

The communication experience of mothers of street children: A phenomenological study

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Abstract

There are different types of uniqueness and diversity of mothers who can be an option for women who, in addition to carrying out their duties as mothers, choose to carry out other activities such as working mothers, mothers who become politicians, and mothers who have street children, as in the research conducted. The purpose of this research is to find out how the mother's communication experience is on the streets. This study was carried out using qualitative research methods and Alfred Schutz's phenomenological approach. Researchers take steps that are deemed necessary in order to explore and comprehend the experiences of street children's mothers and their points of view. This study included 14 informants, including 10 key informants and 4 additional informants. The findings of this study are the experiences of street children's mothers while accompanying their children to work on the streets, as well as the actions they receive from other people as a result of the street children's mothers' acts of communication. Mothers of street children have both pleasant and unpleasant communication experiences; As for the unpleasant experiences that were obtained, among others, being considered an irresponsible mother for allowing her child to be on the streets even though she knew that the streets were very dangerous for herself and her child. Meanwhile, a pleasant experience gained by a mother of street children is the closeness she feels with her child, considering that mothers of street children will be with their children longer than other mothers, mothers of street children can discuss many things with their children, understand children better and discuss what they will do and where they will go each day. From this communication experience, mothers interpret the meaning of children as reinforcement in the life they live and children as helpers who will bring mothers of street children to a better life.

Keywords: acts of communication, communication experience, children meaning, mother of street children,

Introduction

Different countries' estimated totals are for different times, and estimation methods also differ (Dabir & Athale, 2011). The majority of the existing literature on street children is in the form of survey results or evaluation studies conducted by non-profit organizations (Lu et al., 2017). According to Hartjen and Priyadarsini (Hartjen & Priyadarsini, 2012), the laws that have been enacted or can be enacted in various countries to ensure the welfare and protection of street children provide a clear picture of the current situation. De Moura (2002) examined the existing literature on street children, identifying patterns of description and characteristics and focusing on the factors that contribute to their existence (Dutta, 2018).

The existence of street children is regarded as a major social problem in developing countries because it is closely associated with poverty, migration, and population growth, all of which have become major causes of this occurrence (Li, Wang, Xue, Zhao, & Zhu, 2020). Based on the data gathered, UNICEF divides street children into three groups: those who live mostly on the streets, those who work to support their families, and those who are at risk, the majority of whom come from poor urban communities (MacLean, Kelly, Geddes, & Della, 2017). UNICEF developed a useful conceptual perspective in 1986 to categorize street children into three groups based on the degree to which they are associated with the street. The first category is at-risk children. It refers to children from low-income street families who live at home but work on the streets to make ends meet. The second type is children on the street, who play and work on the

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street while maintaining contact with their families and returning home at night. Furthermore, street children work and live on the streets without regular contact with other family members (Gao, Atkinson-Sheppard, Yu, & Xiong, 2018).

Poverty is defined as an economic inability to meet the average community's standard of living in a given area. This ability condition is defined by a low ability to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, and housing. This low income will also make it harder to meet average living standards like those for public health and education (Solihat & Riansi, 2018), which is one reason why women need to work to meet their daily needs. Begging on the streets is a protest movement against the government's concern for the poor. Begging is a movement born out of dissatisfaction with the government's inability to implement policies that benefit the poor, a lack of job opportunities, and a lack of access to economic, political, and cultural issues. Only educated people who are wealthy, powerful, and have extensive networks control job opportunities, access to power, and the economy. Meanwhile, marginalized people such as beggars, buskers, workers, and others are powerless to confront social, political, and economic situations. People who are on the outside of society do things like beg, sing, and scavenge for food in trash and junk to make a living.

Family welfare is a dynamic state of the family in which all physical, material, mental, spiritual, and social needs are met, allowing the family to live normally in accordance with its surroundings and allowing children to grow and develop while receiving the necessary protection to form a mature mental attitude and personality (Faruq & Esa, 2018). Women's roles in household activities imply that they are housewives. In this case, as the smallest unit in the life of society, nation, and state, women play a critical role in the formation of a prosperous family. A prosperous and healthy life must be manifested (Faruq & Esa, 2018). A child's first and most important teacher is his or her mother (Kasumayanti & Elina, 2018). This is because it is a mother who has the most opportunities to shape the child's personality and abilities (Gade, 2012), teaching him by giving special attention (Devi, 2015), according to the child's condition at the time and at the times when the child is most happy (Surahman, 2019). When the mother makes parenting mistakes, her influence is greater than when her caregivers make mistakes (Babcock Fenerci & Allen, 2018). How a baby or young child feels about his parents is a key factor in whether or not he will live (Putri & Lestari, 2015).

Every child has human rights or basic rights from birth, so others should not deprive children of their rights, as stated in Chapter III of the Child Protection Law No. 23 of 2002, Articles 4 to 19, on children's rights. Children in their early stages of development should have a variety of opportunities to thrive physically, mentally, and socially. To achieve all of this, one approach that can be taken is through education and child protection by providing guarantees for the fulfillment of their rights (Yuniarti, 2012). Children's participation in road sales can have a negative impact on their health and education (Hamenuo, Dwomoh, & Dako-Gyeke, 2018). It is undeniable that they are usually carried out by a clean and professional group known as the street child mafia. Each member of the group has specific responsibilities. Some people map every crossroad, while others organize shuttles, and so on. Children are exploited and turned into a business in this country. Worryingly, their own parents, who are often part of the "street children mafia", let this happen.

Researchers were drawn in by observations made at a crossroads in the city of Bandung, where several mothers were waiting for their children who were singing on the streets. It must be properly maintained and cared for, especially for some mothers and children. Childhood does not come around again, so it must be filled with beautiful things, in stark contrast to the situation of mothers who appear to let their children work in the hot sun. When phenomenology is seen as a method of social research that is used to look at a person's behaviours patterns as a social actor in society (Nindito, 2013), its importance grows. Researchers want to investigate the phenomenon of mothers with street children using a phenomenological approach, which aims to experiences, and communication patterns from mothers who allow their children to work on the streets based on the

mother's conscious experience. Based on this, researchers are interested in conducting research on how street children's mothers communicate.

Method

The research adopted phenomenological method to grasp the meaning of the husband's role through interactions with husbands, children, and parents in particular in the institution of marriage, as well as interactions with friends in their social environment in general. Creswell defined the phenomenological tradition as "a study describing the meaning of several individuals' lived experiences about a concept or phenomenon" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Meanwhile, Littlejohn points out that the phenomenological tradition is concerned with a person's conscious experience. Individuals actively interpret their personal experiences and gain a better understanding of life through them (Littlejohn & Foss, 2018). This study employs the social definition paradigm in conjunction with Peter L. Berger's social construction theory. This study focuses on the setting of urban communities, particularly in Jakarta as a metropolitan city where social life is becoming increasingly complex and diverse as a result of modernization and the passage of time. This study was carried out in Bandung City, where the informants live.

The researchers collected data for the study through observation and interviews as they attempted to observe and study what mothers of street children do while waiting for their children on the sidewalks. Data was gathered by asking the mothers of street children questions in person and conducting direct interviews at the intersection while observing their behaviour. The researchers find it simple to obtain and collect the necessary data by using a recording device. The data is analysed using qualitative research methods such as data reduction, data presentation, and data conclusion/verification. The entire procedure was carried out, beginning with data collection and ending with data analysis. Crozier (Chase, 2008) explained that this process should be carried out prior to data collection, specifically when determining the research plan and design, during provisional data collection and initial analysis, and following the final stage of data collection. Individual interviews were recorded using an audio device and transcribed verbatim. Following the completion of the transcription, the data was analysed using an inductive approach. This methodology allowed themes and patterns to emerge from the raw data collected, representing the original discussion (Velardo & Drummond, 2013) The analysis is done in stages, starting with the introduction of data and ending with a thematic analysis.

Results and Discussion

Being on the streets and interacting with a variety of people provides mothers of street children with a variety of experiences. The experiences of mothers of street children in Bandung are classified as negative communication experiences and positive communication experiences. It is not easy to spend almost every day on the streets with toddlers and then engage in various activities that generate little money. Bandung, with its many charms, offers a variety of dreams for everyone, including mothers of street children. During the holidays, the city of Bandung saw an increase in visitors, with many people coming from outside the city for a variety of reasons. Mothers of street kids in Bandung have different ways of communicating, which can be put into the following categories.

Tabel 1 experiences of mothers of street children in Bandung

Experience	Description
Worries	Mothers experience feelings of fear and anxiety when they see children on the streets, considering that there are so many incidents and crimes that could happen to their children and the security conditions that are not guaranteed, considering that children run between motorized vehicles.
Neighbours teased	An experience experienced by mothers carried out by neighbors and road users who see children on the streets while mothers just sit and

	watch children from afar
Feeling guilty	Mothers feel a feeling of not being accepted, if children have to experience conditions of economic difficulty, so they have to be on the road to work that parents should be able to provide protection and comfort from home in general
Harassed	Conditions where the mother has experienced various abuses committed by people who are together on the streets, the harassment that occurs is in the form of verbal abuse such as insults and cursing the mothers of street children
<i>Bullying</i>	is any form of oppression or violence that is carried out intentionally by one person or group of people who are stronger or more powerful towards another person, with the aim of hurting and is carried out continuously by mothers with street children
Family Ties	Togetherness with more children, considering that wherever the mother goes the children are always near and cannot be separated from her sight

Worries

Mothers with street children have a variety of concerns about accompanying their children on the streets. These concerns stem from mothers' awareness that the streets are not a safe place to leave their children. Both mothers and children have felt the possibility of traffic accidents, violence, and abuse toward children and mothers as a result of these mothers' experiences. As a result, mothers with street children always wait for them on the streets and make sure they are not on the streets for too long, according to the children's needs, explained Ai and Meti when researchers met with them in the city of Bandung. Mothers' concern for their children transforms into love and a desire to provide the best for their children; however, mothers with street children frequently blame themselves, their husbands, and the poverty conditions that exist in their lives. However, they try to accept their fate and continue to be good mothers for their children by accompanying them on the streets and protecting them from any evil that may come their way. Mothers with street children are aware that actions taken by allowing children on the streets are actions that should not be taken by a mother, which frequently leads to fights with husbands who refuse to allow street children's mothers to bring their children to work on the streets, especially until their children work, but the desire of children who want to help their parents makes mothers with street children unable to do much and surrender to the existing system.

Neighbours teased

People's experiences may be similar but produce different meanings depending on how the individual perceives what is going on around him. Mothers with street children face ridicule from their neighbours as a result of their irresponsible parenting because they bring their children and allow them to work on the streets. This was felt by Rani, Wiwin, Evi, and Iim, but there was little they could do except accept people's treatment of them with grace and no intention of repaying what people had done to them. They try to encourage and convince their children that it is a lawful job because they do not steal what is not theirs; they are simply trying to meet the basic needs of life. Scorn also frequently occurs to their children from their playmates, both at school and where the children recite the Koran, but they try to encourage and convince their children that it is a lawful job because they do not steal what is not theirs; they are simply trying to meet the basic needs of life. It is difficult to accept the ridicule directed at mothers with street children; this has a significant impact on the mother's self-esteem and her outlook on her and her children's future. Many mothers with street children withdraw from their social environment and prefer to gather on the streets to watch over their children and hang out with other street children's mothers because they feel inferior when they have to meet with relatives and friends. Parents who are prohibited another communication experience that mothers of street children have is less harmonious communication between husbands, in-laws, and mothers of street children. The

husband of a street child believes that what his wife has done has diminished his role as a husband and puts his children in danger by allowing them to be on the streets. For mothers with street children, especially those who have prohibited their children from working, this has become an unpleasant experience. When children see their father sitting at home, unable to work due to illness, they often feel responsible for finding solutions to the father's inability to provide basic family needs. The child believes that he must also go out on the streets to earn a living in order to help his mother or simply to make snacks that his parents cannot afford. Children's awareness to help the family's economy does not necessarily cause mothers to allow children to be on the streets; mothers recognize that roads are not good for children and that prohibiting children will only cause children to leave without their knowledge. As a result, even if the mother must fight with her husband and mother-in-law, the mother of a street child decides to take to the streets with her child in order to care for him.

Feeling guilty

The mothers of street children in Bandung are essentially women who adore their children. This affection is a natural instinct that develops as a result of communication between a mother and a street child. Individuals with good communication relationships will undoubtedly feel guilty and uncomfortable when they see their children in unfavourable conditions such as being exposed to street dust, the hot sun, or even being rained on. Feelings of guilt are present in the hearts of mothers with street children in the city of Bandung because mothers with street children are aware that children should not be on the streets, that children should be at home enjoying their normal growth and development, but poverty and conditions make mothers unable to provide a proper place for their children. This guilt exists in the hearts of mothers who have street children and manifests itself in action by always keeping them on the streets and saving some of the proceeds so that she does not have to be on the streets and can do other jobs to support the lives of mothers who have street children. Ati understands that roads are dangerous for children and frequently fights with her husband because she abandons children on the streets. This guilt is channelled by Ati, who is constantly active in working to earn a living on the streets and caring for her children, who also work on the streets.

Work that is vulnerable several studies have concluded that the streets are synonymous with crime and are not a safe environment for children; similar findings have been found in studies of mothers who have street children. Many raids, passing motorized vehicles, and extortion carried out by those in power on the streets make working on the streets unsuitable for children and dangerous. Ani, Rani, and Ati all agreed on this. Their experience of being arrested several times during Bandung raids made them more cautious when caring for their children. When mothers with street children witness their children being arrested by officers on the street or being almost hit by a motor vehicle, bad memories linger in their minds, given that children are still children who are not always aware of their surroundings. Rani said that she was only out on the streets at certain times because police raids, which could happen up to four times a day, happened so often.

Harassed

Mothers of street children, in addition to being tasked with working and supervising when their children work, frequently hang out with their friends who also work as mothers of street children or trade. When mothers go out on the streets with their friends, it is not uncommon for them to be harassed by their friends or those referred to as "area rulers." The cause is usually the division of labour between him and his child, or someone giving him more money as alms. According to Rani, the abuse occurred when she attempted to evenly distribute the sizable alms received from benefactors who entrusted money to her with the "shared together" message, which occasionally caused problems because there were people who didn't accept it and became angry when she asked for rights for herself and her child. Harassment can also occur if there are people in the area who feel powerful and ask for a share of their sweat; when this happens, Rani says she has no choice but to surrender and try to make peace with the people around her so that the harassment tops.

Bullying

Bullying is often carried out by stronger and more mature people in studies of mothers with street children. This behaviour is observed by mothers of street children at school or while their children are reading the Koran. These behaviours include being called naughty children by parents and their children for their children, as well as behaviour that is reluctant to get along and regards mothers and street children as public trash that must be avoided. This bullying behaviour is not uncommon in public places; at first, they just stare with contempt, then the gaze turns to scorn and cursing. Mothers with street children have no choice but to flee or allow their children to stay and play and attend school. At times, this makes the children too lazy to go to school, especially if the treatment is painful for the mother or the street children themselves.

Family Ties

It is not always that mothers' communication experiences with street children are sad; some mothers speak of the beauty of togetherness they feel because they are never separated from their children for a second. They can feel a sense of togetherness and closeness with their children, are proud that their children understand their parents' situation, and are touched when their children want to help their mother in her difficulties. They can see their children growing and becoming strong as a result of their circumstances. Children are a comfort to Ai and a cure for the suffering she feels. Ai feels happy when she sees her child cheerfully playing and laughing at simple things. This became medicine for him and gave him strength to continue to survive against the poverty he suffered. Ai believes that if she perseveres, she will be able to lift her child out of poverty. Communication activities can result in communication experiences. Communication is the most important aspect of individual survival and the establishment of interpersonal relationships. Frank Dance uses a spiral to describe the communication process. He believes that communication experiences build on one another and are influenced by the past. He stated that one's current experiences will invariably influence one's future, so he emphasized that the communication process is not linear. As a result, communication can be viewed as a process that evolves over time and among people who interact (Turner, 2017).

The communication experience that mothers have with street children is the result of the life journey that mothers and street children take. Experience is something that is felt, and it is through this feeling that each person gains knowledge. The feelings of worry that mothers with street children have are based on their personal experiences of being harassed on the street by those who are stronger. Knowledge is founded on awareness, which underpins meaning. Every event will be a learning experience for the individual. The learned experience contains specific information or a message. This data will be transformed into knowledge.

The fear of mothers of street children towards officers who raid the streets is understandable, given that they have been caught in a raid and must accept the consequences of training, even if they eventually return to the streets. They have a solution in case they are caught in another raid; thus, the various events experienced can increase individual knowledge. An event containing a communication element will be a separate communication experience for the individual, and the most memorable communication experience will be the most memorable and have a special impact on the individual, such as the experience of being bullied at school by both children and parents at the school. with the label "trash" or "street children" After meeting the mothers of street children, they will understand how to deal with mothers who make decisions for themselves and their families. The mother understood her actions and the way she communicated with her family after having a fight with her husband over differing opinions.

According to Turner (Turner, 2017), decision making in family communication studies investigates how family members, in this case the husband and wife, make choices, make judgments, and ultimately draw conclusions that will direct their behaviour toward problem solving. This is a communication act in which every choice is made based on how the two people interact with each other and what they say and do. There are two types of communication experiences: pleasant communication experiences and unpleasant communication experiences. An unpleasant communication experience in this context can be defined as a communication event in which the content, context, and impact of the communication process are perceived and understood

negatively by the perpetrators, undermining their self-confidence or self-esteem. The message content and context of the messages found in this study include communication messages received by street children's mothers, including messages both verbal and non-verbal, harsh words are often received by street children's mothers, even from those closest to them, such as husbands or their families who think that they are irresponsible mothers. One of the non-verbal messages that can be seen is the unfriendly eyes that come from people who happen to pass each other on the street. This occurs when a communication event contains message elements as well as ineffective delivery methods and generates unpleasant feelings (embarrassed, sad, disappointed, annoyed, even hurt). This communication experience then forms the meaning of street children's mothers towards the profession they are currently living, some mothers feel that this has become a part of life that must be lived and they have no choice but to surrender while other mothers think that this is a process. which if carried out in earnest then they will reach a point of success that will change their lives. The experience of being harassed, ridiculed, and bullied causes mothers to be extremely cautious when making decisions. Mothers' communication experiences with street children are felt as a result of the communication act performed when mothers and street children accompany children on the streets to work. Every event will be a learning experience for the individual. There is an attempt to describe the types of past experiences from the standpoint of classical phenomenology. Husserl and Merlau-Ponty call it a pure description of lived experience or a hermeneutic description in Kuswarno (Bajari & Kuswarno, 2020), interpreting the type of experience by relating it to special aspects of the context behind it as well as distinguishing between types of communication experiences in this study.

One of the communication principles states that communication has a content and relationship dimension, which is associated with the explanation of pleasant and unpleasant communication experiences (Mulyana, 2014). The extent to which the relationship experienced in this communication provides a warm attitude, acceptance, and concern for each other reveals the character of the relationship in a pleasant communication experience. According to a mother of street children who stated that she had a pleasant experience, particularly with children, there is a special happiness in the mother's heart when mothers see their children smiling and playing even when they are on the streets. Mothers can see their children grow all the time and see how caring they are for the family's economic situation. Mothers of street kids are also happy to see their kids grow up and become strong enough to handle life's challenges.

Mothers with street children will always interact well with their children, husbands and the people around them. The interaction is carried out in the form of communication that processes and forms various kinds of communication patterns which are then typified by the researcher as follows

Table 2 Communication patterns of mothers street children

Communication patterns		description
Communication patterns mother to her child	While waiting	Mothers with street children try to give understanding by inviting them to talk to give advice to children so that they always protect themselves from things that will harm them
	When asking children to cooperate	Mother gives plans and directions to children what they will do that day, how much they have to raise money and when they have to go home
	According to the wishes of the child	The mother first asks the children whether they want to travel or stay at home
	When not giving permission	The mother gave a strict ban and made sure that the children did not go out on the street because the mother had a bad feeling and the children had to follow and obey the prohibition
Pattern of Communication	When the husband does	Communication goes both ways where there is debate between mother and husband regarding various needs that

between Mother and Husband	not provide a living	must be met immediately
	When you have a difference of opinion	Mothers tend not to listen to their husbands and prefer to go underground with their children so that communication only occurs in one direction from the husband to his wife and children.
	Always coordinate	Communication between mother, children and husband is well established after the father understands why his wife and children are on the streets
	Never coordinated	Mother never spoke at all considering that her husband had no responsibility regarding the needs of the family
Mother's Communication Pattern with the Community on the Streets	Not very familiar	Mothers feel that they do not have to gather or socialize with other street residents because mothers with street children prefer to go home or do other things that they feel are more useful
	Familiar with the group	Mothers with street children feel that they really need good cooperation with other street dwellers in order to get various kinds of information needed so that they can survive long and be safe on the streets

In the research on the dynamics of mothers who have street children in Bandung City, it was found that mother-child interaction became more frequent, considering that mothers with street children accompany them at home to be on the streets with quite a lot of time intensity. The process of communication between mothers and children in this study is slightly different from mothers in general, considering that these street children are already involved in meeting the economic needs of the family. Mothers with street children spend more time with their children. This togetherness occurs because mothers always accompany their children when they are on the streets, both for work and for playing on the streets. Some mothers with street children are considered to be quite democratic in communication interactions, bearing in mind that mothers always pay attention to their children's wishes when they want to go to work and when they just want to play. Some mothers also see the situation and conditions in the field based on experience when the streets are safe enough for them and when they just stay at home.

It's not easy being on the street with uncertain conditions and sometimes it's not safe for the children, that's why some mothers choose to talk to their children in a more intimate manner which only involves the mother and the child. This condition occurs when the mother tells and gives exposure regarding what can be done on the street and what cannot be done and the conditions that must be faced on the road. One-way communication interactions occur when mothers convey messages in the form of advice, prohibitions and tell them about planning activities they will do that day. It is not always that poverty is the cause of children taking to the streets, there are also children who take to the streets as a result of association with friends in the neighborhood where they live. As happened to Ms. Stefani, Ms. Stefani's first child often went underground without her knowledge to go to the street with her friends. In the end, Ms. Stefani had no choice but to go on the road with her two children. Stefani's mother tried to give understanding to her child about the reasons why she, as her mother, did not allow her child to go out, but her child did not want to listen to her because she liked being on the street playing with her friends and looking for extra pocket money.

Communication is the main basis for a person learning the world and carrying out social functions in society. The family is the first organization that is discovered by a child for the first time before he develops himself as a whole human being. The family occupies a central position in an individual's life and is also the most enduring and most fundamental of human social institutions. Ancestral humans owned and identified with their families long before they could speak, and before they formed other social groups and institutions such as communities, societies,

or nations. Even today, especially in families where children are socialized and where both young and old seek social, emotional, and instrumental support. Thus, the quality of family relationships has a profound effect on the quality of life for most people, and how the family functions affects how society in general functions as well. Family communication cannot be equated with communication between ordinary group members. Communication that occurs in a family is not the same as other family communications. Each family has its own communication pattern. The relationship between parents and children is always influenced and determined by the attitude of the parents themselves, both attitudes related to affection and domination, because in reality there are parents who dominate, are indulgent, indifferent and there are parents who are intimate, open and friendly with her children. The family is the spearhead in the formation of a child's personality because the family has the most important role in the issue of children's education, and the family is the place where children grow and develop from birth to adulthood. That's why education in the family should be a major concern. Parents who communicate well, can be considered friends by children and will create a warm life in the family, so that between parents and children there is openness and mutual giving. Besides that, children are given the freedom to express various opinions, ideas, desires, feelings, and the freedom to respond to the opinions of others. Children who live with an effective parental communication pattern will produce a personality of children who can control themselves, children who are independent, have good relationships with friends, and are able to deal with various problems in their lives.

Conclusion

Allowing children on the streets to work is a difficult decision for their mothers, who also love their children and want the best for their child's growth and development. The choice to become a street child mother is motivated by the economic needs of street child mothers who have been living below the poverty line. Economic motives are one of the factors that support mothers to allow children on the streets, while on the streets mothers get pleasant experiences and unpleasant experiences. The pleasant experiences obtained by mothers of street children include the closeness felt by mothers with their children, where mothers are always near their children, accompanying them to play and tell stories on the street. On the street, mothers feel how important children are in their lives. Children have value as people who can be relied on and who can help to solve the economic problems that their families face. The worst thing for the mother of a street child is being laughed at, bullied, and banned by other parents. She is also seen as irresponsible for letting her children live on the street.

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