

PRACTICE-BASED ARTICLE



## Promoting creative thinking and adaptive skills through learning workshops: Insights from Al Hidayah Orphanage, Padang

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### ABSTRACT

An orphanage is an institution that provides substitute care for parents or guardians in meeting the physical, mental, and social needs of children. This institution is responsible for delivering social welfare services, enabling children to develop and grow into the next generation that contributes to community development. The purpose of this Community Service (PkM) activity is to enhance the abilities of orphanage children by improving their learning skills, fostering creative thinking, and developing soft skills to help them adapt to their environment. The PkM activity was conducted over three days, with sessions lasting two hours each, from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM WIB, involving a total of 24 participants from the Al-Hidayah Orphanage.

### KEYWORDS

Learning skills, creative thinking, adaptation, orphanage

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## 1. Introduction

According to the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (Depsos RI, 2011), a Social Orphanage is a social welfare institution responsible for providing social welfare services to abandoned children. These institutions act as substitutes for parents or guardians in fulfilling the physical, mental, and social needs of the children under their care. The primary goal of these services is to provide adequate and appropriate opportunities for the personality development of children so that they can grow into the next generation capable of contributing to national development. Orphanages also function as places of care and rehabilitation for abandoned children, offering a supportive environment to shape the character of children in line with the nation's aspirations. With this support, children in orphanages are expected to grow into independent, competitive individuals who actively participate in community life.

Orphanages help shape children's personalities to become independent, guiding them in good behavior and ethics, and creating bright futures. Every child is born with unique potential, and through character development and interactions in their

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environment, they can form positive or negative perceptions about themselves. The presence of foundations in Indonesia, which were previously unregulated, posed the risk of misuse of their functions. To address this issue, Law No. 16 of 2001 was enacted on August 6 to provide clear legal regulations in line with the rapid pace of development. This law is crucial in ensuring the feasibility and security of these foundations. Thus, the law recognizes foundations as formal institutions required to have legal status.

Al-Hidayah Orphanage is one such child welfare institution located in Padang City. Established on April 27, 1987, it is situated on Jalan Terpadu Kapuk, Kalumbuk Village, Kuranji Subdistrict, Padang City. The foundation of this orphanage was driven by the spirit of providing protection and fulfilling the needs of abandoned children. Al-Hidayah Orphanage was built on 2,750 square meters of donated land, granted by the Child Welfare Institution (LKSA) of Al-Hidayah Orphanage. The orphanage's first caretaker was the late Mr. Jamaris Jama'an, who was also the initiator of its establishment. At the time of its founding, Mr. Jamaris Jama'an was the head of RW III in Kalumbuk Village and an entrepreneur committed to helping underprivileged children in the area. Initially, the orphanage was officially named "Al-Hidayah Level I Orphanage of West Sumatra Province" and accommodated 25 boys as its first foster children (see [Figure 1](#))

The Al-Hidayah Orphanage has shown significant development, especially under the leadership of Mr. Maliyas, who is currently serving his fourth term of management since 2017. Under his administration, the orphanage has not only improved its services to foster children but also achieved various awards and has been recognized as one of the accredited orphanages with a grade of B in Padang City, out of a total of 24 orphanages. Inspired by the spirit passed down by its founder, Al-Hidayah Orphanage continues to serve as an institution supporting the personality development of its foster children to become independent individuals who actively contribute to society.



**Figure 1.** Initial visit to Al-Hidayah Orphanage in Kalumbuk, Padang City

The Al-Hidayah Orphanage is committed to nurturing and guiding children in various aspects of life, including education, physical development, and spirituality. The orphanage places great emphasis on the growth of its foster children, ensuring they are well-prepared to face future challenges. In terms of education, Al-Hidayah Orphanage entrusts the management of formal education to schools. This formal education is expected to equip the children with relevant academic skills, enabling them to compete in the workforce and community life. In today's digital era, mastering technical skills (hard skills) is essential, but it is not sufficient to build resilient individuals (Sihombing, 2023). Personality, creative thinking, and interpersonal abilities (soft skills) are key to the success of children in the future (Alindra et al., 2023). Teachers or caregivers play a strategic role in supporting the character development of children. According to Jumanta Hamdayama (2022), effective caregivers can help children develop soft skills such as empathy, discipline, and self-confidence, which are crucial for their future (Elfindri, 2015).

Mastering good learning methods is a key indicator of children's ability to acquire learning skills and soft skills. This has a significant impact on their responsibility in the learning process and their future success. According to Indra (2021), good learning skills, when combined with the development of soft skills, not only help children learn more effectively but also shape them into individuals who take responsibility for their learning process. Soft skills such as discipline, time management, communication, and critical thinking are the main pillars of this success.

Formal education obtained by foster children is often considered insufficient to build the character and skills needed to address the increasingly complex challenges of human resource quality (Munarsih, 2019). Based on learning evaluation reports from schools, foster children often require additional coaching outside school hours to strengthen their abilities. Al-Hidayah Orphanage strives to provide additional coaching through informal education, such as group learning among foster children. However, the learning methods currently employed have not yet adopted modern approaches applied in integrated and private schools, making the outcomes less optimal in enhancing the foster children's learning abilities, attitudes, and character development.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Definition of soft skills**

Soft skills are a set of personal abilities related to the way a person interacts with others, manages himself, and handles various situations at work or in everyday life (Indra, et al. 2021). Soft skills are often non-technical in nature and involve emotional intelligence, interpersonal communication, and social skills.

## ***2.2. Attributes of soft skills***

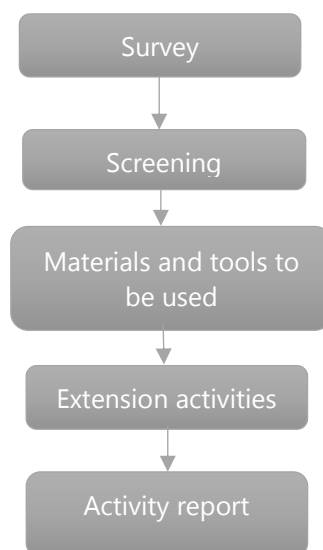
Soft skills attributes include a variety of abilities and characteristics that support social interaction, communication, and self-management. Here are some of the main attributes of soft skills (Sutianah, 2021), namely: (a) Effective communication, including verbal skills, non-verbal skills and active listening skills: Listening fully to understand the messages conveyed by others; (b) Leadership, the ability to motivate and encourage teams or individuals to achieve goals and be able to make effective and timely decisions; (c). Teamwork: the ability to work together with others to achieve common goals, being able to understand and share the feelings of others, which helps create harmonious working relationships; (d) Teamwork: the ability to work together with others to achieve common goals, being able to understand and share the feelings of others, which helps create harmonious working relationships. d. Teamwork: the ability to work together with others to achieve common goals. Problem solving: Critical analysis: the ability to evaluate information and situations to identify core issues. And creativity: seeking innovative solutions to challenges faced; (e) Time Management: The ability to organize tasks based on importance and urgency and keep tasks and time organized; (f) Adaptability, flexibility and continuous learning; (g) Emotional intelligence: self-awareness: understanding one's own emotions and their impact on others. Managing emotions in a positive way, especially in difficult situations.

## ***2.3. Soft skills measurement***

Soft skills measurement is the process of evaluating a person's non-technical abilities, such as communication, cooperation, leadership, and others. Due to their subjective and intangible nature, soft skills measurement requires a special approach. Here are some methods commonly used to measure soft skills according to Cimatti (2016), namely (1) Self-Assessment, questionnaires and surveys. Individuals fill out questionnaires that assess their own perceptions of their soft skills abilities. Likert scale, used to assess the extent to which a person agrees or disagrees with certain statements about their skills; (2) Observation, assessment by Supervisors or Colleagues: Direct observation by supervisors or coworkers to evaluate how individuals interact in real work situations. Checklist or assessment form: Used by observers to record and evaluate specific behaviors that demonstrate soft skills; (3) Competency-Based Interview; (4) Assessment Center, testing using various evaluation tools, such as psychological tests, simulations, group discussions, and interviews, to assess soft skills.

### 3. Method

The methods used were socialization, discussion, and evaluation. The place of implementation of activities at the Al Hidayah Orphanage in Kalumbuk, Padang City. The activities were carried out in several stages, namely (1) Survey of Al Hidayah Orphanage in Kalumbuk, Padang City which will be the place for socialization; (2) Collection of students for socialization conducted at Al Hidayah Orphanage in Kalumbuk, Padang City; (3) Preparation of materials and preparation of methods and tools to be used; (4) Implementation of socialization activities; and (5) Preparation of activity reports (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Activity implementation process diagram

### 4. Results and discussion

The implementation of PkM activities is scheduled for 3 days with a duration of 2 hours, at 08.00 WIB until 10.00 WIB, with a total of 24 students of Al-Hidayah Orphanage. The activity began with an opening ceremony and presentation of soft skills socialization material which was opened by the Moderator, Ulyya Rahmi Aswin S.E, M.M. The material provided in the socialization of soft skills improvement includes the challenges of the industrial revolution 4.0, the development of soft skills in advanced generations, and the importance of developing learning skills.

Building on insights into the challenges of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, the importance of developing soft skills for the next generation, and the necessity of fostering effective learning strategies, Al-Hidayah Orphanage can design programs

aimed at equipping its students to meet future industry demands with confidence. These initiatives could include a range of activities:

First, a Leadership Camp designed to cultivate leadership abilities, time management, and a sense of responsibility. Second, a Creative Thinking and Innovation Workshop could focus on sparking creativity and fostering innovative problem-solving skills. Third, programs on Public Speaking and Communication Skills would enhance students' confidence in presenting ideas and interpersonal communication.

Fourth, to prepare for the future, Future Skills Training could empower students with industry-relevant skills. Fifth, Teamwork and Collaboration Games would teach them the value of empathy, teamwork, and coordination. Sixth, developing emotional resilience through Emotional Intelligence Training would support students in building healthy relationships.

Seventh, for a more entrepreneurial mindset, Entrepreneurship for Youth could provide practical knowledge about starting and managing businesses. Eighth, Character Building through Community Engagement could instill moral values, inclusivity, and social responsibility. Ninth, a Mentorship and Career Guidance Program would help students discover their potential and plan their future paths effectively.

This approach aims to equip students not only with academic abilities but also with social and personal skills that will help them navigate future life challenges. The active participation of attendees in socialization or training activities serves as a key indicator of the program's success. All 24 students attended the socialization program, achieving a 100% attendance rate. This high level of participation reflects the students' commitment and interest in the activities provided. Full attendance is an initial indicator that participants recognize the importance of the material being delivered and are eager to learn. During the training sessions, participants actively asked questions and engaged in discussions, demonstrating high curiosity and awareness of the significance of understanding the material presented. Their enthusiasm in participating in all activities further highlights their interest and awareness of the benefits they would gain from the training.

Following the socialization program, a fun games activity was held with the students. These games aimed to build teamwork, concentration, and collaboration skills. Activities included guessing movements, sentence-building games, and more. The students participated in these games with great enthusiasm.

After the socialization activities, a charity program was conducted, distributing basic necessities at Al-Hidayah Orphanage. This social service activity not only provided material benefits but also emotional and psychological advantages for the students. It boosted their confidence, optimism, and motivation to learn.

The closing session of the socialization program featured the presentation of a plaque by the PkM team leader to the owner of Al-Hidayah Orphanage, accompanied by expressions of gratitude to the orphanage owner and staff for welcoming the community service team from Universitas Putra Indonesia YPTK Padang to carry out the activities.

The socialization activities aimed at enhancing learning skills, fostering creative thinking, and adapting to challenges at Al-Hidayah Orphanage were designed not only to develop practical skills but also to nurture students into well-rounded individuals who care for their surroundings and appreciate diversity. In the future, these students can grow into a generation ready to make positive contributions to society and the nation.

## **5. Conclusion**

Dynamic industry changes demand the development of soft skills not only among adult professionals, but also across all generations, including the students at Al-Hidayah Orphanage. Skills such as effective communication, teamwork, leadership, emotional management, and creativity are now important aspects that must be possessed to adapt to the demands of the modern world of work and the challenges of life.

PkM activities at Al-Hidayah Orphanage are one of the efforts to develop soft skills in order to help students build stronger self-confidence and independence. With the implementation of this socialization activity, students at Al-Hidayah Orphanage are expected to have better readiness when entering the world of higher education or the world of work in the future. Soft skills training and development activities, such as simulations and coaching, provide skills that enable them to compete and contribute to society.

## **Disclosure statement**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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