

## THE ROLE OF FOSTER PARENTS IN IMPLEMENTING CHARACTER EDUCATION: Case Study of Children of Indonesian Workers in Puspan Village Maron District Probolinggo Regency

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this research is to describe the role of foster parents in instilling the value of character education. Of course, parents should be more concerned with the child in order to get maximum education, especially at the age of the children. Considering that mothers are the first madrasas for children, they are instead left to work for the reason that they want to improve the family's economy. That way, parents leave their children in the hope of getting maximum care from those who care for them. This study aims to determine the role of foster parents in instilling character education in Puspan Village, Maron District, Probolinggo Regency. The data for the study were collected by selecting by observation, interviews and documentation. The samples were selected using a random technique based on the area or region where the data analysis technique used was by connecting the data with one another and the sample was three families who worked as laborers. Indonesian workforce consisting of three husband and wife couples who leave their children with the family of Mrs. Sunarsih, Mrs. Sum and Mrs. Nur Fadila. Based on data analysis, it was found that the role of foster parents in instilling character education in Puspan Village, Maron District, Probolinggo Regency has been categorized as successful. Because children are able to implement what has been taught by foster parents, they are able to become children's motivators, as facilitators, as guides in instilling the value of religious character

education, independence, tolerance in children.

**Keywords:** The role of foster parents; Character education; Children's character.

### INTRODUCTION

Family is the main social organization as forming the character of children which has such an important role. A family consists of mother, child and father. The formation of child's personality will be formed through the process of socialization, coaching and internalization. The process of socialization in family will greatly affect the quality of the child.

Within the community there are several norms, values and rules that must be obeyed by every member of the community. The duty to perform the norms is carried by the family so that the child will be able to follow and adhere to the norms (Susanti, 2013).

The present phenomenon shows that most children are entrusted to caregivers is naturally become the children' foster parents. The existence of foster parents affects the formation of children's character by its own nature (Reflianto & Syamsuar, 2018). Foster parents are expected to be able to be a motivator to form good children's character as a provision for the children in the future.

In research (Bai et al., 2019) revealed that families involved in the child welfare system in the United States often deal with housing instability and other educational problems. Instability can hinder parents in the process of parenting their children. Thus, collaboration between child protection agencies, parents and community organizations is needed to ensure optimal welfare of children's protection. This study explores the extent to which the barrier effective between the parent and partner organizations on family reunification is not stable with their children. Furthermore, in other studies carried out by (Ahlqvist-Björkroth et al., 2017) revealed that the role of parents in child care is very vital.

Education in the form of learning has the aim of being able to make a group of people or an individual become a more mature person (Hery Yuli Setiawan dan Feri Faila Sufa, 2018). Education is very important aspect in fostering children's character. The main goal of education is to create talented and responsible people who are expected to be able to compete in the modern world and be able to anticipate the challenges of the times (Saputra, 2017). As a consequent, the education has become a necessity for every citizen. Since the education exist, people's lives become better and more focused. (Wahidah, 2016).

Education is an element to realize the generalization of behavior patterns and ethnics that exist in humans in the process towards a better direction that can be poured into the learning process (Efobi & Nwokolo, 2014). Ethnic patterns and the behavior of an individual can be formed by a process which based on norms are adhered to as a provision for the individual in achieving perfection of education which

is essential not only to gain knowledge but also have a great impact in instilling the moral values from Islam to society (Susandi, 2020b).

The role of mother in educating child is considered to be important since that mother is known as the first *madrasah* for their child (Khoirunnisa et al., 2015). A child first learns anything from his family especially from his mother. So the role of a mother is very important in educating children (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). Meanwhile, the role of father is to provide his wife and children with basic needs, both physical and spiritual needs (Soetari, 2014). Moreover, the duty of a father is to ensure the needs of living like educational fulfillment by providing proper and quality education (Susandi, 2020a). Therefore, both parents are responsible for child's education (Widianingsih, 2019).

In the family, parents must be in charge of providing education, especially in forming child's character of religious values, tolerance and independent self (Puspitasari, 2014). However, some children could not receive full care from both parents. Some of the children are whose parents working abroad and entrusted to live with foster parents or orphanages (Riswari, 2019). Therefore foster parents who are entrusted to look for the children must adjust to the conditions of the children and their school (Shoimah & Soepriyanto, 2018). Conditions of full childcare from parents to the caregivers are still being debated in Indonesia especially in in Puspan Village where many parents entrust their children to their relatives to take care of their children while they are working abroad.

Based on the initial observations, the researchers found that some Indonesian

migrant workers in Puspan Village, Maron District, Probolinggo Regency tended to entrust their children to their relatives so that the first character education that children should receive from their parents was replaced by someone else. As a result, it is common for entrusted child to obtain less attention due to the fact that their relatives as caretakers are busy with their work and also need to take care of their own children. Based on the explanations above, the authors are interested in exploring more deeply about how the role of foster parents in instilling character education in children. So the title of the research that the researcher adopted was "The Role of Foster Parents in Instilling Character Education (Case Study of Children of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Puspan Village, Maron District, Probolinggo regency)".

## **METHOD**

The research approach used in this research is a qualitative research method with a case study approach. The research is carried out to examine events which have problems therefore it is necessary to be studied and look for ways to solve the problems. The data collection system, the researchers used observation and interview. The data analysis technique was carried out in the following stages: Data Reduction, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing or Verification to determine the role of foster parents in instilling character education in Puspan Village, Maron District, Probolinggo Regency. The research participants who were interviewed were three foster parents and each one foster child from the foster parents. Data analysis was carried out by describing the data collected in the form of

words, pictures and not in the form of numbers. These data were obtained from interview manuscripts and observation notes. In the conducted study, researchers conducted structured interviews because the interviewer should determine the problematic and questions to put forward in search for answers to the formulation of research problems.

## **RESULT**

Based on the interview have been done by researchers to three spouses that entrusted the child in which their name disguised into family of Mrs. Sunarti, family of Mrs. Sum and the family of Mrs. Nur which the researchers obtained the information during the children is cared by them, then they automatically act as motivators, facilitators and mentors.

Parents who entrust their children are those who work as Indonesian Migrant Workers who have to work abroad and leave their children at home. The educational process which should be the duty for their biological parents turns to foster parents, in this case their relatives or their own parent.

Based on interviews regarding the role of foster parents in instilling character education, foster parents will automatically act as a mentor. One of her mother Sunarseh states that:

"Every day I reminded him, I advised him and they are sent to school, it is one way to educate him, and in the afternoon they usually recites the Qur'an in the mosque near home."(Sunarseh, 2021)

Mrs. Sunarti also said that her foster children that her foster children had been abandoned by their parents since they

were kindergarten due to unstable economic factors that made them choose to work as migrant workers.

In parenting the foster children, Mrs. Surnarseh found many obstacles including having to divide her time to take care of her own child with her foster children, because she was busy as a housewife so she did not focus on taking care of her foster children. Even so, Mrs. Sunarti is the closest person to her foster children and treats him like her own child by accompanying and guiding him so that he will not be misguided. This is based on an interview with Mrs. Sunarti's foster child whose name is disguised as Reza state that:

“My mother always patient in advising, and patient in educating me. I was also sent to school and ordered to recite the Quran at the mosque so that I can recite the Quran” (Reza, 2021).

With mother's guidance at this time, Reza is able to read the Qur'an well, pray diligently and starting to be independent in preparing his own needs.

The same information was obtained from the results of an interview with Mrs. Sum who stated that the parents of her foster children had been migrant worker since 2007 for reasons of economic factors and wanted to increase their capital. In educating foster children she always guided him properly so that he can study in accordance to his wishes and motivate them to always be cheerful to do their daily life. Considering that it needs to be done in the parenting process which will have an impact on the daily life from the child. This is evidenced by Mrs. Sum's statement which states:

“Yes, if we are gathering, I will give understanding and also motivation so that they will be cheerful to run their daily life, with the fact that they don't have their parents there”. (Ibu Sum, 2021)

It is also being reinforced by the statement from Ifan (foster child) who said that he usually spends time with Mrs. Sum, who always accompanies him and always motivates him when he is home. Also he is sent to school and told to recite the Qur'an in the prayer room so that he will know good and bad things. The following is Ifan's confession:

“Usually, *mbah* (Mrs. Sum) advises me and guides me. I was sent to school and also told to recite the Quran in the mosque on the east side of the house”. (Ifan, 2021)

In the process of parenting, Mrs. Sum attain some obstacles that are normally occurs in the process of educating foster child, even so, she still strives to always be a good mother to Ifan though she is not her biological mother. According to the foster mother, it is important to direct the foster child to become a good person in the future so that he can adapt to the environment so that the community know him as a good person as well. One of the reasons why she teaches all matters to her foster child is because of his biological parents who leave all the matters to her. Mrs. Sum's statement related to the obstacles she usually faces in educating foster child:

“The obstacles is sometimes the foster child did not want to do the things when I asked him to recite the Qur'an or went to school, I need to persuade him first. I also have problems with my work. If

there are many orders, I find it difficult to divide the time.” (Ibu Sum, 2021).

It is not enough just to be a motivator and mentor, Mrs Sum also plays her role as a facilitator for her foster child. She always advises her foster child when she has free time. She said:

“I always provide my time to monitor Ifan, my foster child. I also fulfill his needs in school such as buying books and stationery” (Ibu Sum, 2021).

From the third foster mother interviewed named Mrs. Nur (pseudonym) who incidentally is the older brother of her foster child, Ibrahim’s father (pseudonym) was obtained information that it had been eight years since Ibrahim’s parents had decided to go as migrant workers due to insufficient economic factors. Both his parents entrusted Ibrahim to Mrs. Nur who incidentally is the older sister of Ibrahim’s father.

The role of Mrs. Nur in instilling character education is very important because she gives her care by leaving her foster children in school and Qur’an institutions in the mosque near her house in the hope that her foster children will pray five times a day and diligently recite the Qur’an. In addition, when playing, Mrs. Nur also monitors her foster children so they do not misguides. Mrs. Nur in her interview said:

“I sent him to school and told him to recite Qur’an at a small mosque near the house, in order to make him pray five times a day which will be naturally noticed.” (Ibu Nur, 2021).

The obstacles face by Mrs. Nur were not easy, there were many things that

inhibit her carrying out her role as foster parents. She is not able to intensely monitor their foster children when playing. This happens due to the duty she has to taking care of the family, homework and other interests. Even so, Mrs. Nur tried to give the best to Ibrahim in terms of religious education and taught him to be more independent in the future. The following is Mrs. Nur’s confession regarding to the obstacles she faces:

“The problem is usually when my foster child play far away, I can’t control it. I have a difficulty to accompanied him while playing because I am so busy with household matters, where I have to cook and serve my husband” (Ibu Nur, 2021).

The role of a foster parent is a heavy responsibility. The obstacles faced are not easy. However, as a parent, Mrs. Nur is able to find a solution in every problem she faces. As she stated in an interview with the following author:

“I always try to give the best for my foster child. Besides, I sent my foster child to school and also facilitate him to recite the Quran in the mosque near this house.” (Ibu Nur, 2021).

The important role of foster mother in his life is told by Ibrahim as his foster child:

“My foster mother always advise me. When I make mistake, I am always reminded. I was also sent to school and told to recite the Quran at the prayer room” (Ibrahim, 2021).

Mrs. Nur’s efforts are not enough in giving advice. In addition, he said that he always monitors his foster children in

socializing, asking for help from Ustadz who teaches him the Qur'an to always give him a good advice. In addition, Mrs. Nur wishes that after her foster children graduate from elementary school, she will send her foster child to a boarding school so that he will not fall to promiscuity.

“I always try to monitor my foster children in choosing friends so that they don't fall into promiscuity. I also asked Ustad who teaches my child Quran to always guide him. In addition, I intended to send him to boarding school so that his social interaction is secured.” (Ibu Nur, 2021)

## DISCUSSION

From the analysis results of research in Puspan village, Maron district, Probolinggo is obtained the information that the role of foster parents in instilling foster child's character is as a motivator, facilitator, and mentor. From the results of interviews and observations of all foster parents who were interviewed are as a motivator, where they role in the process of nurturing role as driver or motivator for foster children (Efobi & Nwokolo, 2014). The role of foster parents is carried out in all foster families as well in the research that have been studied. From the three families, each foster parents still motivates foster children to continue their education in school, recite Quran so that they can gain knowledge when they are not around. Based on the results of the study, it was found that foster parents were still able to divide their time in order to remain a motivator for their foster children even though sometimes they were overwhelmed because they were still taking care of the family and also working.

Apart from being a motivator, foster parents are required to be a facilitator for their foster children. By become a facilitator, these foster parents are expected to be able to meet the needs of foster children such as learning tools, transportation facilities, freedom in determining the school they want and of course adjusting it again with the values they have (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). From the three families that have been researched and observed, it was found that there is one foster family that fulfill its role as a facilitator where the foster mother really consider her foster child as her own biological child by fulfilling all the necessity to support the foster children's education.

Finally, foster parents are expected to act as mentors. As mentors, they are expected to act as role models for children in doing everything (Khoirunnisa et al., 2015). Foster parents from the child whose parents are Indonesian Migrant Workers really need guidance, especially from foster parents considering that they are the only parents they have around, therefore the role of foster parents is very vital in the process of character education in particular. Foster parents must continue to guide their foster children to become good individuals in their future.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research and analysis of data on the role of foster parents in instilling character education in Puspan village, Maron district, Probolinggo, the authors conclude that the role of parents to instill character's education is already done by foster parents as it is their duty. The role of foster parents here are so vital because they need to replace the role from



biological parents and perform their role to keep the foster children in order to build their better figure in the future.

Judging from the results of this study, the role of foster parents in instilling character education is optimal because they are always be a good motivator for their foster children in the parenting process. Foster parents always give encouragement to the child to learn, especially in learning religious knowledge so that they can become good people in the future. In the process of taking care, foster parents are also act as a facilitator which provide the children with their necessity. Finally, foster parents also act as mentors for their foster children. The role as a mentor can be said to be carried out where foster parents also act as mentors for their child. The role as a mentor is said to be carried out where foster parents have become role models for their foster children. They are ready to accompany their foster children when studying at night and still pay attention to who their foster children play with.

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