



## Empowering Moral Resilience: Psychoeducational Approaches in Disaster-Affected Communities

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### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 2024-02-08

Revised : 2024-09-30

Accepted : 2024-10-28

### KEYWORDS

*Disaster recovery*

*Moral resilience*

*Post-disaster interventions*

*Moral development*

*Psychoeducation*



### ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of psychoeducation in reinforcing moral development and psychological resilience among the residents of Sibanggor Julu Village, Puncak Sorik Marapi District, Mandailing Natal Regency, following a disaster. The research employs a qualitative, naturalistic approach to capture the complexities of community recovery through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis. Data validity was ensured through multiple strategies, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The key findings reveal that psychoeducational reinforcement significantly contributed to the villagers' post-disaster recovery, leading to enhanced optimism, stronger family economic aspirations, increased religiosity, and improved psychological strength. The villagers also exhibited greater positive behavior and a revitalized fighting spirit. Furthermore, the study identifies the importance of structured psychoeducational activities, including professional human resources, ongoing support, and interactive learning methods such as games and environmental education, in fostering moral and psychological growth. Both exogenous factors (e.g., customs, education, environment, media) and endogenous factors (e.g., self-concept, personality) were found to influence the success of these interventions. The study's findings highlight the effectiveness of psychoeducation in promoting moral development in post-disaster contexts. These insights offer valuable implications for the broader application of psychoeducational models in disaster recovery, suggesting that similar interventions could enhance community resilience and support moral regeneration in other affected areas globally.

## 1. Introduction

Moral development stands as a cornerstone in shaping individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also endowed with integrity, empathy, and a sense of responsibility towards others. Morality reflects the attitudes and behaviors that become inherent through continuous practice and reinforcement. This development often involves habituation, where repeated exposure to moral values such as honesty, patience, tolerance, and justice fosters the internalization of these virtues into everyday behavior. According to [Suryaman and Karyono \(2018\)](#), the consistent integration of such values into daily activities is key to ensuring they become deeply ingrained and permanent. In an ever-changing and challenging societal landscape, the cultivation of morality remains essential for both individual growth and collective harmony.

In the pursuit of moral excellence, rule enforcement is equally significant. Establishing firm and clear boundaries helps guide individuals in distinguishing right from wrong while fostering an environment of discipline. This consistency is crucial for instilling good habits that eventually develop into enduring moral traits. Moral education, however, is not limited to defining ethical boundaries. It emphasizes cultivating habits of virtuous action so individuals not only understand but also internalize and aspire to consistently practice what is right ([Suryaman & Karyono, 2018](#)). Thus, moral development represents a holistic approach to personal and social growth, intertwining ethics with long-term behavioral change.

The significance of moral development has been explored extensively in various studies, particularly from religious and psychological perspectives. In Islam, moral refinement is of paramount importance and

forms the core of the teachings of Prophet Muhammad SAW. As highlighted by [Nata \(2012\)](#), Islam prioritizes spiritual development over physical aspects, asserting that virtuous actions arise from a sound and ethical soul. This foundation ensures overall well-being and happiness, both physically and mentally. [Tafsir \(2014\)](#) echoes this sentiment by emphasizing the necessity of a balanced approach, where worldly ambitions and spiritual goals are harmonized to create a comprehensive framework for moral education. Despite these insights, the practical application of such frameworks in post-crisis settings remains underexplored.

Psychoeducation emerges as a significant intervention for moral development in diverse settings. [Kurniati \(2018\)](#) defines psychoeducation as an approach that integrates educational and therapeutic strategies to help individuals navigate challenges while fostering resilience. These methods are particularly effective when applied in structured group settings, as discussed by [DeLucia-Waack \(2016\)](#), who underscores the role of psychoeducation in developing cognitive and behavioral skills. Studies have shown that modeling techniques, interactive activities, and group learning can effectively enhance moral and psychological growth. However, there is a gap in the literature concerning the role of psychoeducation in addressing the specific moral and psychological needs of disaster-affected communities.

The context of Sibanggor Julu Village in Mandailing Natal Regency provides a compelling case to investigate these gaps. Following the H2S gas leak disaster, the community faced severe moral and psychological challenges, including trauma, anger, and moral disarray. Although the villagers have a strong cultural and moral foundation, the disaster disrupted their collective equilibrium. This situation highlights the need for tailored psychoeducational interventions to support moral recovery and resilience. Current studies lack a comprehensive focus on how psychoeducation can be adapted to such socio-religious and post-disaster contexts.

This research addresses these gaps by exploring the role of psychoeducational interventions in fostering moral resilience among the disaster-affected residents of Sibanggor Julu. The study offers a unique perspective by examining the interplay between cultural, religious, and psychological factors in promoting recovery. Its novelty lies in identifying strategies that align with the specific needs and values of the affected community, thereby contributing to the broader field of moral education and disaster recovery.

The primary aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of structured psychoeducational programs in facilitating moral restoration and psychological resilience within the affected community. It focuses on understanding the influence of both exogenous factors, such as customs,

environment, and media, and endogenous factors, such as personality and self-concept, on the success of these interventions. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for extending psychoeducational practices to similar contexts on a global scale.

### 3. Method

This study adopts a qualitative research design, conducted in a natural setting to interpret phenomena as they occur, emphasizing in-depth understanding of the issues at hand. Qualitative research focuses on exploring complex realities, seeking to reveal actual facts and insights rather than causal relationships. It is particularly suitable for examining unique contexts such as the socio-moral challenges faced by communities in post-disaster settings. This study was conducted in Sibanggor Julu Village, Puncak Sorik Marapi District, Mandailing Natal, North Sumatra, with a specific focus on victims of the H2S gas leak caused by the operations of PT Sorik Marapi Geothermal Power (SMGP).

#### 3.1 Data Collection

To capture the multifaceted experiences of the affected community, a combination of interviews, observations, and document analysis was employed. These methods allowed for a comprehensive exploration of individual and collective responses to the disaster. The study relied on both primary and secondary data sources, each playing a crucial role in constructing a nuanced understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

Primary data were collected directly from individuals closely involved in or impacted by the gas leak incident. The primary data sources include:

- **The Head of Sibanggor Julu Village:** As the community leader, the village head provided insights into the communal and administrative responses to the disaster.
- **Employees/Staff of PT SMGP:** These individuals contributed technical details and clarified procedural aspects related to the gas leak.
- **Residents of Sibanggor Julu Village:** These included both direct victims of the H2S gas leak and other community members, providing firsthand accounts of their experiences and the moral and psychological challenges they faced.

Secondary data were obtained from various written sources, including official records, reports, and literature related to the incident. These data sources enriched the study by offering contextual and historical perspectives, helping to triangulate the findings from primary sources. Examples of secondary data include:

- Event records and official documents from the village administration and health services.

- Reports on the incident from relevant authorities and media outlets.
- Academic literature and previous studies providing theoretical underpinnings for the analysis.

### 3.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study followed a qualitative approach, involving iterative processes of data reduction, categorization, and interpretation. Interviews were transcribed verbatim, and observational notes were systematically reviewed to identify recurring themes and patterns. Thematic analysis was employed to uncover key issues related to moral resilience and psychoeducational interventions in the affected community. To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, multiple strategies were adopted, including:

- **Triangulation:** Combining data from interviews, observations, and secondary sources to corroborate findings.
- **Credibility:** Cross-checking interpretations with participants to validate their accuracy and relevance.
- **Dependability:** Maintaining a detailed audit trail of research activities to ensure transparency and reproducibility.

### 3.3 Informants and Participants

The study utilized a snowball sampling technique, beginning with key informants and expanding to include other relevant participants as the research progressed. This approach ensured the inclusion of diverse perspectives and allowed the researcher to reach data saturation, where no new themes or variations emerged.

The distinction between informants and participants, as described by [Afifuddin \(2019\)](#), was adhered to in this study. Informants, such as the village head and PT SMGP staff, provided authoritative insights based on their roles, while participants, including affected residents, shared experiential accounts of the disaster and its aftermath. This dual approach enriched the data, combining macro-level perspectives with micro-level experiences.

In summary, this methodological framework enabled a thorough examination of the moral and psychological challenges faced by the Sibanggor Julu community. By integrating diverse data sources and employing robust analytical techniques, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how psychoeducational interventions can foster moral resilience in post-disaster contexts.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Reinforcement and Community Resilience

Reinforcement strategies played a crucial role in restoring hope and morale among the affected community. These strategies included verbal encouragement, public recognition, and economic support, which addressed both emotional and practical needs. Community leaders frequently used affirming language during public gatherings to inspire resilience and solidarity.

One villager shared during an interview, “*Hearing our leaders say, ‘We are stronger together,’ gave me a sense of hope and belief that we could rebuild our lives*” [Interviewee 1]. Observational notes from a community gathering documented the visible impact of these affirmations, with attendees nodding in agreement and applauding statements of encouragement. The reinforcement not only boosted individual morale but also strengthened collective identity by framing recovery as a shared responsibility.

Economic support emerged as another key element in fostering resilience. Assistance for agricultural activities enabled families to regain stability and purpose. A farmer remarked, “*The help we received to restart farming was more than financial support; it gave us a way forward and restored our dignity*” [Interviewee 2]. Observations recorded the gradual revival of economic activities, such as the re-opening of local markets and increased farming operations, signaling tangible progress. This combination of emotional encouragement and economic stability created a foundation for sustainable resilience.

The analysis reveals that reinforcement strategies operate on multiple levels, addressing immediate emotional needs while empowering individuals with the means to rebuild their lives. By integrating symbolic and material support, these strategies ensure a more comprehensive recovery process.

### 4.2 Psychoeducational Interventions for Moral Development

Psychoeducation emerged as a cornerstone of the recovery process, offering a structured framework for addressing moral and psychological challenges. These interventions used participatory and reflective methods tailored to the cultural context, such as storytelling, role-playing, and interactive games, to engage participants and foster moral development.

Facilitators emphasized the value of storytelling in helping participants reflect on moral values. One facilitator explained, “*The stories we shared allowed participants to connect deeply with the lessons and think about their own choices and behaviors*” [Facilitator 1]. Observational notes during a storytelling session captured moments of profound engagement, with participants eagerly discussing the narratives and relating them to their personal experiences.

Role-playing exercises provided another layer of depth, encouraging participants to explore moral dilemmas and develop critical thinking. A participant shared, “*When we acted out scenarios, it felt like living through real situations. It made me realize how important it is to be empathetic and to think carefully before making decisions*” [Participant 3]. Observations of these exercises noted enthusiastic participation, with participants offering thoughtful insights and engaging in meaningful debates about the scenarios presented.

Religious elements incorporated into the sessions resonated deeply with participants. A participant reflected, “*The sessions reminded me of my faith and its teachings on patience and compassion. It helped me see that even in difficult times, we must act with integrity*” [Participant 4]. Facilitators observed that incorporating faith-based principles provided participants with a moral and spiritual foundation, enhancing the long-term impact of the interventions.

Interactive elements such as ice-breaking activities and games created a relaxed and supportive atmosphere. One facilitator remarked, “*These activities were crucial in building trust and reducing tension. They helped participants feel comfortable enough to open up and share their thoughts*” [Facilitator 2]. Observations noted moments of laughter and camaraderie, highlighting the importance of fostering a safe and welcoming environment for learning.

The findings suggest that psychoeducational interventions are most effective when they integrate cultural and spiritual elements, creating an engaging and supportive framework that facilitates both reflection and action.

### 4.3 Factors Influencing Moral Development

The recovery process was shaped by a combination of external and internal factors. Environmental challenges, such as fear of recurring gas leaks and the disruption of traditional farming practices, significantly impacted the community's sense of security. One farmer expressed during an interview, “*Even though the air seems fine now, the fear of another leak makes it hard to return to the fields*” [Interviewee 5]. Observational notes confirmed reduced agricultural activity, with many fields left untended due to lingering anxiety.

Internal factors, including personal trauma and varying levels of religiosity, also influenced recovery trajectories. Participants with strong spiritual foundations demonstrated greater resilience. One participant shared, “*My faith gave me the strength to accept what happened and focus on rebuilding my life. It reminded me that this too shall pass*” [Participant 6]. However, individuals grappling with unresolved anger and mistrust required additional support. Observations during community meetings recorded expressions of frustration, with some participants voicing feelings of betrayal and disillusionment toward external parties.

Negative media coverage further complicated recovery efforts by amplifying divisions and mistrust within the community. A local leader noted, “*The way the media portrayed our situation made it harder for us to trust those who wanted to help. It created unnecessary tensions*” [Leader 1]. Observations documented contentious discussions during meetings, highlighting the need for clear and transparent communication to rebuild trust.

These findings highlight the importance of addressing both environmental and emotional factors through a nuanced recovery framework. Providing tailored interventions that combine trust-building efforts with practical support can mitigate barriers to moral development and foster resilience.

### 4.4 Integrated Insights and Interpretations

The triangulated findings reveal that successful recovery requires a holistic approach that integrates reinforcement, psychoeducation, and culturally relevant strategies. Reinforcement strategies addressed immediate emotional and economic needs, providing a foundation for recovery. Psychoeducational interventions offered a participatory and reflective platform for moral restoration, leveraging cultural and spiritual values to resonate deeply with participants.

The analysis suggests that recovery extends beyond addressing physical and economic damage. It involves nurturing intangible aspects such as hope, faith, and social cohesion. One participant summarized this sentiment, “*Recovery is not just about fixing what is broken; it is about finding strength in ourselves and each other to rebuild a better future*” [Participant 7].

These findings underscore the importance of a comprehensive recovery framework that addresses the multidimensional needs of disaster-affected communities. By combining emotional, practical, and cultural dimensions, such models foster resilience and unity, providing a blueprint for addressing similar challenges in other contexts. This study highlights that moral resilience is not an endpoint but a continuous process of growth, renewal, and shared humanity.

## 5. Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the significant role of reinforcement and psychoeducational interventions in fostering moral resilience and psychological recovery in the community of Sibanggor Julu Village. Reinforcement, both verbal and nonverbal, emerged as a pivotal strategy in restoring optimism and building confidence among individuals (Morgado et al., 2022).

As Mulyasa (2018) highlighted, reinforcement is effective when delivered with warmth, enthusiasm, and meaningfulness. Psychoeducational interventions have been shown to be effective in improving various outcomes, such as reducing anxiety, depression, and stress, and enhancing self-esteem and self-concept.

These interventions typically involve providing individuals with information and skills related to their condition or situation, with the aim of increasing their understanding and coping abilities (Yubiliana, 2023; Pratiwi & Widyarini, 2021).

In the context of the Sibanggor Julu Village community, psychoeducational interventions may have played a crucial role in fostering moral resilience and psychological recovery (Morgado et al., 2022). By educating individuals about the importance of moral values, coping strategies, and available support resources, these interventions could have helped to restore a sense of optimism and confidence within the community (Morgado et al., 2022).

Moreover, the use of reinforcement, both verbal and nonverbal, may have further enhanced the effectiveness of these psychoeducational interventions. Positive feedback and encouragement can help to build individuals' self-efficacy and motivation, which are essential for successful recovery and resilience-building (Morgado et al., 2022). The findings of this study are consistent with the existing literature on the benefits of psychoeducational interventions and reinforcement in promoting psychological well-being and recovery (Pratiwi & Widyarini, 2021). By combining these strategies, the researchers were able to develop a comprehensive approach that addressed the unique needs and challenges faced by the Sibanggor Julu Village community (Morgado et al., 2022).

Therefore, this study reaffirms that consistent and targeted reinforcement, whether through words of encouragement or economic support, can catalyze a collective sense of recovery. For example, the community's shift toward optimism and economic renewal illustrates how external reinforcement can act as a stabilizing force during crises.

Psychoeducation has demonstrated its versatility in addressing both moral and psychological dimensions of recovery (Cecchin et al., 2022). By integrating cultural and spiritual elements, the interventions provided participants with tools to navigate their trauma while realigning with core moral values. Winarso (2023) argued, incorporating activities such as role-playing and interactive games enhances engagement and moral development, a finding echoed in this study's outcomes. The faith-based components of the psychoeducational sessions resonated deeply with participants, emphasizing the need for contextually tailored approaches in disaster recovery programs.

Psychoeducation can be carried out through training with methods of exploration, assessment, discussion, role play, and demonstration (Winarso, 2023). The basis of religiosity-based psychoeducational interventions is to provide strength as well as focus on the present and the future to avoid the problem of academic procrastination (Winarso, 2023). Psychoeducation has been shown to be effective

in various settings, including for psychiatric inpatients following remission of a manic episode in bipolar I disorder (Chen et al., 2018), for Turkish breast cancer survivors (İnan & Üstün, 2019), and for individuals at risk for psychosis (Herrera et al., 2021).

The faith-based components of the psychoeducational sessions in this study resonated deeply with participants, emphasizing the need for contextually tailored approaches in disaster recovery programs. This includes giving equal or nearly equal time in its session topics (e.g., prayer, reading and teaching of sacred text, and inspirational music) to faith practices as given to the health topic, and utilizing four or more of the dimensions of faith experience and practices recognized in the faith-health literature (Saunders et al., 2017).

While the study sheds light on the efficacy of reinforcement and psychoeducation, certain gaps remain. The long-term sustainability of these interventions was not examined, raising questions about whether the observed changes in moral resilience and behavior can be maintained over time. Additionally, while the study successfully highlighted the immediate impacts of reinforcement and psychoeducation, it did not fully explore the interplay between community-level dynamics and individual psychological recovery. This gap points to the need for future research on how collective and individual factors influence the efficacy of such interventions.

Another limitation lies in the restricted demographic scope, as the study primarily focused on the community directly affected by the H2S gas leak. Expanding the participant base to include neighboring communities or other stakeholders could offer a more holistic view of the interventions' broader implications.

This study introduces a novel perspective by integrating reinforcement strategies with psychoeducational interventions tailored to a socio-religious context. The inclusion of culturally specific elements, such as Islamic moral teachings, sets this study apart from previous research that often treats psychoeducation as a one-size-fits-all solution. The innovative use of role-playing and storytelling as tools for moral development further highlights the study's contribution to the evolving discourse on post-disaster recovery frameworks.

Moreover, the study's focus on moral resilience, rather than solely psychological recovery, provides a fresh lens for understanding the multifaceted impacts of disasters on communities. By emphasizing the interplay between moral and economic dimensions of recovery, the study offers actionable insights for policymakers and practitioners aiming to design holistic intervention programs.

The findings have significant implications for both practice and policy. First, the study underscores the importance of incorporating reinforcement and

psychoeducation into disaster response frameworks. Policymakers should consider these strategies as essential components of recovery programs, particularly in culturally sensitive contexts. The integration of faith-based teachings into psychoeducational modules provides a replicable model for other communities with strong religious identities.

Second, the study highlights the need for capacity building among facilitators. Ensuring that psychoeducational programs are delivered by trained professionals, as emphasized by [Wiyati \(2017\)](#), can enhance the effectiveness of these interventions and reduce the risk of malpractice. Furthermore, the inclusion of community leaders as co-facilitators could strengthen the perceived legitimacy of the programs and increase community buy-in.

Lastly, the study provides a framework for addressing the socio-economic dimensions of recovery. By linking moral development to economic stability, it offers a pathway for designing interventions that address both immediate and structural challenges faced by disaster-affected communities.

Overall, the findings from this study and the reviewed literature highlight the versatility and effectiveness of psychoeducation in addressing various mental health and psychological challenges, particularly when tailored to the specific needs and cultural contexts of the target population ([Winarso, 2023](#); [Chen et al., 2018](#); [İnan & Üstün, 2019](#); [Herrera et al., 2021](#); [Saunders et al., 2017](#); [Uchino et al., 2012](#); [Seery et al., 2022](#); [Havsteen-Franklin et al., 2020](#)).

Future research should investigate the long-term sustainability of reinforcement and psychoeducational interventions through longitudinal studies tracking moral resilience and psychological recovery over time. Comparative research across diverse cultural and socio-economic settings could uncover universal principles and context-specific adaptations. Broadening the participant base to include neighboring communities and corporate stakeholders would enhance understanding of disasters' socio-environmental impacts. Exploring digital and technology-based platforms for psychoeducation delivery, especially in resource-limited settings, could also offer innovative solutions. Addressing these gaps will support the development of scalable, culturally sensitive models for disaster recovery and community resilience.

## 6. Conclusions

This study highlights the crucial role of reinforcement and psychoeducational interventions in fostering moral and psychological resilience among the disaster-affected community of Sibanggor Julu Village. The key findings indicate that reinforcement activities, including verbal encouragement, economic support, and psychological strengthening, successfully

cultivated optimism, heightened religiosity, promoted positive behavior, and reinforced the community's determination to rebuild. The psychoeducational interventions, structured through a comprehensive methodology involving professional facilitators, interactive sessions, role-playing, games, and environmental education, were instrumental in fostering moral growth and resilience. The study also identified significant influences on moral development, with exogenous factors such as customs, environment, education, and media, and endogenous factors like self-concept and personality playing pivotal roles. The methodological approach, which combined field observations, interviews, and theoretical analysis, provided a robust framework for understanding the complexities of moral recovery in a culturally specific setting. By integrating socio-religious elements into psychoeducational strategies, the study introduced an innovative approach that aligns interventions with the community's spiritual and cultural values. This novelty offers a comprehensive model for addressing moral and psychological challenges while fostering resilience in culturally sensitive ways.

The findings carry significant implications for both practice and policy. Policymakers and practitioners should incorporate reinforcement and psychoeducational strategies as essential components of disaster recovery frameworks, ensuring that interventions are culturally aligned and community-centered. The study further emphasizes the importance of capacity building for professional facilitators and the active involvement of community leaders to enhance the credibility and effectiveness of these programs.

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