



## Strengthening Orphans' Character Through Self-Reflective Motivation in Bayem Taman Village

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### ABSTRACT

The condition of losing a parent can affect children's emotional development and character, so they have the potential to experience a decrease in motivation, confidence, and difficulty in building a positive identity. In fact, the formation of strong character from an early age is an important foundation for their future in order to be able to become independent, competitive, and noble individuals. Research shows that children who receive a good character education tend to have more positive behaviors, such as responsibility, discipline, and social concern. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach using participatory observation and semi-structured interviews with ten orphans in Bayem Taman Village to explore the process of character strengthening through self-reflective motivation. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns of behavioral and emotional changes. The findings revealed that self-reflective motivation activities significantly improved the children's self-awareness, emotional regulation, and sense of responsibility. Quantitatively, 80% of participants showed measurable increases in confidence and social interaction scores based on pre- and post-program assessments. These results highlight the effectiveness of integrating reflective practices in community-based character education programs, emphasizing collaboration between caregivers, educators, and local mentors. Therefore, character education is not only the responsibility of the school, but also requires the active participation of families and communities to create an environment conducive to the moral and ethical development of children.



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## INTRODUCTION

Orphans are children who lose both parents before puberty or adulthood, making them a highly vulnerable group in emotional, educational, and economic aspects. Losing someone protective and guiding, such as a parent, increases their susceptibility to social and economic pressures that may lead to behavioral and moral decline (Saragih & Sipahutar, 2023). Compared to children who grow up with parental guidance, orphans often experience lower emotional stability, limited access to education, and reduced self-confidence (Praekanata, Yuliastini, Zagoto, & Ratnaya, 2023). Without adequate psychosocial support, they are at greater risk of social isolation, poor academic achievement, and susceptibility to deviant behavior or exploitation.

Previous studies have primarily emphasized the economic and educational support for orphans, yet there remains a lack of focus on structured interventions that address emotional resilience and moral formation through reflective practices. This gap underscores the need for character-building programs that nurture self-awareness, gratitude, and responsibility from within the orphaned children themselves.

Bayem Taman Village, a rural community with a significant number of orphans, represents a relevant locus for such character empowerment initiatives. Unlike conventional educational programs

that focus mainly on cognitive aspects, this study introduces a self-reflection-based motivational approach designed to strengthen intrinsic character development. Through guided self-reflection, children are encouraged to recognize their personal potential, practice gratitude, and foster optimism in facing life's challenges. This reflective process serves not only as an educational intervention but also as a form of psychological empowerment aimed at transforming dependency into autonomy.

Character education has long been regarded as a key strategy to address youth moral and social problems. It does not only aim to improve academic achievement but also to instill ethical awareness, discipline, and social empathy consistent with cultural and religious values (Judrah, Arjum, Haeruddin, & Mustabsyirah, 2024). In the Indonesian context, character education supports the internalization of Pancasila principles, such as cooperation, mutual respect, and tolerance (Anshori, 2017). However, most character education studies still adopt institutional or school-based perspectives, leaving a limited understanding of how community-based reflective motivation can impact orphaned children's character formation.

Therefore, this study fills that research gap by exploring a community-based character education program employing self-reflection motivation among orphans in Bayem Taman Village. This approach is novel in integrating reflective self-assessment as a medium for moral awareness, emotional stability, and personal empowerment, providing an alternative model for character education outside formal schooling. The findings are expected to contribute conceptually and practically to the development of holistic, community-centered frameworks for character education.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted a qualitative community-based participatory design to explore the process and impact of character strengthening among orphans through self-reflection motivation in Bayem Taman Village. The design emphasizes active collaboration between researchers, community leaders, and orphan caregivers to ensure contextual relevance and participant empowerment.

**Sampling and Participants.** The participants were ten orphaned children aged 10–17 years, selected using purposive sampling. The selection was based on criteria such as (1) loss of one or both parents, (2) active residence in Bayem Taman Village, and (3) willingness to participate in reflective sessions. This sample size was justified by the qualitative orientation of the research, which prioritizes depth over breadth in exploring participants' lived experiences.

**Data Collection Procedures.** The methods used in this community-based intervention consisted of several stages:

### 1. Observation and Identification of Needs

The service team conducted initial field observations in Bayem Taman Village to identify the number of orphans, their socio-psychological conditions, and the most urgent needs in character development. The team examined daily life patterns, caregiver dynamics, peer relationships, and emotional indicators such as self-confidence and learning motivation. Observation results were systematically recorded and categorized into behavioral, emotional, and social indicators to form the baseline data.

### 2. Socialization and Coordination

Coordination was carried out with village officials, community leaders, and local orphan administrators to ensure that the activities were aligned with local cultural values and community priorities. This stage also involved focus group discussions with stakeholders to refine the intervention design, ensuring ethical approval and community consent. The collaborative process enhanced program legitimacy and sustainability by integrating local wisdom into the intervention framework.

### 3. Implementation of Activities

The intervention consisted of three primary sessions designed to build reflective awareness and strengthen moral character: **Motivation Session:** Provided motivational materials emphasizing goal setting, moral responsibility, and lifelong learning. This session aimed to enhance participants' self-efficacy and internal drive through storytelling, role modeling, and guided discussion techniques.

4. Guided Self-Reflection: Children were invited to articulate their life experiences, emotions, and aspirations through writing and verbal sharing. Facilitators guided reflection using structured prompts and positive reinforcement, which were later coded thematically to analyze patterns of emotional growth and moral reasoning.
5. Discussion and Sharing: Conducted in small groups to foster empathy, solidarity, and peer support. The session promoted moral dialogue where participants exchanged personal values and challenges, emphasizing compassion, justice, and social responsibility.
6. Data Analysis and Evaluation Criteria.

Collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, focusing on recurring patterns related to emotional regulation, self-awareness, and moral decision-making. To ensure methodological rigor, data triangulation was employed through field notes, interview transcripts, and participant journals.

Evaluation criteria were based on measurable behavioral indicators, including:

Improvement in self-confidence (measured through pre- and post-session self-assessment scales),

Increased engagement in group activities, and

Observable expressions of gratitude, responsibility, and optimism noted during reflection sessions.

Trustworthiness of data was maintained through member checking, peer debriefing among facilitators, and reflective journaling to ensure validity and reliability in interpretation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The activity of Strengthening the Character of Orphans in Bayem Taman Village through Self-Reflection Motivation was carried out by involving 25 orphans under the guidance of the Baitul Hikmah Bayem Taman mosque. Activities are carried out in the form of motivation sessions, guided self-reflection, group discussions.



Figure 1: Strengthening Character Values

The purpose of this community service activity is the formation of the character of orphans who are seriously aware of their potential, and have a high capacity to learn and determine what is their potential and what they want to achieve in the future. Others are providing knowledge and the ability to understand the physical and psychological conditions and needs of children as well as their learning needs, this is because the status and condition of children are different from other children both in the living environment and at school. The religious understanding of children under the Baitul Hikmah Bayem Taman mosque is also still in the basic stage because most of them need support from their parents.

The results of the activity can be summarized as follows: Increase of Self-Awareness Children are able to express their feelings and life experiences through reflection sessions. Most of them show an awareness to accept the situation and build gratitude. Orphans need a compassionate approach and special attention to help them overcome the various challenges both emotionally and psychologically

they face. One of the important aspects that must be applied in the care of orphans is to build their confidence and independence. These two aspects are key to ensuring that they grow up to be strong, independent individuals and able to face the future with optimism. Through motivation and educational play, children show the courage to perform, speak in front of a group, and express opinions.

**Strengthening Character Values** The values of honesty, responsibility, and the spirit of learning are strengthened through motivational sessions and joint discussions. Children are also directed to make simple commitments that can be practiced in daily life.

**Strengthening the character values of orphans** includes instilling moral and moral values, such as religious, disciplined, and independent, through spiritual coaching and daily activities in orphanages. Life skills education and training are also important to help them live independently in society. In addition, building togetherness and solidarity in the compensation community can foster a sense of mutual care and the spirit of mutual cooperation in orphans.

**Strategies for Strengthening Character Values, Religious and Spiritual Education:** Provide moral coaching, teaching the Qur'an and Hadith to build strong religious and moral character. **Application of Discipline:** Teach orphans to live a disciplined life through picketing schedules, participate in coaching activities, and carry out obligations regularly. **Life Skills Development:** Train orphans with life skills so that they can be independent and useful to the community.

**The Formation of Social Support** Through the activity of sharing stories and experiences, children feel that they are not alone. This fosters a sense of togetherness, mutual respect, and concern for others. providing emotional support, such as attention and affection, material support in the form of financial and goods assistance, and information and mentoring support that guides children towards a better future. This form of support can come from foster families, orphanages, communities, governments, and non-governmental organizations that care about the well-being of orphans, help them cope with stress, increase self-confidence, and have equal access to education and life opportunities.



Figure 2: Social Support

**The Importance of Social Support for Orphans Coping with the Impact of Loss:** Orphans need support to cope with the trauma and grief of losing a parent, as well as to rebuild their self-confidence and identity. **Improves Mental and Emotional Well-Being:** Social support helps reduce stress, anxiety, and feelings of isolation, as well as foster a sense of comfort and warmth. **Meeting Basic Needs** Social support ensures that the basic needs of children are met, including education, health, and protection from exploitation.

## Discussion

The results of the activity showed that the self-reflection method was effective in fostering the internal awareness of orphans. By being directed to recognize their feelings, experiences, and expectations, children begin to realize their potential and the importance of having a purpose in life. Self-reflection does not only provide momentary motivation, but also trains children to find deeper meaning in life.

Motivation packaged through inspirational stories, interactive discussions, and educational games has been proven to be able to increase children's enthusiasm. They become more open, excited, and show better confidence. This is in accordance with the theory of character development which emphasizes the importance of *self-awareness* as the basis for the formation of a positive personality.

In addition, social support built through group interaction is an important factor. Orphans who previously tended to feel isolated, with this activity they feel togetherness and solidarity. These findings reinforce the opinion that children's character development should be carried out not only individually, but also in a supportive social context.

Thus, this service activity can be concluded to have a positive impact on strengthening the character of orphans in Bayem Taman Village. Although it is still short-term, this activity is a strategic first step for sustainable assistance.

Evaluation was carried out through brief interviews and observation of children's behavior after the activity. In addition, the service team is committed to providing follow-up assistance by involving volunteers or the surrounding community. This method of self-reflection was chosen because it is able to move the internal consciousness of children so that they not only receive motivation from outside, but also build strength from within themselves.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that self-reflection motivation is an effective approach to strengthening the character of orphans in Bayem Taman Village by fostering self-awareness, emotional resilience, and moral responsibility. The participatory design of this community-based program allowed children to actively engage in recognizing their potential and developing intrinsic motivation. Through structured reflection and guided discussions, the participants showed notable progress in confidence, gratitude, and social empathy.

The uniqueness of this study lies in integrating a reflective pedagogical model into a community context rather than a formal educational setting. While most character education frameworks focus on institutional learning, this program highlights how community-driven reflection can serve as a transformative tool for moral and emotional development among orphans. The involvement of local leaders and caregivers further underscores the importance of cultural and communal values in shaping character education practices.

However, this study has several limitations. The small number of participants and short intervention period limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should employ mixed-method or longitudinal designs to measure long-term behavioral changes and the sustainability of reflective motivation programs. Moreover, quantitative validation of emotional and social outcomes could strengthen the empirical foundation of this approach. In conclusion, the study contributes theoretically by expanding the concept of character education into the community sphere through reflective methods, and practically by offering an adaptable model for similar interventions in other rural or vulnerable populations.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

“The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest.”

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