



*Research Paper*

## Child Adoption Practices in Families: A Case Study of Social Dynamics and Social Meanings

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#### Abstract

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The practice of child adoption within families is a social phenomenon that frequently occurs in society. In many cases, the adoption process takes place informally within the extended family environment. This study aims to understand the practice of child adoption in families by highlighting the dynamics of social interaction and the social meanings formed in relationships among family members. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection techniques were conducted through interviews and observations with informants involved in the practice of child adoption within the family. The analysis of this study uses the symbolic interactionism perspective of Mead to understand the dynamics of social interaction within the family. The results show that the practice of adoption within families is often understood as a form of solidarity and support among relatives. In addition, this practice also forms various social meanings regarding family relationships, caregiving responsibilities, and the role of adoptive parents in the child's life. Therefore, the practice of adoption within families is not only related to aspects of caregiving but also reflects the dynamics of social relationships within the family environment.

**Keywords:** Child Adoption; Family; Social Dynamics; Social Meaning; Case Study

### 1. Introduction

Child adoption is one of the social phenomena that occurs in community life. This practice is related to efforts to provide care and protection for children through the formation of new family relationships socially. In the legal context in Indonesia, child adoption has been regulated in the



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Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 54 of 2007 concerning the Implementation of Child Adoption, which explains that child adoption is carried out to ensure the best interests of the child [3].

In social life, the practice of adoption is not always carried out by families who do not have biological children. Some families who already have biological children also adopt children from within their extended family or close relatives. This phenomenon indicates that the practice of adoption is not only related to the need to have children but is also associated with kinship relations and social dynamics within the family [9].

The family is the basic social unit in society that plays an important role in the process of individual socialization. Through the family, individuals learn values, norms, and social roles that apply in society [4], [5], [16], [17], [20]. In the sociological perspective, the family is also understood as a social system that plays a role in maintaining the stability of relationships among family members [15].

In child development, the family environment plays an important role in the formation of personality and the social development of children [18]. Therefore, changes in family structure, including those resulting from the practice of child adoption, may influence patterns of relationships and social interactions within the family. From a sociological perspective, social relationships within the family are formed through continuous social interactions among individuals. These interactions enable individuals to build an understanding of their roles and social relationships within their groups [6], [13]. Thus, the practice of child adoption is not only related to caregiving aspects but also to the formation of social meanings regarding family relationships.

Previous studies show that the practice of child adoption can influence the dynamics of relationships between biological children, adopted children, and adoptive parents within the family. Social interactions that occur in everyday life can form emotional bonds and a sense of togetherness among family members [7], [10]. In addition, communication patterns within the family also play an important role in shaping relationships among family members after the adoption practice takes place. Good communication patterns can help build harmonious relationships between biological children and adopted children [8]. In the sociological context, social relationships within the family are also influenced by social construction processes that occur through everyday interactions among individuals in society [12]. Therefore, the practice of child adoption within families can be understood as part of the social dynamics that develop within family relationships. Based on this background, this study aims to understand the practice of child adoption carried out within the family environment as well as the dynamics of social relationships that are formed after the adoption practice takes place.

## 2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach to understand the social phenomenon related to the practice of child adoption within families. A qualitative approach is used to explore the experiences, perspectives, and meanings held by informants regarding the social phenomenon being studied [1]. The method used in this research is a case study. The case study method allows researchers to understand social phenomena in depth within a particular context [1]. The informants in this study consist of family members involved in the practice of child adoption, including adoptive parents and adopted children. Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique based on their involvement in the practice of child adoption within the family.

Data collection techniques in this study were conducted through interviews and observations. Interviews were conducted with informants involved in the practice of child adoption within the family, while observations were carried out to understand the social interactions that occur in everyday life. The data analysis in this study refers to the qualitative data analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing [2].

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### Presenting the Results

The results of the study show that the practice of child adoption in the studied family has taken place within the family environment and has become part of the family's customary practices. The adopted children generally come from close relatives, allowing kinship relationships to remain maintained. The adoption process usually occurs through agreements among family members. After the process takes place, the adopted child then lives with the adoptive parents and is raised within the same family environment as the biological children. In everyday life, the adopted child carries out various activities together with other family members. They live in the same household, participate in family activities, and receive care from the adoptive parents similar to that given to biological children.

The relationship between biological children and adopted children is formed through interactions that occur in daily life. The children play together, participate in family activities, and interact in various activities within the home environment. In addition, interactions between adopted children and other family members also take place in various family activities such as eating together, household activities, and social activities involving all family members. The presentation of the research findings is carried out descriptively to illustrate the field findings systematically so that the patterns of relationships formed within the family can be understood more clearly [2].

#### Social Dynamics in Child Adoption Practices

Based on the research findings that have been presented, the practice of child adoption within the family can be understood as part of the social dynamics within the family. The relationships between biological children, adopted children, and adoptive parents are formed through social interactions that occur in everyday life. In the perspective of modern sociology, social interactions within the family are also influenced by broader social structures in society [14]. In addition, from the perspective of symbolic interactionism, Mead explains that individuals understand their roles and positions within social groups through continuous processes of social interaction [6]. Through these interactions, individuals construct an understanding of themselves as well as their social relationships with others.

Blumer explains that social meanings are formed through processes of social interaction among individuals in everyday life [13]. In the context of this study, meanings related to family relationships are formed through interactions that occur between biological children, adopted children, and adoptive parents. The interactions that occur between biological children and adopted children show the process of social meaning formation as explained in Mead's symbolic interactionism theory, in which individuals understand their roles through interactions with others [6].

In addition, social construction within family life is also formed through social experiences experienced by individuals in everyday life. Berger and Luckmann explain that social reality is constructed through continuous social interaction processes within society [12]. In family life, these social interactions are reflected in various shared activities carried out by family members.

Daily activities such as playing together, eating together, and other family activities can strengthen emotional relationships among family members [8].

The practice of child adoption is also related to efforts to ensure child protection and welfare, as emphasized by various international institutions that highlight the importance of a safe family environment for children's development [19]. Research conducted by Amalia, Kudus, and Lindawati shows that social factors play a role in shaping individual choices and actions in social life [11]. Thus, the practice of child adoption within families is not only related to aspects of caregiving but also reflects the dynamics of social relationships that develop through everyday interactions among family members.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This study shows that the practice of child adoption within the studied family is not only carried out by families who do not have children but also by families who already have biological children. This practice has developed into a family habit and is carried out by adopting children from close relatives. The results of the study also show that after the adoption practice takes place, a dynamic pattern of social relationships emerges between biological children, adopted children, and adoptive parents in everyday life. The interactions that occur within the family form relationships that gradually develop through shared activities and communication within the family environment. Future research is expected to examine the practice of child adoption within a broader social context and involve more informants in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of family dynamics in the practice of child adoption.

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#### **Authors' contributions and responsibilities**

Yeni Tri Susanti: conceptualization, methodology, writing – original draft, supervision.  
Yustika Irfani Lindawati: supervision, writing – review & editing.

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#### **Availability of data and materials**

All data are available from the authors.

#### **Competing interests**

The authors declare no competing interest.

#### **Additional information**

No additional information from the authors.

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