

## **Street Children's Self-Concept (Study of Symbolic Interaction in the Area under the Grogol Bridge, Kedoya Metro TV and Demolition)**



**Edison Hutapea<sup>1</sup>, Sri Desti Purwatiningsih<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Paramadina, Jalan Gatot Subroto No.Kav. 97, Mampang Prapatan

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Nasional, Jalan Sawo Manila No 61 Pasar Minggu

**ABSTRACT:** This research was conducted to find out whether tutoring followed by street children can form a positive self-concept, full of confidence, courtesy, and friendly, not harming themselves and the surrounding environment, so that the views of family, friends, neighbors, and the community can accept the self-concept. The street children. This study uses the phenomenological tradition, and the theory used in this research is the theory of symbolic interaction, where this theory looks at the social reality created by humans themselves through the interaction of meanings conveyed symbolically. This type of qualitative research uses direct observation and data collection techniques through in-depth interviews. The data validity technique used is data triangulation. The results of this study show that the self-concept of street children before and after receiving tutoring looks different from the pattern of thinking, character, insight, self-concept and how to interact with other people.

**KEYWORDS:** Self Concept, Street Children, Mindset, Symbolic Interaction.

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The environment is one of the cultural constructions in the meaning formation of street children. A slum environment, the absence of parental guidance, and abusive actions tend to form a character that is passive, inferior, gripped, stigmatized with low self-esteem, passive, aggressive, exploitative, and quickly protested or angry. In such conditions, the instilled value system will be complex because self-activity, self-confidence, and self-reliance are almost extinct, so primitive mentality and poverty syndrome arises.

The self-concept of street children through symbolic interactions between street children that form the child's self-concept, street children's communication can be seen from several sides, such as symbols between individual street children. Communication occurs in street children between individuals or interpersonal communication that is rarely seen by many people, such as codes or symbols used by street children to communicate between street children.

Street children are not a phenomenon in big cities, nor are they a phenomenon in small towns. Street children are the "DEBT" of the community, our debt. In our property are the rights of the poor, the poor, and abandoned children. Verily God gave birth to man on the last day of the cycle of creation after providing and managing the rest of the design. That is how the Creator first provided essential capital, human rights slang language: rights to land, air, work, and others.

We found many difficulties experienced by street children that we do not know about, among others: (1) the money earned every day must be spent. Otherwise, the rest must be lost the next day when you wake up; (2) some save money from cigarette traders on the roadside, but they are often lied to; (3) if you have more than one garment, you must wear them all at once; otherwise, they may be lost; (4) when washing clothes, drying clothes must be waited until they dry for fear of being lost, those who do not want to be waited on, then immediately wear them until they dry on the body; (5) sandals must be clamped in the armpits while sleeping so that they are not lost; (6) sleeping on the streets, there is no place to take shelter, the flood is still on the streets, or the rain still sleeps on the sidewalks; (7) to get food, every street child has to sing to get money to eat.

Many problems occur to street children, such as being chased by a tantrip or the police for safekeeping, so that everyday street children are not always in the same place, but at night all of them will gather at basecamp; other problems found by street children include free sex, drugs, marijuana and so on.

Street children are characterized by messy clothes, shabby clothes, dirty like not bathing for days, skinny, black, torn clothes, some even polished, so they are thought to be injured and have a very shabby, ugly appearance. Some are beaten entirely blue and injured, so many people feel sorry for the street children.

Rumah Shelter is a longing to provide a place to live for street children with a sense of security and well-being. Shelter House, which was founded by the late. Milchior is inhabited by 7 (seven) street children and is educated at the State Elementary

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School and Pancaran Berkas Elementary School, but in the first year, many problems caused by the street children, such as stealing guava or starfruit from neighbors, fighting at school, taking classmates' belongings, and even asking them to go out with them. Other street children fight at school.

Tutoring is a means to reach underprivileged and street children, besides helping children in the learning process. However, the tutoring that I will bring is the tutoring which is often called the "Smart Car Bimbel." This tutoring was established free of charge for each child and has existed for 8 years, a total of 9 tutoring schools, but 1 tutoring in the Kapuk Flats has been closed by the FPI organization (Islamic Unity Forum).

### B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Phenomenology is a movement of philosophical thought rather than a school of philosophy. Therefore, some circles, for example, Embree (1998:333-343), talk about the phenomenological movement, namely the international movement in philosophy that extends to various disciplines, especially sociology, anthropology, psychiatry, then communication. Starting in Germany towards the end of the 19th century, the movement pioneered by Edmund Husserl then spread to Europe, America, Asia, and Indonesia.

As a movement in thinking, phenomenology (phenomenology) can be interpreted as an effort to study knowledge that arises because of a sense of awareness of wanting to know. The object of knowledge in symptoms or events is understood through conscious experience. Phenomenology considers experience as data about the studied reality.

From the ontology point of view, the phenomenological view of reality is a whole. Therefore objects must be seen in a natural context, not in a fragmented form. Meanwhile, from the epistemological point of view, the phenomenological view of subjects and objects cannot be separated and is active in understanding various symptoms. From the axiological point of view, the phenomenology of research is bound by values so that the results of a study must be seen in context.

Phenomenology comes from the constructivist paradigm or the construction of social reality. Bungin (2001: 8) says that social construction is closely related to human awareness of social reality. Therefore, awareness is the most crucial part of social construction. Social reality does not stand alone without the presence of individuals both inside and outside that reality.

Social reality has meaning when social reality is constructed and interpreted subjectively by other individuals to take advantage of that reality objectively. So individuals construct social reality, construct it in the world of reality, and stabilize that reality based on the subjectivity of other individuals in their social institutions.

According to Berger and Luckman (in Bungin, 2001: 6), social construction is the formation of knowledge obtained from social discoveries. Social reality, according to both, is socially formed, and sociology is a science (sociology of knowledge) to analyze how the process occurs.

In this case, the understanding of "reality" and "knowledge" is separated. They recognize objective reality by limiting reality as a "quality" associated with phenomena that we consider to be beyond our will because these phenomena cannot be eliminated. While knowledge is the certainty that phenomena are natural and have unique characteristics in our daily lives.

According to the tradition of symbolic interactionism (Ritzer & Goodman, 2003, p. 289), the formation of meaning in individuals cannot be separated from aspects, including:

1. The human ability to think
2. The ability to think is shaped by social interaction,
3. Humans learn meanings and symbols in social interactions, which enable them to use their special thinking abilities,
4. Meanings and symbols enable humans to carry out specific actions and interact,
5. Humans can change the meanings and symbols they use in their actions and interactions based on their interpretation of situations,
6. Humans can make a policy of modification and change, partly because of their ability to interact with themselves. This enables them to examine a series of action opportunities, assess their relative advantages and disadvantages, and then choose one from among the course of action.
7. Patterns of interrelated actions and interactions will form groups and communities.

Briefly explained that the understanding of symbolic interactionism places more emphasis on active and creative individuals than other theoretical approaches. Since the Mead era, the theory of symbolic interactionism has been developed by many other thinkers. In the United States, symbolic interactionism is the main rival for functionalist understanding (in Soeprapto, 2002: 69).

Mead claims that language enables us to become self-conscious beings, i.e., aware of our individuality and a key element in this process is symbols. A symbol is something that 'stands for' another (Giddens, 1993, p. 715). In the example used by Saussure, the word "tree" is a symbol through which we represent the object, namely a tree. Once we master such concepts, Mead states, we can think of trees even though no trees are in sight (in Soeprapto, 2002:70).

Symbolic interactionism is a perspective that treats individuals as self and social self. We can determine the subjective meaning of each object that we encounter rather than accepting what is considered to be an objective, pre-designed meaning.

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The roots of this symbolic interaction theory presuppose social reality as a process and not as something static – dogmatic. Thus, humans are not finished goods but more goods to be made. In other words, the root of this theory says that social reality must go through a process in which each individual will learn new things in his social community; for example, an entrepreneur may not immediately become an entrepreneur owning a building, owning an office, and so on, but someone The company must go through the process of buying assets, negotiating, determining the goods to be sold to becoming entrepreneurs in specific fields.

To understand behavior, we must understand its definition and its process. Humans are actively engaged in creating their world to understand the separation between life history and society, which is essential.

Interpretation is not a free act or determined by human power. However, many people interpret things with the help of other people, such as past people, writers, family, television actors, and individuals they meet in their work or play settings. However, other people do not do it for them. Through interaction, one can form an understanding, or more simply, that students in a particular lecture room often develop a standard definition or shared perspective in symbolic language, and they understand because they regularly relate and experience shared experiences, problems, and backgrounds but agreement is not a must for the students.

### C. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method is a qualitative method that focuses on case study research, where in this study, more emphasis is placed on meaning and process than results or activities. A case study is a research strategy that refers to the forms of why and how questions. Researchers use qualitative research methods because the author is studying people as subjects who change and view the subject as an object of research that continues to move dynamically without setting the subject of his life flat. After all, the subject is not a robot but an individual who can think, act and move.

The subjects of this study were street children who had never received tutoring and street children who had received tutoring. This selection was based on field observations conducted by researchers conducting interviews with several street children. They have the characteristics of children on the street; in this group, street children still have family relationships that are still established but do not regularly return home. And street children over the age of 16. The characteristics of children on the street and street children aged over 16 years were taken from the grouping of street children based on observation and interviews conducted by researchers at several shelter houses and street children's companions.

Researchers do not control the events studied but focus on contemporary phenomena in several contexts of street children's lives. Yin, in the book *Case Study Design and Method* (1989), case study researchers use the strategy to examine contemporary events related to behavior and can hardly be manipulated by existing facts.

The technique of collecting data by interview is the in-depth interview. An interview is a form of communication between two people, involving someone who wants to get information from another person by asking questions based on a specific purpose. (in Mulyana, 2008:180). Two parties carry out the conversation, namely, the interviewer (interviewer) who asks questions and the interviewee (interviewee) who provides answers to these questions (Moleong, 2014, p. 186).

In-depth interviews are the process of obtaining information for research purposes by way of face-to-face questioning between the interviewer and the informant or interviewee, with or without using an interview guide (guide interview), where the interviewer and informant are involved in relatively the same social life (Sutopo, 2010). 2006:72).

Conducting in-depth interviews on the questions posed to the interviewees cannot be formulated with certainty beforehand. However, the questions will depend a lot on the ability and experience of the researcher to develop follow-up questions by the interviewees' answers. In other words, in the interview, a focused discussion takes place between the researcher and the informant regarding the problem under study.

The types of questions in this study are open-ended questions. Open-ended questions have several advantages, for example, allowing the acquisition of various answers according to the informant being allowed to create his way by answering the questions asked.

In addition to interviews, data is also collected by observation, where observation can be a scientific data collection technique if it meets the following requirements:

1. Devoted to the pattern and research objectives that have been set.
2. Planned and implemented systematically and not by chance (accidental).
3. Recorded systematically, associated with more general propositions, and not driven by mere impulses and curiosity.

According to Guba and Lincoln (1981), there are reasons for using observation in qualitative research, including (in Moleong, 2002: 125 – 126):

1. Observation is direct experience, and direct experience is considered the most powerful tool to obtain the truth.
2. With observation, it is possible to see and observe for yourself, then record behavior and events.
3. Observation allows researchers to record events related to relevant knowledge and knowledge obtained from data.
4. Researchers often doubt the information obtained because of fears of bias or deviation.
5. Observation enables researchers to understand complex situations.

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6. In some instances where other communication techniques are not possible, observation becomes a handy tool.

In observation, it should be emphasized that the purpose of this observation (observation) is to enable the observer to see the world as seen by the subject under study and to capture the phenomena and culture of the subject's understanding. Observation allows the researcher to feel what is felt and lived by the subject, not what is felt and lived by the researcher.

### **D. RESEARCH RESULTS**

The symbolic interaction approach to communication theory states how we understand the meaning, norms, messages, and the use of signs or codes or body gestures carried out interactively in communication. These theories explore body movements, or can be said as non-verbal communication, which speaks without making a sound but uses gestures, signs, or codes to convey messages to the recipient of the message.

The world of interaction inhabited by humans explains that reality is not a set of structures outside of us but is shaped through a process of interaction within groups, communities, and cultures. Moreover, the reality is also not entirely as expected because every reality is usually constructed by someone or someone in power, such as robbing people using nails attached to cans so that when the road feels like there is a sound and it is all engineered so that people who drive are not aware of it. I went down to check the tires attached to the can; at that time, the robbers would take the robbery. Therefore, everything that exists is formed through interaction within the group, community, and culture.

#### **Self-Concept of Street Children Before Getting Tutoring**

Mead explained that three other conceptual assumptions have a relationship with symbolic interaction, namely:

##### **1. Mind (Mind)**

Most of the informants of street children commented on their self-concept before getting tutoring and their views on themselves. We know that many people think street children are like buskers. They are looking for money to be deposited with adults, even if there is more it is to their parents. In addition, their views are that they are children who are indifferent or do not care about what other people say or do not care about other people. Their self-concept is formed through their association where they live on the streets inhabited by people who do not care about their self-concept but are more concerned with what they can get and focus on money.

The self-concept of street children before getting tutoring, especially in mind or mind development is very dependent on other street children, so the self-concept of street children before getting tutoring can be seen when helping fellow street children; all street children answer things that have the same meaning, street children, before getting tutoring, they prioritize togetherness and unity, so that they help their other friends in terms of economy, energy. They will help him no matter what problems will befall them, just as they help each other when his friend dies; when his friend is beaten, they will help take them to a 24-hour clinic or hospital.

From informants with street children's backgrounds, before getting tutoring, they answered about their assessments or views that they were not concerned with their values or views; street children were more indifferent to their values or views about themselves, so they always answered that they were ordinary, in the sense that they only concerned with what they should get every day. Almost all street children in Grogol, Kedoya, and Bongkaran answered that they had received tutoring. However, some were different, such as one of the street children who had never received tutoring.

When associated with the theory put forward by George Herbert Mead regarding Mind or Mind where Mead assumes that a person develops his mind through interaction with other people, so the thinking of an individual will be different from others (in the work of Zikri Fachrul, 2015:47).

When linked to the theory, it can be seen that street children develop their minds through interactions with other people, whereas street children interact with other people who do not care about them. Street children also meet seniors who become their examples in forming their self-concept, so street children form self-concepts like other people's views and examples of people with their seniors.

##### **2. Self (self)**

Most of the street children commented about the changes in their self-concept, how to interact with others, and how long street children received guidance stating whether they felt the change or not and how to interact with other people. Street children commented that every street child who received guidance, Even though learning for a while could have an impact, such as changes in self-concept from tutoring, get a positive impact.

In changing their self-concept, although it is a little like the way they interact when at home and on the streets, which gives an understanding that tutoring is essential, especially for street children who have never received tutoring or schooling, what he finds are only examples of parents or seniors on the streets who become guidelines for them.

The length of time receiving tutoring also affects changes in their self-concept and the way they interact, such as street children who receive tutoring for eight years will be very different from street children who only receive tutoring for 1 year or a

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matter of months in terms of how to respond to other people, how to interact or talking to other people, in a character that is not easy to use hands if you find street children who speak in a slightly high-pitched and emotional tone which when on the streets, street children will continue to be signed so that their emotions will be empathetic, just like street children when on the street. The street expresses "stupid, stupid" is very common and can distinguish itself when at home interacting with their parents, brother, or sister with courtesy.

This is related to the theory of Self-proposed by Herbert Blumer who is a teacher from Mead, who says that "the individual is not surrounded by potential objects that play with him and shape his behavior. The correct image is that he forms those objects." (Soeprapto, 2002, p. 121)

From the above theory, it is clear that the formation of their self-concept is determined by them, such as whether or not they want to follow the tutoring. It is their will because they determine their objects and form them. Some street children choose to live on the streets because they feel more accessible, even though living on the streets, there must be rules they must follow. After all, they feel more accessible, or there are no rules that bind them to form their objects.

### **3. Society**

In this case, the researcher asks questions such as the views of the families of street children who have received tutoring, whether they say change or not, and in interacting or communicating with fellow street children, often use signs or codes, it turns out that some street children give additional comments.

*Informant* who had received tutoring, although only briefly said that the changes experienced by the informants were not only experienced by them but also until their families felt their changes. From these changes, it depends on each street child, especially the informant who wants to apply it every day or not.

*Informant* tasked by the researcher stated that they did not interact with each other using signs or codes because it was more directed to buskers; when buskers met other buskers, they just shook hands and greeted each other, in contrast to street children such as street thugs or children. Hang out with those who like "Robbing", and "Pointing". They use the sign or code only to indicate their target or to state that the street child is a friend or a group with them. Usually, street children like to hang out, and thugs often use signs or codes.

### **The Self-Concept of Street Children After Getting Tutoring**

Mead explained that three other conceptual assumptions have a relationship with symbolic interaction, namely:

#### **1. Mind (Mind)**

Most of the street children informants commented on their self-concept after receiving tutoring and their views on themselves. The self-concept of street children after receiving tutoring or until now still getting tutoring and views from other people changes such as he has been successful, feels more robust, confident, and less inferior.

They think that they are more independent. The informants whom the researchers asked answered that their self-concepts, which used to feel inferior, shy, afraid, like to cry, and so on, have changed since receiving tutoring so that they can state that they are confident, not inferior, not shy, more assertive and in terms of their economy is easier to share with their friends or other people who are in trouble. Maybe some of them who used to have the same focus as street children before getting tutoring were more concerned about what they could get from groceries, or their focus was money and was very stingy, selfish, and did not think about sharing.

The self-concept of street children after receiving tutoring, especially in mind or mental development, is very influential on tutoring, as well as the learning process when entering school so that the self-concept of street children after receiving tutoring can be seen when helping others, each of the informants gives an understanding "if people have helped us, then we also should help people, even though it is other people we help," that is the understanding they get when they get tutoring. Indeed, in terms of helping people, street children who have been helped will quickly help people who are experiencing difficulties, but they are different from street children before receiving tutoring.

Before getting tutoring, street children help people or friends who have trouble from positive to opposing sides. In contrast, street children who have received tutoring, such as informants whom researchers ask, will help their neighbors, their friends, or people they do not know only on a positive side, such as a friend dies, informants will help each other in terms of energy, until economy.

From the informants with the background of street children, after receiving tutoring, they answered their assessments or views that they felt that by changing themselves, they were getting better, making them move forward in terms of character, nature, and words. Like when they have not received tutoring, their words are insulting, but after getting tutoring, their words in interacting with others are more orderly and polite. Moreover, they consider education very important, so they prioritize it over making money, even though they are now looking for money to pay for college and their daily lives. However, the work they do is not singing.



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Regarding theory, Cooley expresses the looking-glass self-theory, saying, "as if we were going to put a mirror in front of us. First we imagine, second imagine other people see us and third experience feelings of pride or disappointment" (in Rakhmat, 2003:99).

When viewing the theory that street children, after receiving tutoring, when asked, they will compare themselves with what they are now, like seeing what they look like in a mirror, assessing what they are like, and feeling proud of the changes they have experienced themselves. The formation of the informant's self-concept to date is strongly influenced by the tutoring they get.

### 2. Self (self)

Most of the street children's informants commented on the changes in their self-concept and how to interact with others. From how long the street children received guidance stating that they felt the change or not as well as how to interact with other people and street children commented that every street child who received Although tutoring can have an impact, such as changes in self-concept, tutoring has a positive impact.

In changing their self-concept, has undoubtedly changed a lot from the way they interact with people who used to speak loudly and shout to become more polite, subtle and the changes are very far; in other words, the change in the informant's self-concept is visible from the first living on the streets until now have become successful, for example, all informants before receiving guidance when they interact with other people must be mean, rude, when other people use a higher tone or get angry the informant will be even angrier. However, after receiving guidance, the informant is more able to control emotions how to interact with other people more politely, so researchers can conclude that with tutoring, street children can form a better self-concept.

The duration of tutoring also affects changes in self-concept and how informants interact, such as informants who received tutoring from eight years ago until now and informants who only received tutoring for 1 year and decided to leave, which will look different from their thinking patterns, and their way of thinking. Interact, how to respond to other people when viewed in character also changes, not emotional when meeting unpleasant people because they are taught to hold back their emotions when problems come and not to speak harshly and speak politely.

Researchers try to relate these events to the theory of symbolic interactionism, according to Blumer, which provides three main premises, namely: (1). Humans act toward things based on the meanings that things have for them; (2) the meaning is obtained from the results of social interactions with other people; (3) these meanings are perfected when the process of social interaction is taking place (in Soeprapto, 2002:120-121).

From the premise above, on the third point where Blumer said these meanings were perfected when the process of social interaction was taking place, he stated a thought that was in line with the researcher, where the meaning of the informant's self-concept would continue to be refined when social interaction took place including tutoring, tutoring. Included in social interaction because in tutoring, not only do informants learn about learning at school, but informants also learn to interact with other people.

### 3. Society

In this case, the researcher asks questions such as the views of the families of street children who have received tutoring, whether they say change or not, and in interacting or communicating with fellow street children, often use signs or codes, as well as symbols commonly used and their benefits and how the symbols are created. . It turned out that the informant answered the same thing.

*Informant* after receiving tutoring said that the changes the informants felt were not only felt by themselves but until their family and friends felt their changes. From these changes, the informants must feel proud of what they have achieved through tutoring, where they are taught from character how to interact to what their self-concept should look like.

*Informant* asked by the researcher stated that they did not interact with other street children using signs or codes. When they are still living on the street, even though they are still aware of some signs or codes used by street children, namely signs or codes for "robbing" such as "GM" which means "picture", the purpose of "picture" is to indicate people to be visited. "Pointing" and one of the informants said that those who use signs or codes are more delinquents who live on the streets, thugs, or children who like to hang out on the streets. The signs or codes carried out by street children only aim to indicate their prey or state that street children are friends or a group.

When associated with the theory of symbolic interactionism, which says that "symbol interaction refers to the special character of interactions between humans, actors do not merely act on the actions of others but interpret and define each other's actions. The actor's response, directly or indirectly, is always based on the meaning assessment. Therefore human interaction is bridged by the user of the sign or code, interpretation or by finding the meaning of the actions of others" (in Soeprapto, 2001:121).

Symbolic interactionism's theory aligns with the researcher's understanding of the exchange of meaning by using signs or codes in interacting with fellow street children.

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### E. CONCLUSION

I. The self-concept of street children before receiving tutoring was based on 3 (three) assumptions, according to Mead, namely:

1. Mind (Mind)

The self-concept of street children before getting tutoring is that they only think about what they can get, and to develop the mind of many street children do not want it because they feel there is no benefit to them and their self-concept is formed from senior street children, who only think about what can be obtained, and only focus on 'money'.

2. Self (Self)

Self-concept on self or self, street children before getting tutoring that is not concerned with themselves. Street children have more complex emotions to control, have harsher language, and are more sensitive or temperamental.

3. Society (Society)

People perceive street children as dirty, uneducated, have no manners, are rude in speech. However, when viewed from the community or group of street children, they are more concerned with togetherness, unity, and familiarity; it can be said that street children are not concerned with themselves but with their friends.

### II. The Self-Concept of Street Children After Getting Tutoring

The self-concept of street children after receiving tutoring is seen from 3 (three) assumptions according to Mead, namely:

1. Mind (Mind)

The self-concept of street children after getting tutoring is that education is essential for the development of their minds, the development of insight, and their perspective on every problem so that they want to continue learning. They also feel that they are more independent.

2. Self (Self)

The self-concept of street children after receiving tutoring on Self is that they are more confident, more intelligent, and more robust, as well as changes in attitudes, manners, ways of speaking, ways of acting, and being able to reflect on themselves through interactions with others, significantly to develop themselves personally.

3. Society (Society)

In society, street children, after receiving tutoring, receive a positive impact from family, friends, and those around them who feel a better self-concept from speaking, thinking, and activities carried out mainly to help people who lack, such as tutoring for students. Children who are not in school.

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