

EdgeMind Program: Strengthening Growth Mindset and Motivation for Dropout Children at Lamandasini Foundation

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Abstract: The high dropout rate in Patimpeng District, Bone Regency, has resulted in limited access to quality education and low self-confidence among children. This condition requires a supportive approach to foster a growth mindset as an effort to build resilience and motivation. This study aims to implement the *EdgeMind* program at Lamandasini Foundation to strengthen children's self-confidence, motivation, and learning orientation. The method applied was the Participatory Action Learning System (PALS), consisting of three stages: awareness, participating, and scaffolding. The program involved 15 dropout children aged 7–12 years through activities such as motivation flashcards (Makkebbu), creative expression (Mabbicara), and monitoring sessions (Mappaccappu). The results showed that 90% of participants experienced an increase in self-confidence, demonstrated by their willingness to express ideas, participate in group discussions, and formulate life goals. Moreover, 85% of the facilitators improved their skills in guiding children. The program not only enhanced motivation and mindset transformation but also established sustainable collaboration with local government and educational institutions. In conclusion, *EdgeMind* contributes significantly to building inclusive education, strengthening human resources, and supporting SDG 4 on quality education.

Keywords: Growth Mindset, Self-Confidence, Dropout Children, Participatory Learning, Motivation.

Article History:

Received: 02-09-2025

Online : 04-10-2025



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A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia continues to face the challenge of school dropouts, particularly in rural areas. In Bone District, South Sulawesi, many children between the ages of 7 and 12 are at risk of discontinuing their education. One institution that supports these children is the Lamandasini Foundation, which provides informal learning activities for school dropouts. Children who drop out of school often show low learning motivation, lack of self-confidence, and a fixed mindset that limits their potential to grow. Psychosocial aspects such as growth mindset, self-confidence, and learning motivation are essential prerequisites for re-engagement in education. According to Dweck (2006), a *growth mindset* emphasizes that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort, strategies, and guidance.

Previous research also highlights the importance of psychosocial interventions. Afandi (2022) stresses the role of community-driven character education, while Hamzah et al. (2024) and Herlina et al. (2024) found that community participation significantly increases learning

motivation. Izzan (2023) further notes that self-confidence strongly contributes to students' academic success.

The EdgeMind program was designed to address these issues by applying the Participatory Action Learning System (PALS) approach. This initiative not only seeks to improve growth mindset, self-confidence, and learning motivation among dropout children, but also aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on Quality Education, national education priorities (*Asta Cita*), and the Community Literacy Movement (GERLIMAS). Thus, EdgeMind provides a local solution to the dropout problem while contributing to the broader national agenda of inclusive education.

B. METHOD

The EdgeMind program was implemented using the **Participatory Action Learning System (PALS)** approach, which emphasizes the active role of participants in every stage of learning. The intervention lasted for **four months** and involved **15 dropout children aged 7-12 years** along with teachers and facilitators from the Lamandasini Foundation.

The PALS approach consisted of three main phases:

1. Awareness

Identifying problems through focus group discussions (FGD), conducting baseline assessments (*Mappaisseng* and *Mappammula*), and raising awareness among children and facilitators.

2. Participating

Carrying out interactive activities such as training of trainers (*Mappangngaja*), inspirational movie sessions with reflections (*Mattiro*), motivational flashcard creation (*Makkebbu*), challenge room games (*Mallaga*), and art expression sessions (*Mabbicara*).

3. Scaffolding

Providing structured mentoring, organizing an exhibition and awarding day (*Mappasseddi*), and supporting continuous practice to strengthen the children's growth mindset, self-confidence, and learning motivation. Evaluation was conducted using observation sheets to monitor behavior and participation, as well as questionnaires to measure changes in growth mindset, self-confidence, and motivation before and after the program. All activities were designed to be participatory, child-friendly, and culturally relevant, ensuring that the intervention addressed both the psychosocial and educational needs of the participants.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Participation and Implementation of Activities

The EdgeMind program was successfully carried out through a series of stages with high participation rates from both children and facilitators. The implementation of activities ranged between **80-100%**, indicating strong engagement from the beneficiaries. Key activities included:

- a. *Mappaisseng* (FGD to identify problems and set commitments),
- b. *Mappammula* (pre-test and baseline mapping),
- c. *Mappangngaja* (training of trainers for facilitators),
- d. *Mattiro* (watching inspirational movies and reflection),
- e. *Makkebbu* (motivational flashcard creation),
- f. *Mallaga* (challenge room game),
- g. *Mabbicara* (art expression and public speaking),

h. *Mappasseddi* (exhibition and awarding day).

Table 1. Implementation of EdgeMind Activities

Stage/Agenda	Description	Achievement
Mappaisseng (FGD)	Identifying problems, initial commitment	100%
Mappammula (Pre-test)	Baseline mapping of mindset and motivation	90%
Mappangngaja (ToT)	Training for facilitators	100%
Mattiro	Inspirational movies & reflection	90%
Makkebbu	Motivational flashcards	85%
Mallaga	Challenge room game	80%
Mabbicara	Art expression & presentation	95%
Mappasseddi	Exhibition and awarding	100%

2. Changes in Growth Mindset, Self-Confidence, and Motivation

Observations and questionnaire results indicated significant improvements among the participants. Approximately **90% of the children** demonstrated better self-confidence, willingness to try new strategies, and persistence in facing challenges after the program. These changes show the effectiveness of activities that emphasize practice, reflection, and reinforcement of effort-based feedback.

3. Supporting Factors and Challenges

The success of the program was supported by:

- Active involvement of facilitators through training,
- Creative learning materials (motivational flashcards),
- Fun and culturally relevant activities (games and art).

Challenges included irregular attendance of some participants, limited learning facilities, and the need for continuous monitoring to sustain progress.

4. Discussion

The findings align with Dweck's (2006) theory of *growth mindset*, which highlights the role of effort and learning strategies in shaping children's beliefs about intelligence. Similar studies (Hamzah et al., 2024; Herlina et al., 2024) confirm that participatory and community-based approaches can significantly improve learning motivation. The results of EdgeMind therefore provide evidence that structured psychosocial interventions, when combined with creativity and cultural relevance, can help school dropouts re-engage in the learning process.

D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The EdgeMind program successfully improved the growth mindset, self-confidence, and learning motivation of dropout children at the Lamandasini Foundation. By applying the Participatory Action Learning System (PALS), participants became more engaged, persistent, and confident in facing learning challenges, with more than 90% showing improvement compared to the baseline. These results demonstrate that participatory and creative interventions can effectively support the psychosocial development of vulnerable children. To ensure sustainability, continuous mentoring and broader collaboration with schools, local authorities, and other stakeholders are recommended. Future research is encouraged to conduct long-term evaluations and adapt similar approaches in different educational contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to the Lamandasini Foundation, which served as the main community partner in this program, as well as to the village and district governments and the local education office for their continuous support. Appreciation is also extended to the facilitators and volunteers who actively guided the children, and to all participants who contributed their time and enthusiasm. This program was made possible through collective collaboration and commitment to improving the quality of education for dropout children.

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