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Implementasi Program Edukasi Fatherless di Era Digital Bagi Orang Tua di Desa Grinting Kecamatan Tulangan Kabupaten …

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COMMUNITY SERVICE ARTICLE

Farid et al.

Implementasi Program Edukasi *Fatherless* di Era Digital Bagi Orang Tua di Desa Grinting Kecamatan Tulangan Kabupaten Sidoarjo

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Articles Information	Abstrak
	Fenomena *fatherless* atau ketiadaan figur ayah dalam pengasuhan anak merupakan isu sosial yang semakin meningkat di tengah perkembangan teknologi digital. Kondisi ini tidak hanya memengaruhi keseimbangan emosional anak, tetapi juga memperlemah peran keluarga dalam menghadapi tantangan era digital. Berdasarkan fenomena tersebut, kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran dan kapasitas orang tua di Desa Grinting, Kecamatan Tulangan, Kabupaten Sidoarjo, melalui program Edukasi *Fatherless* di Era Digital. Metode pelaksanaan dilakukan secara luring (tatap muka langsung) selama bulan Agustus hingga September 2025, dengan empat tahapan utama: (1) observasi fenomena fatherless di masyarakat, (2) perencanaan dan penyusunan materi edukasi, (3) sosialisasi dan pelatihan kepada orang tua, serta (4) evaluasi dan tindak lanjut program. Kegiatan diikuti oleh 40 peserta yang terdiri atas orang tua, guru, dan kader PKK. Hasil pelaksanaan menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam pengetahuan, sikap, dan keterampilan peserta dalam mendampingi anak di dunia digital. Orang tua menjadi lebih mampu menerapkan komunikasi positif, mengontrol penggunaan gawai, dan memahami pentingnya kehadiran ayah dalam perkembangan anak. Sebagai hasil keberlanjutan, terbentuk kelompok Orang Tua Peduli Digital yang berfungsi sebagai wadah belajar dan berbagi praktik pengasuhan. Kegiatan ini membuktikan bahwa pendekatan partisipatif dan kontekstual dapat menjadi strategi efektif dalam memperkuat ketahanan keluarga dan mengurangi dampak fatherless di era digital.

Kata kunci: *Fatherless*, Edukasi Digital, Peran Ayah, Pengasuhan, Pengabdian Masyarakat |
| | **Abstract** |
| | The phenomenon of fatherlessness—the absence of a father figure in child-rearing—has become an increasing social issue in the digital era. This condition not only affects children's emotional balance but also weakens the family's role in facing digital challenges. In response, this community service program aimed to enhance the awareness and parenting capacity of parents in Grinting Village, Tulangan District, Sidoarjo Regency through the Fatherless Education Program in the Digital Era. The implementation was carried out offline (face-to-face) from August to September 2025 through four main stages: (1) observation of fatherless phenomena in the community, (2) planning and preparation of educational materials, (3) socialization and training for parents, and (4) evaluation and program follow-up. A total of 40 participants—including parents, teachers, and women community group members—took part in the activities. The results indicated a significant improvement in participants' knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to digital parenting. Parents became more capable of applying positive communication, supervising gadget use, and understanding the importance of the father's presence in children's development. Moreover, a community group called Digital Parenting Care was established as a platform for sharing and sustaining parenting practices. This program demonstrates that a participatory and contextual approach can serve as an effective strategy to strengthen family resilience and reduce the social impact of fatherlessness in the digital era.

Keywords: Fatherless, Digital Education, Father's Role, Parenting, Community Service |

1. INTRODUCTION

The family serves as the primary foundation for shaping a child's character and psychosocial well-being. However, in some cases, the condition of fatherlessness, he absence of a father figure either physically or emotionally—has become a phenomenon that disrupts family stability. Studies show that children from fatherless families are vulnerable to psychological problems, loneliness, low self-esteem, and even tendencies toward internet addiction (Widyaningsih et al., 2021). In today's digital era, the role of parents has become increasingly complex as new challenges arise from online environments, social media, and digital lifestyles. When parents are not prepared to manage these pressures, fatherlessness may be exacerbated by the negative influences of the digital world on children. Therefore, adaptive educational interventions that are relevant to the digital context are needed so that families can remain strong and supportive of children's development. This program was initiated as a direct response to that need, particularly in Grinting Village, Tulangan District, Sidoarjo Regency. In this area, several parents have expressed difficulty in providing digital guidance to their children, especially when the father figure is absent. Hence, educational programs tailored to the local context are essential as a form of family empowerment.

The digital era has transformed the ways we interact, access information, and shape parenting patterns. Parents today not only face real-world challenges but must also understand social media, online content, and digital literacy skills in order to guide their children effectively. Meta-analysis research suggests that digital-based parenting interventions significantly improve parents' self-efficacy and social support, and can reduce symptoms of depression (Lin-Lewry et al., 2024). In addition, other studies show that online parental education facilitates more adaptive parenting practices, particularly among low-income families (Novianti et al., 2023). However, the success of digital parenting programs largely depends on parents' readiness, both in terms of technical skills and internal motivation. In Indonesia, the 2023 UNICEF survey on Online Knowledge and Practices of Parents and Children indicates that although internet access is relatively high, many parents still lack sufficient digital literacy to accompany their children online (UNICEF, 2023). For this reason, developing structured and accessible digital education programs has become an urgent need.

The phenomenon of fatherlessness is often not fully understood by many parents, especially within the digital context. Widyaningsih and colleagues (2021) found that fatherlessness is associated with internet addiction, suicidal tendencies, and learning difficulties among students. This shows that beyond its psychological impact, the digital sphere becomes an additional pathway through which the risks of fatherlessness may expand. In this context, parents need educational support that bridges their understanding of fatherlessness and strategies for responding to digital challenges. Without intervention, children from fatherless families are more vulnerable to entering harmful online environments. In rural areas such as Grinting, access to information may be limited, so digital education programs must be accompanied by offline media to ensure inclusion for parents who are less familiar with technology. Through a hybrid approach (digital and in-person), parents are expected to follow the program more easily and experience its benefits directly. This service program was designed to fill that gap—presenting sensitive

material about fatherlessness while strengthening parents' digital literacy.

Parents are the central actors in shaping a healthy family environment, although they sometimes face limitations in educating their children, particularly in fatherless households. In the era of Society 5.0, parents are required not only to be caregivers but also careful digital mediators (Asep et al., 2024). If parents are unable to keep up with the rapid advancement of technology, they risk losing their role as guides for their children in the digital world. Research on parents' digital competence shows that such competence correlates with the effectiveness of digital parenting (Rahayu et al., 2021). Furthermore, Fidan (2023) demonstrates a positive relationship between digital parenting self-efficacy and supportive attitudes toward digital parenting practices (Fidan & Olur, 2023). This indicates that educational programs must not only deliver content but also build parents' confidence to apply the knowledge in daily life. Therefore, this program focuses not only on instructional materials but also on hands-on training so that parents feel capable. In Grinting Village, geographical conditions and local culture must be considered to ensure the program does not feel overly general or disconnected from participants' lived experiences.

In community service, sustainability and local relevance are essential. If educational programs are conducted once and then discontinued, the impact will be temporary. For that reason, this PKM program adopts a model that enables parents to independently transfer knowledge after the program ends. A "training-of-trainers" model becomes one strategy to ensure the program continues through local community members. Additionally, the use of digital media-such as online modules, WhatsApp groups, or short educational videos-helps parents access materials flexibly at any time. However, it must also be noted that not all parents have equal access or comfort in using technology; therefore, in-person assistance remains necessary. This aligns with research findings showing that digital parenting interventions combined with face-to-face orientation tend to be more effective (Lin-Lewry et al., 2024). In Grinting Village, community leaders, teachers, and village volunteers can serve as local facilitators to maintain sustainability. Through participatory approaches, parents are actively involved in determining how the education will continue according to their needs.

Several operational challenges must be anticipated early to ensure that the education program runs effectively. First, disparities in internet access and device availability among parents become a major barrier. UNICEF's 2023 survey indicates that although internet access in Indonesia is high, gaps in digital skills across households remain significant. Second, resistance to topics related to fatherlessness may arise due to social taboos or the perception that it is a "private family matter." Therefore, educational material must be presented sensitively and communicatively. Third, parents' daily responsibilities may make it difficult for them to attend regular educational sessions, so modules must be flexible and reusable. Fourth, parents' internal motivation must be maintained-if they see the material as irrelevant, participation may decline. Fifth, the skills of local facilitators must be strengthened to avoid dependence on external teams. All of these challenges must be considered for evaluation and adaptation throughout the program.

Theoretically, several conceptual frameworks support the implementation of this educational program. Social learning theory emphasizes that knowledge and behavior can be learned through observation,

imitation, and interaction (Bandura). In this context, parents who participate in the program can observe examples of healthy digital parenting and apply them in their families. The concept of digital parenting readiness explains that parents' readiness (knowledge, attitudes, skills) determines the success of digital interventions (Zhao et al., 2023). Digital intervention models in parenting also highlight that combining instructional materials, social support, and digital interaction can strengthen outcomes (Lin-Lewry et al., 2024). Evaluation frameworks should include input (resources and materials), process (implementation), output (knowledge and attitudes), and outcomes (behavioral changes among parents). With these theoretical foundations, the program is designed to ensure both practical relevance and academic validity.

Grinting Village was chosen strategically due to its social and geographic characteristics. Many parents in this village have limited access to educational resources outside the area and rely on digital media as an alternative source of information. Preliminary observations revealed that some parents expressed confusion when their children spent long periods online without guidance or supervision. Additionally, the village has active community leaders and local institutions, providing strong opportunities for collaboration. Teachers, health-post volunteers, and village staff can be optimized as facilitators. The village's proximity to the district center also eases visits from program teams. Thus, the program can be implemented in a hybrid format: face-to-face sessions for areas with limited online access and online modules for those who are more flexible.

The main objective of this program is to improve parents' knowledge, attitudes, and skills in addressing fatherlessness through digital education, while ensuring that the program can be sustained by the local community. Specifically, the program aims to: (1) provide understanding of the impacts of fatherlessness, (2) deliver adaptive digital parenting techniques, (3) train parents to serve as community education ambassadors, and (4) develop accessible digital learning media. Evaluation will be conducted using pre- and post-tests as well as in-depth interviews after implementation. In the long term, families in Grinting Village are expected to independently apply adaptive parenting practices in the digital era, reducing the negative effects of fatherlessness on children. The results of this program are also expected to be replicated in other villages with similar characteristics.

Through the implementation of this educational program, meaningful transformation in parenting practices is expected to emerge in Grinting Village. When parents become more confident in guiding their children in the digital world, the negative effects of fatherlessness can be mitigated. This educational initiative is not merely a knowledge transfer, but a form of empowerment that encourages parents to become agents of change in their community. The program also opens opportunities for collaboration with educational institutions, religious organizations, and village government to strengthen sustainability. In the future, the evaluation findings and reflections from this program may serve as the basis for policy recommendations at the village or district level in the areas of family and digital education. Thus, this service article not only reports an activity but also offers practical, adaptive solutions for addressing fatherlessness in the digital era.

2. METHOD

This Community Service Program (PKM) was carried out offline (face-to-face) in Grinting Village, Tulangan District, Sidoarjo Regency. The program took place from August to September 2025 and involved local community members, particularly parents with school-aged children from elementary to junior high levels. The implementation method consisted of four stages: (1) the initial phase (observation), (2) the planning phase, (3) the socialization phase, and (4) the program evaluation and sustainability phase. These stages were designed to ensure that the activities proceeded systematically, measurably, and produced sustainable impact for the target community. The offline approach was chosen because it enabled more effective communication, fostered emotional closeness between the service team and the community, and aligned with the social characteristics of Grinting Village, whose residents are more responsive to direct interaction.

The first stage was the initial phase, which involved field observation to identify the phenomenon of fatherlessness in the digital era and its impact on families in Grinting Village. Observations were conducted by examining family interaction patterns, children's daily activities, and digital media usage habits among parents and their children. The implementation team also conducted informal interviews with several parents, community leaders, and teachers to explore their perspectives on the role of fathers in childcare. The findings revealed that many parents struggled to control their children's digital activities due to limited time and technological knowledge. This condition reinforced the need for an educational program that not only provides knowledge but also practical skills to address parenting challenges in the digital era. These observation results served as the foundation for designing the next stages.

The second stage was the planning phase, which involved formulating goals, themes, and activity designs based on the field observations. During this phase, the team developed the "Digital-Era Fatherlessness Education Program for Parents," focusing on increasing awareness and strengthening digital-literacy-based parenting skills. The activity plan was structured through a participatory approach, allowing the community to help determine the schedule, activity format, and appropriate learning media. The team also prepared printed educational modules, visual posters, and simple guideline sheets containing tips for family communication and effective digital supervision. In addition, short educational videos were produced as supporting materials for the socialization phase. This thorough planning ensured that the program would run effectively, inclusively, and according to the social conditions of Grinting Village.

The third stage was the socialization phase, which marked the direct implementation of the education program for the community. The activities were conducted at the Grinting Village Hall and involved village officials, PKK women's group cadres, teachers, and parents. The socialization consisted of interactive face-to-face training that delivered material on the importance of the father's role in the family, effective parent-child communication, and parenting strategies in the digital era. The delivery method combined lectures, group discussions, and case simulations, enabling participants to better understand the material in a concrete manner. The service team also demonstrated real-life applications through role-play scenarios

depicting common situations in households. Participants showed high enthusiasm, evident from their active engagement in asking questions and sharing personal experiences. This phase became the core of the program because it was where the actual transfer of knowledge and parenting values took place.

The fourth stage was the evaluation and sustainability phase, conducted after the completion of all socialization activities. The evaluation assessed two aspects: process evaluation and outcome evaluation. Process evaluation was conducted by observing participants' engagement during the activities, while outcome evaluation was done by comparing participants' understanding before and after the program using simple questionnaires and reflective interviews. The results indicated a significant increase in parents' awareness of the importance of the father's role and their skills in supervising their children's digital activities. As a follow-up initiative, a "digital-care parent group" was established as a forum for sharing experiences and maintaining program continuity. Village officials and community leaders were also involved in facilitating the group's regular meetings. Thus, this PKM initiative not only provided education but also evolved into a sustainable community-level social movement. The implementation method of these activities is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Flow of community service program implementation

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of the Fatherless Education Program in the Digital Era in Grinting Village received a positive response from both the community and the village government. The activities were carried out from August to September 2025, involving residents, PKK women's group members, and village officials. The offline approach proved effective because it facilitated direct interaction, which strengthened two-way communication between facilitators and participants. This program served as an initial step in building collective awareness that a father's presence greatly influences a child's character formation and the family's emotional stability. Field observations revealed that the fatherless phenomenon in Grinting Village was not solely caused by divorce or death, but also by fathers who frequently worked outside the region. Many children grew up with a father who was economically present but emotionally absent. This

aligns with findings by Rachmah and Susilo (2022), who explain that fatherlessness in Indonesia tends to be "sociological," rather than biological—fathers are physically present but not emotionally engaged. This situation is worsened by parents' limited digital literacy, which results in children spending more time interacting with gadgets than with their parents. Children in this village typically spend 3–5 hours per day on mobile phones without supervision. This condition highlights the need for digital education for parents so they can guide children toward positive technological use (Rahayu et al., 2021). Observations also revealed weak family communication and a lack of shared activities, which form the root of many related problems.

The planning stage became a crucial foundation for the program's success. During this phase, the community service team involved local leaders and parent representatives in determining the schedule, location, and method of implementation. This participatory approach ensured that the community felt included in decision-making, thereby increasing their sense of ownership toward the program. Consistent with Pratiwi and Handayani (2022), community involvement in the planning process enhances program sustainability because residents feel like active agents of change rather than passive recipients. The team also prepared printed modules and simple visual materials to accommodate participants' varying literacy levels. This community-based empowerment approach successfully fostered a harmonious relationship between the program team and the residents, while strengthening social trust.

The educational content was developed around four main themes: (1) understanding the fatherless phenomenon and its impact on children, (2) effective family communication, (3) parenting in the digital era, and (4) strategies for strengthening father–child attachment. The materials were created using an andragogical approach to suit adult learners (Knowles et al., 2020). Each session included group discussions, case simulations, and personal reflection. This strategy allowed participants not only to receive theoretical knowledge but also to learn from one another's experiences. The use of simple media such as posters and short educational videos enhanced participants' visual understanding. This visual-auditory approach aligns with research by Nugraha et al. (2021), which found that experience-based and visual learning methods improve knowledge retention in community outreach programs.

The educational stage in Grinting Village became a significant milestone in the program's implementation. A total of 43 participants attended and actively engaged in discussions throughout the activities. They showed strong enthusiasm, especially when discussing communication patterns with their children and challenges in controlling gadget use. One key outcome of this session was the collective realization that fatherlessness not only affects children emotionally but also influences their digital behavior. This reinforces the findings of Lin-Lewry et al. (2024), which state that digital parenting education effectively increases parents' confidence and improves family communication patterns. Participants also acknowledged the importance of balancing control and open dialogue when guiding children in their digital activities. Their active involvement reflected the success of the experiential learning method applied during the program.

Figure 2. Implementation of the educational program in grinting village

The evaluation results showed a significant increase in parents' understanding after participating in the program. Based on the pre- and post-activity questionnaires, 85% of participants demonstrated improved comprehension regarding the father's role and the importance of family digital literacy. Prior to the program, most participants viewed digital supervision merely as restricting children from using mobile phones. However, after the training, they understood the importance of accompanying children in their online activities, recognizing risky content, and teaching digital ethics. These findings align with Fidan and Olur (2023), who emphasize that increased digital parenting self-efficacy can strengthen the emotional bond between parents and children. The program also enhanced parents' confidence to be more actively involved in shaping their children's character through healthy digital interactions.

In addition to knowledge improvement, the program resulted in positive changes in participants' attitudes. Many parents—particularly fathers—began allocating time to talk with their children about their online activities. This phenomenon indicates that a direct and experiential approach is effective in fostering reflective awareness. In post-activity interviews, several fathers admitted feeling closer to their children after applying the communication strategies introduced during the training. This reinforces Bandura's social learning theory (as cited in Zhao et al., 2023), which explains that social behavior change can occur through observation and imitation of positive behavior models. Such an approach has proven effective in transforming the perception of the father's role—from solely an economic provider to an active guiding figure in their children's digital lives.

Figure 3. Enthusiasm during the educational activities in grinting village

As a follow-up outcome, participants established the Digital-Aware Parent Group, which serves as a forum for sharing experiences and providing informal peer consultation. The group is facilitated by PKK representatives and village officials, with the community service team acting as technical mentors. This initiative reflects strong program sustainability. Such community formation aligns with the community-based literacy model (Rohmah et al., 2021), which emphasizes sustainability through horizontal social support among residents. Within this group, parents routinely share best practices related to supervising children's digital activities and have even begun planning future initiatives, such as creating a family literacy corner at the village hall. Thus, the impact of the program extends beyond educational activities, evolving into an independent social movement.

A key factor contributing to the success of this program was the synergy between the implementation team, participants, and village authorities. Support from the village head and the involvement of community leaders strengthened the legitimacy of the activities in the eyes of local residents. Additionally, the use of interactive face-to-face methods enabled participants to learn naturally through discussions and hands-on practice. The evaluation revealed that success was reflected not only in increased knowledge but also in behavioral changes among participants. This aligns with Novianti et al. (2023), who argue that the success of family education programs depends greatly on active participant engagement and the relevance of the material to their daily lives. The collaborative approach and integration of local cultural context were crucial in ensuring that the program was well received and adopted by the community.

Overall, the Fatherless Education Program in the Digital Era proved to have a positive impact on the residents of Grinting Village. The activities not only increased parents' awareness of the father's role and digital literacy but also strengthened social solidarity at the community level. The program demonstrates that the issue of fatherlessness can be addressed educationally through a sensitive, communicative, and simple technology-based approach. Its practical implication is the importance of integrating family education, digital literacy, and community empowerment into every community service initiative. Moving forward, this program model can be replicated in other villages with appropriate local adaptations, particularly in semi-urban communities facing similar challenges. To ensure long-term sustainability, cross-sector collaboration among academics, local government, and civil society organizations needs to be strengthened so that digital parenting literacy becomes part of an ongoing social movement (UNICEF, 2023).

4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Fatherless Education Program in the Digital Era in Grinting Village, Tulangan District, Sidoarjo Regency, successfully generated a positive impact on parents' understanding and awareness regarding the importance of the father's presence in child-rearing amid the challenges of the digital era. Conducted offline through the stages of observation, planning, socialization, and evaluation, the program produced tangible changes in participants' attitudes and knowledge. Parents who initially had

limited understanding of digital parenting now demonstrate improved ability to accompany their children, monitor gadget use, and establish more effective communication within the family. In addition, the program fostered a sense of collective engagement through the formation of the Digital-Aware Parent Group as a forum for continued education. This initiative demonstrates that a participatory and contextual approach based on local needs can serve as an effective strategy for addressing complex social issues such as fatherlessness in the digital era.

To ensure that the program's impact continues to grow, ongoing support from the village government, educational institutions, and universities as partner facilitators is essential. Moving forward, similar initiatives should be developed in the form of advanced training or integrated into village programs, such as family literacy and digital-based character education. Furthermore, collaboration with religious leaders and village youth can expand the reach of the educational efforts and reinforce the role-modeling values associated with fatherhood. For academics and practitioners, this implementation model can be replicated in other regions with local contextual adjustments to address similar issues. Thus, this community service program not only addresses short-term concerns but also contributes to sustainable social development by strengthening the role of families in the digital era.

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