

## The Description of Social Support in Continuing Education to College in Orphanage Children

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**Abstract.** In continuing education to college, every child needs social support from the closest environment, including orphanage children. The purpose of this study was to obtain an overview of social support in continuing education to college in foster children at 221 GMIT Ebenhaezar Oeba Christian Orphanage. This type of research is qualitative research using interviews as data collection. The number of participants in this study were 10 foster children. Using thematic analysis techniques, this study produced four main themes, namely Constraints in Education Sustainability, Forms and Sources of Social Support, Impact of Support, and Challenges in Providing Social Support. The results of this study show that the social support received by foster children is emotional support, appreciation support, instrumental support, and informative support, which is described in 7 more specific forms of support. The support comes from the child's closest environment, such as caregivers, parents, peers, teachers, and the outside community.

**Keywords:** *Education, Orphanage, Social Support*

**Abstrak.** Dalam keberlanjutan pendidikan ke perguruan tinggi, setiap anak membutuhkan dukungan sosial dari lingkungan terdekatnya, termasuk anak panti asuhan. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendapatkan gambaran dukungan sosial dalam keberlanjutan pendidikan ke perguruan tinggi pada anak asuh di Panti Asuhan Kristen 221 GMIT Ebenhaezar Oeba. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif dengan menggunakan wawancara sebagai pengumpulan data. Jumlah partisipan di dalam penelitian ini adalah 10 anak asuh. Dengan menggunakan teknik analisis tematik, penelitian ini menghasilkan lima tema utama, yaitu Kendala dalam Keberlanjutan Pendidikan, Bentuk dan Sumber Dukungan Sosial, Dampak dari Dukungan, dan Tantangan dalam Pemberian Dukungan Sosial. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa dukungan sosial yang diterima oleh anak asuh ialah dukungan emosional, dukungan penghargaan, dukungan instrumental, dan dukungan informatif, yang dijabarkan dalam 7 bentuk dukungan yang lebih spesifik. Dukungan tersebut datang dari lingkungan terdekat anak, seperti pengasuh, orang tua, teman sebaya, guru, dan masyarakat luar.

**Kata Kunci :** *Pendidikan, Panti Asuhan, Dukungan Sosial*

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### **Introduction**

Orphanage is a very popular institution for shaping the development of children who do not have a family or who do not live with a family. Based on data from the Indonesian Child Profile in 2021, as many as 4.76% of Indonesian children live with other families, and some are in orphanages, which are estimated to number around 5,000 orphanages. They live in orphanages run by foundations, families, or individuals. In reality, most children are placed in orphanages by their families who are experiencing economic difficulties in the hope that they will get a proper education.

After completing their education, especially at the senior high school or vocational level (SMA/K), most orphanage children return to their parents and live independently in the community. Orphanage children are faced with the choice of continuing their education at university or finding a job according to their abilities. Most orphanage children choose to continue their education to higher education, with the reason being to reduce the perception and stigma from the social environment, due to the children's condition in poverty and financial deprivation, which makes their future success doubtful. Therefore, continuing their education to university is important to prove themselves to be better people (Ibda, 2022).

However, before going to college, children have to face several problems, namely low socio-economic status factors, making it difficult to pay for education, a lack of parental trust in children in choosing majors, and doubts about choosing majors and universities that match children's interests. There is anxiety that can lead to stress. Hurlock (in Hasmarlin & Hirmaningsih, 2019) revealed that heightened emotions, especially in adolescents, are because they are under social pressure and facing new conditions. The new condition in question is a condition where children are making decisions about the continuation of their education. It

makes children need social support from their closest environment to overcome excessive anxiety about continuing their education to college.

According to Sarafino (2011), social support refers to the comfort, care, self-esteem, or assistance available to a person from other people or groups. Sarafino states that social support is a form of acceptance from a person or group of people towards an individual who creates a perception in him that he is loved, cared for, valued, and helped. Social support is very important to understand because it becomes very valuable when individuals experience a problem. Therefore, the individual concerned needs the closest people who can be trusted to help in overcoming these problems.

Social support can be provided in various forms, such as real help, useful advice or input, attention and affection, and so on. This form of social support can be interpreted as emotional support, instrumental support, appreciation support, and information support. If emotional support is high, individuals will feel encouraged. If the appreciation for the individual is great, it will increase self-confidence. If individuals receive instrumental support, they will receive adequate facility support from the family. If individuals get a lot of informative support, they feel that they get attention and knowledge (Solikhati & Saraswati, 2021).

## **Methods**

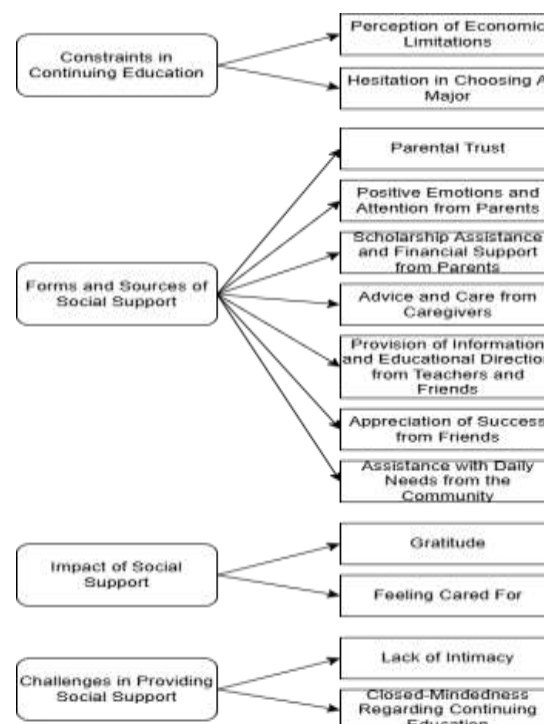
The research method used in this research is a qualitative research method, using interview techniques to obtain the desired data. The interview method used is a semi-structured interview, which refers to a series of open-ended questions. The interview process will be assisted by using a recording device to provide evidence of the interview. Data analysis in this study uses thematic analysis to identify patterns or to find themes through the data that has been collected by researchers.

In this study, participants will be selected using predetermined criteria. Participants involved in this study are children who are adolescents, namely 10-22 years old, still have at least one parent, are currently attending high school or vocational level, and who currently live at 221 GMIT Ebenhaezer Oeba Christian

Orphanage. From these criteria, there were 10 foster children who became participants in this study. The interview was conducted in the orphanage hall, with the duration of the interview ranging from 13 to 20 minutes. Before the interview took place, the researcher gave an explanation related to the research and provided informed consent as an agreement to conduct the interview, to be signed by the participant.

## Result

The data in this study were obtained from interviews. The results of the interviews obtained by the researchers then went through the data analysis process using the thematic analysis method, and the researchers found 5 main themes, namely obstacles in continuing education, forms and sources of social support, the impact of social support, and challenges in providing social support.



Picture 1.2 Theme and Sub Theme

[ ] : Theme  
 [ ] : Sub Theme

## 1. Constraints on Education Sustainability

There are two sub-themes in it, namely perceptions of economic limitations and doubts about choosing a major. As Malakai said about his economic condition, *"... I want to go to college too, but because the economy doesn't support going to college.... My parents want me to go to college but I can't, so I'm still thinking about it because if I want to go to college, I have to spend a lot of money..."*

As for the hesitation in choosing a major, it is the same as what Parker said, *".... What I thought before, I wanted to take the police test but there was no support from my parents about my decision, my parents said they wanted me to go to college but take a major that I didn't like, even if I didn't take the police test, I just wanted to continue my previous education in school... civil engineering so if I wanted to go to college I took housing construction engineering..."*

## 2. Forms and Sources of Social Support

Specific forms of support are described that are provided from the closest sources of support, namely family, close friends, caregivers, teachers, and from the outside community.

### a. Parental Trust.

In the interview, Archie said, *"...My parents are happy because I have the intention and willingness to continue my education and they entrust me to take the major I want..."*

### b. Positive Emotions and Attention from Parents.

In the interview, Malakai said, *"...From the family, there is definitely attention given. They often call and encourage me, and my mom always supports me in prayer..."*

### c. Scholarship Assistance and Fund Support from Parents.

There were participants who received support in education funds from their parents, but there were also participants who chose to look for scholarships to ease the burden on their parents, as Roxy said in the interview, *"...it has been discussed with my parents and I am also trying to get a scholarship or look for a scholarship to ease the burden on my parents..."*

Or what Felix said in his interview,

*"...my parents asked me to focus only on school, while the funding (for education) and other things will be arranged by my parents. They prepared everything for me to continue my education to a higher level..."*

d. Advice and Care from Caregivers.

In the interview, Ryder said,

*"...Usually caregivers often remind us to be patient and not to give up. Often reminding us to study hard, parents also do the same and often remind us to always worship..."*

e. Providing information and educational guidance from teachers and friends.

In the interview, Parker said,

*"...At school, my teacher said that if you want to go to college, you have to continue your current major, because if you choose another major, it's the same as repeating the learning from the beginning. Unlike the current major, there is already a picture, so it will not be difficult when studying..."*

f. Appreciation of Success from Friends.

In an interview, Mikhael said,

*"...I'm good at playing soccer, so when I do exercises with my friends, I'm often praised for playing well..."*

g. Daily Needs Assistance from the Community.

In an interview, Noah said,

*"...The caregiver once gave money, then from outside guests also often gave money to be distributed to all children equally..."*

### **3. Impact of Social Support**

There are two impacts felt by participants related to the support provided by their social environment, namely gratitude and feeling cared for. These impacts can improve psychological well-being in participants. As Malakai said,

*"...Expressing gratitude and thanking God for giving blessings, whatever it is, we here feel grateful because it is rare to get money or other blessings..."*

Noah said the same in his interview,

*"...I feel happy that there are still people who care about us, and whatever is given is enough for all of us here..."*

#### **4. Challenges in Providing Social Support**

Challenges arose because the recipients of support were secretive about their continuing education and there was a lack of intimacy between sources of support. This can be an obstacle in providing the support that participants should get. As Mikhael said in the interview,

*"...I don't usually share my problems with others, I usually keep quiet and solve them myself. It is rare to tell parents or caregivers, because if there is a problem and then tell people, I am afraid of being scolded..."*

Or what Flynn said in his interview,

*"...If I have a problem, I rarely tell anyone about it, I choose to keep quiet, and am lazy to tell problems to other people..."*

### **Discussion**

The problem of continuing education begins with the obstacles experienced by participants, namely the perception of economic limitations and doubts in choosing a major. This perception of economic limitations comes from the participants themselves who realize the economic limitations of their parents so they decide not to go to college so as not to burden them with large education costs. Meanwhile, doubts in choosing a major arise because of differences of opinion between the wishes and expectations of children and the wishes and expectations of parents, which can lead to conflict so that it becomes an obstacle in the decision-making process. These two obstacles can trigger anxiety that can lead to stress. Therefore, social support is needed that can effectively handle psychological pressure in difficult and stressful situations (Rif'ati., et al, 2018).

Parents as the main source of support for participants have a very large role for the continuation of participants' education. Full trust is needed by participants in choosing a major or university that becomes the participant's goal. With the trust given, participants get the freedom to choose majors and the feeling that parents fully support the decisions made by the participants themselves. This

support is support in the form of parental appreciation to participants. Research conducted by Viratama and Basaria (2024) also revealed that the appreciation support received by children plays a very important role in strengthening motivation and enthusiasm. So it can be said that appreciation support not only makes participants get freedom in choosing majors but also makes participants as individuals who have high motivation and self-confidence.

The presence of parents is far from the participants but the sense of care and attention from parents is always obtained by the participants. There are positive emotions from participants who feel attention from parents. As Feeney and Collins (in Lee & Ybarra, 2017) stated, when a child knows that they are cared for, there is a feeling of security that arises. This feeling makes participants feel protected and make parents a "place to go home" when participants experience difficulties. This feeling of security is the result of emotional support provided by parents. But the feeling of security will not always be felt by a child. There will be various other problems, one of which is education funds in continuing education. It is at this time that the instrumental support of parents is tested. However, due to economic limitations, instrumental support is also a challenge for parents. Participants who have a high interest will choose to look for scholarships as a cheaper access to education.

The search for scholarships was not done by the participants themselves, but there was help from other sources of social support, such as teachers and peers. The direction in choosing a major from the teacher and advice and input from friends made it easier for participants to make the right decision. This informative support can help reduce emotions caused by problems regarding education funds (Christensen., et al in Rif'ati., et al, 2018). Other support provided by peers is in the form of appreciation of success. Often the main focus of support is always on parents, without seeing that peers also have support that is no less important. Close friends are always present in every joy and sorrow, and appreciate every small or big thing that participants do. Hurlock (in Rif'ati., et al 2018) stated that adolescents get more social support from peers. This shows that peers play a big role in providing support that is not found from other sources of support.



Support becomes a big influence if participants interpret it well and feel a good effect on the continuation of their education. Feelings of gratitude and a sense of being cared for are the effects or impacts felt by participants. With participants feeling this positive impact, participants become individuals who have high psychological well-being. As stated by Rif'ati et al (2018) that the positive impact of individuals who receive social support from others appropriately, can become stress coping when individuals have problems. However, providing social support will not run smoothly if there are obstacles which come from the participants themselves. The closed nature of continuing education and lack of communication is a challenge for the support provider. Social support that should be given on time becomes late due to these obstacles. Recognizing and understanding the factors that influence these barriers can help in the effort to provide more effective support. It is important for support providers to build trust, communication and create an environment that encourages participants to open up and receive support.

### **Conclusion**

Social support is a right for all children, including orphanage children. When they are faced with decisions or problems that lie ahead, the closest people are present to provide social support, especially in continuing their education to college. Many supports are obtained from the closest people, such as parents, caregivers, teachers, friends, and the community. The support provided is in various forms that are specifically described, namely parental trust, positive emotions and attention, scholarship assistance and education funding support, appreciation of success, providing information and educational direction, and daily assistance. They represent emotional, appreciative, instrumental and informative support that is indirectly provided from those around them.

The interesting thing that the author found when analyzing the research is related to the obstacles in providing social support. One of the factors that can be an obstacle in providing support is that which comes from the recipient of the support. Closed nature and lack of communication can be obstacles and challenges

in providing support. This can be a finding that can be developed into new research related to social support.

*Suggestion*

Orphanage children are advised to be open with people around them, such as parents, caregivers, and friends, so that the support they want to give is well conveyed. In addition, it is recommended to establish good communication and also be open with parents so that there are no mistakes in choosing the right major. For the participant's family, it is recommended to build good communication with the participant, by jointly finding solutions to problems regarding majors or other problems. Always provide support to participants because parental support is the most necessary support for participants in continuing their education.

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