



Nurturing Social Skills in Adolescents: Patterns of Development in Lembaga Kesejahteraan Sosial Anak (LKSA) Muhammadiyah Bandung City

Hassa Yanura Khairina^{1*}, Yoyoh Jubaedah¹, Nenden Rani Rinekasari¹

¹Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author. E-mail: hassayk27@upi.edu

Received: 1 Jul 2023; Revised: 12 Feb 2024; Accepted: 19 Feb 2024

Abstract: Enhancing social skills in adolescents facing complex challenges, such as those residing in orphanages, follows a distinct trajectory compared to their counterparts living with families. This research endeavors to uncover the nuanced adolescent social skill development patterns within the Muhammadiyah Child Welfare Institution (LKSA) in Bandung City. This study seeks to identify strategies for improving social skills by employing a qualitative methodology with an intervention theory approach in casework. The results indicate that the enhancement of social skills among adolescents in LKSA Muhammadiyah Bandung City is achieved by addressing aspects of peer relations, self-management, and compliance. This is facilitated through increased adolescent participation, the cultivation of emotional intelligence, and the promotion of productive self-management. These interventions contribute to heightened self-identity and independence in social activities among adolescents. The cultivation of self-reliance becomes integral to improving adolescents' societal functioning, leading to an augmentation in social community acceptance. This positive transformation stems from bolstering adolescents' mental and physical readiness through affective and psychomotor strengthening.

Keywords: *Caregiver, Social Skills, Early Adolescents*

Abstrak: Peningkatan keterampilan sosial pada remaja yang memiliki kompleksitas problem, seperti remaja yang berada di panti asuhan memiliki pola berbeda dengan remaja yang hidup bersama keluarganya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi pola peningkatan keterampilan sosial remaja di Lembaga Kesejahteraan Anak (LKSA) Muhammadiyah di Kota Bandung. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan teori intervensi dalam casework. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan kemampuan sosial pada remaja di LKSA Muhammadiyah Kota Bandung dicapai dengan peningkatan pada aspek peer relation skills, self-management skill, and compliance skill melalui peningkatan partisipasi remaja, pembangunan intelegensi emosional, dan pengelolaan diri secara produktif. Tiga aspek yang dilakukan mengarah pada peningkatan identitas diri dan kemandirian remaja dalam aktivitas sosialnya. Penanaman terhadap kemandirian diri merupakan bagian dari peningkatan keberfungsian remaja dalam masyarakat agar aspek penerimaan komunitas sosialnya semakin meningkat.



Peningkatan tersebut dihasilkan dari penanaman kesiapan mental dan fisik remaja melalui penguatan afektif dan psikomotorik.

Kata Kunci: *Pengasuh, Keterampilan Sosial, Remaja Awal*

INTRODUCTION

The condition of early adolescents with limitations in social skills (Marheni et al., 2019) caused by emotional vulnerability (Saputro, 2017; Susanto & Farozin, 2018) demands a relevant mentoring mechanism to shape their social skills. Social skills are considered an aspect that can benefit adolescents in dealing with the complex social world (Nikooyeh et al., 2017; Olivares-Olivares et al., 2019; Salavera et al., 2017) which is considered to be the responsibility of the family in the conception of attachment (Marheni et al., 2019), ignores the mechanism of forming social maturity for adolescents living in orphanages. Orphanage caregivers are tasked with providing assistance and shaping physical and psychological maturity (Afrella & Amri, 2018) display different patterns that are influenced by elements of attachment that are not owned, so the various methods used lead to interactive patterns by emphasizing the active participation of adolescents in orphanages to develop themselves. The model of cultivating direct involvement and enhancing emotional aspects is the primary mechanism for assisting orphanage adolescents.

The identification of mentoring models involving orphanage caregivers for adolescent residents is explored simply by relying on formal mechanisms. Previous research looks at improving social skills directed at educational models (Mohammadzadeh et al., 2020), therapeutic community (Kholifah et al., 2020) and increased resilience (Rahmawati & Amalia, 2020). Researchers tend to overlook the accompanying mechanisms of adolescents living in social welfare institutions as actors who replace the role of parents. Meanwhile, research looks at improving adolescents' social skills associated with family functioning. Moreover, Wang et al. (2020) found that the socioeconomic conditions of the family and the environment influence the vulnerability of adolescent growth. Family and neighborhood concern for the influence of technology (Downey & Gibbs, 2020; Modecki et al., 2022; Steinfeld, 2021) and parenting patterns (Batool & Lewis, 2022; Hamjah et al., 2020) and the social capabilities of the community are also part of the researchers' identification about family vulnerability.

Good social skills are needed by adolescents so that they can develop themselves, interact with others, and get support from their peer group. During adolescence, social skills become essential because they involve building friendships, adapting to new environments, communicating, and maintaining existing friendships. (Dinata et al., 2019). Based on preliminary studies conducted, caregivers at several Muhammadiyah Children's Social Welfare Institutions (LKSA) in Bandung City found that most of the children living in the dormitory come from fatherless, motherless, orphan, and *duafa* (weak group) backgrounds with poor economic conditions, dropping out of school, divorced parents, left by one of the parents, and even become family supporters. The institution provides opportunities for these children to get guidance and fulfill their needs. The observations and interviews with adolescents and caregivers found several problems related to social skills in early adolescents in orphanages. These problems include difficulties in adapting to a new environment, low self-confidence, the tendency to be shy and quiet, difficulty in communicating and interacting with others, lack of care and empathy for others, difficulty in managing time, frequent skipping school, troublemaking behavior and fighting with fellow dormitory residents, breaking the rules such as stealing, dating, and smoking. The existence of various limitations experienced by adolescents in orphanages is the purpose of this research.

This study departs from the argument that the pattern of improving social skills of adolescents living with parents is different from that of adolescents living in orphanages. Adolescents living in orphanages tend to close themselves off, are limited in developing interpersonal communication, and have low self-confidence (Febriana et al., 2014). Early adolescents living in orphanages face challenges and environmental changes that require adaptation. They must accept rules and norms different from those they experience in the family environment. Their ability to behave in accordance with the norms and rules of the orphanage is of great significance, as this will affect their experience in the orphanage. They need to adjust to the demands that have been set (Widiasavitri, 2016). Whether or not adolescents successfully overcome these problems depends mainly on how they use their experiences from their environment, which allows them to build a more robust and mature personal attitude (Firmansyah & Sovitriana, 2021). Therefore, good social skills are needed for adolescents, especially those living in orphanages, as part of their social capital when carrying out activities in dormitories and other social environments.

METHODS

The method used in this research is a qualitative method with a descriptive explanation model. This model explains the circumstances, conditions, or other things mentioned, the results of which are presented in the form of a research report (Arikunto, 2013). The instrument used in this study is a questionnaire or closed questionnaire, where respondents answer questions based on the answers provided in the same form as a multiple-choice questionnaire. The selection of the Muhammadiyah Child Social Welfare Institution (LKSA) in the Bandung City area is based on an inadequate number of caregivers compared to the number of foster children, and some caregivers also have additional jobs outside of their duties as caregivers. This imbalance and the lack of a structured activity schedule can reduce the opportunity for caregivers to provide individual attention and guidance to foster children. (Zaccagnino et al., 2015)..

The research was conducted in 8 (eight) Muhammadiyah Child Social Welfare Institutions (LKSA) in Bandung City, including LKSA Muhammadiyah Sumur Bandung and LKSA Muhammadiyah Sumur Bandung Branch Jl. Babakan Ciamis, LKSA Muhammadiyah Sumur Bandung Branch Jl. Veteran, LKSA Muhammadiyah Sumur Bandung Branch Jl. Sindang Jaya, LKSA Muhammadiyah Fajar Harapan, LKSA Muhammadiyah Taman Harapan, LKSA Muhammadiyah Putera Harapan, and LKSA Muhammadiyah Kuncup Harapan. The *sampling* technique used in this study was *total sampling*, which comprised 40 caregivers from 8 LKSA consisting of men and women who provided care to young men/women in Bandung City. This research uses an intervention approach in social casework theory in data analysis.

RESULTS

Variety of Early Adolescent problems: Patterns of social intervention

The problem of adolescents with a complex range of problems is a challenge for assistants in increasing their resilience. Miser (1996) claims that the complex problems of adolescents with limited time become the main problem in the mentoring process to continue to grow and develop. Support becomes essential to improving their transitional status to be ready to face a more complex social life. The unstable nature of adolescents adds to the complexity for mentors to know the circumstances in which they should be intervened in making decisions to be controlled with the circumstances in which they

should be allowed to make decisions based on their desired passions (Ungar, 2004). Restriction and liberation of social issues activities have become a challenge for youth assistants in developing their potential.

Various identifications of adolescent empowerment mechanisms, especially at the early stage, are influenced by various complex determinants. Vulnerability to various pressures in early adolescence requires persuasive mentoring patterns to build and encourage adolescents to interact with peers, adults, and their families (Schmied & Walsh, 2010). In fact, in some studies, family factors are a determinant solid variable that can affect the existence and resolution of early adolescent problems (Leathers, 2006; Williams-McCoy & Tyler, 1985) through neglect, violence, and abandonment (Tyler et al., 2008). Social environments are also thought to contribute to increased stress on adolescents in the form of bullying, racism, and exclusion that require different patterns of mentoring (Font, 2013; Font et al., 2012). Schools that contribute more to avoiding complex social problems in society also create pressure on adolescents through bullying (El Dosoqy, 2021). Therefore, adolescents are highly vulnerable to a variety of problems that require a variety of assistance patterns.

Identifying a relevant pattern of assistance for early adolescents requires the ability and knowledge of facilitators, institution administrators, or assistants to identify the natural causes. This process is critical to seeing the suitability of the intervention applied to overcome and improve the role of adolescents in their social community (Maikovich et al., 2009). The identification role of the facilitator to address adolescents' problems is another part of their contribution to the mentoring process. Facilitators, assistants, and institutional administrators are also considered actors who can provide comfort so that adolescent problem-solving can be facilitated and run effectively (Jaramillo & Kothari, 2022).

Social casework model in LKSA: Mechanisms for improving adolescent social relationship's ability

Technological developments that have implications for forming individualistic and anti-social adolescents (Dempsey, 2020) are a complex challenge for various institutions that manage the welfare of children and adolescents. The pattern of assistance applied is required to be based on a form of intervention that considers their relationship to the surrounding environment (Lundblad, 1995). The social casework model is relevant for

enhancing the role of adolescents in their social communities. This model can help adolescents develop self-resilience while fostering their social functions. (Richmond, 1922). Revitalizing adolescents' social functions can impact their positive relationships with the surrounding environment, an essential element to support their maturity. Patterns of activities that encourage early adolescents to increase their social activities are carried out by the Child Social Welfare Institution (LKSA) in Bandung City.

The model of changing adolescent social skills in the Bandung City Muhammadiyah Children's Social Welfare Institution (LKSA) is implemented in three forms. *The first is skills to interact with peers (peer-relation skills).*

Table 1. Recapitulation of efforts to improve interaction skills with friends

No.	Category	Development Efforts	Frequency (%)
1.	Social and emotional support	Provide support and motivation to hang out with friends	50
2.		Set a good example in interacting and communicating with friends	50
3.		Rewarding when adolescents show care and help friends	42.5
4.		Provides an understanding of empathy and relationship-building	45
Means			46.87
5.	Active participation	Engage youth in fun and creative activities	42.5
6.		Provide opportunities for youth to speak up and express their opinions	47.5
7.		Providing opportunities for youth to take the lead in activities carried out	55
8.		Engaging youth to work together in group activities	47.5
Means			48.13
9.	Positivity	Encourages teens to notice positive things in friends	37.5
10.		Providing an understanding of the rights of others to be respected and protected	50
Means			43.75

From the data in Table 1, the development tendency is towards three aspects: social and emotional support, encouragement of active participation, and positivity. Development with an emphasis on encouraging active participation through involving adolescents in creative activities (42.5%), providing opportunities to speak (47.5%), opportunities to lead

(55%), and freedom to cooperate in group activities (47.5%) became the highest average effort made by caregivers. This shows that caregivers tend to improve interaction skills by increasing the active participation of adolescents in various activities that gather many people.

Second, the development of self-management skills. Data showing the improvement of self-management skills carried out by caregivers of Child Social Welfare Institutions (LKSA) in Bandung City leads to increased emotional intelligence, problem-solving, and interpersonal support.

Table 2. Recapitulation of efforts to improve self-management skills

No.	Category	Development Efforts	Frequency (%)
1.	Emotional intelligence	Provide opportunities to share their problems and be a good listener	70
2.		Provide opportunities to do activities that broaden horizons and knowledge	42.5
3.		Provide support and confidence in his/her abilities	55
Means			55.8
4.	Problem-solving	Provide alternative suggestions or solutions for overcoming the problems encountered	65
5.		Encourage self-confidence and responsibility for their own choices	42.5
6.		Encourage teenagers to make a regular daily schedule	40
Means			49.17
7.	Interpersonal support	Providing understanding not to respond with emotion/harsh talk	37.5
8.		Providing understanding to be tolerant and not selfish	45
9.		Steer teenagers in distinguishing between constructive and destructive criticism	40
10.		Provide opportunities to participate in group activities or cooperative projects	45
11.		Provides opportunities to ask questions/ask for help and responds	40
Means			41.5

The improvement in the emotional intelligence aspect, which was the highest average, was illustrated in the position of caregivers who acted as listeners who provided open space for adolescents to share their problems faced by 28 caregivers (70%). The openness of space

that creates emotional improvement is also reinforced by increased confidence in their abilities carried out by most caregivers (55%). Meanwhile, almost half of the caregivers (42.5%) increased their knowledge through various supportive activities.

Third, the development of the obedience aspect. The formation of adolescents to obey uses three tendency models (see Table 3).

Table 3. Recapitulation of efforts to shape compliance aspects

No.	Category	Development Efforts	Frequency (%)
1.	Productive management	Involving youth in environmental cleanup activities together in the dormitory	50
2.		Involve youth in the care and maintenance of shared facilities	57.5
3.		Provide restrictions on using gadgets/accessing social media	42.5
4.		Provide clear time limits for completing the assigned tasks	57.5
Means			51.87
5.	Effective communication	Provide clear and easy-to-understand instructions or directions	47.5
6.		Provide criticism or correction in a polite and non-judgmental manner	42.5
7.		Provide an understanding of the adverse effects of harmful behavior	60
Means			50
8.	Role model	Set an example in complying with rules and following policies	42.5
9.		Provide opportunities to engage in positive activities (social-religious activities)	40
Means			41.25

The first trend leads to increased active participation of adolescents in joint activities balanced with improved time management. The second trend leads to achieving compliance with the mechanism of implementing effective communication through the habituation of easy-to-understand command models, polite expression of criticism, and precise delivery of the impact of an action. The third trend is achieved through role modeling so that adolescents can model caregiver compliance with norms balanced with the direct involvement of adolescents in social and religious activities.

There are three trends in the social skills development of LKSA caregivers in Bandung City. *First*, there is an emphasis on active participation to encourage *peer relation skills*.

The model of encouragement to actively participate opens up space and opportunities for adolescents to instill confidence in their potential and abilities as elements that form creativity and self-confidence. (Tabi'in, 2020). Creativity and self-confidence become the capital of adolescents to position themselves in social interactions with peers. Adolescents will learn to overcome conflicts, build healthy relationships, and appreciate group differences by engaging in these social interactions. In addition to the problem of acceptance and rejection from peers, adolescents face the challenge of maintaining themselves in the social environment or peer group they join (Dinata et al., 2019).

Second, the formation of emotional intelligence to encourage self-management skills. Initiative and personal responsibility are the basis of adolescent self-management. (Barida & Prasetiawan, 2018) Are presented by caregivers through providing space for adolescents to initiate in terms of problem management and the courage to take responsibility for the problems faced. Providing an open and comfortable space is part of an effort to create an emotional connection (Widiasavitri, 2016). (Widiasavitri, 2016) which can provide satisfaction and fulfill emotional needs (Andani, 2015). By encouraging self-confidence, adolescents can develop their internal ability to face various situations and challenges, increase their mental capacity, help them achieve success independently, and take responsibility for their decisions (Saragi et al., 2022). (Saragi et al., 2022)..

They are third, increasing social productivity to develop compliance skills. Increasing the ability and awareness of individuals to fulfill and obey applicable regulations (Yani et al., 2022) is achieved by involving adolescents in various activities that are beneficial to them. Activities directly impact the experience of positive and negative values experienced as a result of obeying and ignoring the rules. Self-emerging understanding is essential to the parenting mechanism involving control and supervision. (Rahmadiana & Sekar, 2019). Engaging adolescents to foster obedience builds their mental strength during their growing years.

DISCUSSION

Critical concepts in adolescent social skills development: enhancing self-identity and independence

The development of social skills of adolescents in the Children's Social Security Institution (LKSA) in Bandung City is achieved through improving peer relation skills, self-

management skills, and compliance skills, leading to a tendency to increase adolescents' self-identity and independence in their social activities. The two aspects caregivers pursue are optimizing adolescents' involvement in various activities, cultivating emotional intelligence, and productive management. These aspects involve a variety of practical efforts by positioning caregivers as actors who carry out social interventions with adolescents. The pattern of intervention emphasized leads to the functioning of adolescents in society, which can support the achievement of social growth and development so that the interactions and communication carried out impact the community's acceptance of them in the context of their social life.

Social skills that promote effective interaction and communication (Fatimah, 2010) impact social relationships' effectiveness (Arends, 2008). The caregivers aim to improve the role of adolescents in their social community through improving their ability to interact, self-management, and compliance. The improvement model carried out by caregivers through three aspects, which are part of the mechanism of improving social skills (Caldarella & Merrel, 1997), has relevance to the formation of adolescents' functional relationships with their social reality. Improving relationships through a peer relationship approach with active participation is relevant to increasing adolescents' usefulness in their social sphere. Elena Delgado et al. (2022) claim that encouragement to increase self-confidence by providing opportunities for adolescents to express themselves is considered adequate for improving relationships with peers that correlate with the formation and development of their psychological aspects.

The vulnerability of adolescents due to unstable psychological aspects encourages the realization of efforts to develop social skills directed at the process of self-management. In this aspect, most LKSA caregivers try to build self-management by increasing adolescent emotional intelligence. Nirwana Permatasari et al. (2021) found a relationship between emotional intelligence and adolescents' independence in overcoming problems and controlling themselves. Adolescents with a level of emotional intelligence are identified as figures who can stabilize their emotions so that they can play a role in their social community. (Handayani et al., 2021). The positive relationship between emotional intelligence and social skills influences this. Bothaina Mohamed (2023) claims that adolescents with social skills are sure to have a high level of emotional intelligence to manage the stress level experienced.

Stable psychological conditions support the process of forming compliance through encouragement, which has implications for adolescents' awareness of a series of norms that apply in society. The conditions for adolescents' acceptance of norms are formed by encouraging students to increase their productivity. Efforts to involve adolescents in group activities, being responsible for the environment, and productive use of time are chosen to shape compliance behavior. Such procedural mechanisms build adolescents' trust in the legitimacy of norms that bind them in social life. (Thomas et al., 2020). Procedural mechanisms also contribute to shaping self-control in adolescents so that they can avoid actions that go beyond the limits of the norm. (Rahmadiana & Sekar, 2019)..

A series of intervention efforts by LKSA caregivers encouraging the formation of three skill models as a mechanism for developing adolescents in mastering social skills indicate that empowerment leads to strengthening identity and independence. Involving adolescents in various social activities provides basic abilities for them to carry out social activities (Pasqualotto et al., 2021). Cultivating basic skills by involving adolescents in various activities to increase their identity capital affects their interaction and commitment to their social community. Susan Branje et al. (2021) identified this pattern as the impact of adolescents' self-identity development on their social capabilities. Stable self-identity correlates with confidence in adolescents' abilities so that they can contribute and exist in a social community. This enhancement model contributes to providing social awareness for adolescents in an environment their biological parents do not directly supervise.

Strengthening identity and independence in adolescents who are in a care model outside of parental care has implications for adolescents' readiness to face the challenges of social life. The cultivation of self-confidence and independence influenced by the family environment (Downey & Gibbs, 2020; Modecki et al., 2022; Steinfeld, 2021) cannot be applied to adolescents in youth social welfare institutions. Educational needs that are oriented towards improving social skills (Mohammadzadeh et al., 2020), engagement in various medical endeavors (Kholifah et al., 2020), and increased resilience (Rahmawati & Amalia, 2020) being a cognitive model of cultivation. Affective and psychomotor aspects that play an essential role in forming adolescents to improve social skills are left out. Intervention through applicable activities to form self-identity and independence is essential for shaping the parenting model.

CONCLUSION

The fostering of social skills in adolescents, which has been formed through structuring cognitive aspects, is different in this study. Instead, this study found elements of forming social skills in adolescents by emphasizing affective and psychomotor abilities. The formation of emotional maturity through improvement in the intelligence aspect and encouragement to actively participate in group activities are the main components of the caregivers of the Child Social Welfare Institution (LKSA). These two aspects are implemented by providing space to express problems, activeness in group activities, leadership, and cultivating creativity. These various activities reflect efforts to increase independence and self-discovery as elements that support adolescents in developing their social skills.

This study's model of developing social skills through forming self-identity and independence is based on implementing intervention concepts in social casework theory. This theoretical model provides details of the actions actors take in developing self-ability to grow and improve themselves to improve adolescents' functioning in their social community. Nevertheless, this study has limitations in scope with the limited variables studied. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve a wider research population or conduct comparisons with other LKSA to obtain more comprehensive data.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We sincerely thank the administrators and caregivers at the Muhammadiyah Children's Social Welfare Institution (LKSA) in Bandung City, including LKSA Muhammadiyah Sumur Bandung and LKSA Muhammadiyah Sumur Bandung Branch Jl. Veteran, Jl. Babakan Ciamis, Jl. Sindang Jaya, LKSA Muhammadiyah Fajar Harapan, LKSA Muhammadiyah Taman Harapan, LKSA Muhammadiyah Putera Harapan, and LKSA Muhammadiyah Kuncup Harapan, who have provided opportunities, contributions, and assistance in the data collection process as well as valuable resources, so as to support the smooth implementation of this research.

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