



Social support in the formation of street children's identity

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ABSTRACT

Background: Street children face significant challenges in identity formation due to economic pressures, social stigma, and lack of access to self-exploration. This study aims to describe social support in identity formation among eight street children in Penjaringan Village, North Jakarta, using descriptive qualitative methods through interviews and observations. **Findings:** This study consistently shows that social support helps adolescents and young adults overcome developmental crises and challenges. Therefore, it is important to understand how the type of support they receive on the streets shapes their current identity status. **Methods:** This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to describe in depth the sources and forms of social support received in identity formation among street children in Penjaringan Village, North Jakarta. **Conclusion:** The results show that most street children are in a state of identity moratorium or identity confusion due to difficulties in exploring roles and making commitments. Some informants exhibited characteristics of identity coercion and identity achievement in certain aspects. Social support has been shown to be important in identity formation. Comprehensive and effective support from various sources and forms facilitates more focused role exploration and clearer identity commitments. However, the nature and perception of support are also crucial. **Novelty/Originality of this article:** Real, personalized support helps adolescents better navigate identity crises, leading to a productive identity moratorium or even identity achievement. Research concludes that social support plays a role in helping street youth navigate the complexities of identity formation.

KEYWORDS: identity formation; social support; street children; teenagers.

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a striking developmental stage and a unique world between childhood and adulthood (Erikson, 1968). During this period, adolescents aged 12 to 18 (Hurlock, 2011) experience numerous changes in physical, psychological, cognitive, social, and even moral aspects (Santrock, 2010). The search for identity is a developmental task that adolescents must overcome. According to Erikson (1968), adolescents face a stage of identity crisis and role confusion, where they attempt to integrate various experiences, values, and roles into a coherent identity. This crucial process is ideally supported by a psychosocial moratorium, a period of exploration that allows adolescents the freedom to try out various roles without the pressure of immediate commitment (Erikson, 1968).

Adolescents who successfully navigate an identity crisis are generally able to establish a consistent and stable identity, demonstrate a clear sense of self, have a definite direction in life, and feel confident about their goals and position in society (Erikson, 1968). To achieve this, they require an environment that facilitates safe exploration, opportunities for

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experimentation, and effective guidance from adults (Erikson, 1968). Emotional, instrumental, and informational support from family, education, and the community are crucial (Santrock, 2014). Conversely, failure at this stage can lead to identity uncertainty, difficulty defining life goals, susceptibility to peer influence, or even social isolation (Erikson, 1968). This occurs due to limited exploration, inadequate guidance, or an uncondusive environment.

Unfortunately, the ideal conditions for identity development are at odds with the reality of street children. They are often trapped in environments that fundamentally limit the process of healthy exploration and identity formation (Marni, 2020). Street children are defined as children who spend most of their time earning a living or wandering the streets and public places (Utami et al., 2020). The phenomenon of street children in Indonesia shows alarming numbers, with the number increasing from 36,000 in 2017 to 232,829 according to data from the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs in 2022. The main driving factors forcing these children to live on the streets include extreme poverty, family conflict, neglect, physical and psychological violence, and abandonment (Kaiser, 2020). Street children often do not receive basic needs for identity development, such as a proper education (Sovitriana & Arsita, 2019), a safe environment, and positive adult guidance (Kaiser, 2020). As a result, they are vulnerable to psychosocial development disorders, adopting a street child group identity, and difficulty forming an independent and positive identity due to a lack of structured social support (Utami et al., 2020; Marni, 2020). They also face social stigma and limited access to resources, which hinder the exploration and integration of healthy values, leading to prolonged role confusion (Doob, 2013).

In the context of street children, although they may lack the support of their nuclear families, they often form peer groups or non-blood-related street families as a means of adapting to survive in harsh environments. Such peer-based support systems function as alternative social structures that help adolescents cope with marginalization and insecurity (Erikson, 1968; Tyler & Melander, 2015). This support is essential for their survival, but the identities formed in these environments are often adaptive to emergencies and may not reflect their healthy developmental potential. These identities can involve strong survivalist attitudes, but they can also lead to distrust of adults and engagement in high-risk behaviors (Febriani, 2020; Kidd & Shahar, 2008). While these identities serve as psychological defense mechanisms, they may limit broader role exploration and hinder the integration of complex and positive identities necessary for the transition to adulthood (Marcia, 1966; Utami et al., 2020).

For adolescents from low-income families, including street children, social support is an important foundation for building a stable self-identity and avoiding role confusion that hinders future development (Santrock, 2014). Social support includes motivation, guidance, and economic assistance (Heaney & Israel, 2008), and can come from family, community, or social organizations. Research consistently shows that social support helps adolescents and young adults cope with developmental crises and challenges (Santrock, 2014; Chu et al., 2010; Taylor, 2011). Therefore, it is important to understand how the type of support they receive on the street shapes their current identity status.

2. Methods

2.1 Research approach

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach (Bryman, 2012; Neuman, 2014) to describe in depth the sources and forms of social support received in the formation of the identity of adolescents who become street children in the Penjaringan Subdistrict area, North Jakarta. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because this study seeks to understand the experiences, interactions, and social realities faced by street children in their daily lives. Through this approach, the researcher was able to explore participants' perspectives and meanings related to the social support they receive in the process of identity formation.

2.2 Data collection and research location

Data were collected through in-depth interviews with adolescents who become street children, their parents, and related institutions, as well as participant observation in the Penjaringan Subdistrict area, North Jakarta. The research was conducted in three specific locations, namely RW 12 Penjaringan, which is the location of Institution X studio; the red light intersection of Jl. Pluit Raya 1, Jl. Pluit Selatan Raya, and Jl. Pluit Timur Raya, which are places where street children conduct their activities; and the residential area next to SDN Penjaringan 03, which is the average residence of the informants.

2.3 Informants and sampling technique

Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique (Neuman, 2014) with the criteria of adolescents who become street children aged 12 to 18 years. This technique was chosen because it enables the researcher to obtain participants who have relevant experiences and characteristics related to the research objectives. In addition, purposive sampling allows for a more in-depth exploration of the social conditions and identity formation experienced by street children.

2.4 Data analysis and validity

Qualitative data analysis was conducted systematically through sorting, classification, and coding (open, axial, and selective coding) to organize and test data patterns (Neuman, 2014). To ensure data quality and validity, this study applied method triangulation (Neuman, 2014) by comparing the results of observations and interviews, as well as statements from three data sources, namely street children informants, parents, and Institution X.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (identity vs role confusion)

Erikson (1968) proposed that the primary motivation in human development is social, reflecting the desire to connect with others. This development is divided into eight stages throughout life, each with a unique psychosocial crisis that must be resolved. These crises are turning points marked by increased individual vulnerability and potential, are interpersonal or social in nature, and complement the individual's ability to cope with their environment (Paul, 2023). The fifth stage in Erikson's (1968) developmental stages is identity and role confusion, which occurs between the ages of 10 and 20. During this time, adolescents are faced with the challenge of discovering who they are, who they want to be, and what direction they want to take in life, as well as how they are perceived by others compared to their own feelings. Erikson (in Santrock, 2014) calls this period the psychosocial moratorium, a transition from childhood dependence to adult independence, during which adolescents experiment with various roles without the pressure of immediate commitment. Success in this stage depends heavily on appropriate adult guidance and adequate social support (Cooper, 2011 in Santrock, 2014). Successful adolescents emerge with a new sense of self, self-confidence, and acceptance by society. Conversely, adolescents who fail to resolve their identity crisis will experience identity confusion, withdrawal, and isolation from peers and family (Santrock, 2014).

James Marcia (in Santrock, 2014) categorizes four identity statuses based on the extent to which adolescents experience crisis and commitment. Crisis is defined as the period when adolescents explore alternative identities. Commitment is defined as the period in which adolescents demonstrate personal investment in what they will do (Erikson, 1968). The four identity statuses are: Identity Diffusion: Adolescents have not experienced a crisis or exploration of alternative identities and have not made any commitments. They appear

apathetic, indifferent, or confused about the future (Santrock, 2014). Identity Foreclosure: Adolescents have made commitments without a significant period of exploration or crisis, often inherited from authority figures or family traditions (Santrock, 2014). Their behavior tends to be rigid, conventional, and highly dependent on the approval of others (Erikson, 1968). Identity Moratorium: Adolescents are in the midst of an identity crisis, actively exploring alternatives, but have not yet made a clear commitment (Santrock, 2014). Identity Achievement: Adolescents have experienced a period of identity crisis through active and in-depth exploration and have made a commitment to their future. Individuals in this state tend to be more psychologically healthy, have higher self-esteem, and are purposeful.

3.2 Social support

Social support is defined as various forms of information, advice, assistance, or actions given verbally or nonverbally based on a close relationship, which provide emotional benefits and a sense of being cared for and appreciated for the recipient (Gotlieb, 1983 in Smet, 1994). This support includes feelings of being loved, respected, and included in a network of communication and reciprocal obligations (King, 2012). In addition to helping individuals manage stress, social support also plays a role in the process of self-acceptance and self-esteem (Rook, 1985 in Smet, 1994). Heaney & Israel (2008) divide social support into four forms, namely, emotional support, the ability to listen to complaints to release emotions and feel loved; instrumental support, supporting means such as books or transportation costs; informational support, helping to overcome problems with insight, advice, and guidance; and affirmative support, feedback and affirmations that increase self-esteem. Sheridan & Radmacher (1992) also mention five forms of social support, namely, emotional support, empathy, affection, concern from those closest to them; Appreciative support, approval of ideas that boosts self-confidence; informational support, in the form of advice, suggestions, and feedback; instrumental support, direct assistance in the form of materials, objects, or services; and network support, the feeling of belonging to a group that reduces anxiety.

Social support can come from various sources. Sarafino & Smith (2017) suggest that family, partners, friends, coworkers, and the community are primary sources of social support. Uchino (2014) adds that this support can come from family members such as partners, parents, and siblings, as well as from friends, colleagues, superiors, social communities, and even professional services such as therapists or counselors. Purwantoro (2017) categorizes sources of social support into family, peers, and teachers. Social support depends heavily on the source, with long-term support more often provided by family members, while friends and the surrounding community tend to provide temporary or short-term support. For street children, these sources of support are often limited and different from those of typical adolescents, but they often form peer networks that serve as surrogate families for survival.

3.3 Street children

A child is someone who is not yet 18 years old, including children who are still in the womb (Law No. 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection). Street children are a group of children who spend most of their time living on the streets, either to earn a living or simply wandering in public places without the supervision of responsible adults. Adolescents in this study follow the definition of Hurlock (2011), where adolescents are individuals aged 12 to 18 years. Amnesty International (in UNICEF, 2011) divides street children into three main categories, namely: Children on the street, namely children who work on the streets to help the family economy but still have close relationships with their parents and return home. Children of the street, children who are more intensely involved in street life to meet economic and social needs, who can have strained or broken relationships with their families, and are vulnerable to abuse. Children from families of the street, children who grow up and live permanently with their families on the streets, such as under bridges or in

informal settlements, so they become accustomed to the harsh risks of street life from an early age.

3.4 Research result

This research was conducted in Penjaringan Village, North Jakarta. The research location focused on three main areas directly related to the activities of street children. First, RW 12 Penjaringan, which is the location of the X Institute studio and a densely populated settlement including informal settlements under the toll road flyover with zinc and plywood walls, where several informants live. Second, the red light intersections of Jl. Pluit Raya 1, Jl. Pluit Selatan Raya, and Jl. Pluit Timur Raya, are the main points of livelihood activities for most informants, such as newspaper sellers, traveling coffee vendors, and silver people. Observations show that activities start from morning until night with varying incomes such as newspaper sellers earning an average of IDR. 50,000 per day and silver people IDR. 150,000-IDR. 300,000 per day. Third, the residential area next to SDN Penjaringan 03 or also known as the Muara Baru area, where most informants live. This area features a combination of brick houses and buildings made of plywood and corrugated iron, some even floating due to its location on the Pluit spillway. Rent for a single room in this area is quite high, around IDR. 400,000 to IDR. 600,000, but basic amenities like bathrooms or kitchens are often lacking. The diverse environmental conditions, ranging from densely populated and informal settlements to busy intersections, provide important context for the lives and interactions of the informants. The following are brief profiles of eight teenage informants who became street children, as reflected in the research findings, as outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Informants based on street children category

Informant identity	Gender	Age	Work	Living together	Education status
<i>Children on the street</i>					
AL	Female	13	Newspaper seller	Family	School
ZK	Male	15	Busker	Family	School
AQ	Female	14	Newspaper seller	Family	School
DU	Male	15	Busker	Family	School
<i>Children of the Street</i>					
ER	Male	15	Silver man	Friend	No school
ML	Female	17	Newspaper seller	Husband	No school
AC	Male	17	Silver man	Wife	No school
<i>Children from families the Street</i>					
RA	Female	13	Scavenger	Family	School

Street children in this study received social support from various sources. Family was the primary source for children on the street, such as AL, ZK, AQ, and DU. One informant stated, "My parents said, 'Go to school first, then we'll find a way.'" (AQ, May 14, 2025). In the children of the street category, ML and AC still received family support, although ER did not receive such support because they lived separately. This is in line with the statement from informant ML, "My family's support, sis... From my late brother, sis." (ML, May 19, 2025). An interesting finding was that the support ML received from his late mother and older brother demonstrated the phenomenon of internalization of his values. The advice given during his lifetime has been implemented by ML and has become part of his internal motivation. This shows that social support does not always have to be in the form of ongoing physical interactions, but can be a legacy of values and experiences that have a positive influence on the formation of an individual's identity. RA, a member of the children from families on the street category, also felt a significant sense of support from her mother. Peers also played a significant role as a source of support, received by informants from all categories, including AL, ZK, AQ, DU, RA, ML, and AC. This is in line with ZK's statement, "If you get support or help from friends, older siblings, or other people, you feel better, like

someone is listening." (ZK, May 16, 2025). Teachers were a source of support for AL and AQ, especially in terms of educational information. AQ said, "Teachers often give me information about scholarships, books, and uniforms, sis." (AQ, May 14, 2025). Spouses provided significant support for ML and AC. AC stated, "My wife's support makes me confident." (AC, May 19, 2025). The surrounding community, including security guards and individuals on the street, also provided support to AL, ZK, ER, and AC. This aligns with ER's statement, "Well, I mostly get it from here, sis. Sometimes people even give me food." (ER, May 13, 2025). Finally, social institutions or organizations are an important source of support for DU and RA, especially in the context of education. DU said, "Well, it's mostly from institution X, sis. The older siblings give me guidance and encouragement, sis." (DU, May 16, 2025).

The forms of support received varied widely. Emotional support, which provides a sense of comfort and appreciation, was widely received by informants from family, friends, teachers, partners, the community, and institutions. Appreciative or affirmative support, which includes approval and appreciation, was evident in praise from friends, teachers, and family, as well as a sense of coolness felt by informants. Informational support, which includes advice and guidance for overcoming problems, was provided by teachers, older siblings, their deceased mother, security guards, vendors, the community, and institutions. Meanwhile, instrumental support comes in the form of direct assistance such as food, money, uniforms, books, and study spaces, received from neighbors, the community, teachers, and institutions. Finally, network support, which creates a sense of belonging through social interaction and entertainment, is felt by most informants from playmates, studios, and interactions in the work or residential environment. The following are the sources and forms of social support received by informants, as outlined in Table 2 below.

Tabel 2. Sources and forms of social support received by informants

Informant	Sources and forms of social support
<i>Category children on the street</i>	
AL	Receiving support from family, friends, teachers, and the community. Forms of support include emotional, appreciation or affirmative, informational, instrumental, and networking.
ZK	Supported by family, friends, and sometimes the community. The forms of support received are emotional, appreciation or affirmative, informational, and networking.
AQ	Receive support from family, playmates, and teachers. Forms of support include emotional, appreciation, informational, and instrumental.
DU	Support comes from family, friends, and institutions. The forms of support received include emotional, appreciation, informational, instrumental, and networking.
<i>Category children of the street</i>	
ER	The source of her support is the community. The forms of support she receives include emotional, esteem, informational, and instrumental.
ML	Receive support from family, partners, and the community. The forms of support are emotional, esteem, informational, and networking.
AC	Support from family, coworkers, partners, and the surrounding community. Forms of support received include emotional, esteem, informational, instrumental, and networking.
<i>Category children from families of the street</i>	
RA	Sources of support include family, friends, the surrounding community, and institutions. The forms of support she receives are emotional, esteem, informational, instrumental, and networking.

Street children face significant obstacles in role exploration and identity formation, with research showing varying identity statuses. For example, AL actively explores his role as a student and newspaper seller, takes pride in his independence, and has a strong commitment to education and a medical dream that is still in the developmental stage. This is in line with AL's statement regarding his dream, "But I don't know what kind of doctor I want to be yet, sis," (AL, May 14, 2025). In contrast, ZK shows unclear role exploration,

struggling between school and the family's economic needs, and has a vague future direction and is easily influenced by negative views from others. This is in line with ZK's statement, "Um, I'm confused... I want to go to school, but if I don't help my parents, they will have a hard time too." (ZK, May 16, 2025). Informant AQ shows striking role exploration, "What am I doing? I'm just looking for money, so I help my parents, and besides, I want to be alone, why aren't my parents forcing me to?" (AQ, May 14, 2025). AQ redefined his role as a newspaper seller from a forced one to a life choice, and had a strong ambition to become a teacher with a commitment to education. In contrast, DU had very limited role exploration and an unclear future direction, with his aspirations of becoming a police officer turning into doubt after a negative experience. This aligns with DU's statement, "What should I do? I wanted to be a police officer, it's cool, but now I'm arrested, bro" (DU, May 16, 2025).

Table 3. Formation of informant identity status

Informant	Role exploration	Role commitment	Identity status
<i>Category children on the street</i>			
AL	Demonstrates active efforts in exploration, integrating roles, and having aspirations for the future of the doctor.	Strong commitment to educational path, but not yet finalized on a specific vocational identity.	Identity moratorium
ZK	Limited exploration, confused between school and work, the workshop's ambitions are still vague.	There is no clear strong commitment to a future path.	Identity confusion
AQ	A significant exploration from coercion to self-choice, having a clear ambition to become a teacher.	Strong commitment to education and teacher ideals, but still in progress.	Identity moratorium
DU	Exploration is very limited, future hopes are minimal, ideals are lost due to negative experiences.	There is no clear commitment to a future identity path.	Identity confusion
<i>Category children of the street</i>			
ER	Limited exploration, the role of the silver humans is out of necessity, the ideals of the army are not yet clear in detail.	The desire to continue school/work is uncertain, doubts hinder strong commitment.	Identity confusion
ML	Limited exploration, the role of selling newspapers out of necessity.	Strong commitment to the broiler business which is a heritage skill.	Identity imposition
AC	Her exploration is driven by her desire for her family's future, self-reflection on her role in life, and a strong desire to become a lawyer. She is also actively pursuing Package B education and plans to pursue Package C.	A very strong commitment to the ideals of a lawyer. Demonstrated by concrete actions, continuing education in Package B and ambitions to pursue Package C.	Identity achievement
<i>Category children from families of the street</i>			
RA	Exploring roles amidst family responsibilities, having specific aspirations to become a doctor, driven by positive motivation.	Strong commitment to the ideals of a doctor and continuing education, personal investment and high certainty in the path that is believed.	Identity moratorium

Informant ER appeared severely restricted in his role exploration, with his job as a silver man being more of a necessity, with few other options. ER said, "Well, what can I do, bro? I can't do anything else... I still want to go to school, but I don't know if I can actually

continue my education or not." (ER, May 13, 2025) Although he expressed his desire to join the military and continue his education, his commitment was uncertain, and he faced practical obstacles such as not having an ID card for formal employment. He was still searching for direction amidst extremely limited options. Informant ML demonstrated a shift in role exploration from helping her older sibling to selling newspapers as a personal life choice, even though this choice was rooted in circumstances and inherited skills from her family. She exhibited strong self-acceptance and pride in her work. She also had a clear goal of running her own chicken business: "Yes, that's right, I could sell chickens..." (ML, May 19, 2025). This demonstrated a strong commitment to this goal, although it hadn't gone through a period of in-depth exploration of alternatives.

Informant AC demonstrated role exploration driven by a strong desire for a better future for her family, accompanied by deep self-reflection on her role on the street. She had a very strong and focused goal of becoming a lawyer, clearly motivated by helping others. Her commitment to this goal was not only expressed but also demonstrated through concrete actions, such as continuing her formal education through the Package B program and planning for Package C: "Okay, after that, I took the Package B class, now I'm already in Package B. If I have the money, I'll take Package C too." (AC, May 19, 2025). This demonstrates his commitment to his dream of becoming a lawyer. Meanwhile, RA explores his role amidst family responsibilities as a student and scavenger, with a strong desire to become a doctor to care for his mother. He demonstrates self-acceptance and pride despite facing social stigma and bullying. He maintains a strong commitment to his dream of becoming a doctor and continues his education, demonstrating significant personal investment in his future goals. RA stated, "I want to be a doctor so I can take care of my mother when she's sick." (RA, May 14, 2025). The following is the formation of the informant's identity status, as outlined in Table 3 above.

3.5 Discussion

Identity formation is a crucial developmental task during adolescence, particularly in the stage of Identity versus Role Confusion described by Erikson (1968). For street children, this process becomes more complex because social support functions not only as a means of survival but also as an important factor in shaping adolescents' capacity to explore roles and develop identity commitments (Marcia, 1966; Santrock, 2014). Social support refers to various forms of information, advice, assistance, or actions provided verbally or nonverbally through close interpersonal relationships, which create feelings of being cared for, valued, and emotionally supported (Gotlieb, 1983, as cited in Smet, 1994). Previous studies have shown that supportive social relationships contribute significantly to adolescent resilience, self-development, and psychological adjustment (Uchino, 2014). Various sources of social support, including family, peers, partners, teachers, surrounding communities, and institutions (Sarafino & Smith, 2017; Uchino, 2014; Purwantoro, 2017), may influence adolescents' identity status, such as identity confusion, foreclosure, moratorium, or identity achievement (Marcia, 1966; Santrock, 2014).

Informants like AL, AQ, and RA, who were in an identity moratorium, benefited from strong emotional support from their families, which motivated them to pursue their dreams and attend school (Sarafino & Smith, 2011). Valuable support from peers and teachers boosted their self-esteem (Heaney & Israel, 2008; Sheridan & Radmacher, 1992). Informational support from teachers and mothers provided educational guidance (Heaney & Israel, 2008; Sheridan & Radmacher, 1992), while instrumental assistance from the community or institutions eased economic burdens. Finally, network support from peers and studios provided a sense of acceptance (Sheridan & Radmacher, 1992). This combination of support facilitated productive role exploration and strengthened identity commitment, which are central characteristics of identity moratorium and adolescent identity development (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966).

In contrast, informants like ZK, DU, and ER were more often in a state of identity confusion. Although they received support, the nature and intensity were insufficient to

encourage in-depth role exploration or the formation of clear commitments. ZK and DU received emotional and informational support from family and friends, as well as sporadic instrumental support from the community or institutions. However, significant economic pressures, social stigma, and negative experiences limited their space for exploration and hampered their ability to identify a clear life purpose. For ER, who was separated from his nuclear family and lived independently, his primary support came from non-conventional figures, such as the security guard, who provided advice and emotional support. While this support helped ER survive, the lack of structural support, such as access to a national ID card for formal employment, and significant educational barriers hindered further exploration. The quality of the support they received, or how they perceived it, was often insufficient to overcome internal and external obstacles, leading to a lack of clarity about their future direction and difficulty committing to a meaningful path, consistent with the characteristics of identity confusion (Erikson, 1968).

ML exhibited characteristics of identity coercion, where he was strongly committed to his role as a newspaper seller and his ambition to run a broiler chicken business without in-depth exploration of other alternatives. This commitment appeared to be inherited or shaped by the circumstances and skills he possessed from his family. Strong emotional support and appreciation from her husband, along with advice from her late mother about a hard work ethic, strengthened ML's acceptance of her choice. Despite facing social stigma from neighbors, the network of support from her husband and neighbors strengthened her commitment and provided a sense of acceptance (Sheridan & Radmacher, 1992). Instrumental support also alleviated economic pressures. In ML's case, the support she received seemed to validate and reinforce her existing or inherited path, encouraging commitment without triggering an extensive exploration crisis, leaving her in a state of identity imposition (Santröck, 2014).

Informant AC is in a state of identity achievement. He receives comprehensive support from his partner, peers, and the surrounding community in various forms. Emotional support from his wife, friends, and neighbors stimulates AC's self-reflection on his role on the street, while esteem support from his wife boosts his self-confidence. AC actively seeks informational support from vendors and bystanders, which helps him navigate problems with insight (Heaney & Israel, 2008), and receives instrumental assistance from people at traffic lights. This combination of support, particularly tangible and personal support, enables AC to overcome economic pressures, educational barriers, and the social stigma of being a "silver man." Such support facilitates deeper role exploration and strengthens his commitment to becoming a lawyer. This finding aligns with the concept of identity achievement proposed by Marcia (1966), in which individuals successfully resolve identity crises and develop clear commitments toward future goals.

Overall, this discussion confirms that social support is a crucial element in helping street youth navigate the complexities of identity formation. The findings indicate that the quantity of social support influences the likelihood of identity status; the less support received, the greater the likelihood of identity confusion. However, this relationship is not direct and unique. Another important factor is how recipients perceive and interpret the social support they receive, as well as the combination of forms and sources of that support. Support that feels tangible and personal, and that facilitates exploration and strengthens commitment, has been shown to be more effective in helping adolescents navigate identity crises and achieve a productive identity moratorium or even identity achievement. This suggests that the nature and reception of support are more essential than its mere presence in shaping adolescents' capacity to define themselves and navigate their futures. Table 4 summarizes the impact of social support on informants' identity formation.

Table 4. Social support in the formation of informant identity

Informant	Sources and forms	Social Support in identity formation
Category <i>children on the street</i>		
AL	Sources: Family, Peers, Teachers, and the Community.	Emotional and informational support from family and teachers, supplemented by peer

Informant	Sources and forms	Social Support in identity formation
	Forms: Emotional, Informational, Appreciative/Affirmative, Instrumental, and Networking.	praise and instrumental assistance, helped AL to commit strongly to his education and goals, maintaining a productive identity moratorium.
ZK	Sources: Family, Peers. Forms: Emotional, Informational, Appreciative or Affirmative, Instrumental, and Networking.	Emotional and informational support from older siblings, coupled with instrumental support from the community, helped ZK cope with economic pressures. However, this support was not enough to facilitate exploration or a strong commitment to ideals, leaving ZK prone to identity confusion.
AQ	Sources: Family, Peers, Teachers. Forms: Emotional, Informational, Appreciative or Affirmative, and Instrumental.	Emotional support from parents and teachers, as well as informational and instrumental support from teachers, facilitated the exploration of AQ roles. This helped her shift from coercion to self-choice and commitment to her goal of becoming a teacher, strengthening her self-worth and pushing her beyond the identity moratorium.
DU	Sources: Family, Peers, Institutions. Forms: Emotional, Informational, Appreciative or Affirmative, Instrumental, and Networking.	Emotional and informational support from older siblings and the institution, as well as instrumental assistance from the institution, helped DU overcome educational and social barriers. However, negative experiences and a lack of clarity about his future direction prevented him from making a clear commitment, leaving DU in a state of identity confusion.
<i>Category children of the street</i>		
ER	Source: Local Community. Forms: Emotional, Informational, Appreciative or Affirmative, and Instrumental.	Emotional and informational support from the security guard, as well as instrumental assistance from the community, helped ER survive and provided hope. However, a lack of family and peer support, coupled with educational and structural barriers, hindered role exploration and commitment, leaving ER prone to identity confusion.
ML	Source: Family, Partner. Forms: Emotional, Informational, Appreciative or Affirmative, Instrumental, and Network.	Strong emotional and informational support from her husband and deceased family, as well as instrumental assistance from her husband, strengthens ML's self-acceptance and commitment to her role rooted in inheritance and condition, leading her to identity coercion.
AC	Sources: Family, Partner, Peers, and the Community. Forms: Emotional, Informational, Appreciative/Affirmative, Instrumental, and Networking.	This comprehensive support sparked self-reflection and fostered AC's strong commitment to her goal of becoming a lawyer. This support helped her overcome economic pressures, educational barriers, and social stigma, enabling in-depth role exploration, leading to her identity achievement.
<i>Category children from families of the street</i>		
RA	Sources: Family, Peers, Community, Institutions. Forms: Emotional, Informational, Appreciative or Affirmative, Instrumental, and Networking.	The combination of emotional and informational support from her mother and the institution, instrumental support from the institution and family, and network support helped RA overcome educational barriers, economic pressures, and social stigma. This facilitated exploration of the role of doctor and strengthened her commitment to her ideals, putting RA on a moratorium on identity change.

4. Conclusion

Street children in Penjaringan Village receive social support from various sources, including family, peers, community members, teachers, and social institutions. This support varies in form, including emotional support, esteem or affirmative support, informational support, instrumental support, and network support. Each adolescent receives a unique combination of these sources and forms of support, tailored to their particular street child category and personal situation. The process of identity formation in street children aged 13 to 17 is highly complex. Their role exploration is often hampered by economic pressures and social stigma, which force them to immediately assume the role of breadwinner. As a result, many of them still face unclear life directions and varying commitments, placing them in a state of identity moratorium or identity confusion, according to Marcia's classification. Social support is a crucial factor in their identity formation. Comprehensive and perceived effective support, in terms of both sources and forms, facilitates more focused role exploration and the formation of clearer identity commitments. The less social support received, the greater the tendency for adolescents to experience identity confusion. However, the nature of support and how the recipient perceives it also significantly impacts adolescents' ability to navigate identity crises and achieve a productive identity moratorium or even identity achievement. This suggests that social support fundamentally shapes adolescents' ability to define themselves and determine their future direction, and that the quality of support is more essential than its mere presence.

Practically, these findings demonstrate that social support plays a crucial role in shaping the identity of street children, emphasizing the urgency of targeted interventions to help them overcome identity confusion and achieve a more positive self-identity. Social institutions working with street children are advised to design more comprehensive social support programs, focusing not only on basic needs but also on emotional, informational, and friendship networks that can facilitate role exploration and the formation of identity commitments. Stable adult figures, such as agency mentors or social workers, can build deep personal relationships. This can provide a safe space for adolescents to share their stories without judgment and provide consistent and relevant life advice and guidance to spark role exploration that may have never been meaningfully explored. Early interest identification and development, such as helping adolescents discover hidden interests or talents, can be beneficial. Furthermore, providing access to related activities, even on a small scale, can be an initial trigger for a more purposeful role exploration and give them a new sense of purpose and direction in life. Providing access to structured instrumental support to ensure the availability of basic needs and a legal identity serves as a foundation for their security. Interventions address stigma and negative experiences by building a supportive environment where adolescents feel accepted. Programs aimed at enhancing self-esteem and teaching coping strategies for teasing or past traumatic experiences, for example through peer counseling or mentoring programs, are essential to clear the path to healthy identity exploration and commitment.

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