

Identification of Motives of Children Working as Street Clowns in Manado City, North Sulawesi Province

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Abstract. Various activities are carried out by the community to meet their living needs. One activity that has become a new phenomenon seen in Manado City is street clowns. The phenomenon of street clowns can be found at intersections and at the entrances and exits of the Boulevard shopping area. They try to entertain the general public and drivers so that they get money, although the amount is not much. However, most of these street clowns are of school age and should not be active to earn income. This phenomenon is actually different from the culture of the Manado City Community in carrying out activities to earn income. This study was conducted to identify and analyze the motives of children who work as street clowns in Manado City. The results of this study can be used as a recommendation for the Manado City government in compiling a program to strengthen social institutions in the Community and in maintaining public order in public places. This study will be conducted using a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Data were collected through interviews with children who work as street clowns and with the leaders of the Social and Community Empowerment Service and the leaders of the Manado City Civil Service Police Unit. Conducting observations on the activities of street clown professions and collecting other supporting data through internet-based electronic library searches such as Google Scholar and ResearchGate. Data analysis through the stages of data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions and data verification. Children who work as street clowns in Manado City are school-age children. The main motive is to help parents meet their living needs through additional income. They come from suburban areas and have a community. The hope of feeling affection and attention and having time to play is very much needed by them.

Keywords: Motive, Children, Street Clowns

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INTRODUCTION

The high population growth in Indonesia has an impact on activities to meet the needs of life. Indonesia is one of the countries with a high population growth rate (Yunan et al., 2023). As of December 2023, the population of Indonesia was recorded at 280.73 million people according to population data from the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration of the Ministry of Home Affairs. This data shows an increase of 1.61 million people compared to the total population in June 2023 and an increase of 1.13 percent from 2022 to 2023. Because in 2022 it was recorded at 275.77 million people and in 2021 272.68 million. With the increase in population, it will also have an impact on activities to get work. Especially for people who live in urban areas. Because even though people try to find work, when there is high competition because there are many job seekers, there will automatically be people who do not get jobs either (Martino). Therefore, in their life process, people will try to do various activities in order to meet

their living needs through work. One of the jobs carried out by people that is usually seen in big cities such as Jakarta (Yunan et al., 2023) Bandung (Nugraha & Suherman, 2022) as well as in Banjarmasin (Martino et al., 2022), Pekanbaru (Nilta, 2023) Palembang (Lestari & Utami, 2022), Tangerang (Sartika, et al. 2022) is those who work as street clowns. By working as street clowns, they entertain the public by singing, dancing, selling chips or tissues or regulating traffic flow at intersections. From the activities they do, they get money that is voluntarily given by the community that they encounter. The money obtained is used to meet personal and family living needs.

However, there is a phenomenon that is contrary to the activities carried out by street clowns, namely that the perpetrators are school-age groups or children. This group of people should be carrying out activities, namely studying, not working. They should go to school because the government has guaranteed the need for basic education services for school-age people. The group of people seeking work or the group of people of working age are not children. In family life, the ones who should work to meet the needs of the family are parents. Children should be encouraged to go to school, not work. Activities in the form of street clown professions carried out by children have been seen as a form of activity from new-style buskers or beggars. wearing costumes and character clown masks, by dancing along the street or in public places. By wearing clown costumes while carrying music speakers and other equipment, they start their activities (Nilta et al.). However, it can also be seen as part of the exploitation of street children (Yuliani et al., 2022). And not just for entertainment (Wicaksana et al., 2023) and become part of the problem of order and law (Tharelnsia & Din, 2023).

For people in big cities on the island of Java, of course, the phenomenon of street clowns has been going on for a long time. However, it is different from the people in Manado City, North Sulawesi Province. One of the activities that has become a new phenomenon seen in Manado City since mid-2023 is street clowns. The phenomenon of street clowns can be found at red light points on Ring Road 1 Manado, at the entrances and exits of the Boulevard shopping area (Mantos and Mega Mall) and in the Boulevard Dua Culinary Tourism Area. By using costumes that may be their own or rented at a costume rental place, they entertain the people they meet by dancing, selling snacks, selling balloons or tissues and the like. Through the activities they do, there is hope of earning income through money given by the general public and motor vehicle drivers, even though the amount may not be much.

There was an issue that had developed in the Manado City Community that those who work as street clowns are a group of people who come from the island of Java, there are also those who think that they are a group of people who are organized and controlled by certain agents. Even street clown activities have become a hot issue on social media and in social interactions in the Community because they are considered to disturb the safety and security of car and motorbike drivers. There were even pros and cons when the Civil Service Police Unit carried out a clean-up at the end of 2023. Field facts show that most of these street clowns are of school age and should not be active in the form of work, these costumes and equipment are usually obtained from clown costume rental places and have become a situation that makes these children feel comfortable because they have earned money. This phenomenon is also actually different from the culture of the Manado City community in general and Minahasa in particular in carrying out activities to earn income.

Problems related to the profession of street clowns in other areas should not occur in Manado City. Because it will cause problems in the process of social interaction of the community and also disrupt security and order in city planning as is currently being done by the Manado City Government. Various institutional and infrastructure improvements made by the government in making Manado City a comfortable area for activities and tourism will be disrupted when problems are found related to children who work as street clowns as is the case in other areas.

Until now, there has been no research conducted specifically to study the problems of children who work as street clowns in Manado City. Sam Ratulangi University through the

development of the tri dharma of higher education can take a role in conducting research whose results can be recommended to assist the Manado City Government in controlling and fostering children who work as street clowns. This research was conducted to identify and analyze the motives of children who work as street clowns in Manado City. The researcher believes that in order to solve problems related to activities directed at the profession of street clowns, the motives that form these activities must be known. Motives are formed because of motivation. The motivation that exists in humans can be sourced from needs that must be met. It is hoped that with this research, the main root of the phenomenon that forms these motives can be found in children who work as street clowns.

METHODS

The research location that will be used as a place for direct data collection in the form of observation and interviews is in the entrance and exit areas of the Mantos and Boulevard Shopping Center Area, Boulevard II Culinary Tourism Area and Manado Ring Road. All of these research locations are within the Manado City Government area. The research design that will be used is a qualitative design with a phenomenological approach. The selection of this research design and approach is adjusted to efforts to achieve the research objectives, namely to identify and analyze the motives of children who work as street clowns in Manado City. The results of this study can be used as a recommendation for the Manado City government in compiling a program to strengthen social institutions in the community and in maintaining public order in public places. Therefore, data was collected through interviews with children who work as street clowns and with respondents who are leaders of government agencies related to the research object. Followed by observation and use of secondary data. Data analysis is adjusted to the research facts which are naturally based on a phenomenological approach. Data analysis goes through stages that are scientifically as qualitative design. The level of technological readiness (TKT) used is stage three (Proof of concept of function and/or important characteristics analytically and experimentally).

The informants who are planned to be interviewed in this study are those who are considered to have knowledge, data and information related to the research object. The target informants are representatives of the following elements: 1) Children who work as street clowns in Manado City; 2) Parents of children who work as street clowns in Manado City; 3) Leadership and staff elements at the Manado City Social and Community Empowerment Service; 4) Leadership and staff elements at the Manado City Pangong Praja Police Unit.

The data collection techniques used in this study are as follows: a) Interviews. In-depth interviews will be conducted with informants related to the motives that shape school-age children to work as street clowns in Manado City; b) Observation. Observation or direct observation at the research location by observing the activities of school-age children working as street clowns in Manado City; c) Literature Study (Documentation). Literature study was conducted by collecting documents related to the identification of motives that shape school-age children to work as street clowns through internet-based electronic literature searches such as Google Scholar and ResearchGate which can be proven to be valid. The stages of data analysis were carried out since the research process took place starting from the background in the field until all the data needed such as interviews, observations and secondary documents were collected. Data analysis through stages consisting of data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions and data verification. In conducting data analysis, researchers used the systematic literature review technique, where researchers carried out the process of identifying, assessing, and interpreting a number of data related to the previously determined research theme in order to meet the research objectives (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). This study will also conduct focus group discussions in strengthening data analysis. Data validity checks are carried out through credibility tests, transferability tests, and dependability tests. Data analysis techniques are carried out by conducting data reduction, data presentation, and data verification (Suryandari, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Manado City, the capital of North Sulawesi Province, is one of the main tourist destinations in Indonesia. Known for its natural beauty, rich culture, and diverse society, the city attracts many visitors, both domestic and international. However, behind this tourist attraction, there is a dark side that must be considered: the exploitation of children who work as street clowns. This phenomenon is not only a local problem, but also reflects a larger social and economic challenge in Indonesia. Children who work as street clowns generally come from families who live in difficult economic conditions. They are forced to make a living on the streets to help meet the daily needs of their families. In many cases, these children lose the opportunity to get a decent education. Instead of sitting in school, they spend hours on the streets, facing very high risks. They are exposed to various forms of danger, including physical and emotional violence, harassment, and exposure to hazardous substances. Working in unsafe conditions, their physical and mental health are threatened, and their quality of life is drastically reduced. Children who work as street clowns in Manado City have become a common sight, especially in busy areas such as parks and tourist attractions. This phenomenon is inseparable from the social and economic conditions that plague society. Many of these children come from low-income families who are forced to rely on additional income to meet their daily needs. Not a few children in Manado City are involved in various types of informal work, including as street clowns. This shows the high number of children who are forced to leave formal education to help their families. Although working as a street clown may seem fun to some, the reality faced by these children is far from it. They often have to work long hours under the hot sun, interact with strangers, and face high-risk situations. These children are highly vulnerable to exploitation, both by adults who employ them for unfair wages and by irresponsible audiences. This situation creates conditions in which children's rights are violated, including the right to education, health, and protection from violence. The lack of attention from the government and society to this issue makes things worse. In many cases, these children do not have access to adequate health services, quality education, or the psychological support needed to face the challenges they face. This not only impacts individual children, but also the development of society as a whole, which loses the potential of the younger generation who could otherwise contribute positively.

Max Weber stated that Social action, which includes both failure to act and passive acquiescence, may, be oriented to the past, present, or expected future behavior of others". This statement provides an explanation that social action that includes failure to act, may be oriented to the past, present, or expected future behavior of others. So it can be understood that the motives that shape people to act will be related to past, current conditions and steps taken to prepare for future situations. Therefore, the actions taken by humans do not just happen or suddenly. However, there is a background that causes the action to be carried out (Wicaksana et al., 2023). Motive is something that drives behavior and can cause intensity in acting, and is the key to satisfying needs. So this motive can arise because of the needs that must be met. The Uses and Gratification Theory as put forward by Katz, Gurevitch, and Hazz explains that the social environment is the initial unit that determines human needs. The social environment includes demographic characteristics (age, gender, income, occupation, education, religion, ethnicity, etc.), group affiliation (benefits sought in a group to meet needs), and personality characteristics (a reflection of a person's social class, lifestyle, and personality in a social class in society (Setyawati, 2015). Motive is a drive that exists within a person so that they behave and do things to achieve certain goals. The reason that drives a person to do something is because the person concerned has needs that must be met (Goni & Londa, 2014).

Every human being in their actions is in line with needs, desires and hopes. Understanding human needs, the motivation theory put forward by Abraham Maslow can be the basis for study. The motivation theory of Abraham Maslow which is known as the hierarchy of needs, namely physiological needs, safety needs, sense of belongingness and love, esteem needs and self-actualization needs (Maslow in Rifai & Chatarina, 2016). Humans will be active or act because of the existing needs. Gradually, as in the hierarchy of needs put forward by Maslow, humans act.

The needs faced by humans are important aspects for them in survival. These needs include food, clothing, shelter, security, and to be appreciated. Humans need physical, economic, psychological, social needs, up to the desire to be owned and loved, appreciated or recognized (Winarsih, et.al, 2020). The needs of human life, both personally and as a family, can be physical and non-physical. In an effort to fulfill needs, financial support is needed, either in the form of attention or interaction. Related to the needs that require financial support, it requires each individual to work so that they earn money to finance these needs. As an effort to fulfill the needs of life, a family will carry out economic activities. The economic activities carried out are not the same by each family, some carry out business activities such as trade, agriculture, animal husbandry, plantations, industry and others. In addition to business activities, there are also those who choose to become employees. Every family has the same right to carry out economic activities in the community in order to fulfill the needs of their family members (Yuniasari, 2020). Broadly speaking, there are three basic needs that must be met in a family ((Fitriyani et al., 2016) namely physical needs, emotional needs, and stimulation or education needs; Nurwati & Listari, 2021). However, what is most often found in community activities (family or household) is related to meeting basic life needs so that each family member will try to be active (Kusnadi in Sugihardjo et al., 2012). Each family member will maximize their abilities to earn income and finance their needs (Hayati, et al. 2016).

The phenomenon of children who work as street clowns in Manado City in particular and in various other cities in Indonesia is a problem that needs a solution through scientific study. Children who are still of school age should be carrying out learning activities at school but are actually active to meet their living needs or work so they can earn money. Is this a demand or a situation that has trapped children in the environmental conditions in which they live? Begging or asking for help using clown clothes has been seen as a strategy for street children to survive. However, it has also become part of the exploitation that forces them to work, clashing with the order program which ultimately results in street children facing the Civil Service Police Unit and is also related to the lack of serious attention from the government to provide guidance or provide assistance to street children or street children's families to meet their living needs (Alvi et al., 2023). The phenomenon of children who work as street clowns in Manado City in particular and in various other cities in Indonesia is a problem that needs a solution through scientific study. Children who are still in school age should be doing learning activities at school but are actually doing activities to meet their living needs or working to earn money. Is this a demand or a situation that has trapped children in the environmental conditions where they live? Begging or asking for help using clown clothes has been seen as a strategy for street children to survive. However, it has also become part of the exploitation that forces them to work, clashing with the order program which ultimately causes street children to face the Civil Service Police Unit and is also related to the lack of serious attention from the government to provide guidance or assistance to street children or families of street children to meet their living needs²⁰.

Children who work as street clowns in Manado City not only reflect socio-economic conditions, but also reflect the various challenges faced by society. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Manado City, the poverty rate reached 15% in 2023, and this figure shows that there are groups of people who are still struggling to meet basic needs. Many families rely on informal work to survive, including children who are forced to work on the streets to help ease the family's economic burden. In this context, children who work as street clowns often come from underprivileged families, where parents' income is not enough to meet daily needs. In addition, education problems are also a contributing factor to child exploitation. According to a UNICEF report, more than 30% of children in Manado City are not enrolled in the formal education system, so they lose the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for a better future. In many cases, these children are forced to leave school and turn to street work to help their parents.

The working environment for street clown children is very risky. They often have to face dangerous situations, such as interacting with strangers in public places, potentially experiencing

harassment or violence. In addition, they are vulnerable to traffic accidents, especially when operating in high-traffic areas. Data from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) shows that children who work on the streets are at higher risk of physical injury compared to children who do not work. The psychological condition of these children is also a serious concern. Many of them experience stress, anxiety, and emotional distress due to the situations they face. Without adequate psychological support, these children can experience mental health problems that impact their overall development. Research shows that children involved in street work are more vulnerable to mental disorders, which can affect their ability to learn and interact socially. Another challenge faced is the lack of adequate legal protection for children working in the informal sector. Child protection laws in Indonesia do exist, but their implementation is often weak, especially at the local level. Local governments do not have effective mechanisms to monitor and enforce laws related to child protection, so these children continue to operate without the necessary protection. Many people still think that this job is commonplace, so there is no incentive to change this view. From a social perspective, the stigma against children who work as street clowns is also a barrier. People often look at them with a cynical gaze, considering them as children who have no hope. This not only harms children psychologically but also creates a social distance between them and society, making it difficult for them to get the support they need. Based on these facts, it is important to formulate effective policies that not only focus on child protection but also address the root of the problem. Comprehensive policies must involve the government, society, and non-governmental organizations to create a better environment for street clown children in Manado City. With the right approach, it is hoped that these children can return to education and get the opportunity to build a better future.

CONCLUSION

Children who work as street clowns in Manado City are mostly school-age children. Their main motive for being active as street clowns is to help their parents meet their living needs through additional income. Children who work as street clowns live in suburban areas and have been affiliated with groups or communities that have been formed. The motive for helping parents meet their living needs is part of the effort to fulfill basic needs. The motive for safety in carrying out activities has not been a concern for them. Likewise, appreciation for the profession of hope to be appreciated. However, the hope of feeling affection and attention from parents and family and having time to play like children their age is very much needed. Seeing these conditions, there needs to be a comprehensive policy intervention to protect these children. The local government needs to issue clear and firm regulations regarding the protection of children in informal work. These regulations must include provisions on age limits, working hours, and protection from exploitation. In addition, a supervisory team consisting of representatives from the government, NGOs, and the community needs to be formed to ensure that these regulations are implemented effectively. To reduce children's dependence on informal employment, it is important to provide better access to education. Skills training programs should also be provided to help them learn skills that can improve their future employment opportunities. For example, training in performing arts, crafts, or technology can pave the way for them to obtain more secure and sustainable employment. Comprehensive social services should be provided to support the basic needs of children and their families. This includes access to health services, psychological assistance, and support for education. The government needs to work with non-governmental organizations to ensure that these services are accessible to all street clown children in Manado City.

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