

Goal Setting Training to Improve Future Orientation in the “The Lost Boys” Community

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to determine the effectiveness of goal setting training in improving future orientation among the youth community known as “The Lost Boys” in Randutatah Village, Paiton District, Probolinggo Regency. The method used is psychological intervention with a participatory training approach through five sessions, namely opening, future inspiration, self-potential exploration, goal setting, and closing. The results of the study showed positive changes in the participants after attending the training, where they began to be able to recognize their potential, set short-term and long-term goals, and show increased motivation and productive behavior such as reducing risky behavior, stopping alcohol consumption, and being active in social activities. This training also helped participants understand the importance of having a clear direction in life and responsibility for the future. Overall, goal setting training has proven to be effective as a psychological intervention strategy for shaping a positive future orientation, increasing self-awareness, and fostering a commitment to change in at-risk adolescents. Implementation can be enhanced through continuous mentoring, collaboration with community leaders, and integration into youth empowerment programs to sustain behavioral change. Future efforts should expand participation, involve family and peers, and use digital media for ongoing motivation and goal tracking. This study provides a novel community-based application of goal-setting training among at-risk rural youth in Indonesia, a population rarely addressed in previous intervention research.

Keywords: Training, Goal Setting, Future Orientation.



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INTRODUCTION

Youth represent a critical developmental stage characterized by the transition from dependence to autonomy, where individuals begin to form identities, values, and aspirations that shape their future roles in society. According to developmental psychology, this period is marked by the exploration of

purpose and life direction. According to Law Number 40 of 2009 concerning youth, article 1 paragraph (1), youth are defined as “Indonesian citizens who are entering an important period of growth and development, aged 16 (sixteen) to 30 (thirty) years old” (Kesekretariatan RI, 2009). Based on the above definition, it can be concluded that youth are people aged 16-30 who have shown signs of biological maturity. The participation of the younger generation in development must be in line with national ideals. In this environment, the younger generation is expected to take an effective part in pioneering community efforts among the younger generation itself (Samuels et al., 2023).

Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation No. 114 of 2014 concerning Guidelines for Village Development, Article 6 mandates the capacity building of communities, including youth groups. The youth referred to are those aged 16-30 years, both married and unmarried (RI, 2014). Young people, who are considered to be the future leaders and heirs to the nation's ideals, need to prepare themselves to become cadres of the nation so that they remain a racially diverse, virtuous generation with skills and a sense of responsibility for the future. This is because the role of the younger generation is very important, as they know what the needs and desires of the community are, and young people have greater opportunities to participate in village development. In youth participation, it is necessary to form a youth organization with objectives that can be useful for village development. Although there has been a long debate between practitioners and theorists regarding organizations as a fundamental instrument for participation, it can be argued that the difference between organizations and participation lies in the essence of organizational forms as a means for participation, such as organizations that are commonly formed as a result of participation (Yamane & Kaneko, 2021). In the process of development, community participation is very much needed, especially that of young people, who have a great responsibility on their shoulders because they are the successors of the previous generation. Whether they have dropped out of school or are still studying, are already working or are unemployed, young people must be able to provide new breakthroughs (Liu-Lastres et al., 2025). To achieve this goal, the younger generation must be able to provide creative ideas and innovations to advance development in the village in both physical and non-physical forms. Furthermore, in implementing community participation, especially among young people, this can be done through several dimensions, namely contributions of ideas, contributions of materials (funds, goods, tools), and contributions of labor (working or employing workers) (Bakare et al., 2023).

Randutatah Village is one of the villages in the Paiton District, Probolinggo Regency, East Java. Access and mobility for the people of Randutatah Village are relatively easy and smooth. Randutatah Village is located 5 km from the Paiton district, which can be reached by motor vehicle in approximately 45 minutes. If traveling by non-motorized vehicle, it takes about 1 hour. Meanwhile, the distance to the regency capital is 45 km and can be reached by vehicle in approximately 1 hour. Most of the people in this village work as farmers, fishermen, and manage shrimp and salt ponds. This village has a group of people who are very disturbing to the local residents, as these members often cause disturbances but no one admits or takes responsibility for their actions. They also consume alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs, making them easily provoked. These members lack clear life goals, motivation, and social support, and they depend on the community. When they have problems with others, it often leads to conflicts between villages.

Nurmi, states that future orientation is an individual's view of the future based on patterns, attitudes, and assumptions from past experiences that are integrated with the environment, resulting in future expectations and shaping one's will and self-perception regarding things that will happen in the future (Fadhilla et al., 2021; Lin et al., 2022; Rydell & Brocki, 2024). Meanwhile, (Seginer, 2022) argues that future orientation is all future interests that serve as a basis for individuals in deciding their future by setting goals and making plans for their future. Seginer (2009) also says that there is research showing that adolescents' future desires in the areas of career, education, and family life are significantly influenced by their life experiences.

In this community, the symptoms that appear are a lack of desire to do anything useful, such as helping parents with work, a lack of social support from parents and the local community, a preference for hanging out and gathering with friends, not continuing their education and not trying to find work because some of their diplomas are being held by the school, so they only rely on seasonal work in the village, namely the chili harvest season, which does not require a diploma or special skills. They consider this situation to be comfortable and allows them to live their days without any specific plans for the future, causing members of this community to spend their time smoking and drinking alcohol.

There are several ways to improve future orientation, namely (1) Individual counseling, (2) Parent counseling, (3) Training (Novita et al., 2025; Sendayu et al., 2025). The researchers chose training because most adolescents have a short attention span and their actions are substantially shaped by their interactions with their peers. To improve future orientation, according to (Chua et al., 2015), interventions should focus on improving the ability to set goals and make appropriate plans to achieve them. This process can be carried out through goal setting. Therefore, the chosen intervention is “Goal Setting” training. Goal setting training can improve a person's ability to set goals, increase motivation, make plans, engage in self-regulated learning, and provide feedback. Goal setting training is one method that can be used to improve adolescents' future orientation. As stated in a study conducted by (Zakariyya & Koentjoro, 2019), goal setting training can improve the future orientation of junior high school students. Goal setting training is a training program designed to teach skills in designing and setting goals effectively so that these goals can be achieved (Swann et al., 2021).

Basic of goal setting theory is to encourage individuals to strive to achieve their goals (Locke & Latham, 2002). Specific goals with a certain level of difficulty will motivate individuals to work harder than specific goals with an easy level of difficulty, thereby encouraging individuals to do their best in achieving their goals (Collins et al., 2023). Through goal setting training, individuals can maximize the stages of developing a future orientation because the benefits of goal setting include providing internal reinforcement of an individual's personal abilities, helping to determine clear goals and directions for what to achieve, fostering motivation in directing actions to achieve dreams and ambitions, and measuring achievements (Islam et al., 2023; Janasz & Forret, 2008).

Based on the above explanation, this study aims to determine the effectiveness of goal setting training on the future orientation of the “lost boys” village youth community. Therefore, the researcher developed this goal setting training program with the aim of helping village youth improve their future orientation so that they can be more focused on achieving their future goals. By using this training

method, it is hoped that community members will be able to determine their life goals, make plans, and evaluate the plans they have made so that they can be more focused on achieving their life goals. This study fills a gap in the literature by implementing goal setting training as a community-based psychological intervention for at-risk adolescents in rural Indonesia, a population rarely examined in goal-setting research. Unlike previous goal-setting interventions conducted in formal educational settings, this study introduces a novel community-based psychological training for high-risk rural youth, demonstrating its applicability beyond classroom contexts.

METHOD

The method used in this study was a qualitative participatory approach, which emphasizes active involvement of participants in the intervention process to explore their experiences, perceptions, and behavioral changes related to future orientation (Azwar, 2015). The research was conducted in Randutatah Village, Paiton District, Probolinggo Regency, East Java. This study employed a qualitative participatory intervention design involving 25 participants. Data were collected through observation and interviews, and triangulated with reports from community leaders. Ethical approval was obtained from Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya. The intervention design is as follows:

Table 1. Assessment Design

No	Type of Assessment	Purpose of Assessment	Parties Involved
1	Observation	To understand the physical, psychological, behavioral, and psychological disorder tendencies experienced by the community.	Trainer, local community, neighborhood association, and community members
2	Interview	To gather data on anxiety complaints, life history, and other information related to the community.	Trainer, local community, neighborhood association, and community members

The training implementation plan is as follows:

Table 2. Training Plan

Session	Activity	Duration	Objective	Activity Details
I	Opening	20 minutes	Build rapport and explain the training that will be conducted.	1. Introduction. 2. Explanation of the training that will be conducted. 3. Agree on the training rules.
II	Future Inspiration	90 minutes	Providing an understanding of the importance of having a future orientation and goal setting	1. Material on the importance of future orientation and material on goal setting and the SMART method. 2. Reflection on future orientation. 3. Completing worksheet 1 (I want to become).
	Ice Breaking I	15 minutes	Eliminating boredom and fatigue	Games

Session	Activity	Duration	Objective	Activity Details
III	Exploring your potential	45 Minutes	Participants can recognize their potential so they can achieve their future goals.	1. Complete worksheet 2 (about myself). 2. Reflect on worksheet 2 (about myself).
Rest Prayer Meal				
	Ice Breaking II	15 Minutes	Bringing participants back into focus	Games
IV	Designing Goal setting	120 minutes	Participants can make plans for their future.	1. Develop plans by completing worksheet 3 (My Long-Term Plan) and worksheet 4 (My Short-Term Plan). 2. Reflect on the plans that have been made.
V	Closing	30 minutes	Participants can commit to implementing the goal setting they have created.	1. Closing and review of the material. 2. The trainer encourages participants to implement the plans they have created.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The training implementation is as follows:

Table 3. Training Implementation

Session	Date	Objective	Target	Result
I (Opening)	28 May 2023	Build rapport and explain the training that will be conducted.	1.Introduction and explanation of the training that will be conducted. 2.Agree on the training rules.	1. community members agree to participate in the training activities. 2. community members understand the training program.
II (Future Orientation)	28 May 2023	Providing an understanding of the importance of having a future orientation	1.Material on the importance of future orientation and material on goal setting and the SMART method. 2.Reflection on future orientation. 3.Completing a worksheet (I want to become).	1. Community members listen to and pay attention to the material presented by the trainer. 2. Community members understand future orientation. 3. Community members have not yet written down their specific aspirations and the competencies needed to achieve them. The trainer helps provide guidance so

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Session	Date	Objective	Target	Result
				that members can write down their specific aspirations.
Ice breaking 1	28 May 2023	Eliminating boredom and fatigue	Playing games to make up words	Community members feel happy and enjoy the games provided.
III (Exploring Potential)	28 May 2023	Participants can recognize their potential so that they can achieve their future goals.	1.Complete worksheet 2 (about myself). 2.Reflect on Worksheet 2 (about myself).	Community members recognize their strengths and weaknesses but lack awareness of the competencies needed to achieve their aspirations, which the trainer facilitates through guided understanding.
Ice breaking 2	28 May 2023	Bringing participants back into focus	Games (Ekstravet Sarung)	Community members felt happy and enjoyed the games that were provided.
IV (Designing Goal Setting)	28 May 2023	Participants can make plans for their future.	1.Develop plans by completing worksheet 3 (My Long-Term Plan) and worksheet 4 (My Short-Term Plan) 2.Reflect on the plans that have been made.	1. Community members are still confused about how to properly create short-term and long-term plans. 2. The trainer assists and guides community members in distinguishing between short-term and long-term plans and aligning them with the aspirations they have written down.
V Closing/Termination)	28 May 2023	Participants can commit to implementing the goal setting that has been created and express their appreciation for the participants' willingness to attend the goal setting training.	1.Closing and review of material. The trainer motivates participants to implement the goal setting that has been created.	1. Community members are able to remember the material provided by the trainer and begin to understand how to properly plan for the future.

The results of the training are as follows:

Table 4. Training Results

Before Intervention	After Intervention
Members of the “lost boys” community had a low future orientation, such as feeling pessimistic, lacking motivation, and being indifferent to risky behaviors such as juvenile delinquency, smoking, alcohol, and illegal drugs.	Members of this community began to feel motivated by the training provided, such as realizing their abilities, gaining confidence, and starting to think about the risky behaviors they had been engaging in by stopping alcohol and drug consumption.
Members of this community did not have any specific activities and did not think about the future, did not know their purpose in life, and did not think about plans for the future.	Members of this community began to carry out activities in stages that had been created and understood by community members for their future, such as diligently practicing volleyball, saving money to buy mechanical equipment, and expanding their knowledge through the internet.

Based on the training conducted, the trainer assessed the community members by observing and interviewing the community leader, neighborhood association leader, local residents, and village treasurer. The assessment was conducted while the community members were playing volleyball together at the nearest school field. There were a few obstacles during the training, as the community members were unable to specify their goals and were unable to make proper plans for the future. Therefore, the trainer had to help each member understand, but it did not take long after being given examples for each of their goals for the community members to be able to write them down properly.

The trainer asked the members of this community to commit to implementing the goal setting that had been made in order to have a good orientation and improve their future. The trainer also asked the local community, neighborhood association, and village treasurer to continue training the youth organization by inviting all members to fill out the pocketbooks that the trainer had provided for goal setting under the guidance of the youth organization leader, who currently has a business (tailoring) that is suitable for the job.

The results of the study show that before the intervention, members of “The Lost Boys” community had a low future orientation. They tended to be pessimistic, lacked motivation to change, and were indifferent to their risky behaviors, such as juvenile delinquency, smoking, alcohol consumption, and illegal drug use. This condition illustrates a low level of self-awareness regarding life goals and a clear direction for the future. This is in line with the future orientation theory proposed by (Nurmi, 1989), which states that individuals with low future orientation usually do not have concrete plans, lack positive expectations, and do not have strategies to achieve their goals.

After the goal setting training was given, there was a notable change in the mindset and behavior of community members. They began to realize their potential, grew in confidence, and became motivated to improve themselves. Goal setting training helped community members recognize their personal

values and connect their short-term and long-term goals through enhanced self-regulation and intrinsic motivation. Consistent with findings by (Hudig et al., 2025) and (Yu & McLellan, 2020), this study extends goal-setting theory by demonstrating its applicability in non-formal, communitybased interventions among marginalized youth.

This is in line with (Hudig et al., 2023) opinion that goal setting can increase individual motivation and performance because it provides clear direction, focus, and standards for action. The positive impact of the training was also evident in the behavioral changes of community members, who began to reduce or even stop negative habits, such as consuming alcohol and illegal drugs (Mertens et al., 2022; Suud et al., 2023). The reflection process in the training helped them understand the consequences of each action and encouraged them to choose healthier and more productive behaviors. These results indicate that goal-setting training not only affects cognitive aspects (understanding and planning) but also affective and behavioral aspects (motivation and concrete actions). This shows that a goal-based intervention approach can be an effective strategy in shaping positive behavior in at-risk youth groups (Kholifah et al., 2023; Yu & McLellan, 2020).

In addition, this training also had an impact on the activities and social involvement of community members. After the intervention, they began to engage in purposeful activities such as practicing music and utilizing internet technology to broaden their knowledge (Noskeu et al., 2021; Peng & Zhang, 2022). These activities show that goal-setting training can foster a sense of responsibility for the future and encourage individuals to take concrete steps toward achieving their goals. This change reinforces (Bandura, 1991) theory of self-regulation, which explains that individuals with clear goals will independently regulate their behavior to achieve the desired results.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that goal setting training is effective in improving the future orientation of members of “The Lost Boys” community. Through a learning process involving reflection, discussion, and direct practice, participants were able to understand the importance of having life goals and how to achieve them. The changes that occurred after the intervention showed improvements in motivation, positive behavior, and a clearer direction in life. Thus, it can be concluded that goal setting training-based interventions have the potential to be applied more widely to other communities with similar problems, in order to help them build a more focused and meaningful future. This underscores the novelty of applying goal-setting training beyond institutional education, showing its adaptability to rural psychosocial contexts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the training, it can be concluded that goal setting training is effective in improving the future orientation of members of “The Lost Boys” community, offering a novel application of goal-setting theory within a community-based psychological intervention and contributing to the understanding of self-regulation and motivation processes among at-risk rural youth. Through this training, participants showed positive changes in both their mindset and behavior, such as increased motivation, self-confidence, and awareness of the importance of having clear life

goals. Participants also began to avoid risky behaviors and switch to more productive activities such as exercising, saving money, and expanding their knowledge through the internet. These results prove that training-based psychological interventions can foster self-awareness, motivate behavioral change, and shape more focused and realistic future planning.

However, this study has several limitations, including a limited number of participants from only one community, meaning that the results cannot be generalized to a wider population. In addition, the intervention process was only carried out for a short period of time without long-term follow-up to assess the sustainability of behavioral changes. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies expand the sample size, involve different communities, and include follow-up evaluation sessions to monitor the consistency of changes in future orientation, while also examining potential causal pathways and integrating other motivational constructs such as self-efficacy or intrinsic motivation to deepen theoretical understanding of how goal setting influences long-term behavioral change. In addition, the community and village leaders are expected to continue similar activities on an ongoing basis so that goal-setting training can continue to be applied as a strategy for empowering young people to build a better future. Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature by extending goal-setting training into community psychology contexts. It offers a new intervention framework adaptable to rural youth empowerment programs in developing countries.

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