

BUILDING A MADANI PERSON (BECOMING INDEPENDENT, CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE) AT LKSA MUHAMMADIYAH NANGGULAN ORPHANAGE, KULON PROGO

Zahro Varisna Rohmadani ¹, Andhita Dyorita Khoiryasdien ²

^{1,2} Program Studi Psikologi, Fakultas Ekonomi Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora, Universitas 'Aisyiyah Yogyakarta, Sleman, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta

E-mail corresponden : zahrovarisna@unisayogya.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this PKM program is to help partners overcome existing problems in the form of financial and mental problems. The problems experienced by partners are (1) mental health, difficult conditions make partner children feel less confident in their potential, and confused about their future, (2) economic independence, partners still depend on donations given by donors in meeting their daily needs. The solution provided is to empower the community by: (1) education related to character education, (2) education related to fostering interest in entrepreneurship from an early age, (3) education related to financial management for children; so as to achieve an independent, creative and innovative person. The results obtained from this program are: partners show high motivation to compete; have the ability to make decisions and deal with problems that arise; have a strong sense of confidence and responsibility; realize the importance of creating jobs and how to develop an entrepreneurial spirit from an early age; partners also have an understanding of how to keep simple records and save money to live fruitfully..

Introduction

The social gap within society has left some of the nation's children neglected compared to the luxurious lives of celebrities portrayed on television. Unlike children from wealthy families, children born into poverty often receive insufficient attention and are often neglected in terms of health, education, and welfare. Their poverty stems from various causes, such as the loss of a parent, orphanhood, or other factors. This situation leaves poor families unable to meet the needs of all family members, especially children who require greater attention.

Orphanages serve as a platform for gathering and assisting children who have been "neglected" by their families. According to data from the Yogyakarta Special Region Social Services Agency (2019), there were a total of 111 registered orphanages in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, with a total of 5,019 children in 2018. Through the support of donors, orphanages not only help meet physical needs such as food and healthcare, but also provide education and character development. Furthermore, the orphanages strive to develop the potential of the children under their care so they can thrive in society. To achieve this goal, children need to be encouraged and taught to live independently, not solely dependent on others.

These efforts align with the concept of community empowerment, which emphasizes the importance of providing knowledge, skills, and resources to enable individuals to play an active role in maintaining and improving their quality of life, including health (Angreni *et al.*, 2024). Empowerment plays a crucial role in lifting a group from a state of helplessness, underdevelopment, or decline to a more independent and productive life (Herman *et al.*, 2022). International research findings indicate that empowerment-based interventions, character education, and community support can improve children's independence, decision-making abilities, and social skills (World Health Organization, 2024; Lestari, 2016; Singh, 2019; Sofyan, 2020). Furthermore, mental health, as an integral part of well-being, also contributes to children's ability to make decisions, build relationships, cope with life's stresses, and make positive contributions to their communities (World Health Organization, 2024). Thus, the empowerment carried out in orphanages is not only aimed at strengthening economic independence, but also at supporting the creation of healthy physical and mental conditions in order to realize shared prosperity.

This is crucial considering that children are the nation's next generation, playing a strategic role as the spearhead of future progress. The sustainability of a nation is largely determined by the quality of children's growth and development, so early empowerment—whether in health, mental health, or economic aspects—will lay the foundation for creating an independent, creative, and innovative generation (Afriani *et al.*, 2021). One effort supporting this is character education. For children in orphanages, character education serves as the foundation for developing individuals who are not only intelligent and skilled, but also possess noble morals and respect social values such as togetherness, mutual cooperation, and tolerance. This character education will produce a superior generation

with cognitive intelligence and strong character for success, in line with the findings of international research on early character development (Lestari, 2016).

Character education plays a crucial role in shaping students to become leaders with integrity, with an emphasis on the importance of educational policies that support the strengthening of moral aspects (Singh, 2019). Similarly, Sofyan (2020) emphasized that education does not merely serve as a means of transferring knowledge, but also as a process of character development so that individuals become better, possess adequate skills, are ethical, and behave positively in everyday life. Education also plays a role in creating a conducive environment for the development of children's potential, particularly in optimizing creative thinking skills, which are essential provisions for facing future challenges (Aflah *et al.*, 2023). International research also shows that character education contributes significantly to children's readiness to face future social and economic challenges.

With good character education, children are not only morally and socially formed but also prepared to be independent in facing life's challenges, including financial and self-management. Independence is crucial for every individual, including children living in orphanages. However, this independence cannot be achieved easily without training. This independence can also help them maintain financial stability, manage themselves well, and be optimistic about their future as children raised in orphanages. More broadly, the role of the younger generation extends beyond social aspects to the development of the creative economy. With their innovative ideas, young people can generate new business opportunities that contribute to increased productivity and support government efforts to reduce unemployment (Adipura *et al.*, 2023). International research findings also support this strategy, which emphasizes entrepreneurship development as a means of increasing economic independence and innovation among the younger generation (Guerrero *et al.*, 2022; Huang *et al.*, 2022).

In this knowledge-based era, young people are also faced with the challenge of making a real contribution to economic and social development at both the city and national levels (Marchesania *et al.*, 2022). One strategic approach to addressing this challenge is to encourage entrepreneurship development as a means of creating new jobs and increasing independence (Guerrero *et al.*, 2022; Huang *et al.*, 2022). Efforts to empower these young people require a platform capable of facilitating ongoing development. One institution playing a crucial role in supporting this process is the Muhammadiyah Nanggulan Orphanage (LKSA).

The Child Welfare Institution (LKSA) of the Muhammadiyah Nanggulan Orphanage was inaugurated on May 19, 1996 or 1 Muharram 1417 H by the Regional Leader of Muhammadiyah DIY at that time, namely Mr. Drs. Ali Warsito, Alm. (LKSA Muhammadiyah Nanggulan Orphanage, nd). After having moved locations several times, the orphanage under the auspices of the Muhammadiyah organization, since 2013 until now is located in Grubug, Jati Saron, Nanggulan, Kulon Progo Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta. The foster children who resided or lived at the Muhammadiyah Nanggulan Orphanage during the Covid-19 pandemic decreased from 30 children, now only 23

children. Some of them returned to their respective homes due to the conditions of this pandemic.

Economically, the orphanage caters to people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds whose parents are divorced, orphans, or whose family circumstances prevent them from providing care for certain reasons. They live in the orphanage and receive assistance from donors, provided they can meet their basic daily needs. One of the orphanage's donors, Dompot Dhuafa, provided financial support for the establishment of 11 catfish ponds and collaborated with experts to provide operational support. The harvested catfish will be used for household consumption, with some for sale. Previously, harvested catfish were sold directly without being processed into higher-value products.

Currently, the Muhammadiyah Nanggulan Orphanage LKSA oversees a community of children and adolescents around Nanggulan as part of the orphanage's foster care (who live in private homes with their families but still receive supervision from the orphanage). Activities organized by this community include social activities such as tree planting, workshops, plant planting training and other social activities, the total number of registered members joining this community is around 200 children, ranging from elementary school, junior high school, to college.

Of course, every child has different needs, so the orphanage strives to accommodate all of them by facilitating what is deemed necessary by the majority of its foster children. The main issues that need to be addressed are the economic independence and mental health of the children under its care. The concept used to resolve the existing problems at the Muhammadiyah Nanggulan Orphanage is Community Empowerment so that individuals within it become "Independent, Creative, and Innovative Individuals." To address the issue of independence, character education is one of the educational programs that has been intensively socialized and implemented in recent years, which aims to reduce the crime rate by children and shape children's character. The community service team will conduct an independent character education seminar to instill an attitude of independence in the foster children. The community service team will provide several education to the foster children related to self-confidence, responsibility, initiative, and attitudes to be able to make their own correct decisions. This is in line with research results showing that character education can increase children's independence and decision-making abilities (Lestari, 2016; Sofyan, 2020).

Furthermore, in the economic sector, education will be provided on how to foster an interest in entrepreneurship from an early age. The main capital for becoming a successful entrepreneur is strong internal motivation, along with the courage to take risks, perseverance, and tenacity in running their business, thus becoming a resilient and resilient *entrepreneur*. *This will be realized if the entrepreneurial spirit is nurtured from an early age.* Early childhood is a crucial time in shaping patterns for children's future lives (Ningrum, 2017). Instilling entrepreneurship education from an early age is crucial because it can foster an interest in entrepreneurship in students. With this interest, students or students will be better prepared to face the dynamics of life in society (Riyadi *et al.*, 2024). This is certainly very appropriate for what partners need. Considering that in the future they must be prepared to live independently. Therefore, they must be given education and

enthusiasm for entrepreneurship as early as possible. International research findings also emphasize the importance of early entrepreneurship education to foster economic independence and creative innovation among the younger generation (Guerrero *et al.*, 2022; Huang *et al.*, 2022).

Creative thinking will be used to identify spending priorities, find alternative solutions when funds are limited, and utilize business proceeds for productive needs (Taufek, 2024; Pusparadi *et al.*, 2024). In addition to fostering entrepreneurial interest, this economics education will be complemented by financial management education. This education will be simple and aimed at introducing children to money management, thus helping them become accustomed to managing their expenses from their income. The character education provided is also closely linked to education about entrepreneurial interest and financial management. Independence, closely linked to a sense of responsibility and initiative, will undoubtedly further enhance their knowledge.

The team will also educate children on living simply. By living simply, children will also spend their money wisely, avoiding wasting their money on less useful items. By teaching them to live simply, we also teach them to be grateful for their lives. They should be grateful for everything they already have and will use it as best they can. A simple life will also impact a child's psychological development, making them wiser, possessing good personalities and caring for others. This is also in line with research conducted by Sumiyati (2017), which states that although transactions do not require special skills and anyone can do them, understanding careful, good, and wise financial management will result in efficient and effective transactions. Financial management needs to be taught from an early age, with the hope that children can manage their finances wisely and develop good character. Learning to live frugally and not wastefully, and not falling into a consumptive lifestyle.





Figure 1. Side view of the LKSA PA Muh Nanggulan building



Figure 2. Location of the LKSA PA Muh Nanggulan Agribusiness Complex



Figure 3. Harvest from Catfish Cultivation Pond



Figure 4. Gardening Activities of Children at the Orphanag

Method

The method for implementing this community service activity can be seen in the following flow diagram:

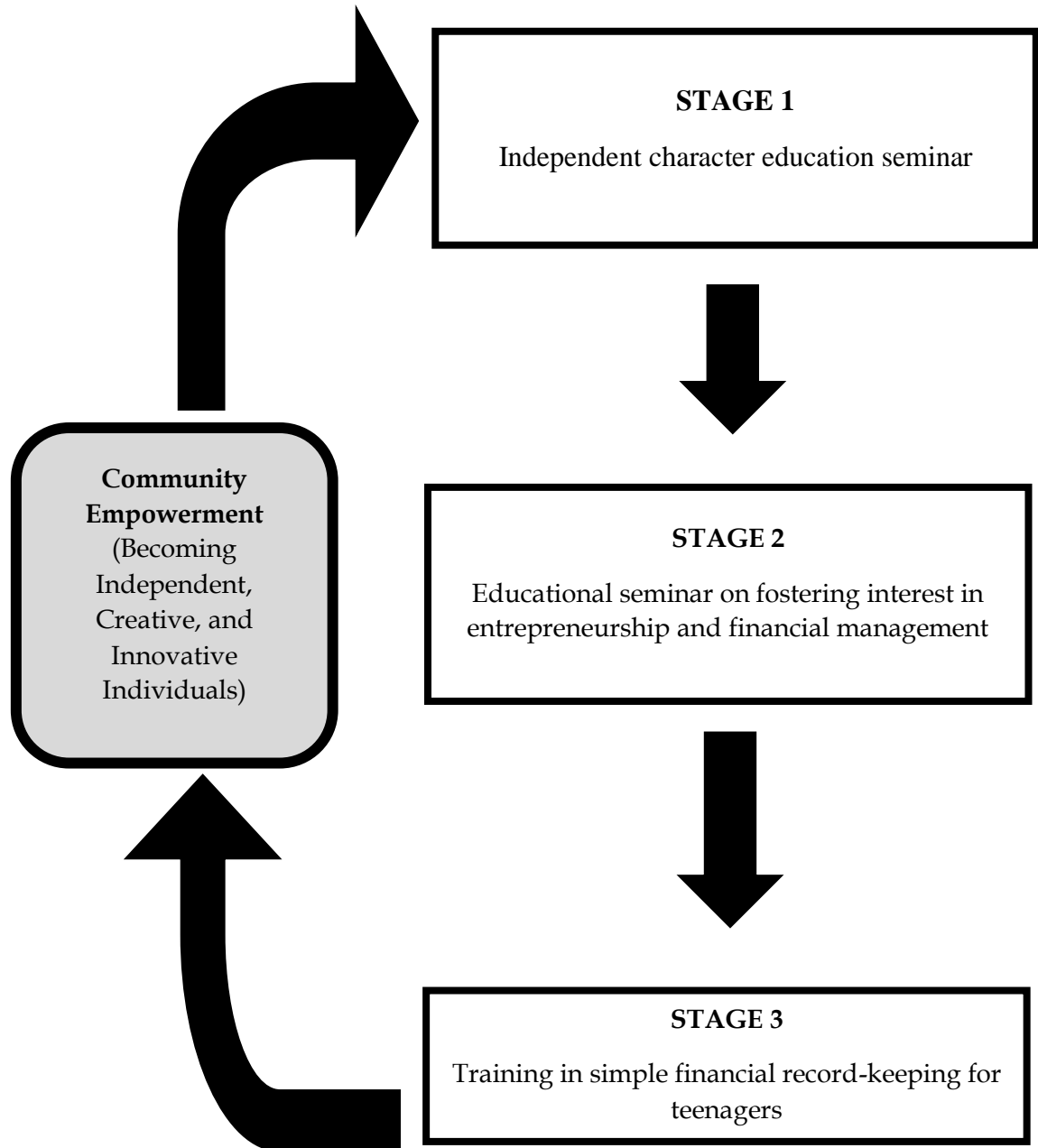


Chart 1. Flowchart of Community Service Implementation Method

STAGE 1 : Independent Character Education Seminar. Held in January 2023 at the Muhammadiyah Nanggulan Orphanage, the program included children under the guidance of partners. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the Independence Index can be seen in four aspects: the desire to compete, the ability to make decisions and address

problems, self-confidence, and a sense of responsibility. These results align with the concept of character education, which not only teaches ethical principles but also builds a culture that reinforces these values. By supporting these four aspects of independence, children's character development can be more effective and sustainable, as research findings on character education in elementary schools (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2024).

STAGE 2 : An educational seminar on fostering interest in entrepreneurship and financial management was held in February 2023 at the Muhammadiyah Nanggulan Orphanage, with children under the guidance of partners. The event aimed to provide a basic understanding of the importance of job creation and fostering an entrepreneurial spirit from an early age. The material presented emphasized not only the importance of economic independence but also practical skills, such as developing a simple business plan, managing pocket money, and strategies for identifying business opportunities appropriate to the surrounding environment. Specifically, the findings highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship training in honing opportunity awareness, increasing self-confidence (self-efficacy) in starting a business, and instilling a never-give-up attitude appropriate to their developmental age.

STAGE 3 : Simple financial record-keeping training. Held in April 2023 at the Muhammadiyah Nanggulan Orphanage, the program was attended by children under the care of partners. The community service team taught the children how to record income and expenses and how to save to live frugally and avoid excessive consumption. This training aimed to equip the children with basic financial record-keeping skills, including how to record income and expenses and effective savings techniques. The methods used include counseling, discussion, and direct practice, so that participants can understand and apply these concepts in everyday life (Aziz *et al.*, 2025).

Results and Discussion

1. Preparation Stage

At this stage, the implementation team coordinated with the Muhammadiyah LKSA PA Manager, Nanggulan through online communication using the WhatsApp application. Preparatory activities included planning educational seminar materials for independent character education, educational seminars to increase interest in entrepreneurship and financial management, and simple financial recording training. Then, the selection of resource persons was determined based on their areas of expertise, namely character education experts, entrepreneurship practitioners, and simple accounting/financial practitioners. Next, the schedule was arranged according to the needs of partners and the availability of resource persons. For the collection and analysis of initial data, short interviews and observations were conducted to determine the level of motivation, understanding of entrepreneurship, and financial literacy of participants before the activity .

2. Implementation and Analysis Stage

Activities are carried out in three stages according to partner needs:

a) **First Stage (Independent Character Education Seminar)**

Participants attended a seminar that emphasized the importance of developing ethical, honest, caring, disciplined, intelligent, and resilient individuals. Observations showed that participants became more confident, took initiative, and were able to define their goals more clearly.

b) **Second Stage (Entrepreneurship and Financial Management Seminar)**

Entrepreneurship education enhanced participants' understanding of the importance of creating business opportunities. A tangible outcome is the partner's initiative to transform used bottles into valuable handicrafts. This demonstrates the direct application of the education received.

c) **Stage Three (Simple Financial Recording Training)**

Participants were trained to record income and expenses, as well as to save. Observations showed that participants understood how to manage their pocket money, enabling them to be more frugal and less consumptive.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

The evaluation was conducted using observation, interviews, and a simple questionnaire before and after the activity. The evaluation results showed:

- a) **Independent Character Education** : 75% of participants admitted to being more confident and enthusiastic in achieving their goals after the seminar.
- b) **Entrepreneurship** : 65% of participants started having simple business ideas (for example recycling used bottles).
- c) **Financial Literacy** : 80% of participants understand the importance of simple financial recording and saving.

4. Obstacles or problems in implementing activities

- a) **Limited Facilities** : Some participants do not have writing tools or media to record finances consistently.

Solution : Provide a simple notebook from the implementation team.

- b) **Different Participant Motivations** : There were participants who were less enthusiastic at the start of the activity.

Solution : Personal approach by the resource person and providing inspiring examples to make participants more motivated.

- c) **Limited Implementation Time** : Activities must be adjusted to school schedules and orphanage activities.

Solution : Divide the activity into several short but effective sessions.

Conclusion

This community service activity was implemented in three mutually supportive stages to improve the partners' competence and independence. The first stage focused on independent character education, which successfully increased the partners' motivation, self-confidence, initiative, and responsibility. The second stage emphasized entrepreneurship and financial management education, encouraging partners to recognize business opportunities and utilize their creativity, such as making crafts from used bottles. The third stage involved simple financial record-keeping training, which equipped partners with the skills to record income and expenses and foster savings habits. These three stages of the Community Service Program (PKM) were successfully implemented. Partners demonstrated high motivation to compete; possessed the ability to make decisions and deal with emerging problems; possessed a strong sense of self-confidence and responsibility; recognized the importance of creating jobs and how to develop an entrepreneurial spirit from an early age; and partners also gained an understanding of how to keep simple records and save for a frugal lifestyle. Overall, this activity successfully improved the partners' financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills, and character and independence, in line with previous research findings (Ho *et al.*, 2018; Maryati *et al.*, 2024; Wibowo *et al.*, 2023).

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