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Factors Influencing Resilience among Children in Orphanages: A Systematic Literature Review

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A R T I C L E I N F O

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A B S T R A C T

This study aims to identify, categorize, and synthesize the various factors that influence resilience among children in orphanages through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach guided by the PRISMA 2020 and JBI 2020 guidelines. The search was conducted across five databases (Google Scholar, Web of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and PubMed) using keywords derived from the PEO framework and restricted to publications from 2020–2026. The findings indicate that resilience among children in orphanages results from the interaction of multiple internal and external factors, with social support from caregivers and a supportive caregiving environment emerging as the most consistent contributors to higher levels of resilience. These findings are expected to provide a scientific foundation for orphanage administrators, psychologists, social workers, and policymakers in designing intervention programs oriented toward strengthening protective factors to enhance the resilience of children in orphanages.

INTRODUCTION

Children represent one of the most vulnerable populations and have the fundamental right to grow up in a safe, supportive, and nurturing family environment that promotes their physical, emotional, social, and psychological development. However, various circumstances such as parental death, abandonment, family conflict, poverty, and neglect prevent many children from remaining with their biological families. Consequently, a considerable number of children are placed in orphanages or other forms of alternative care to ensure their basic needs are met. Although institutional care provides shelter, education, and basic living necessities, it cannot completely replace the emotional security and attachment typically established within a family environment (Roy, 2021; Mkinga et al., 2022). As a result, children living in orphanages often experience developmental challenges that differ from those faced by children raised in family-based care.

Life in institutional care requires children to adapt to numerous psychological and social changes. Besides coping with the loss of parental figures, children must adjust to institutional rules, communal living arrangements, shared caregiving, and limited opportunities to establish stable emotional relationships with caregivers. Such circumstances frequently expose children to feelings of loneliness, anxiety, low self-esteem, emotional insecurity, and difficulties in developing healthy interpersonal relationships (Imtinan & Ahmad, 2025; Ramadan et al., 2026). When these challenges are not accompanied by sufficient protective resources, children become more vulnerable to psychological distress and maladaptive behaviors that may persist into adulthood. Therefore, strengthening children's capacity to adapt positively to adversity has become a critical concern within institutional child care.

Previous empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that children living in orphanages are capable of adapting successfully despite experiencing significant adversity. Rather than being determined solely by adverse childhood experiences, their psychological adjustment is influenced by various protective factors that enable them to recover from stressful events and continue functioning adaptively. Several studies have reported positive associations between resilience and factors such as caregiver support, peer relationships, self-esteem, optimism, emotional regulation, adaptive coping strategies, spirituality, and supportive educational environments (Lasamahu & Murti, 2024; Pessoa et al., 2020; Mawila-Chauke & Munongi, 2025). These findings suggest that resilience develops through the interaction of multiple internal and external resources rather than emerging automatically from exposure to hardship.

Despite the growing body of research on resilience among children in institutional care, existing studies have primarily examined individual protective factors independently or within specific cultural contexts. Consequently, current evidence remains fragmented, making it difficult to identify which protective factors consistently contribute to resilience across different orphanage settings and alternative care systems. Furthermore, previous studies vary considerably in terms of research design, sample characteristics, and measurement instruments, limiting the ability to formulate comprehensive conclusions regarding resilience

development. This fragmentation highlights the need for a systematic synthesis capable of integrating empirical evidence from diverse contexts into a coherent understanding of resilience among children living in orphanages.

A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) provides an appropriate methodological approach to address this research gap because it enables researchers to identify, critically evaluate, and synthesize empirical findings using transparent, systematic, and reproducible procedures. By integrating evidence across multiple studies, an SLR not only identifies the protective factors most consistently associated with resilience but also reveals inconsistencies and areas requiring further investigation. Accordingly, this study aims to systematically identify, categorize, and synthesize the factors influencing resilience among children living in orphanages based on empirical studies published between 2020 and 2026. The findings are expected to contribute to the theoretical understanding of resilience in alternative care settings while providing evidence-based recommendations for psychologists, social workers, orphanage administrators, and policymakers seeking to strengthen resilience among children in institutional care.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Resilience in Children Living in Alternative Care

Resilience has become one of the central concepts in developmental psychology, particularly in understanding how children adapt positively despite experiencing significant adversity. Initially, resilience was viewed as an innate personality trait possessed by only a small proportion of individuals. However, contemporary psychological research has shifted this perspective by conceptualizing resilience as a dynamic developmental process that emerges through continuous interactions between individuals and their surrounding environments (Masten, 2001; Ungar, 2011). From this perspective, resilience is not merely the absence of psychological problems but reflects an individual's capacity to recover, adapt, and continue functioning effectively following exposure to stressful or traumatic life experiences.

Among children living in orphanages, resilience plays an especially important role because institutional care often exposes children to multiple developmental risks. Many children residing in orphanages have experienced parental loss, neglect, abuse, poverty, or family separation before entering institutional care. These adverse childhood experiences may increase vulnerability to emotional distress, behavioral difficulties, and impaired psychosocial development. Nevertheless, empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that many institutionalized children are capable of maintaining positive psychological functioning despite these adversities, indicating that resilience develops through the interaction of multiple protective resources rather than being solely determined by exposure to risk.

Several theoretical perspectives explain resilience as a multidimensional construct. One of the most influential frameworks was proposed by Grotberg (1995), who conceptualized resilience through three interrelated dimensions: "I Have," "I Am," and "I Can." The I Have dimension refers to external protective resources such as supportive caregivers, positive family or institutional

relationships, educational opportunities, and community support. The I Am dimension represents internal psychological strengths, including self-esteem, optimism, responsibility, empathy, and self-confidence. Meanwhile, the I Can dimension encompasses interpersonal and problem-solving skills that enable individuals to regulate emotions, communicate effectively, seek assistance, and resolve challenges constructively. This framework provides a comprehensive explanation of resilience by integrating both personal competencies and environmental support systems.

Within institutional care settings, resilience should therefore be understood as a developmental outcome resulting from continuous interactions between children's internal capacities and the quality of support available in their environments. Consequently, interventions designed to strengthen resilience should not focus exclusively on enhancing individual psychological characteristics but should also improve caregiving quality, social relationships, and institutional environments that facilitate healthy child development.

Children Living in Orphanages and Alternative Care

Alternative care refers to any formal or informal arrangement in which children are cared for outside their biological families due to circumstances that compromise parental caregiving capacity. According to the United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (United Nations, 2010), alternative care includes foster care, kinship care, residential care, institutional care, and orphanages. Although these care settings differ in structure and caregiving approaches, they share the common objective of ensuring children's safety, development, and well-being when family-based care cannot be provided.

Among various forms of alternative care, orphanages remain one of the most common care arrangements in many developing countries, including Indonesia. In orphanage settings, caregivers often assume parental responsibilities for multiple children simultaneously, resulting in caregiving patterns that differ substantially from family environments. Limited caregiver-to-child ratios, institutional regulations, frequent caregiver turnover, and restricted opportunities for individualized attention may reduce children's opportunities to establish secure emotional attachments. Consequently, children living in institutional care frequently encounter unique developmental challenges that require substantial psychological adaptation.

Previous studies have reported that institutionalized children are more likely to experience emotional difficulties, behavioral problems, lower self-esteem, impaired attachment, and reduced psychological well-being compared with children raised in family-based care. However, these outcomes are not universal. Considerable variability exists among institutionalized children, with many demonstrating remarkable resilience despite prolonged exposure to adversity. Such variability suggests that resilience cannot be explained solely by adverse experiences but rather reflects the presence of protective factors operating at individual, interpersonal, institutional, and broader social levels.

Protective Factors Influencing Resilience

Protective factors are conditions or characteristics that reduce the negative effects of adversity while promoting positive adaptation and psychological well-being. Contemporary resilience research consistently emphasizes that protective factors operate across multiple ecological levels rather than existing exclusively within the individual. Accordingly, resilience is increasingly understood as the product of interactions among personal characteristics, social relationships, environmental resources, and broader cultural contexts.

Individual protective factors include self-esteem, self-efficacy, optimism, adaptive coping strategies, emotion regulation, problem-solving ability, and psychological flexibility. These characteristics enable children to interpret stressful experiences more adaptively, regulate emotional responses, and maintain confidence in overcoming future challenges. Numerous empirical studies have consistently demonstrated positive associations between these psychological resources and resilience among children living in institutional care.

Social protective factors primarily involve supportive relationships established with caregivers, peers, teachers, and other significant adults. High-quality caregiver–child relationships characterized by warmth, consistency, trust, and emotional availability provide children with a secure base from which adaptive development can occur. Similarly, positive peer relationships facilitate emotional support, social competence, and a sense of belonging, thereby strengthening children's resilience. Research has repeatedly identified caregiver support as one of the strongest predictors of resilience among children living in orphanages.

Environmental protective factors encompass institutional caregiving quality, educational opportunities, community participation, extracurricular involvement, and access to psychosocial services. Institutional environments that promote safety, stability, participation, and child-centered caregiving provide greater opportunities for children to develop adaptive competencies. Additionally, meaningful participation in educational, recreational, and community-based activities contributes to children's self-confidence, social integration, and psychological well-being.

Spirituality and religiosity have also emerged as important protective factors in resilience research. Spiritual beliefs may provide children with hope, purpose, emotional comfort, and adaptive meaning-making processes during stressful experiences. In many cultural contexts, including Indonesia, religious practices also strengthen social connectedness and provide moral guidance that supports children's psychological adjustment. Therefore, resilience should be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon that develops through the interaction of psychological, social, environmental, and spiritual resources.

Conceptual Framework

The present review adopts Grotberg's (1995) resilience framework as its primary theoretical lens because it comprehensively explains resilience through the integration of internal and external protective resources. This framework aligns closely with the findings synthesized in the present review, in which

resilience among children living in orphanages is consistently associated with both individual characteristics and environmental support systems.

Within this framework, individual psychological resources—including self-esteem, optimism, self-efficacy, emotion regulation, and adaptive coping strategies—can be conceptualized under the "I Am" and "I Can" dimensions. Conversely, caregiver support, peer relationships, institutional caregiving quality, educational environments, and spiritual guidance correspond to the "I Have" dimension because they represent external resources that facilitate children's adaptive functioning. The interaction among these three dimensions provides a comprehensive explanation of how resilience develops among children experiencing adversity within institutional care.

Accordingly, this review synthesizes empirical findings by classifying resilience factors into four interconnected domains: individual factors, social factors, environmental factors, and spiritual factors. This conceptual organization provides a systematic framework for interpreting previous empirical evidence and serves as the theoretical foundation for the discussion presented in the subsequent sections.

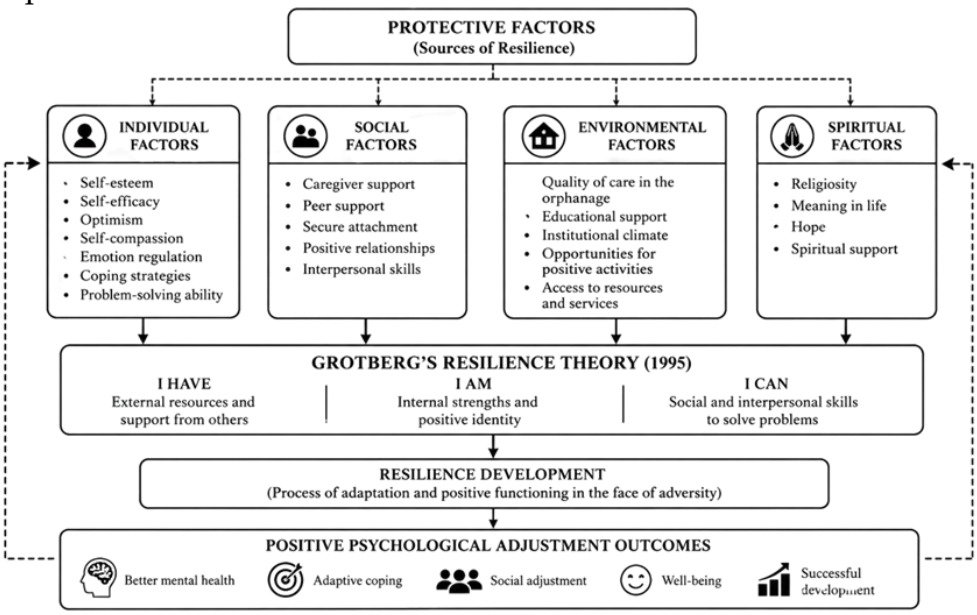

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Protective Factors Influencing Resilience Among Children Living in Orphanages

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, a systematic research approach used to identify, critically evaluate, synthesize, and integrate the findings of prior studies relevant to a given topic or research question. The SLR method aims to produce a comprehensive, objective, and replicable synthesis of scientific evidence through clearly defined procedures. The research process began with a search for scientific articles related to the research topic, followed by a selection process based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The resulting synthesis is expected to provide a thorough overview of research developments on the topic under review.

This study adopted the stages outlined in the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020; Page et al., 2021) as a guideline for the identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and selection of articles. These stages included article identification, removal of duplicate records, screening by title and abstract, eligibility assessment through full-text review, and the final determination of articles meeting the criteria for further analysis. This approach was selected because it enhances transparency, objectivity, and reproducibility in the process of conducting a systematic literature review. The stages of this study are described below.

Stage 1: Formulating the Research Question

The research question in this study was formulated using the PEO (Population, Exposure, Outcome) framework in accordance with JBI guidelines (Aromataris & Munn, 2020). In this study, the Population (P) refers to children residing in orphanages or alternative care institutions, Exposure (E) refers to the various factors that potentially influence resilience, and Outcome (O) refers to resilience among children in orphanages. Based on this PEO framework, the research question addressed in this study is presented below. Table 1 outlines each PEO component within the context of this study.

Table 1. PEO Framework

Component	**Description**
Population	Individuals aged 6–18 years who are children living in orphanages
Exposure	Factors associated with resilience
Outcome	Resilience

Based on this PEO framework, this review addresses the following research question:

What factors are associated with resilience among children in orphanages? The literature search was conducted systematically across five databases—Google Scholar, Web of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and PubMed—to identify scientific articles relevant to the research topic. These databases were selected for their broad coverage of publications in psychology, health, and the social sciences, providing access to empirical research related to resilience among children in alternative care. The search strategy was developed based on the PEO framework, combining keywords using Boolean operators (AND and OR) to make the search process more specific and comprehensive. The keywords used were ("resilience" OR "psychological resilience") AND ("orphanage" OR "institutional care" OR "residential care" OR "alternative care" OR "foster care") AND ("children" OR "adolescent" OR "youth") AND ("factor*" OR "predictor*" OR "determinant*" OR "associated factor*"). The literature search was carried out independently by the researcher in each database, with the search syntax

adjusted to the specific characteristics of each database, to ensure that the retrieved articles met the research objectives as well as the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 2. Search Strategy for Each Database

Database	**Search Terms**	**Results**
PubMed	("resilience" OR "psychological resilience") AND ("orphanage" OR "institutional care" OR "residential care" OR "alternative care" OR "foster care") AND ("children" OR "adolescent" OR "youth") AND ("factor*" OR "predictor*" OR "determinant*" OR "associated factor*")	21
Web of Science	("resilience" OR "psychological resilience") AND ("orphanage" OR "institutional care" OR "residential care" OR "alternative care" OR "foster care") AND ("children" OR "adolescent" OR "youth") AND ("factor*" OR "predictor*" OR "determinant*" OR "associated factor*")	2,316
Scopus	("resilience" OR "psychological resilience") AND ("orphanage" OR "institutional care" OR "residential care" OR "alternative care" OR "foster care") AND ("children" OR "adolescent" OR "youth") AND ("factor*" OR "predictor*" OR "determinant*" OR "associated factor*")	328
ScienceDirect	("resilience" OR "psychological resilience") AND ("orphanage" OR "institutional care" OR "residential care" OR "alternative care" OR "foster care") AND ("children" OR "adolescent" OR "youth") AND ("factor*" OR "predictor*" OR "determinant*" OR "associated factor*")	4,193
Google Scholar	("resilience" OR "psychological resilience") AND ("orphanage" OR "institutional care" OR "residential care" OR "alternative care" OR "foster care") AND ("children" OR "adolescent" OR "youth") AND ("factor*" OR "predictor*" OR "determinant*" OR "associated factor*")	890
Total		**7,748**

Stage 3: Screening Literature for Topic Relevance

Literature selection was carried out in two sequential stages: screening by title and abstract, followed by full-text assessment. The selection process was guided by predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion	**Exclusion**
Children or adolescents living in orphanages, institutional care, residential care, or other forms of alternative care.	Studies conducted on populations other than children in orphanages or alternative care, such as university students, older adults, hospital patients, or workers.
Addresses resilience or the factors that influence resilience, whether individual, social, environmental, or spiritual.	Does not address resilience or does not examine factors influencing resilience.
Empirical studies (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods).	Systematic literature reviews, literature reviews, meta-analyses, editorials, conference proceedings, books, theses, undergraduate theses, and dissertations.
Written in English and/or Indonesian.	Written in a language other than English and/or Indonesian.
Published between 2020 and 2026.	Published before 2020.
Full text available.	Full text not available.

Stage 4: Quality Assessment (Critical Appraisal)

After the selection process based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria was completed, all eligible articles were evaluated for methodological quality through a critical appraisal process. This quality assessment aimed to ensure that the articles used in the synthesis possessed adequate methodological validity, thereby providing credible scientific evidence. In this study, the critical appraisal process was conducted using the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Critical Appraisal Tools (Aromataris & Munn, 2020), adapted to the research design of each article, such as analytical cross-sectional studies, qualitative research, and cohort studies. Each article was assessed on several aspects, including the clarity of the research objective, participant characteristics, the validity and reliability of instruments, data collection procedures, identification of confounding factors, and the appropriateness of the analytical methods used. The results of this quality assessment formed the basis for determining the eligibility of articles for synthesis and assisted the researcher in interpreting the strength of evidence obtained from each study.

Stage 5: Data Extraction

Articles that met the quality criteria were subsequently extracted using a systematically developed data extraction sheet. The extraction process aimed to gather essential information from each study to facilitate the synthesis of results. The extracted information included study identity (author names, year of publication, and country of origin), respondent characteristics, research design, the resilience measurement instrument used, and the factors examined in relation to resilience among children in orphanages. In addition, data on analytical methods and key findings from each study were recorded to identify similarities and differences in results across studies. All extracted data were then compiled into a data extraction table as a basis for the synthesis conducted in the following stage.

Stage 6: Synthesizing and Reporting the Analysis Results

The extracted data were analyzed using a narrative synthesis approach, given the heterogeneity in research design, respondent characteristics, measurement instruments, and variables studied across the reviewed literature, which precluded a meta-analysis. Through this synthesis process, the factors influencing resilience among children in orphanages were grouped into several major themes based on shared characteristics and research findings. In this study, these factors were classified into four main categories: individual factors, social factors, environmental factors, and spiritual factors. Each category was analyzed to identify its form of contribution to the development of resilience as well as the consistency of findings across the reviewed studies. The entire reporting process was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines to ensure transparency, accountability, and reproducibility, and is presented in the form of a PRISMA flow diagram, a data extraction table, and a narrative synthesis.

RESULTS

The data included in this literature review represent the analysis and summary of several articles related to the factors influencing resilience among adolescents in orphanages.

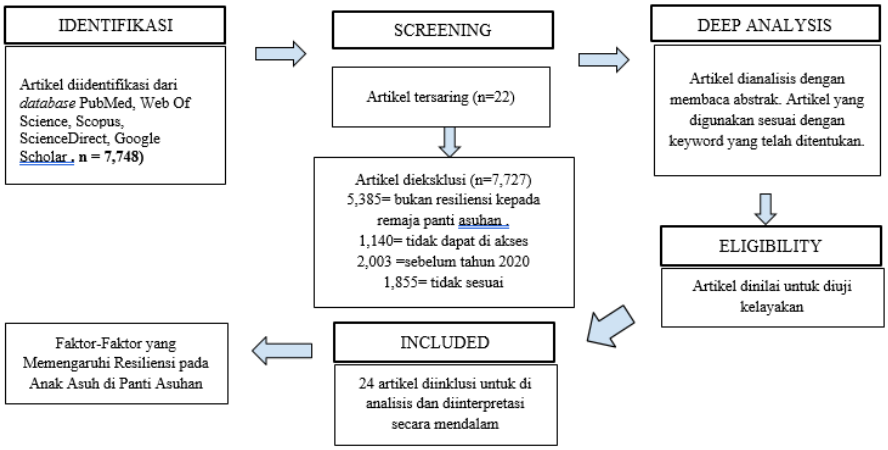

Figure 2. PRISMA flow diagram of the article exclusion and inclusion process in the Systematic Literature Review (n = number of articles).

The literature identification process was conducted across the Google Scholar, Web of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and PubMed databases using keywords developed based on the PEO framework. All retrieved articles then underwent a screening process in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, applying the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. At the screening stage, 5,385 articles were excluded because they did not address resilience among children or adolescents living in orphanages or alternative care settings. In addition, 1,140 articles could not be included because the full text was unavailable, while 2,003 articles were excluded because they were published before 2020. A further 1,855 articles were excluded because they did not align with the research objectives, whether in terms of population, variables examined, or research design, leaving only the articles that met all inclusion criteria to be analyzed at the synthesis stage. After the entire selection process was completed, 24 articles were determined to meet the inclusion criteria and were used as the primary sources for the synthesis in this study. The complete characteristics of each study are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Extraction Data

No.	Researcher(s)	Journal	Findings
1	Fitri Apriani & Ratih Arrum (2019)	JPI	Emotional intelligence had a positive and significant effect on psychological resilience. Adolescents with higher emotional intelligence tended to show higher levels of resilience.
2	Ananda Prima Kristianti & Wahyuni Kristinawati (2024)	Wacana Psikokultural: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi	The study found a relationship between self-acceptance and resilience. Self-acceptance helped adolescents come to terms with their strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to better cope with the pressures of life in the orphanage.
3	Zahra Mufatihah, Jelyanah, Rima Ayu Lestari, & Anisa Siti Nurjanah (2025)	Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Flobamora	Resilience developed through Grotberg's three aspects: I Have, I Am, and I Can. Social support from caregivers and peers, personal strengths (empathy and self-confidence), and communication and emotion-regulation skills were the primary factors underlying resilience.
4	Ramadan et al. (2026)	AIJIS	The study found that children in orphanages still experienced difficulties with emotion regulation, problem-solving, and optimism. The authors concluded that a coping-strategy-based psychoeducational guidance module is needed to enhance the resilience of children in orphanages.

No.	Researcher(s)	Journal	Findings
5	Rachna Mishra & Vanita Sondhi (2021)	Children and Youth Services Review	The study found that at the core of the resilience pathway among orphaned adolescents in Indian orphanages was a "desire to break through adversity," which emerged as a consequence of a childhood marked by hardship. This desire strengthened the protective value of the resources they encountered after entering the orphanage.
6	Akasya Shintaningtyas & Dhevy Setya Wibawa (2020)	Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi MANASA	The study found that the resilience factors of female adolescents in orphanages—comprising I Have (environmental support), I Am (personal strength), and I Can (social and interpersonal ability)—were interrelated.
7	Daphney Mawila-Chauke & Lucia Munongi (2025)	South African Journal of Psychology	This study explored the resilience factors that enabled orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) in an orphanage (Soweto, South Africa) to cope. These factors were divided into individual traits and ecological/contextual factors. At the individual level, agency (the capacity to act), a positive outlook on life (optimism), and internal motivation strengthened children's ability to persevere. Contextually and ecologically, positive peer relationships, adequate physical care from orphanage staff, and the role of donors greatly helped these children overcome challenges.
8	Macalane Junel Malindi & Johnnie Hay	Frontiers in Psychology	This study showed that children in out-of-home care institutions in South Africa were able to endure and demonstrate resilience during and after the COVID-19 pandemic through a complex combination of personal strengths and socio-ecological resources. Personally, their resilience was strengthened by religious practices (such as prayer and Bible reading), listening to or writing music, using social media as a distraction, physical activity at the gym, and positive cognitive attitudes such as gratitude and future orientation. Socio-ecologically, strong relationships with caregivers, extended family (such as uncles), peers, partners, and even emotional bonds with pets served as

No.	Researcher(s)	Journal	Findings
			important anchors supporting their psychological adaptation, demonstrating that resilience originates not only from within the child but also from the surrounding environment.
9	Stefanie Baios et al.	Adversity and Resilience Science	The study showed that repeated placement instability increased emotional and behavioral problems. Conversely, caregiving stability strengthened children's ability to cope with stress and enhanced resilience.
10	Felly Zefanya Lasamahu & Heru Astikasari Setya Murti	GUIDENA: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, Psikologi, Bimbingan dan Konseling	This study found a significant positive correlation between social support and resilience among adolescents living in orphanages in the city of Ambon. This indicates that the higher the social support received by these adolescents from their surrounding environment, the higher their level of resilience in facing various challenges and hardships of life in the orphanage.
11	Khoiriya Ulfah & Septia Laura	ANFUSINA: Journal of Psychology	The results showed a positive and significant relationship between self-efficacy and emotion regulation, both jointly and individually, with resilience among adolescents living at Panti Asuhan Mahmudah Bandar Lampung. This finding demonstrates that strong self-belief and good emotion-management ability are important factors that help adolescents in orphanages rise above adversity and the problems they face.
12	Renatha Ernawati, Dwi Yuwono Puji Sugiharto, & Heru Mugiarso	COUNSENESIA: Indonesian Journal of Guidance and Counseling	This study found that adolescents in child welfare institutions used various emotion-focused coping strategies, such as praying, sharing feelings with peers, and seeking emotional support from caregivers. These strategies were shown to make an independent, significant contribution as predictors of adolescent resilience, helping them regulate psychological pressure and maintain emotional stability despite limited control over their external environment.
13	Ghina Imtinan & Mutia Aini Ahmad	Empati	The study found no significant relationship between self-disclosure and resilience among adolescents in orphanages. This result indicates that

No.	Researcher(s)	Journal	Findings
			self-disclosure is not a primary factor influencing resilience, suggesting that other factors are needed to enhance adolescents' ability to face life's various challenges.
14	Maulana Arif Muhibbin, Anggraeni Swastika Sari, Ikbar Ihza Deanova, Rizky Akbar Putra Hakiki, & Mochammad Arif Hadi Maulana	GUIDENA	The study showed that resilience and secure attachment jointly had a significant effect on future orientation among adolescents in child welfare institutions. Both factors helped improve adolescents' readiness to plan their education and career, although their combined contribution was only 9%, indicating that other factors also influence future orientation.
15	Sudeshna Roy	Institutionalised Children Explorations and Beyond	Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal – Instability at Transitions and Within Continuity: Navigating Maltreatment and Relational Impermanence in Out-of-Home Care.
16	Alex Sandro Gomes Pessoa, Linda Liebenberg, Débora Belizário da Fonseca, & Jaqueline Knupp Medeiros	Olivia D. Chang, Yujeong Chang, & Erna Chiu	The study found that children's resilience in foster care was influenced by the quality of the relationship with caregivers, social support, and opportunities to develop autonomy and daily living skills.
17	M. J. Malindi & J. H. Hay	Frontiers in Psychology	The study identified that warm relationships with caregivers, peer support, spiritual values, and meaningful activities were the primary sources of resilience among children living in out-of-home care institutions.
18	Pablo Carrera, Maite Roman, & Jesus M. Jimenez-Marago	Elsevier	The study found that more than one-third of children in foster care exhibited good adaptive functioning. Behavioral regulation was the factor that most distinguished the resilient group of children from the less resilient group.
19	Amanda Angelöw et al.	Adversity and Resilience Science	Through in-depth interviews, the study found that a sense of belonging, secure relationships with foster families, and the opportunity to make one's own decisions could enhance children's resilience in foster care.
20	Ester, Diny Atrizka, & Achmad Irvan Dwi Putra	PSYCHOPOLYTAN: Jurnal Psikologi	A study of 90 adolescents in orphanages showed that self-disclosure had a positive and significant relationship

No.	Researcher(s)	Journal	Findings
			with resilience. Adolescents who were more open in expressing their thoughts and feelings tended to have higher resilience.
21	Mkinga, G., Kirika, A., Nkuba, M., Mgode, S., Huth, M., & Hecker, T.	Sage Journals	The study showed that the quality of the caregiver relationship, caregiver stress levels, and the organizational conditions of the orphanage influenced children's psychological well-being. A positive caregiving environment was a protective factor for the development of resilience.
22	Pessoa, A. S. G., Liebenberg, L., Fonseca, D. B., & Medeiros, J. K.	Early Child Development and Care	The study found that support from foster families, opportunities to develop independence, and positive social relationships enhanced children's resilience in foster care.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm that resilience among children in orphanages is not merely a static, innate characteristic but a dynamic process that continues to develop (Grotberg, 1995). Through the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, it becomes evident how children's adaptive capacity is shaped by the combination of internal capacities and external support systems (Atak & Bebiş, 2024). The conditions of orphanage life, characterized by strict rules and the absence of parental figures, require children to continually optimize all the protective factors available to them. When these protective factors interact positively with one another, children in orphanages become better able to cope with environmental stressors and are less likely to experience mental health problems. Understanding how the accumulation of these factors operates is therefore crucial for improving the psychological well-being of children in alternative care.

The integration of spiritual values and religiosity also plays a unique and indispensable role in shaping children's mental resilience. Daily spiritual activities, such as prayer and reading religious scripture, provide substantial moral reinforcement for children in orphanages when they feel powerless (Ernawati et al., 2026). Spirituality helps these children reconstruct meaning from the suffering they have experienced. By finding meaning in life, they are able to cultivate a deep sense of gratitude and a positive acceptance of divine will (Anggraeni et al., 2024). This spiritual factor operates at the deepest cognitive level, transforming children's outlook from despair into renewed, optimistic hope.

Theoretically, all the findings of this systematic review align closely with Grotberg's (1995) concept of resilience, which divides sources of resilience into the aspects of I Have, I Am, and I Can. The availability of caregiver support and a conducive orphanage environment represents the external strength that children possess (I Have). Meanwhile, self-esteem, optimism, and spirituality form the

robust internal characteristics within them (I Am). Communication skills, emotion regulation, and adaptive coping strategies complete their interpersonal capacity to act (I Can) (Mufatihah et al., 2025; Shintaningtyas & Wibawa, 2020). Future intervention programs should therefore be designed holistically, addressing all three of Grotberg's dimensions so that resilience among children in orphanages can be built in a comprehensive manner.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this Systematic Literature Review (SLR), resilience among children living in orphanages is shaped by the dynamic interaction of individual, social, environmental, and spiritual factors. Individual factors, including self-esteem, self-efficacy, optimism, emotion regulation, coping strategies, and problem-solving skills, play a crucial role in enabling children to cope with adversity and adapt to challenging life circumstances (Mishra, 2021; Pessoa et al., 2020). Social factors encompass caregiver support, peer support, secure attachment, and positive interpersonal relationships, all of which have been consistently identified as significant protective factors associated with higher levels of resilience. Environmental factors, such as the quality of institutional caregiving, educational support, and participation in constructive activities, also contribute substantially to children's adaptive capacity and psychological well-being. In addition, spirituality, religiosity, and the ability to derive meaning from life experiences serve as important psychological resources that strengthen resilience (Malindi & Hay, 2023). These findings suggest that resilience among children in orphanages is not determined by a single protective factor but rather emerges through the reciprocal interaction of multiple internal and external resources within the institutional caregiving environment.

Based on the synthesized evidence, orphanage administrators are encouraged to implement child-centered caregiving practices that foster warm, secure, and supportive relationships between caregivers and children. Capacity-building programs for caregivers should include training in trauma-informed care, empathetic communication, and the development of secure attachment, as the quality of caregiver–child relationships has consistently been identified as one of the strongest determinants of resilience. Furthermore, psychologists and social workers are recommended to design evidence-based interventions aimed at enhancing self-compassion, emotion regulation, self-efficacy, adaptive coping strategies, and peer-support systems, given the consistently positive associations between these factors and children's resilience (Lasamahu & Murti, 2024; Mishra, 2021; Pessoa et al., 2020). In addition, child-care institutions should provide sustainable programs focusing on personal development, character education, academic support, and spiritual development to strengthen protective factors that promote children's psychological well-being and resilience.

FURTHER STUDY

Future research should extend beyond identifying factors associated with resilience by examining the causal relationships among these variables through longitudinal, experimental, or mixed-method research designs. Further studies are also encouraged to develop comprehensive conceptual models that

investigate the mediating and moderating roles of psychological constructs, such as self-compassion, secure attachment, emotion regulation, and perceived social support, using advanced analytical approaches such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Moreover, intervention studies evaluating the effectiveness of resilience-enhancement programs based on strengthening caregiver–child relationships, emotion regulation training, self-compassion interventions, and peer-support initiatives are needed to generate robust empirical evidence for the development of evidence-based caregiving practices in orphanage settings. Such studies will provide stronger scientific evidence to guide policy development and psychosocial intervention programs aimed at improving the long-term resilience and well-being of children living in institutional care.

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