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The Role of Foster Parents in Forming Children's Social Interactions

***Mhd Fadlan Choiri¹, Mutiawati²**

^{1,2}Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Sumatera Utara, Jl. William Iskandar Ps. V, Deli
Serdang, North Sumatra, Indonesia
*mhd.fadlan0102202031@uinsu.ac.id

Article Information	Abstract
Received: 22 May 2024	<i>This research explores the significant role of foster parents in shaping the social interaction of children in Al Washliyah Orphanage, Binjai City. Using a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, the study involved in-depth observations, direct interviews with foster parents and foster children, as well as analysis of related documentation. Data analysis uses data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results revealed that foster parents adopt various strategies, including advice-giving, encouragement to interact, and organizing social activities, to improve children's social skills. However, the results still showed that some foster children had difficulties in interacting and tended to be withdrawn, highlighting the need for additional methods and more modern adaptations. These findings emphasize the importance of innovation in parenting approaches to support the social development of children in orphanages more effectively and sustainably.</i>
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	Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran signifikan orang tua asuh dalam membentuk interaksi sosial anak-anak di Panti Asuhan Al Washliyah, Kota Binjai. Menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif, penelitian ini melibatkan observasi mendalam, wawancara langsung dengan orang tua asuh dan anak-anak asuh, serta analisis dokumentasi terkait. Analisis data menggunakan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa orang tua asuh mengadopsi berbagai strategi, termasuk pemberian nasihat, dorongan untuk berinteraksi, dan pengorganisasian kegiatan sosial, untuk meningkatkan kemampuan sosial anak-anak. Namun, hasilnya masih menunjukkan bahwa beberapa anak asuh mengalami kesulitan dalam berinteraksi dan cenderung menyendiri, menyoroti kebutuhan akan metode tambahan dan adaptasi yang lebih

modern. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya inovasi dalam pendekatan pengasuhan guna mendukung perkembangan sosial anak-anak di panti asuhan secara lebih efektif dan berkelanjutan.

I. INTRODUCTION

Family Environments with a pattern of good parenting and good durability , like economic, social, and religious, have a big influence on interactions with social children. However, not all children are lucky to live in harmonious, intact families, and many existing children are still in these situations. Such as children whose parents divorced, fatherless, motherless, children from a family Not capable and so on.

Social interactions are social relationships that involve relationships between individuals, individuals and groups, and groups and groups (Viandari & Susilawati, 2019). Social interaction will occur if there is social contact and communication. Social interaction is the key to all social life; therefore, without social interaction, there would be no possible life together.

Basic concept of social interaction is the social relationship between two or more people, either between individuals or between individuals and human groups or their environment which influences or is influenced by each other. The theory discovered from the findings of reference materials (books and research results) regarding social interaction, whether by Levinger's theory, Heider's theory, or Symbolic Interactionism theory, even Action Theory (Eren & Holmes, 2024).

In early childhood, social interaction is needed because children will be taught how to live in society, and then children will also be taught various roles, which will later become their self-identification; apart from that, when carrying out social interactions, children will obtain various information around them. Children adapt to their peers and environment to achieve optimal social development.

Parents are the main and first educators for their children because it is from them that children first receive education. Thus, the first form of education is found in family life; the parents, in this case, the husband and wife, are the main figures in the family, and no one is more important to their children than their parents (Wahidin, 2019). Parents must provide enough time to develop closeness

and become emotional coaches for their children. Emotional intelligence is now a top concern and priority because emotional intelligence is an important provision in preparing children to face the future (Hartati & Tumin, 2021).

Parents are the main factor in the success of character education in the family, with the example shown to children, like fruit that does not fall far from the tree. This proverb is closely related to the example parents set for their children. This proverb means that all the characteristics, behaviours, or whatever of parents will be inherited or followed by their children (Saputri et al., 2022).

Children can adapt to an open environment, interact well in society and interact according to the teachings of their religion. Children can adapt to an open environment, interact well in society and interact according to the teachings of their religion. On the other hand, children not in a harmonious family will find it difficult to adapt to the environment and interact well in society.

Similar to research conducted by Farhaeni & Martini, (2024), she stated that when interacting with friends at the BRSPA Sleman children's orphanage, the children were also involved in the assessments and views of their fellow friends. Since they come from different backgrounds, this leads to variations in temperament and character. These differences influence not only positive treatment and reception but also negative treatment and reception.

Sometimes, some friends at the orphanage give them bad treatment, especially from homestead children AT (homeless child) to homestead children TC (trauma centre), who are reluctant to play together and look down on TC children because some of them have psychological and intelligence disorders. This can make some TC children feel isolated from the orphanage environment.

Putri et al., (2020) Also revealed that students' traits or personalities reflect how individuals behave in their surrounding environment. One of the most common divisions is between introverts and extroverts. Extroverted individuals are sociable and friendly, while introverts are more introverted. They may have difficulty interacting personally and take longer to adapt to new environments. They tend to isolate themselves and are less open to others.

Based on research conducted (Nisa & Muhid, 2020), the form of interaction between two or more people will impact each individual's characteristics. In this case, it can influence a change in a person. Humans born in this world have actually interacted with the people around them, including the environment where they are, this is concrete evidence of interaction with other individuals. In this case, social interaction can be seen in how individuals communicate with others. In this case, social interaction can also be seen in our daily lives, including ourselves. Apart from that, other factors influence it, namely the individual's intellectual abilities.

Tischler explains that in social interaction, there are two important factors: social status and role. Status refers to the position determined by society that an individual occupies, while role is the cultural norm that governs expected behaviors associated with that status (Agustina et al., 2022). Both status and role help shape patterns of social interaction crucial for successful interactions. Tischler also identifies several types of social interaction such as nonverbal behavior, exchange, cooperation, conflict, and competition, all of which are related to these two factors.

Social interaction is also called a social process, which means there is a reciprocal relationship between two or more people, and each person involved plays an active role. In interaction, there is more than just a relationship between the parties involved; there is mutual influence. Interaction is important to maintain and can change behaviour, meaning, and language. In other words, through interaction, someone can quickly and easily find out about something they want (Fahri & Qusyairi, 2019).

Based on the background description above, researchers will explore how foster parents can shape the social interactions of children in orphanages. The formulation of the problem is how foster parents can implement effective strategies in shaping the social interactions of children living in orphanages.

II. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to understand in depth the role of foster parents in shaping children's social interactions at the Al Washliyah orphanage in the city of Binjai. The approach to this research is qualitative because it aims to explore and collect actual, detailed information and rich and in-depth data from participants (Febriyani et al., 2014). This approach describes the phenomenon in the form of words and language naturally and uses various natural methods (Adlini et al., 2022).

In this research, the target subjects were foster parents and foster children (Latifah, 2020), namely four foster parents and six foster child informants who were the subjects. This research was conducted from January 25, 2024, to February 10, 2024, at the Alwashliyah orphanage in Binjai City. Determining informants and primary data sources was done using a purposive sampling technique, a data collection method with certain considerations (Lenaini, 2021). Detailed and relevant data will be obtained by taking samples that serve as informants (resources) through semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and documentation.

Interviews allow participants to convey information directly, allowing researchers to obtain more detailed answers to the questions asked (Yusra et al., 2021). Direct observation technique is a way of collecting data that is carried out through observing and recording symptoms that appear on the research object, which is carried out directly at the place where an event, condition or situation occurs and documentation techniques are also used as a complementary tool to obtain data, which includes recordings, interviews and photos (Aryanti & Santoso, 2021).

The data analysis technique for this research is using qualitative descriptive analysis. The stages in the analysis are data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or data verification (Ikhwan, 2021). The data analysis techniques used include data reduction, which is an effort to simplify data findings by taking the core data until a conclusion and focus of the problem is found. Data presentation is a collection of data information that has been arranged which may

involve stages in drawing conclusions and taking action in the research in question. And finally drawing conclusions, namely in qualitative data analysis where the process of drawing conclusions and verification is carried out. Initial conclusions are temporary, and will change if strong and supportive evidence is not found at the next stage of data collection in the research being conducted (Firmansyah et al., 2021).

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Difficulty Interacting with Foster Children in Orphanages

Results of data obtained regarding difficulties in socializing or interacting with foster children at the Al Washliyah Orphanage, Binjai City. The researcher started the interview with Mrs. KAP who was 37 years old, had a bachelor's degree, and was in the orphanage as a foster mother and deputy administrator of the orphanage. Mrs. KAP explained what actions foster parents take when dealing with foster children who are difficult to get along with:

"Regarding foster children who are difficult to get along with, of course, there are, but foster parents act quickly on children who are difficult to get along with and appeal to other friends so that their friends invite the child to mingle with other friends so that the child doesn't just stay alone, coincidentally at that time there is a child like that, the foster parents try to make him joke, invite him to join in with other friends, over time the child gets used to joining his friends, and we as foster parents act as mentors who provide emotional support. We provide love and attention that helps children feel safe and appreciated so that it can increase children's self-confidence and courage in social interactions" (KAP, 2024).

The second informant, namely Mrs FH, a 59-year-old female foster mother and receptionist, revealed the actions taken by foster parents towards children who were difficult to get along with:

"As far as I know, there are none because we always pay attention to foster children in this orphanage. Even if there are foster children like that, we will advise foster children who are difficult to get along with. We will forbid them from being alone and must socialise with friends who otherwise give them good advice because we are all family here. If something happens, we must feel the same and tell other friends if we have problems. We will organise and facilitate various social activities such as group games, events, and educational activities. This activity aims to improve children's social skills, such as cooperation, communication and problem-solving" (FH, 2024).

Then, the third informant, namely Mr MA, as a foster parent and Deputy Administrator for a son with a bachelor's degree 26 years old, revealed the actions taken by foster parents towards orphaned children who had difficulty getting along:

"For foster children who are difficult to get along with, there is. However, we take action to get closer to the child by talking about what problems the child has because the personality of the foster child here depends on their personality, so we as foster parents have to study their personality, and then we will know. What does the child want to be like? Who does the difficult child want to get along with so that we will know what the child's personality is like?" (MA, 2024).

The final informant from foster parents, namely Mr BM, who is 62 years old, a foster parent and chairman of the boys' board, Mr BM revealed the actions of foster parents towards foster children who are difficult to get along with:

"As far as I know, they always interact, are close friends and get along well. There is no visible difficulty in getting along, but in the past, there were children who were difficult to get along with. Our action for foster children who were difficult to get along with was that we provided the first thing, morals. , in the sense of the word morals, it includes good manners, that is what we give them if these morals are instilled in them, then the foster children will behave well and will be easy to interact with, of course, we also become role models for the children through their behaviour. By showing empathy, cooperation and effective communication, foster parents will provide a direct example that foster children can follow" (BM, 2024).

Then, the researcher interviewed six foster child informants, and the researcher also asked the same questions. Researchers interviewed informants about foster children who had difficulty socialising and interacting with foster children in the Alwashiyah orphanage in Binjai City. As a result, the six informants said some children had difficulty socialising and interacting.

The first informant, PASM, who is 13 years old and is studying junior high school, revealed that foster children find it difficult to socialise and interact:

"I easily interact with other foster children, but I prefer to interact and get along with my seniors because they are good, in my opinion. They always teach me new things, but I also have friends who are difficult to interact with, and my actions are just inviting him to socialise and join other friends so that he is not alone and isolated" (PASM, 2024).

The second informant, namely NF, who is 16 years old and is currently attending high school, revealed that foster children find it difficult to interact and get along with other foster children:

"I am someone who easily gets along with my friends my age because my peers are fun to joke with. However, I also have a friend who is difficult to get along with, and my only action is to invite him to join other friends so that the foster child will start to get used to interacting with other friends" (NF, 2024).

Then another informant, namely AI, 13 years old, who is currently in junior high school, said that regarding foster children who have difficulty interacting and socialising:

"I am a child who rarely interacts or socialises like foster children in general. I don't really care about other people, but sometimes, with my senior siblings, I just stay in foster care if I'm invited; for foster children who have difficulty getting along like me, of course, there are; my actions might be to try to be brave. To say hello so they can interact" (AI, 2024).

Then, FI from a 17-year-old boys' orphanage who is currently in high school revealed that foster children have difficulty socialising and interacting:

"I personally am someone who likes to hang out with friends, but only with friends of the same age because if we talk about something, we can understand each other, so it's nice to be friends with them, and I don't know of any friends who are difficult to get along with" (FI, 2024).

Then, 15-year-old AF, who is currently in high school, also revealed about foster children who have difficulty socialising and interacting:

"I don't really like to socialise and don't like to be alone. Sometimes, I hang out with friends of the same age because I already know them, and other friends are casual. Some friends are difficult to get along with, but many other friends often try to interact with the foster child so that they want to join them. As a result, the foster child will sometimes just stay silent" (AF, 2024).

Then the last informant, namely MRR, 14 years old, who is currently in junior high school, revealed about foster children who have difficulty interacting with other foster children:

"I don't like socialising, but I still only make friends with close friends, and there are no friends who are difficult to get along with. If there are any, try

playing with them, walking around the orphanage and trying to joke around” (MRR, 2024).

Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted by researchers, it can be seen that the role of Orphanage Management is very good in forming and handling foster children who have difficulty socialising and interacting. Foster parents provide love and attention that help children feel safe and appreciated, which can increase children's self-confidence and courage in social interactions.

Foster parents also organise and facilitate various social activities such as group games, events, and educational activities. This activity aims to improve children's social skills, such as cooperation, communication and problem-solving. Foster parents serve as role models for children through their behaviour. By showing empathy, cooperation and effective communication, foster parents provide a direct example that foster children can follow.

Above are the results of researchers' interviews with ten informants regarding children who have difficulty socialising and interacting and the actions taken by foster parents and foster children towards foster children who have difficulty interacting. The activities carried out by foster parents for foster children in foster care are to form children's social interactions that are more attached and better at socialising and interacting with other people.

Social Activities of Foster Children in Orphanages

Based on Table 2 above, social activities are always carried out by the Al Washliyah orphanage in Binjai City, such as social activities in the form of Tahfiz Al-Qur'an competitions, Tahfidz Al-Qur'an graduations, gymnastics and mutual cooperation. This activity is a routine activity carried out by the Al Washliyah orphanage in Binjai City; activities such as tahfidz graduations and Tahfiz competitions are held every year to improve the reading of the Qur'an, while gymnastics and mutual cooperation activities are held every week which aim to create a sense of responsibility in cleanliness. Orphanage and cooperation with foster children so that children's social interactions are formed. These activities

allow orphanage children to become more familiar with other friends and not hesitate to communicate and interact.

There are no restrictions on social activities in the orphanage, whether it is Tahfiz competitions or mutual cooperation. However, foster parents will distribute tasks fairly to children, from children to teenagers, such as children cleaning the room and making the bed. In contrast, teenagers will cook, wash dishes, and do work that teenagers usually do in general.

Extracurricular activities are additional activities at school and in the orphanage which aim to ensure that orphanage children do not get bored and can form children's social interactions by socialising or forming groups in these extracurricular activities because extracurricular tahfidz is followed better at reading the Qur'an; better at reciting the Qur'an in terms of recitation, and memorising more. Meanwhile, one informant, AF, not only participates in one extracurricular activity, such as tahfidz, but he also participates in extracurricular badminton because it is his hobby and it can calm his mind, said the informant.

Extracurricular activities can create good interactions between one another, as evidenced by extracurricular activities that create social interactions for the six informants, 4 of whom are embedded in themselves to interact and socialise with other foster children. However, the other two informants have not been successfully embedded well. For this reason, apart from emphasising social interaction with foster children, foster parents also hold social activities aimed at increasing the sociability of foster children in terms of their interactions and social behaviour. According to the six informants, they always participate in social activities held by the orphanage and social activities from outside.

The method used by foster parents for children who have difficulty getting along is that foster parents apply a personal approach to parenting. They get to know each child individually and adapt their approach to their needs and characteristics. Then, foster parents also form small groups for foster children, which are divided into small groups for various activities. This allows for closer and more effective interactions and helps children learn to work together in groups, such as mutual aid activities.

Foster parents also create Structured and Non-Structured Activities, namely structured activities such as classes and training; foster parents also encourage non-structured activities such as free play and creative exploration. The aim is to develop social skills so that foster children can interact more easily, have the courage to open themselves up to socialise, and have self-confidence in individuals who can interact widely.

However, from the role that has been carried out, foster parents feel that there are obstacles in which not all foster children accept and follow what the foster parents have done. There are still many who often do not contribute to the social activities carried out by the orphanage. For example, several foster children are often absent on purpose to avoid participating in tahfidz activities. They will give various reasons, from being tired from studying at school to pretending to be sick. There are even those who claim to be menstruating even though when examined, it turns out they are not menstruating.

Then, the obstacles foster parents face are limited financial and material resources, which limit the ability of orphanages to provide various facilities and activities for orphaned children. Another obstacle is that the large number of children and the limited number of foster parents mean that the attention given to each child is often not optimal. Differences Foster children come from diverse backgrounds with different life experiences, which sometimes becomes a challenge in building harmonious social interactions.

However, for all the obstacles experienced, there is always a way out or a solution taken by foster parents to support the formation of children's social interactions; namely, the administrators try to provide complete facilities for foster children, find donors and become good foster parents for the children. -children in orphanages by maximising self-confidence and creating harmonious relationships to increase solidarity.

The Role of Foster Parents in Forming Children's Social Interactions

This research's results emphasise the importance of foster parents in shaping children's social interactions at the Al Washliyah orphanage in Binjai City.

The Role of Foster Parents as Mentors and Emotional Supporters

The findings show that emotional support from foster parents plays a major role in building children's self-confidence. This aligns with child development theory, which emphasises the importance of love and attention in children's emotional development (Pello & Zega, 2024). Rewards or appreciation given by teachers are usually in the form of praise, applause, or giving rewards of giving more value or a prize. This is supported by an explanation that the teacher's efforts to appreciate students' efforts in learning are very good because this can make students proud of themselves so they will be more confident (Putri et al., 2020).

Effectiveness of Parenting Methods Applied

There are different forms or types of parenting methods, namely (1) authoritarian parenting methods, where parents tend to raise children harshly and provide strict rules. (2) democratic parenting methods, in which parents provide opportunities for their children due to the equal position recognised by the parents towards the child, providing space for the child to participate in making decisions. (3) the permissive parenting method, where parents give their children complete freedom and care less about their children; and the last one is. (4) parenting methods, in which parents apply rules, directions and actions according to the child's condition and situations. Therefore, parents do not emphasise boundaries with their children (Nisai & Santoso, 2023).

The research findings are that foster parents use a more personal approach, and forming small groups has proven effective in improving children's social skills. This supports previous research, which shows that more intensive and personal interactions can improve the quality of children's social relationships (Dinawati et al., 2019).

Barriers in Parenting

Apart from academic influences, parental involvement in raising children also influences the formation of children's character. Children adopt their social development through parental care, but this will be hampered if foster parents and children are not mutually sustainable. Limited resources and the large number of children are the main obstacles faced by foster parents. To overcome this, more support is needed from the government and society in the form of financial and material assistance and increasing the number of caregivers (Zuhdi, 2021).

Subsequently, challenges in communication can hinder children from effectively interacting with peers, causing confusion or disappointment. Children may require guidance to understand others' perspectives, which can reduce their levels of empathy and respect. Consequently, unpleasant or demeaning behavior may emerge, potentially affecting the atmosphere in orphanages. It is evident that how children interact with adults and their peers plays a significant role in their growth and progress in social interaction (Jaga et al., 2023).

Positive Impact of Structured and Non-Structured Activities

Structural activities must be completed within the limits of those who provide them. Structured activities are learning activities that develop students' learning independence. Providing structured activities is a learning activity that deepens learning material by a student-designed by the provider to achieve competency standards (Ikhwan et al., 2022). The combination of structured and non-structured activities significantly impacts children's social development. This suggests balancing rules and freedom in daily activities is essential for developing children's social skills (Madya et al., 2022).

Extracurricular activities also constitute social skills necessary for foster children to interact with others, including abilities in cooperation, respecting others' rights, and having social sensitivity (such as teamwork, tolerance, and respecting others' rights). Moreover, it is important to learn self-control and self-direction. The ability to share ideas and experiences with others is also part of these social skills. By mastering these skills, foster children can be more effective in self-actualization, optimizing their potential, expressing their feelings and

problems, and finding appropriate solutions. This helps avoid behaviors that harm themselves or others (Indriyani et al., 2021).

Recommendations for Improving the Quality of Care

Based on the results of this research, it is recommended that orphanages improve training for foster parents to enrich their parenting methods (Isyanto, 2021). As stated in the word of Allah SWT in Q.S At-tahriim verse 6 which reads:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ
اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

"O believers, protect yourselves and your families from the fire of hell whose fuel is people and stones. Its guardians are rough and tough angels. They did not disobey Allah for what He commanded them and always did what they were ordered to do."

Based on the verse above illustrates that parents' responsibility is to protect their family from the threat of hellfire, which means saving themselves by doing good deeds. It includes providing teaching and education to children, guiding them in good behaviour, directing them towards useful things, and causing happiness for them in the future (Ikhwan et al., 2020). Apart from that, orphanages must find ways to overcome resource constraints, for example, by collaborating with social institutions and donors.

This research provides valuable insight into the role of foster parents in shaping children's social interactions at the Al Washliyah orphanage in the city of Binjai. These findings can be a basis for improving care practices in other orphanages and encourage the development of policies that support the welfare of children in foster care.

IV. CONCLUSION

Foster parents have made every effort to shape the social interactions of orphaned children, starting from the attention that is always given to foster children in the orphanage, routine social activities, to educating foster children to have good attitudes and behavior when interacting. By applying several ways to form social interactions, namely giving advice, getting foster children used to socializing, interacting with the surrounding environment, and providing good

examples in the environment. This activity can make it easier for orphanage children to socialize openly without feeling afraid, embarrassed or not confident in interacting. However, with social inequality still existing, it is hoped that this will slowly disappear so that comfort can be created for foster children and success in educating children from orphanages. Washliyah became a skilled human being with noble character. Can become a person with noble character, have broader and deeper knowledge, always study hard and work hard, and become a person who is intelligent and agile in fighting for hope. Of course, the researcher hopes that other researchers can conduct more in-depth research regarding the role of foster parents in shaping the social interactions of children in orphanages, perhaps by applying relevant parenting methods or patterns they can shape the social interactions of children in orphanages better.

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