

# Orphan and Fatherless: Reinterpretation of Hadiths about Orphans Using A Socio-Historical Approach

Vicky Magdarianti<sup>1</sup>, Rifqi Muhammad Fatkhi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, Indonesia: [vickymagdaa@gmail.com](mailto:vickymagdaa@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

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## ARTICLE INFO

### *Keywords:*

Orphans,  
fatherless,  
Double Movement,  
Kafālah,  
Child Protection.

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### *Article history:*

Received 2025-05-14

Revised 2025-10-12

Accepted 2025-11-17

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the reinterpretation of hadiths about orphans in relation to the phenomenon of fatherlessness in contemporary society through the perspective of Fazlur Rahman's double movement theory. In classical Islamic studies, an orphan is generally defined as a child who loses his father before reaching the age of puberty. However, modern social realities show that children who grow up without the presence of a father figure—whether due to divorce, labor migration, or emotional absenteeism—also experience similar social and psychological vulnerabilities. This study aims to examine how the ethical values contained in hadiths on orphans can be contextualized to address the challenges faced by fatherless children in modern society. This research uses a qualitative approach, employing the library research method, tracing hadith using the takhrij al-hadith method, conducting socio-historical analysis, and applying Fazlur Rahman's interpretation framework of the double movement. The results of the study show that the hadiths about orphans emphasize the principles of compassion, social responsibility, and protection of the rights of children in vulnerable conditions. Through the double movement approach, these principles can be extended not only to orphans in the classical sense but also to children experiencing fatherlessness. In addition, the concept of kafālah in Islam can be an ethical and institutional model in child protection by ensuring parenting, education, and emotional support without changing the identity of the child's nasab. This research contributes to the development of a more contextual hadith study while offering a normative perspective for strengthening child protection policies in contemporary Muslim society.

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**Corresponding Author:** Vicky Magdarianti: Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, Indonesia: [vickymagdaa@gmail.com](mailto:vickymagdaa@gmail.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

In the Islamic tradition, orphans occupy a very important position in the social ethical structure of Muslim societies (Alanoglu et al., 2025; Nasution, 2021). The Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) consistently place the protection of orphans as part of the moral obligation of society. Many verses and hadiths emphasize the importance of treating orphans with compassion, protecting their rights, and protecting them from various forms of social and economic exploitation (Wahyudi et al., 2025). In the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, it is even emphasized that the person who gives birth to an orphan will get a position close to the Prophet in heaven, a powerful symbol that shows that the protection of orphans is a fundamental value in Islamic teachings (al-Bukhari, 1981). These ethical values show that Islam has established a normative framework for protecting vulnerable social groups in society from the beginning. Historically, Islam's great concern for orphans was inseparable from the social conditions of pre-Islamic Arab society. In the social structure of Arab society at that time, the family and tribe played a major role in providing economic and social protection to individuals. The loss of the father figure in this context means the loss of the main protector in the clan structure, so that orphans often experience social marginalization, economic exploitation, and neglect in people's lives (Muid & Salwa, 2024). In many cases, guardians or relatives who are supposed to protect orphans abuse their property. This situation then prompted Islam to affirm various rules that protect orphans, either through strict prohibitions on eating their property or through encouragement to provide social protection and compassion to them (An-Nawawi & Burhanuddin, 2013).

In classical hadith literature, an orphan is generally defined as a child who loses his father before reaching puberty. This definition relates to the patriarchal family structure in early Arab societies, where the father functions as the head of the family as well as the main person responsible for meeting the economic and social needs of the family (Hamid, 2013). Therefore, losing a father automatically puts the child in a state of economic and social vulnerability. Classical scholars then developed various legal rules related to the protection of orphans, including property management, guardianship, and community social responsibility towards them (Ashari, 2018a).

Although the phenomenon of fatherlessness has been widely discussed in psychology and sociology studies, Islamic studies, especially in the study of hadith, are still relatively limited in studying this phenomenon systematically. Most of the research in the study of hadith still focuses on the textual understanding of the definition of orphans as understood in classical literature. Meanwhile, relatively few studies have attempted to connect the teachings of hadith with contemporary social realities. In fact, the prophetic tradition not only functions as a normative text, but also as a source of social ethics that can provide guidance in dealing with various modern social problems.

Several previous studies have addressed the issue of orphans from various perspectives. Mouftah in his research on how the Muslim community in the United States negotiates adoption laws in Islam, specifically through the concept of *kafalah* as an alternative to the Western adoption system (Mouftah, 2020). This research shows that Islamic law pays great attention to the protection of orphans, although in practice it has to adapt to the modern legal system. Another study by Azizah and Rahmawati that discusses the care of orphans in the perspective of Hamka's interpretation of Al-Azhar, emphasizes the importance of empathy and social concern for orphans in Muslim societies (Azizah & Rahmawati, 2022). Meanwhile, Maisya's research highlights the reinterpretation of the concept of orphans in the perspective of Edip Yuksel, which defines orphans more broadly as individuals in need of social protection (Maisya, 2023). Although this study opens up new interpretive space for the concept of orphans, it is still limited to the study of the interpretation of the Qur'an and has not specifically linked it to the phenomenon of fatherlessness in modern society. Thus, it can be said that there is still a

significant research gap in the study of hadith that connects the classical concept of orphans with the social phenomenon of fatherlessness.

To bridge this gap, an interpretive approach is needed that allows classical hadith texts to be understood contextually in the face of modern social realities. One approach that can be used is the dual-motion theory developed by Fazlur Rahman. This theory emphasizes that religious texts must be understood through two interpretive stages (Raḥmān, 2002). The first stage is to understand the text in the socio-historical context in which it appears. The second stage is to extract the moral principles contained in the text and then apply them to different social contexts (Umair & Said, 2023). The dual-movement approach allows the hadith to be understood not only literally, but also contextually by taking into account the changing social structure of society. In the context of this study, this approach is used to understand how the hadith about orphans during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) can provide an ethical basis for the protection of children who have lost their fathers in modern society. By understanding the historical context of the emergence of hadith and the moral values contained in it, Islamic teachings can provide a more relevant guide in dealing with contemporary social challenges.

Based on this background, this study seeks to reinterpret the hadith about orphans through a socio-historical approach and Fazlur Rahman's theory of double movements. This research not only aims to understand the historical meaning of hadith about orphans, but also to identify ethical values that can be applied in dealing with the phenomenon of fatherlessness in Indonesia. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to the development of a more contextual study of hadith, as well as offer an ethical framework for child protection efforts in contemporary Muslim society.

## METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with the library research method, which aims to understand and interpret social phenomena through analysis of relevant written sources (Adlini et al., 2022). This method was chosen because the research focuses on the study of hadith texts and academic literature related to the concept of orphans and the phenomenon of fatherlessness in contemporary society. The main data of the study comes from classical hadith books, especially the Polar al-Sittah which includes Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Sunan al-Tirmizī, Sunan al-Nasā'ī, and Sunan Ibn Mājah. Hadith search is carried out using keywords such as orphan, kafālah, and raḥmah to identify narrations related to the protection of orphans. The hadith found were then selected based on their thematic relevance to the issue of child protection and the phenomenon of fatherlessness, so that the analysis could be focused on a history that representative described Islamic normative principles on child welfare (Kaelan, 2010).

The process of collecting hadith data is carried out through the takhrij al-ḥadīth method, which is the tracing and verification of hadith history from classical hadith sources. In this study, takhrij is carried out through two main approaches, namely takhrij based on pronunciation and takhrij based on theme. The first approach uses specific keywords to find textually relevant hadiths, while the second approach is done by searching through chapters or topics in the hadith book related to orphans and family responsibilities. This method allows researchers to obtain hadith that is not only editorially relevant, but also thematically relevant with the focus of the research. From the results of the search, several representative hadiths were selected that were considered to be able to describe the principles of Islamic ethics related to the protection of orphans, so that an in-depth analysis of their meaning and relevance in the modern social context (Maulana, 2021).

To comprehensively understand the meaning of hadith, this study uses a socio-historical approach. This approach aims to reconstruct the social and historical context behind the emergence of hadith, so that its normative message can be understood more fully. The reconstruction of the historical context is carried out by referring to classical hadith sharia literature such as *Fath al-Bārī* by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī and *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* by al-Nawawī, as well as the study of the social history of pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arab societies. Through this approach, the condition of orphans at that time was understood as a very vulnerable group socially and economically due to the loss of protection of families and tribes. Thus, socio-historical analysis not only sheds light on the background of the emergence of hadith, but also helps to identify ethical values that can be applied in different social realities, including in the phenomenon of fatherlessness in contemporary society (Djazimah, 2012).

The main analysis in this study uses the double movement theory developed by Fazlur Rahman. This theory emphasizes two stages of interpretation in understanding religious texts. The first stage is to understand the text of the hadith in the socio-historical context when it appears in order to identify its initial meaning and normative purpose. The second stage is to extract moral principles from the text and apply them in the modern social context. In this study, the approach is used to interpret the hadiths about orphans and relate them to the phenomenon of fatherlessness in Indonesian society. The analysis process is carried out through a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning, namely by collecting relevant hadiths, analyzing the sanad and matan, and drawing ethical principles that are then applied to contemporary social problems related to the protection and welfare of children (Umair & Said, 2023).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### THE CONCEPT OF ORPHANS IN THE HADITH TRADITION

In the Islamic tradition, orphans occupy a very important position in the social ethical structure of Muslim society. The Qur'an and hadith of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH pay great attention to the protection, welfare, and fulfillment of the rights of orphans. This concern is not only in the form of moral encouragement, but also manifested in various social and legal rules that aim to protect orphans from social marginalization and economic exploitation. In the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, it is stated that the person who bears the orphan will be very close to the Prophet in heaven, as described by the gesture of two fingers that are close. This hadith is narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and is often used as a normative basis in emphasizing the importance of the care and protection of orphans in Islam (Al-Bukhari, 1981). The hadith shows that concern for orphans is not just a social act, but also part of the spiritual value in Islamic teachings.

Terminologically, in classical hadith and fiqh literature, an orphan is defined as a child who loses his father before reaching the age of puberty. This definition is closely related to the social structure of Arab society in the early days of Islam, where the father played the role of the main protector in the family, both in economic, social, and security aspects. Losing a father means losing a figure responsible for the fulfillment of basic needs and social protection of the family. Therefore, children who lose their fathers are considered to be in a very vulnerable condition in society. The scholars of hadith and fuqaha then developed various legal provisions to ensure that orphans continue to receive their protection and rights fairly in Muslim societies (Hamid, 2013).

In various hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, there are a number of normative principles related to the protection of orphans. The first principle is the obligation to provide care and attention to orphans. The hadith narrated by al-Bukhari confirms that the person who bears orphans will get a very close position with the Prophet in heaven. In the hadith lecture, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī explained that this hadith contains a strong encouragement for Muslims to provide care for orphans by replacing

the role of fathers in aspects of education, sustenance, and affection (Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, 2010). This explanation shows that orphan care is not only interpreted as material assistance, but also includes the emotional and social dimensions of children's lives.

The second principle in the hadith about orphans is the protection of their economic rights. In several hadiths narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) gave a stern warning against the practice of eating the property of orphans illegally. The prohibition is even classified as one of the major sins that can bring severe punishment to the perpetrator. In *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Imam al-Nawawī explained that the prohibition shows how much Islamic care is towards the protection of the rights of orphans, especially since they have lost the main protector in the family who is supposed to look after their interests (An-Nawawi & Burhanuddin, 2013). Therefore, Islam provides strong legal protection for the property of orphans to prevent exploitation by guardians or other parties who have access to their property.

In addition to economic protection, the Prophet's hadith also emphasizes the importance of social protection for orphans. One of the hadiths narrated in *Sunan Ibn Mājah* states that the best house among Muslims is a house in which there are orphans who are well treated. This hadith affirms that the protection of orphans is not only an individual responsibility, but also a social responsibility that must be borne by the Muslim community collectively. In this context, families and communities have an important role to play in ensuring that orphans do not experience social exclusion or discrimination in their daily lives. This concept of social solidarity shows that Islam encourages the formation of a society that cares for vulnerable groups, including orphans.

Another very important dimension in the hadith about orphans is the aspect of compassion and empathy. In one of the narrations contained in *Musnad Ahmad*, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH encouraged his people to rub the heads of orphans as a form of affection and attention. This simple act has a deep symbolic meaning in Arab culture, as a touch of the head is a form of social recognition and an expression of affection for the child. This hadith shows that the protection of orphans is not only related to economic or legal aspects, but also includes psychological and emotional dimensions that are very important in the development of children. Thus, Islamic teachings place compassion as one of the main principles in the care of orphans (Hidayah et al., 2023).

In the development of Islamic thought, various scholars have also developed institutional concepts to support the protection of orphans, one of which is through the *kafālah* system. In Islamic law, *kafālah* is a parenting mechanism that allows a person or institution to bear the life of an orphan without changing his or her biological lineage. In contrast to the adoption system in Western law that can change the legal status of children, *kafālah* maintains the identity of the child's *nasab* while ensuring that the child's economic, educational, and affectionate needs are met. This system is one of the social mechanisms that allows Muslim society to provide protection to children who have lost their father without violating the principles of family law in Islam (Mouftah, 2020).

The concept of orphan protection in the hadith also reflects a broader vision of Islamic social ethics. Islam not only emphasizes the obligation of the individual to help orphans, but also establishes a value system that encourages the formation of a society that cares for vulnerable groups. In this perspective, the protection of orphans can be understood as part of the principle of social justice which is one of the main goals of Islamic law. By placing orphans as a group that must be protected, Islam seeks to create social balance in society and prevent inequality that can harm the weaker groups.

Nevertheless, the classical understanding of orphans is limited to children who have lost their fathers due to death need to be revisited in the context of modern social change. In contemporary society, children's vulnerability arises not only as a result of the death of a father, but also due to various other factors such as divorce, labor migration, or emotional absence from the family. This phenomenon

shows that the concept of child protection in Islam needs to be understood more contextually in order to remain relevant to the evolving social realities. Therefore, the study of the hadiths about orphans is not only important to understand the teachings of Islam textually, but also to identify ethical principles that can be used to answer various modern social problems, including the phenomenon of fatherlessness in contemporary society.

Thus, the concept of orphans in the hadith tradition is not only related to the legal definition of children who have lost their fathers, but also reflects a broader social ethical framework regarding the protection of vulnerable groups in society. The hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH about orphans contain moral messages that emphasize the importance of nurturing, protection of economic rights, social solidarity, and compassion for children who have lost family protection. These principles are an important basis for the development of contextual interpretations that can bridge the teachings of hadith with modern social challenges, especially in understanding the phenomenon of children growing up without the presence of a father figure in the family.

### **The Socio-Historical Context of the Protection of Orphans in the Prophet's Time**

To fully understand the meaning of the hadiths about orphans, it is important to place them in the social and historical context of Arab society in the early days of Islam. The socio-historical approach in the study of hadith aims to reconstruct the social conditions behind the emergence of a hadith so that the normative message contained in it can be understood more comprehensively. Without understanding this social setting, hadith is often understood purely textually and has the potential to ignore the moral goals that Islamic teachings want to achieve. Therefore, the analysis of the hadiths about orphans needs to consider the social reality of pre-Islamic Arab society, including the family structure, the clan system, and the economic relations that influenced the social position of orphans in society (Djazimah, 2012).

In pre-Islamic Arab society, people were organized into tribal structures that relied heavily on the strength of family solidarity. Within this social structure, the father held a very important role as the primary protector of the family. He was not only responsible for providing for the family but also represented its honor and security within the tribal system. When a father passed away, the family—especially the children—lost essential economic and social protection necessary for their survival (Muthohar et al., 2025; Shobihah, 2025; Wiyanto & Taluwara, 2024). This situation made orphans particularly vulnerable, both economically and socially. They were often subjected to exploitation, deprived of access to family wealth, and even treated unjustly by guardians or relatives who were supposed to protect them (Muid & Salwa, 2024).

This social situation explains why the Qur'an and hadith pay great attention to the protection of orphans. Islam is present in the context of a society that still shows significant social inequality, especially for groups that do not have a protector in the structure of the tribe (AL-Momani, 2024; Varner et al., 2020). Orphans are one of the most vulnerable groups to social injustice, especially in terms of inheritance management. In the practice of pre-Islamic societies, guardians or relatives often controlled and used the property of orphans for personal gain without considering the rights of the child. Therefore, Islam then established various rules aimed at protecting the economic rights of orphans, including a strict prohibition on eating their property illegally (An-Nawawi & Burhanuddin, 2013).

Islam's concern for orphans can also be understood as part of the social reforms carried out by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. One of the most famous hadiths states that the person who bears the orphan will be close to the Prophet in heaven. This hadith not only provides spiritual motivation for Muslims to help orphans, but also reflects the Prophet's efforts in building social solidarity in the community

(Jayadi et al., 2025). In this way, Islam seeks to replace a tribe-based system of protection with a broader system of social solidarity within the Muslim community.

In addition, the hadiths about orphans also show that Islam not only provides protection in the economic aspect, but also emphasizes the emotional and social dimensions in the life of children. In one of the narrations, it is stated that the Prophet Muhammad PBUH encouraged his people to rub the heads of orphans as a form of affection. This act has a strong symbolic meaning in Arab culture, as touching the head is a form of social respect and recognition for a child. Through this simple act, the Prophet wanted to show that the protection of orphans is not only related to the fulfillment of material needs, but also to the restoration of their dignity and emotional well-being (Hidayah et al., 2021).

The socio-historical approach also helps to explain that the hadiths about orphans are not only normative, but also a response to the real social conditions of the time. By understanding this historical background, it can be concluded that the main purpose of Islamic teachings on orphans is to protect individuals who have lost paternal protection in society (Norfauzan, 2021). In other words, Islam's concern for orphans is not solely because of their biological status as children who have lost their fathers, but because of the conditions of social vulnerability they experience due to the loss of a protective figure in the family.

In this context, a socio-historical approach is very important in understanding the relevance of hadith to contemporary social realities. If in early Islam the vulnerability of children was mainly caused by the death of the father in the clan structure, then in modern society similar vulnerabilities can appear in various other forms, such as divorce, labor migration, or the emotional absence of the father figure in the family. This phenomenon is known in modern social studies as fatherless, which is a condition when a child grows up without the presence of a father figure in daily life. Although the social context is different, the conditions of vulnerability experienced by fatherless children are similar to the conditions of orphans in the early days of Islam, namely the loss of a figure who should have provided protection and support in their lives (Ashari, 2018b).

Socio-historical analysis of the hadiths about orphans opens up space to understand the broader moral message of Islamic teachings. These hadiths not only talk about children who have lost their biological fathers, but also about the social responsibility of society to protect individuals who are in vulnerable conditions due to the loss of family protection. This understanding is an important basis for reinterpreting the hadiths about orphans in the face of modern social phenomena such as fatherlessness. By identifying the moral principles contained in the prophetic tradition, Islamic teachings can remain relevant in answering various social problems that arise in contemporary society.

Therefore, the socio-historical approach not only serves to explain the historical background of the hadith, but also helps to connect the ethical values in the Islamic tradition with modern social needs. Through this approach, the hadiths about orphans can be understood as part of a broader framework of Islamic social ethics, which aims to protect vulnerable groups and ensure the creation of social justice in society. This understanding then became the basis for the next stage of interpretation, namely the reinterpretation of the hadith through Fazlur Rahman's theory of double movement to extract moral principles that can be applied in the context of the phenomenon of fatherlessness in modern society.

### **Reinterpretation of the Hadith about Orphans in the Perspective of Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement**

In the development of modern Islamic studies, one of the main challenges in understanding religious texts is how to bridge the normative messages contained in classical texts with changing social realities. Hadith texts, as an important part of the source of Islamic teachings, are often understood literally without considering the historical context behind their appearance. This kind of textual

approach has the potential to limit the relevance of hadith teachings in dealing with various contemporary social problems. Therefore, a hermeneutic approach is needed that is able to connect the historical meaning of the text with the needs of modern society. One of the most widely used approaches in contemporary Islamic studies is the double movement theory developed by Fazlur Rahman (Raḥmān, 2002). This theory offers a methodological framework for understanding religious texts through two interrelated interpretive movements, namely understanding the historical context of the text and extracting universal moral principles that can be applied in different social contexts.

According to Fazlur Rahman, religious texts cannot be understood in their entirety without considering the social conditions behind their emergence. Rahman distinguishes between the historical meaning of the text and the moral message that the text seeks to convey. Therefore, he proposed a method of interpretation consisting of two main stages. The first stage is to understand the text in the socio-historical context in which it appears (Raḥmān, 2002). At this stage, the interpreter seeks to identify the social situation behind the emergence of a text and the normative goals that the teachings want to achieve. The second stage is to extract the moral principles contained in the text and apply them to different social contexts. In this way, Islamic teachings are not only understood as static rules, but as a value system that has the flexibility to answer various social challenges in modern society (Wahdah, 2021).

In the case of this study, the double movement theory was used to reinterpret the hadiths about orphans in order to answer modern social phenomena such as fatherlessness. In the first stage, the hadiths about orphans are analyzed in the socio-historical context of Arab society during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). When a father dies, children lose the main protector in the clan structure, so they become a particularly vulnerable group to social and economic exploitation. This explains why Islam pays great attention to the protection of orphans through various social and legal rules aimed at safeguarding their welfare.

The hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH about orphans can be understood as a response to these social conditions. Such as the hadith that states that the person who bears orphans will be close to the Prophet in heaven shows that there is a strong moral impulse for the community to provide protection to children who have lost their father figure (Johendra et al., 2022). In its historical context, this hadith serves as a social mechanism to ensure that orphans continue to receive protection and support in society. In other words, Islam's concern for orphans is not only related to their biological status as children who have lost their fathers, but also to the conditions of social vulnerability they experience due to the loss of a protector in the family structure.

In addition, the hadiths that strictly prohibit eating the property of orphans can also be understood in the context of the social practices of the Arab society at that time. Before the advent of Islam, guardians or relatives often controlled and used the property of orphans for personal gain without considering the rights of the child. Islam then introduced various rules aimed at protecting the economic rights of orphans, including a strict prohibition against the misuse of their property. In this case, hadith not only serves as a moral teaching, but also as an instrument of social reform aimed at creating justice in society (An-Nawawi & Burhanuddin, 2013).

After understanding the historical context of the hadith in the first stage of the double movement, the next stage is to extract the moral principles contained in the hadith. If analyzed more deeply, the hadiths about orphans contain a number of ethical principles that are universal. These principles include the obligation to protect vulnerable groups, the importance of social solidarity in society, and the moral responsibility to provide compassion and support to children who have lost family protection. These principles show that the main purpose of Islamic teachings on orphans is to protect individuals who are in vulnerable conditions due to the loss of a protective figure in the family.

This moral principle can then be applied in the modern social context through the second stage of the double movement. In contemporary society, children's vulnerability is not only caused by the death of the father, but also by various other factors such as divorce, labor migration, or the emotional absence of the father figure in the family. This phenomenon is known in modern social studies as fatherless, which is a condition when a child grows up without the presence of a father figure in daily life. Research in psychology shows that children who grow up without a father figure tend to face a variety of challenges in their emotional and social development, including low self-confidence, difficulty building interpersonal relationships, and an increased risk of behavioral problems (Ashari, 2018b).

If analyzed through the framework of the double movement, the phenomenon of fatherlessness can be understood as a form of social vulnerability that has similarities with the condition of orphans in the early days of Islam. Although the causes are different, both conditions are marked by the loss of the father figure who functions as a protector and guide in the child's life. Therefore, the moral principles contained in the hadith about orphans can be expanded to include children who experience a fatherless condition. Thus, the reinterpretation of hadith through a double movement approach allows Islamic teachings to provide a more relevant response to changes in social structure in modern society.

This approach also shows that Islamic teachings do not only focus on formal legal aspects, but also emphasize the broader dimension of social ethics. In the hadith about orphans, the attention of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH is not only limited to meeting economic needs, but also includes the emotional and psychological dimensions in the life of children. The hadith about rubbing the heads of orphans, for example, shows that attention to the emotional well-being of children is an important part of Islamic teachings (Tempo, 2024). In the modern context, this principle can be translated as the need to provide psychological and emotional support to children who grow up without the presence of a father figure.

In addition, the reinterpretation of hadith through the framework of the double movement also opens up space for the development of a more inclusive model of child protection in Muslim society. The concept of *kafālah* in Islamic law, for example, can be understood as a social mechanism that allows society to provide protection to children who have lost their father figure without having to change their biological lineage. In practice, this concept can be adapted in various forms of modern social programs, such as orphanages, educational scholarships, and community-based parenting programs that aim to support the well-being of children in (Mouftah, 2020).

In this case, the application of the double movement theory in the reinterpretation of the hadith about orphans shows that Islamic teachings have the capacity to answer various social problems that arise in modern society. Through this approach, hadith is not only understood as a historical text limited to the context of the past, but as a source of ethical values that can provide guidance in dealing with various contemporary social challenges. This reinterpretation also shows that Islam's concern for orphans is essentially part of a broader vision of social ethics, which is to protect vulnerable groups and ensure the creation of social justice in society (Adiyono et al., 2025; Aisah et al., 2025; Humaida et al., 2026).

Therefore, the reinterpretation of hadith about orphans through Fazlur Rahman's double movement approach not only contributes to the development of a more contextual study of hadith, but also opens up space for integration between Islamic values and modern social policies in an effort to improve children's welfare. By understanding the moral message contained in the prophetic tradition, Muslim society can develop various social strategies that are more responsive to the phenomenon of fatherlessness, so that Islamic teachings remain relevant in responding to the ever-evolving dynamics of social life.

## **KAFĀLAH AS A MODEL FOR THE PROTECTION OF FATHERLESS CHILDREN IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF HADITH**

In the Islamic legal tradition, the concept of kafālah is one of the social mechanisms developed to protect children who have lost a protective figure in the family, especially orphans. Etymologically, the word kafālah comes from the Arabic root kafala which means to guarantee, maintain, or bear (Fadillah et al., 2025). In the context of Islamic law, kafālah refers to a parenting system that allows a person or institution to take responsibility for nurturing, educating, and meeting the needs of a child without changing their identity. This concept developed as an alternative to adoption practices that could change genealogical relationships within families. Thus, kafālah becomes a social mechanism that maintains a balance between child protection and the principles of family law in (Nazmi & Syofyan, 2023).

The hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) provide a strong normative basis for the practice of orphan care in Muslim societies. One of the hadiths that is often used as a reference in this context is the hadith that states that the person who bears orphans will be close to the Prophet in heaven. This hadith shows that the care of orphans is seen as a charity that has high spiritual value in Islam. In the explanation of the scholars, the responsibility of bearing orphans does not only include the provision of economic assistance, but also includes education, social protection, and the provision of affection to the child. Therefore, the practice of kafālah can be understood as a form of concrete implementation of the ethical values taught by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH regarding the protection of children who have lost protective figures in the family (Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, 2010).

Historically, the concept of kafālah developed in Muslim societies in response to the social need to protect children who do not have families or have lost the primary protector in the family. In contrast to the adoption system in the Western legal tradition that can change a child's legal status and break the genealogical relationship with his or her biological family, kafālah maintains the identity of the child's nasab while ensuring that their basic needs are met. This principle is in line with Islamic teachings which emphasize the importance of maintaining the clarity of lineage (ḥifẓ al-nasab) in the family structure (Jault-Seseke, 2025). Thus, kafālah serves not only as a parenting mechanism, but also as a legal instrument that maintains a balance between child protection and the basic principles of family law in Islam.

From a hadith perspective, the care of orphans through kafālah is also closely related to the concept of social solidarity in Muslim society. Islam emphasizes that the protection of vulnerable groups is not only the responsibility of the nuclear family, but also the collective responsibility of society. Therefore, various hadiths encourage Muslims to pay special attention to orphans and ensure that they do not experience marginalization in social life. The hadith that the best home is one in which there are well-treated orphans shows that the care of orphans is seen as part of a religious practice that reflects one's moral qualities. In this way, Islamic teachings seek to build a social culture that values concern for vulnerable groups (Hamid, 2013).

In the context of modern society, the concept of kafālah has a very important relevance in answering the phenomenon of fatherlessness. As previously explained, the phenomenon of fatherlessness refers to the condition when a child grows up without the presence of a father figure in daily life. This condition can be caused by a variety of factors, such as death, divorce, job migration, or emotional absence from the family. Research in the field of developmental psychology shows that the absence of a father figure can have a significant impact on children's emotional and social development, including an increased risk of behavioral problems and difficulties in building interpersonal

relationships in adulthood (Laman et al., 2023). Therefore, a social mechanism is needed that is able to provide support to children who experience this condition.

If analyzed through the perspective of hadith and double movement theory, the concept of kafālah can be understood as a social protection model that can be expanded to include children who experience fatherless conditions. Although in the classical definition kafālah is more often associated with the upbringing of orphans, the underlying moral principle is actually broader, which is to provide protection to children who have lost family support. In this context, the reinterpretation of the hadith allows the principle of orphan protection to be extended to include various forms of social vulnerability experienced by children in modern society. Thus, kafālah can be understood as an ethical framework that allows Muslim society to provide support to children who grow up without the presence of a father figure.

In contemporary social practice, the concept of kafālah can be implemented in various institutional forms that support the welfare of children. In many Muslim countries, kafālah has been adopted as an alternative parenting model in the child protection system. Social institutions such as orphanages, zakat institutions, and humanitarian organizations often develop parenting programs inspired by the concept of kafālah, such as educational scholarship programs, psychological support, and community-based parenting programs. These programs aim to ensure that children who have lost their father figure continue to receive the support they need to develop optimally in society (Zarkasyi & Badri, 2023).

In Indonesia, practices that resemble the concept of kafālah can be found in various socio-religious institutions, such as Islamic boarding schools, Islamic orphanages, and social foundations engaged in child welfare. These institutions often not only provide economic assistance to children in need, but also provide education, moral guidance, and emotional support that are essential for children's development (Fahham, 2020). In this context, socio-religious institutions can act as an alternative space that replaces some family functions for children who experience fatherless conditions. Thus, the concept of kafālah is not only relevant in the discourse of Islamic law, but also has practical implications in the development of child protection systems in Muslim societies.

Not only that, the reinterpretation of the concept of kafālah in the context of the fatherless phenomenon also opens up opportunities for integration between Islamic values and modern social policies. In many countries, child protection systems often focus on state intervention through various social welfare programs. However, in Muslim societies, a community-based approach rooted in religious values can also play an important role in supporting children's well-being. By utilizing the concept of kafālah, socio-religious institutions can contribute to building a wider social protection network for children in vulnerable conditions (Aminah, 2025).

Thus, the concept of kafālah in the perspective of hadith is not only a mechanism for orphan care in the classical context, but can also be understood as a relevant model of social protection in dealing with the phenomenon of fatherlessness in modern society. Through the reinterpretation of the hadith with a double movement approach, the ethical principles contained in Islamic teachings can be adapted to answer various contemporary social challenges. This approach shows that prophetic traditions have the capacity to provide inspiration in the development of a more inclusive child protection system, while strengthening the role of society in creating a social environment that supports child welfare.

## CONCLUSION

This study reveals that hadiths concerning orphans fundamentally emphasize the protection of vulnerable children within a broader framework of Islamic social ethics. Through a socio-historical analysis, it is evident that the prophetic concern for orphans emerged in response to social conditions where the loss of a father resulted in significant economic and social vulnerability. Therefore, the ethical

core of these hadiths lies in safeguarding children who lack familial protection. From an interpretive perspective, the application of Fazlur Rahman's double movement theory demonstrates that the moral principles embedded in hadith—such as compassion, social responsibility, and protection of rights—can be extended beyond the classical definition of orphanhood. In contemporary contexts, these principles are highly relevant to addressing the phenomenon of fatherlessness, where children experience similar forms of vulnerability despite differing causes. Academically, this study contributes to the development of contextual hadith studies by bridging classical Islamic texts with modern social issues. It offers a new perspective by integrating hadith discourse with contemporary child welfare challenges and expanding the application of kafalah as an ethical and institutional model for child protection in modern Muslim societies. However, this study is limited by its reliance on library research and textual analysis, without empirical field validation. Future research is therefore recommended to incorporate empirical approaches, such as case studies or policy analysis, to examine the practical implementation of kafalah-based child protection models in different socio-cultural contexts.

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