NURTURING SOLIDARITY: COLLABORATION AND TOGETHERNESS AT THE ORPHANAGE "RUMAH HATI SUCI"

Nicola Felita[1], Mariana[*2] & Franky Liaw[3]

[1]Interior Design Department, Universitas Tarumanagara, Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: nicola.615200043@stu.untar.ac.id
[2]Interior Design Department, Universitas Tarumanagara, Jakarta, Indonesia*
Email: mariana@fsrd.untar.ac.id
[3]Architecture Department, Universitas Tarumanagara, Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: frankyl@ft.untar.ac.id
*Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

Interior design plays a significant role in shaping social interactions and the development of children in orphanage environments. The primary focus of this research is to elucidate the role of design in fostering social solidarity and influencing interactions among residents, as well as the growth of children in the orphanage. The increasing number of orphaned children serves as a catalyst in emphasizing the importance of design that can accommodate holistic well-being. The concept of solidarity, according to Emile Durkheim, underscores the need for attention to interior design as a primary driver of social interaction. Through research methods involving literature analysis and case studies, it is evident how the implementation of interior design contributes to enhancing interactions among children. The results indicate that carefully chosen interior design elements, such as bunk beds in sleeping areas, interactive study spaces, and modular dining areas, significantly contribute to strengthening social relationships among orphanage residents. The implications of these findings affirm that responsive design plays a crucial role in enhancing social solidarity among children in need of special attention. In conclusion, well planned interior design holds great potential in creating an environment that supports positive growth and close social interactions within the orphanage.

Keywords: Children, interior design, orphanage, solidarity

1.   PREFACE

According to UNICEF's 2021 report, more than 140 million children are orphaned due to the loss of one or both parents. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has had serious impacts on social and economic conditions, increasing risks of educational inequality, malnutrition, and psychosocial effects. Based on data from the Ministry of Social Affairs taken from the Integrated Social Welfare Data Dashboard (DTKS) SIKS-NG as of December 15, 2020, the number of orphaned children in Indonesia alone has reached 67,368. Orphanages play a crucial role in society by providing protection and care for orphaned, abandoned, or marginalized children (UNICEF, 2022).

The problem of poverty in Indonesia in 2019 according to the Central Statistics Agency has reached 25.14 million people out of a total population of 270 million, with this increasing number of neglected children in Indonesia due to economic problems experienced by their parents (Savitri et al., 2020). Orphanages are not just places of physical protection but also serve as foundations for education, mental health, and social development for children. They are important institutions that offer shelter and care for children in need or requiring special protection. By preserving and strengthening the role of orphanages through redesign, we can provide an environment that supports the holistic development of children, addresses the real challenges they face, and bridges gaps that can positively impact the future generations (Zumroh, 2020).

Developmental issues commonly encountered by children living in institutional settings stem from environments that lack supportive experiences for normal brain development. Children adapting to new environments often experience uncertainty, confusion, anxiety, and depression, which can negatively impact their learning if left unaddressed. Therefore, it is important to consider how the design of orphanages can help children overcome their feelings of sadness and grief. Sensory-stimulating, multisensory designs, and positive distractions can assist orphaned children in overcoming their psychological issues and create an environment that supports their overall development (Helles, 2021).

While orphanages often provide for the basic needs of children, they may sometimes lack the essential sense of familial warmth crucial for social and emotional development. This can leave children residing in orphanages feeling estranged and lacking solidarity within their group. However, orphanages should not only be a place of refuge but also a new home and family for them. They should be environments that embrace familial values, foster unity, and ultimately build solidarity among the new family members formed within them. Interior design that is responsive to these needs is very much needed. Interior design is related to intervention, adaptation and changes to existing conditions, to find new functions and programs that can be added to existing rooms (Atmodiwirjo & Yatmo, 2022).

The concept of solidarity, as advocated by Emile Durkheim, is a sense of unity and interdependence among members of society. This includes caring for one another, assisting each other, and feeling part of a supportive community.

Achieving this requires the interior design of orphanages to play a crucial role. Through thoughtful design, we can create an atmosphere conducive to positive social interaction and establish the identity of the orphanage as a true home for these children. Design by observing user behavior will increase the effectiveness of achieving design goals (Indriyati, 2020).

In the interior design of orphanages, interior design plays a significant role in creating atmosphere, influencing social interaction, and shaping the identity of a space. The quality of interior design in orphanages can be a key factor in creating an environment that supports children's growth, strengthens bonds among residents, and fosters solidarity among them. It is important to pay attention to comfortable and stimulating private spaces as well as play areas that support social interaction and children's development.

2.   RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the method employed is a qualitative approach utilizing the two-stage design method proposed by William M. Pena, known as programming (analysis) and schematic design (synthesis). According to Pena & Parshall (2012), the overall design process consists of two stages, namely analysis and synthesis. In the analysis stage, issues within the design are divided and identified. During synthesis, these issues are brought together, and solutions are sought. In the programming stage, the author analyzes what problems need to be considered in the design process.

Once these problems are identified, the process moves on to the schematic design stage, which involves finding solutions to the identified issues. This design method incorporates in-depth literature review to understand relevant theories and concepts of interior design concerning the environment of children in orphanages. The research is also conducted through case studies, allowing direct observation of the implementation of interior design and its impact on the social

interactions of children. This is important because those who will use these facilities are children living in orphanages (Norman, 2013). Listening to children and the importance of children's participation when designing these facilities will be needed to determine what things are important to pay attention to in the interior design (Dudek, 2018).

A qualitative approach is utilized to analyze the experiences, perspectives, and interactions of children within the specifically designed environment. By combining these various approaches, the research aims to uncover the relationship between interior design and the social interactions of children in orphanages.

3.   RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Emile Durkheim, widely regarded as one of the founding figures in sociology, distinguished between two fundamental types of social solidarity: mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. Mechanical solidarity thrives in simpler societies characterized by shared tasks and lifestyles, fostering a deep-seated interdependence among individuals.

Conversely, organic solidarity emerges in more complex, modern societies where a diversity of functions necessitates interdependence in meeting various needs. Durkheim's classification provides a nuanced understanding of how social cohesion operates within different societal contexts, shedding light on the evolving nature of human connections as societies progress.

Figure 1
Bedroom Layout

Figure 2
Implementation in Interior Design Bedroom

According to the Children Center Design Guide, these sleeping areas can offer many activity opportunities and benefits. Attics should always be designed or positioned with children's safety in mind (U.S. General Services Administration, 2003). The incorporation of bunk beds into bedroom design within the orphanage serves as a deliberate strategy to enhance mechanical

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solidarity among the residents. Beyond being a mere functional choice for sleeping arrangements, this concept aims to create an environment that fosters close relationships, emotional bonds, and cooperation among the children. The utilization of bunk beds symbolizes the importance placed on cooperation and togetherness in the daily lives of the orphanage's young inhabitants.

The bedroom, envisioned as more than just a sleeping area, becomes a dynamic space where shared activities and daily interactions unfold. The intentional arrangement of bunk beds not only optimizes the use of space but also encourages social engagement among the children. The layout is thoughtfully designed to create situations conducive to social interaction, promoting a sense of community and interpersonal connection.

Moreover, the inclusion of a small lounge area or communal space within the bedroom provides a dedicated spot for the children to gather, interact, and further strengthen their social relationships. This multifunctional space transcends its primary purpose, transforming the bedroom into a hub of social activity where children can engage in shared experiences, discussions, and collaborative endeavors.

In essence, the strategic use of bunk beds in the bedroom design goes beyond mere practical considerations; it is a thoughtful approach to shaping the social dynamics within the orphanage. By emphasizing the importance of cooperation and communal living, this design choice contributes to the holistic development of the children, creating an environment that nurtures not only restful sleep but also the formation of enduring bonds among them.

Figure 3
Study Room Design

Figure 4
Study Room Design

The interactive and flexible design of the study room within the orphanage is thoughtfully crafted, integrating various elements such as a climbing wall, chalkboard wall, and adjustable desks and chairs. This comprehensive design approach serves a dual purpose: to facilitate collaboration and social engagement among the children and to foster an environment that actively encourages their participation in the learning process.

Central to this concept is the incorporation of interactive furniture, exemplified by the climbing wall, which not only provides avenues for physical activity but also instills a spirit of collaboration as children work together to overcome challenges. Simultaneously, the chalkboard wall acts as a dynamic platform for sharing ideas, sparking interactions among the children, and promoting a collaborative learning atmosphere.

Furthermore, the study room is intentionally designed with a focus on the concept of mutual teaching, aligning with Durkheim's principles of social solidarity. Through collaborative learning activities, children are provided with opportunities to share knowledge, inspire one another, and offer support. This environment cultivates a sense of positive dependence among them, with collaboration and mutual assistance emerging as central principles in the overall learning process.

In essence, the study room serves not just as a space for academic pursuits but as a dynamic arena where the principles of collaboration, social engagement, and mutual dependence are actively encouraged and embedded in the learning experiences of the children within the orphanage.

Figure 5
Dining Area Layout

This chosen dining room design, centered around a circular arrangement of modular tables, is a deliberate effort to cultivate an environment that goes beyond mere dining—it seeks to foster an atmosphere that supports cooperation and closeness among the residents of the orphanage. This design decision is not only a reflection of the significance placed on exchange, collaboration, and resource-sharing but also an embodiment of core values intrinsic to social solidarity.

Figure 6
Dining Area Design

The centralized and circular layout of the dining tables serves as a focal point, deliberately encouraging open conversation, enhancing interaction among children, and mitigating feelings of alienation. This dining area is envisioned as more than just a space for meals; it transforms into a social hub where children can actively strengthen their social bonds, experience a sense of equality, and extend mutual assistance in an open and friendly atmosphere.

Furthermore, the intentional selection of furniture, including modular dining tables and movable chairs, adds an extra layer of flexibility to the dining space. This strategic choice not only addresses practical considerations but also transforms the dining area into a dynamic space where children can interact more closely while sharing meals. The modular arrangement not only promotes collaboration but also provides an avenue for mutual support among the residents.

In essence, this dining room concept transcends traditional notions of a meal space; it is designed to be a catalyst for social solidarity, creating an environment that not only supports cooperation but also significantly strengthens interpersonal relationships among the residents of the orphanage.

The strategic implementation of interior design, with a deliberate focus on flexibility, social interaction, and collaboration, is geared towards fortifying the social bonds among the children residing at Rumah Hati Suci Orphanage. Through careful consideration of individual needs and the promotion of positive interactions within the designed spaces, there is a collective aspiration for fostering an even stronger sense of solidarity among them. This intentional approach seeks to create an environment that not only accommodates their diverse needs but also actively encourages meaningful interactions, ultimately contributing to the nurturing of a supportive and cohesive community within the orphanage.

4.   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the comprehensive research conducted, it can be conclusively affirmed that interior design plays a pivotal and irreplaceable role in shaping social interactions and fostering the development of children residing in orphanages. Notably, the incorporation of elements such as bunk beds in bedrooms, interactive study spaces, and modular dining areas has demonstrated its efficacy in significantly strengthening the social bonds among the residents of the orphanage.

The far-reaching implications of these findings emphasize the critical importance of directing special attention to interior design to actively support the psychosocial development of children

in orphanages. The call for responsive and interactive designs, harmonized with the fundamental principles of social solidarity, holds immense potential for the augmentation of social connections among the children. Hence, the careful consideration of suitable interior design emerges as a powerful tool in creating an environment that not only facilitates positive developmental outcomes but also encourages closer social engagement for children who require special attention in orphanages.

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