

The Exploitation of Street Children by Parents in Pasir Koja of Bandung City

Muhammad Alfi Nurfaizi

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung
nurfaizialfi@gmail.com

Muhammad Iqbal

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung
muhammadiqbal.090300@gmail.com

Vera Octavia

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung
vera_79@uinsgd.ac.id

Suggested Citation:

Nurfaizi, Muhammad Alfi; Iqbal, Muhammad; Octavia, Vera. (2022). The Exploitation of Street Children by Parents in Pasir Koja of Bandung City. *Temali: Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial*. Volume 5, Number 2: pp 113-118. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15575/jt.v5i2.13442>

Article's History:

Received July 2022; Revised November 2022; Accepted November 2022.
2022. journal.uinsgd.ac.id ©. All rights reserved.

Abstract:

Street children are a social phenomenon that is often found in various areas in the city of Bandung. Typically children enjoy playing, but they spend most of their time on the streets to earn money, which should have been the duty and obligation of their parents. The qualitative research method describes the problem by collecting data directly through interviews and observation. The purpose of this study is to find out the background and reality of life that street children go through and to find out about the factors that cause them to take to the streets to earn money. The results obtained in the field show that the presence of street children is driven by the exploitation of their children by parents. In reality, parents use their children to make money on the streets of Pasir Koja, either by begging or singing. Basically, the age of these children is still very young, this is what parents take advantage of, because young children will more easily get people's attention to give them money.

Keywords: primary education; forced labor; fundamental rights; urbanization; urban poor

INTRODUCTION

Children are one of the gifts given by God to a family (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2019; Sundararajan et al., 2019); therefore, children have human rights or fundamental rights since they are born into this world (Chelladurai et al., 2018; Fong, 2020). Therefore, this right cannot be taken away by anyone, even one's family. In Indonesia, this is stated in the Child Protection Act No. 23 of 2002 Chapter III article 4 to article 19 concerning children's rights. During its development period, a child should get many opportunities to grow well, be it physically, mentally or socially (Masten & Barnes, 2018). All of these things can be felt and realized by taking education and protection by providing guarantees for children's rights (Alam, 2022). Normally a child will and must have every need fulfilled following the child's rights (Achir, 2022). However, from the other side of life, we cannot deny that there are still

many children whose rights cannot be fulfilled (Todres & Fink, 2020). Whether it is by his parents or even his whole family, it cannot fulfill the rights a child must obtain. In fact, not a few parents and families use a child as a tool to gain profit by begging and singing, expecting compassion from others by using or bringing the child (Bajari & Kuswano, 2020). This can be called the exploitation of children by their families to make money on the streets (Putra et al., 2021).

According to the Social Welfare Service, a street child is a child under 18 who spends around eight to twenty-four hours on the streets doing activities such as busking, begging, and vagrancy to get money that will be used to sustain his life (Marina, 2018). The phenomenon of street children is a social problem that often occurs in big cities in Indonesia (Darma et al., 2021). The economic crisis and urbanization situation has created various social problems, one of which is the phenomenon of street children which continues to increase (Sadzaglishvili et al., 2021). Being a street child is not a life choice expected by everyone, especially a small child, who should spend his childhood playing with his peers (Gowreesunkar et al., 2020). However, parents' economic situation and attitude towards children make it a tool for making money on the streets (Chudnovsky & Peeters, 2021).

The development of street children is a social problem that should receive special attention from various parties, especially the government (Stivens, 2020). Because this will significantly impact a child, where he will be exploited such as rough treatment, involvement in criminal acts, and other social deviations. This situation can have a terrible impact on a child, both mentally and physically. Street children cannot get their rights as a child, because they live in unacceptable conditions in their daily life. A street child also does not get the opportunity that is also his right to be educated at school because he spends a lot of time on the streets, so he cannot develop his interests and talents. Street children also often experience malnutrition, this is because they do not get proper food or because they often eat carelessly.

Terry E. Lawson (Lawson, 1993), in his theory of exploitation, stated that child exploitation leads to discriminatory attitudes or arbitrary treatment of children by their families or society. Child abuse, namely 1) emotional abuse, namely violence that occurs when parents, caregivers, and child protectors find out that their child is asking for attention but ignores it, 2) verbal abuse) namely a treatment that contains insults or various words that can abuse children, 3) physical abuse or violence that occurs when parents, or caregivers beat or commit acts of violence against children, 4) sexual violence (sexual abuse) where forced sexual relations occur in household life.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method or approach, namely expressing problems by collecting several opinions, information, concepts and descriptions related to street children's activities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The qualitative way is basically the process of extracting valid data or information about a problem in the life of the object under study. In this case, the data used is primary data, which is obtained directly from informants through interviews and observations (Denzin Yvonna S., 2009). The location for this research is in the Pasir Koja area, Bandung City, especially within the scope of the Bagea Foundation and its surroundings. The research subjects in this study were street children in the Pasir Koja area.

The technique of selecting informants who will be used as research subjects for interviews is by using a purposive, here the researcher first approaches a Bagea Foundation administrator who is considered quite close and respected by street children and who knows the condition of the street children best. Later this informant is expected to be able to help researchers to bring and show the right research subjects, according to the problem being studied (Loubere, 2017), namely street children with conditions employed by their parents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A child can be called a street child when he spends most of his time on the streets (Reza & Bromfield, 2019), and of course what these street children do varies, some even lead to the stages of delinquency and crime (Aufseeser, 2020). In Pasir Koja itself, these street children aim to make a living, often found by begging and playing musical instruments (busking) around the red light in Pasir Koja. From the data from interviews and observations conducted by researchers, that these street children take to the streets to meet their economic needs, but the problem here is that street children take to the streets to earn money because there is coercion from their parents, this done by their parents because they consider a child as an asset to gain cash on the streets by scavenging the public's compassion for street children.

Street children in Pasir Koja often take to the streets to make money because of coercion from their parents, street children are even prohibited from going to school or getting proper education for children of their age for inadequate economic reasons. Although these street children in Pasir Koja are forced to go out, they voluntarily take to the streets by themselves because they prefer to earn money rather than study hard. This can happen because they are initially forced to take to the streets to meet the needs of their parents, they become used to it and begin to feel that free life on the streets is fun. This problem occurs because of the exploitation of street children by their parents.

Every day the Pasir Koja red light is filled with various vehicle activities passing through the Pasir Koja red light, many of which are private two-wheeled and four-wheeled vehicles; there are also inter-city buses that leave the terminal and go to the Pasir Koja toll road or vice versa. Amid the dense activity of vehicles and people around the Koja Sands red light, many street children carry out activities around the Koja Sands red light every day by begging or singing. Street children use the crowd at the Koja Sands red light to make money, they use musical instruments and compassion from the people who walk around the Koja Sands red light area.

Around Pasir Koja, or more precisely in Jalan Cibuntu Selatan area in Kampung Babakan, there are approximately 20 street children, where these street children come from underprivileged or low-income families. However, despite the low economic situation, the parents of these street children are not working or looking for work, they prefer to make their children an investment tool by sending them to the streets. However, these street children are protected by the Bagea Foundation in Babakan Village, this foundation is engaged in independent social welfare institutions where this foundation is a shelter for street children who are exploited by their parents. This foundation provides education that street children should receive, this foundation also not only deals with street children, but also handles the families of these street children.

Street children do play activities at the Bagea Foundation, even though they spend their time on the streets, they take the time to play at this Foundation, even if it is just to play. These children are street children who are victims of exploitation by their parents. They take to the streets under coercion and because of the mindset of their parents who see children as an investment (tool) to get money from the streets. This is a serious problem that occurs and affects school-age children, on average these street children are still at elementary school age which should be the golden age for formal education, but due to the difficult economy and parents who make them tools to make the Street children feel the loud hustle and bustle of the streets.

From the information obtained from one of the informants, what happened was that parents made their children a valuable commodity. Their children make a living on the streets, drenched in sweat when the weather is hot, while their parents just wait for the results their children have earned. Actually there is a problem that is rooted in this problem. One of the things that parents do to continue to meet economic needs is have sexual relations, so uncontrolled reproduction results in very high birth rates without being accompanied by a decent life and good planning for children. From here alone there have been efforts to continue to nourish street children, so handling is increasingly difficult to realize. Behind it all, there are reasons why parents continue to give birth to street children. In fact, small children are still very easy to be directed by them regarding certain goals, they do not question much and go against what their parents say, because usually children will be small afraid and shy. Likewise, the community as "consumers" of what street children peddle is considered more compassionate and feel more empathetic towards these young street children.

When street children do not obey what their parents say, there are cases when they are punished, whether in the form of violence or force-fed liquor. Another impact due to uncontrolled reproduction is the increasing number of neglected children, who in the end end up becoming street children as well. In terms of family health, street children basically live in a sphere where life is not proper, starting from poor sanitation to the food they consume is lacking in nutrition and vitamins, this often also has a contribution to keep the culture of street children alive.

This family dysfunction experienced by street children makes them experience many negative impacts. The intact family refers to Talcott Parsons (Parsons & Fox, 1952) regarding the structural-functional theory, which should have a clear role for each family member. It aims to present a balanced system, which results in balance (equilibrium). A mother is present in the family as a provider of affection and security, a moral booster and early socialization, and a father responsible for earning a living to support the family.

In the case of street children in Pasir Koja these things were not realized. However, what happened was the disintegration or chaos of the system, in which an important role, especially making a living, was given entirely to the backs of small children. The Bagea Foundation is the home where street children go home after doing activities on the street. As a place that provides a sense of security and comfort so far they should get. The Foundation takes

care of street children as children in general. Most of the street children accommodated are very young, ranging from kindergarten to elementary school. Therefore, there they are given education and education such as basic needs, namely, reading, writing, counting and drawing.

Bagea Foundation is a good and safe place for street children in Pasir Koja, where children can spend their time without any pressure from their parents to make money on the streets. Children feel that at this foundation they get more playing time and better learning time. According to the foundation's management, this foundation was also established to deal with the problems of street children around Pasir Koja, so that street children can spend time not going out on the streets without pressure from their parents. It is hoped that this foundation can protect street children so that they spend less time on the streets and slowly begin to find other activities that are better than having to take to the streets.

Parents who always force their children to take to the streets looking for money can have several impacts on the child, both physically and psychologically. First, the physical impact that street children get is when they are always hot when they are busking around the red light in Pasir Koja, and sometimes they are at high risk when begging by taking the bus, where they sometimes fall and cause injuries. Street children also get a bad effect when they are too often on the streets, where they often breathe dirty street air due to the effects of many vehicles, street children also often have their nutritional needs not met so that street children seem thin and unhealthy. Second, street children are also affected psychologically, where this impact greatly influences the psychological development of children. The local community often calls this psychological impact as naughty and disturbing for the environment, this is because street children do not get good upbringing from their parents who always force them to take to the streets looking for money. This causes street children to behave negatively and are often ostracized by society (Julien, 2022; Roschelle & Kaufman, 2004).

Based on the Child Protection Act No. 23 of 2002 it is known that street children around the Pasir Koja red light do not receive proper protection and treatment, they also receive discrimination from their surroundings, exploitation by their parents, and sometimes neglect, cruelty, violence and abuse by their parents when did not follow the orders of his parents to take to the streets.

Based on the theory of exploitation of child labor which states that there are several criteria for child labor who are always exploited, namely as follows; when children work full time at a very young age, too much time is spent working, jobs that cause psychological, social and physical stress often occur (Infurna et al., 2020). Insufficient wages, too much responsibility, work that hinders access to education, and work that reduces the dignity and self-esteem of the child, such as slavery or forced contract work and sexual exploitation (Srivastava, 2019).

Based on the exploitation theory explained above, it can be concluded that street children in Pasir Koja who sing and beg could be included in exploitative forms of work for the following reasons; Street children spend most of their time busking and begging on the streets. The shortest time street children in Pasir Koja work is 8-12 hours daily. Children become bearers or are responsible for the needs of their parents and family by busking; this happens because parents are forced and always ask for income from the child who makes money by busking and begging. Frequent outings on the streets can also negatively affect children, such as bad company, smoking, drinking, and even drugs (Josephine et al., 2019).

In the end, the welfare of street children requires various roles from the government and community institutions in the field of social welfare (Huriani et al., 2021), such as the Bagea Foundation. Also, the need for the role of the police to carry out good coaching, supervision and guidance not only to discipline and give punishment (Warnick & Scribner, 2020), these street children should receive special attention, moreover they are victims of exploitation from their parents so they have to do many things that they should not have done at their young age.

CONCLUSION

The existence of street children's activities around the Pasir Koja red light is one of the social problems that befall children, caused by the behavior of their parents who use children as tools or investments to gain money. Even though poverty is the main reason parents force their children to take to the streets, it cannot be tolerated. Disorganization of a family experienced by street children causes them to take to the streets. Family members do not have the structures and systems that support the formation of a normal family, the roles and functions within them do not work properly, in this case the child becomes the backbone of the family which should not be the case.

The problem is even more complicated because in the scope of street children, uncontrolled reproduction causes this phenomenon to continue over time. Parents want many children to fulfill their wishes, while they only wait for the profits and results to be obtained. This is considered adequate because to gain empathy for people on the street, it is necessary for street children whose age is still very young because they will feel sad and feel sorry for them, from there more money can be obtained.

The Bagea Foundation stands amid this problem as an independent body that oversees and takes care of street children. Here they are given attention like small children in general, not only that, they are also educated and given primary education because some of them cannot read, write and do arithmetic, although some are already in elementary or junior high school. The point is that this place provides space for free movement for street children, so they can reduce their time on the streets and reduce the burden they bear.

REFERENCES

- Achir, N. (2022). Fulfillment of The Constitutional Rights of Abandoned Children Victims of Economic Exploitation. *Jambura Law Review*, 4 (1), 160–175.
- Alam, A. (2022). Employing Adaptive Learning and Intelligent Tutoring Robots for Virtual Classrooms and Smart Campuses: Reforming Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence. In *Advanced Computing and Intelligent Technologies* (pp. 395–406). Springer.
- Aufseeser, D. (2020). Towards a relational understanding of child poverty: Care and adverse inclusion among street-affiliated children in Peru. *Geoforum*, 114, 10–18.
- Bajari, A., & Kuswarno, E. (2020). Violent language in the environment of street children singer-beggars. *Heliyon*, 6 (8), e04664.
- Chelladurai, J. M., Dollahite, D. C., & Marks, L. D. (2018). “The family that prays together...”: Relational processes associated with regular family prayer. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 32 (7), 849.
- Chudnovsky, M., & Peeters, R. (2021). The unequal distribution of administrative burden: A framework and an illustrative case study for understanding variation in people’s experience of burdens. *Social Policy & Administration*, 55 (4), 527–542.
- Darma, D., Malawat, M., & Ridwan, M. (2021). Delineating Subjective Experiences in the Mardika Market: Self-Management of Beggars Identities in Moluccas, Indonesia. *Technium Soc. Sci. J.*, 26, 607.
- Denzin Yvonna S., N. K. . L. (2009). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. SAGE PUBLICATIONS.
- Fong, K. (2020). Getting eyes in the home: Child protective services investigations and state surveillance of family life. *American Sociological Review*, 85 (4), 610–638.
- Gowreesunkar, V. G., Seraphin, H., & Nazimuddin, M. (2020). Beggarism and black market tourism—a case study of the city of Chaar Minaar in Hyderabad (India). *International Journal of Tourism Cities*.
- Huriani, Y., Dulwahab, E., & Annibras, N. (2021). *Strategi Penguatan Ekonomi Perempuan Berbasis Keluarga*. Lekkas.
- Infurna, F. J., Gerstorf, D., & Lachman, M. E. (2020). Midlife in the 2020s: Opportunities and challenges. *American Psychologist*, 75 (4), 470.
- Josephine, M. T., Andrew, C. T., & Stephen, M. K. (2019). Investigation of the socio-economic factors that influences deviant behaviour among the youth: A case study of Madonsi Village, South Africa. *Gender & Behaviour*, 17 (1), 12630–12648.
- Julien, G. (2022). Traits of street children. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 17 (5), 160–167.
- Lawson, T. E. (1993). *The Consequences of "not Good Enough" Parenting*. Spencer Publications.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Loubere, N. (2017). Questioning transcription: The case for the systematic and reflexive interviewing and reporting (SRIR) method. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 18 (2), 22. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-18.2.2739>
- Marina, P. J. (2018). *The Hard and Soft City: A Portrait of New Orleans Neighborhoods and Their Characters*. In

- Down and Out in New Orleans* (pp. 17–45). Columbia University Press.
- Masten, A. S., & Barnes, A. J. (2018). Resilience in children: Developmental perspectives. *Children*, 5 (7), 98.
- Mugumbate, J., & Chereni, A. (2019). Using African Ubuntu theory in social work with children in Zimbabwe. *African Journal of Social Work*, 9 (1).
- Parsons, T., & Fox, R. (1952). Illness, therapy and the modern urban American family. *Journal of Social Issues*, 8 (4), 31–44.
- Putra, M. A. H., Handy, M. R. N., Rusmaniah, R., Mardiani, F., & Subiyakto, B. (2021). Exploitation of Children as Buskers in Banjarmasin. *The Innovation of Social Studies Journal*, 3 (1), 49–55.
- Reza, M. H., & Bromfield, N. F. (2019). Poverty, vulnerability and everyday resilience: How Bangladeshi street children manage economic challenges through financial transactions on the streets. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 49 (5), 1105–1123.
- Roschelle, A. R., & Kaufman, P. (2004). Fitting in and fighting back: Stigma management strategies among homeless kids. *Symbolic Interaction*, 27 (1), 23–46.
- Sadzaglishvili, S., Gotsiridze, T., & Lekeshvili, K. (2021). Ethical considerations for social work research with vulnerable children and their families. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 31 (4), 351–359.
- Srivastava, R. N. (2019). Children at work, child labor and modern slavery in India: an overview. *Indian Pediatrics*, 56 (8), 633–638.
- Stivens, M. (2020). The hope of the nation: Moral panics and the construction of teenagerhood in contemporary Malaysia. In *Coming of age in South and Southeast Asia* (pp. 188–206). Routledge.
- Sundararajan, R., Yoder, L. M., Kihunrwa, A., Aristide, C., Kalluvya, S. E., Downs, D. J., Mwakisole, A. H., & Downs, J. A. (2019). How gender and religion impact uptake of family planning: results from a qualitative study in Northwestern Tanzania. *BMC Women's Health*, 19 (1), 1–10.
- Todres, J., & Fink, D. V. (2020). The Trauma of Trump's Family Separation and Child Detention Actions: A Children's Rights Perspective. *Wash. L. Rev.*, 95, 377.
- Warnick, B. R., & Scribner, C. F. (2020). Discipline, punishment, and the moral community of schools. *Theory and Research in Education*, 18 (1), 98–116.



© 2022 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY SA) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).