, conditions, and needs of Batuampa Village.

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