

Orphan Child Maintenance in Islamic Law: Contemporary Social Relevance and a Case Study of Medan Tembung District

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Abstract

This article examines the formulation and implementation of the obligation to provide maintenance for orphans in Islamic law and the factors contributing to its variation and neglect in social practice. The main research problem addresses how Islamic law normatively constructs the obligation of orphan maintenance and why this norm is not fully internalized in community life. This study employs an empirical legal research method with a socio-legal approach, integrating normative analysis of the Qur'an, hadith, and classical Islamic jurisprudence with field research conducted in Medan Tembung District through interviews, observation, and documentation. The findings reveal that Islamic law provides a strong and multilayered normative framework for ensuring orphan maintenance through the responsibilities of guardians, extended family, and social mechanisms; however, in practice, maintenance is predominantly perceived as a moral or charitable act rather than a legally binding obligation. Variations and neglect are influenced by economic constraints, low legal awareness, family cultural structures, and weak institutional integration. The study concludes that the gap between normative provisions and social practice undermines effective protection of orphans' welfare, highlighting the need to strengthen legal awareness and develop a more structured and sustainable system of maintenance responsibility.

INTRODUCTION

The protection of orphans constitutes a theme of significant importance within both social ethics and the Islamic legal system. In the normative tradition of Islam, orphans are not merely understood as individuals who have lost one parent, but also as a social group vulnerable to economic, social, and psychological marginalization. Therefore, concern for the welfare of orphans is often regarded as an indicator of the moral integrity of Muslim society and the extent to which the legal system supports vulnerable groups. In Arabic terminology, the term *yatim* refers to a child who has lost their primary source of support before reaching maturity. In the construction of Islamic law, the term specifically refers to a child whose father has passed away and who has not yet reached puberty, thereby giving rise to juridical implications related to guardianship, protection of property, and the fulfillment of basic needs, including maintenance (*nafaqah*).¹

Within the traditional family structure of Muslim societies, the father is generally positioned as the primary provider for the family. When the father passes away, this responsibility may become vacant, creating structural vulnerability for the child. This condition renders the fulfillment of an orphan's maintenance a critical issue in Islamic family law. The Qur'an consistently emphasizes the obligation to safeguard the welfare of orphans and strongly prohibits any actions that harm them, whether through neglect of their basic needs or misappropriation of their property. This principle demonstrates that the protection of orphans is not merely a moral obligation but also possesses a strong legal dimension within Islamic law.²

From the perspective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, the obligation to provide maintenance for orphans is closely linked to the fundamental objectives of Islamic law, particularly the protection of life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) and the protection of lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*). These principles affirm that the continuity of life and the welfare of future generations must be ensured through clear mechanisms of social responsibility. Accordingly, the concept of maintenance in Islamic law extends beyond the provision of material needs such as food, clothing, and shelter, to include education, healthcare, and proper upbringing. Thus, fulfilling the maintenance of orphans carries a broader social dimension, as it is intrinsically connected to sustaining a just and sustainable social order.³

Classical fiqh scholarship has developed a normative framework concerning the parties responsible for providing maintenance to orphans. Scholars of different legal

¹ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu* (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2004), 7:764-765.

² Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 38-40.

³ Jasser Auda, *Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* (London: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2008), 21-23.

schools (madhāhib) hold diverse views regarding the hierarchy of such responsibilities. Some scholars prioritize the closest paternal relatives as bearing the primary obligation, while others extend this responsibility to the wider family or even to the Muslim community collectively when close relatives are unable to fulfill it. This diversity of opinions indicates that the obligation of orphan maintenance is not merely a moral issue but also a legal matter with broad social implications in Muslim societies.⁴

In recent years, academic discourse on orphans has expanded across various disciplines, including Islamic family law, child welfare studies, and social policy. Several studies indicate that the protection of orphans is often intertwined with the dynamics of modern society, including changes in family structure, economic mobility, and the transformation of social institutions. Research conducted by Asep Saepudin Jahar and colleagues shows that the practice of Islamic family law in contemporary Muslim societies is frequently shaped by the interaction between fiqh norms, state law, and social realities.⁵

Moreover, some empirical studies reveal that the practice of fulfilling the rights of orphans does not always align with the normative constructions of fiqh. For instance, research by Siti Nurhayati indicates that in many cases, the responsibility for orphan maintenance is informally transferred to parties who are not normatively designated as primary obligors, such as distant relatives or community-based social institutions. This phenomenon demonstrates that economic factors, family structure, and the level of legal awareness within society significantly influence the fulfillment of orphan maintenance.⁶

At the global level, the issue of orphan welfare has also attracted attention within studies on Islamic social justice and philanthropy. Research by Jonathan Benthall highlights the important role of Islamic philanthropic institutions in supporting orphan welfare across various Muslim countries. Meanwhile, studies by Rachel M. Gisselquist show that the protection of vulnerable groups, including orphans, is often incorporated into broader social development agendas in developing countries.⁷

Although these studies provide important contributions to understanding the issue of orphan welfare, most of them still focus on aspects of social policy, philanthropic

⁴ Muhammad Abu Zahrah, *Al-Ahwal al-Shakhsīyyah* (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, 2005), 189-191.

⁵ Asep Saepudin Jahar, Jaih Mubarak, and A. Khoirul Anam, *Islamic Law in Contemporary Indonesia: Ideas and Institutions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2021), 112-115.

⁶ Siti Nurhayati, "Child Welfare and Islamic Family Law: Socio-Legal Perspectives on Orphan Care in Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Law and Society* 30, no. 2 (2022): 205-207

⁷ Jonathan Benthall, *Islamic Charities and Islamic Humanism in Troubled Times* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 55-57; Rachel M. Gisselquist, "Children and Social Protection in Developing Countries," *World Development* 146 (2021): 104-106..

institutions, or child protection in general. Studies that specifically examine the construction of the obligation of orphan maintenance within the framework of Islamic family law and relate it to social practices remain relatively limited. In many cases, research on orphan maintenance obligations is confined to normative analysis of fiqh texts, without examining how such norms are understood and implemented in contemporary social life.

These limitations reveal an academic gap in the study of Islamic family law. First, there is still a lack of research integrating normative fiqh analysis on orphan maintenance obligations with empirical analysis of their implementation in contemporary Muslim societies. Second, existing studies rarely explore how differences among legal schools regarding maintenance responsibilities are understood and applied within local social contexts. Third, empirical research on orphan maintenance obligations at the community level remains limited, leaving the concrete social dynamics of fulfilling orphan rights insufficiently captured in academic literature.

Based on this gap, this article seeks to offer a scholarly contribution by integrating normative analysis of Islamic law – derived from the Qur'an, hadith, and the views of classical jurists – with empirical analysis of the practice of fulfilling orphan maintenance in contemporary society. The novelty of this research lies in its use of a socio-legal approach that connects doctrinal dimensions of fiqh with social realities. By taking a case study in Medan Tembung District, this research aims to demonstrate how Islamic legal norms concerning orphan maintenance are understood, negotiated, and implemented within local social life.

Accordingly, this study seeks to address the main research question: how is the obligation of orphan maintenance constructed within the perspective of Islamic law, and to what extent is this norm realized in the social practices of the community in Medan Tembung District? Through a socio-legal approach, this research is expected to contribute academically to the development of Islamic family law discourse while also offering a more contextual perspective in understanding mechanisms for fulfilling orphan maintenance that align both with the principles of the Shari'ah and the social needs of contemporary society.

METHODS

This study constitutes an empirical legal inquiry with a socio-legal character, integrating normative analysis of Islamic law with an empirical examination of social practices in fulfilling the obligation of maintenance for orphans. This approach is chosen because the research aims not only to explain the normative construction of orphan

maintenance obligations in Islamic law, but also to analyze how such norms are understood, negotiated, and implemented within social life. From a socio-legal perspective, law is viewed not merely as a system of norms, but also as a social phenomenon influenced by economic, cultural, and structural factors, as well as by the level of legal awareness within society.⁸

Methodologically, this study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to understand the meanings, interpretations, and social experiences of research subjects in carrying out maintenance obligations toward orphans. Meanwhile, the case study design is used to analyze social phenomena in depth within a specific social context, thereby producing a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Islamic legal norms and social practices.⁹

In its normative dimension, this research applies several approaches: the statute approach, conceptual approach, case approach, comparative approach, and historical approach. The statute approach is used to examine sources of Islamic law such as the Qur'an, hadith, and the views of classical jurists concerning orphan maintenance obligations. The conceptual approach is employed to analyze the concept of maintenance (*nafaqah*), the responsibilities of guardians, and principles of child protection within the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and *maṣlaḥah*. The comparative approach is conducted by examining the views of different Islamic legal schools regarding the parties responsible for orphan maintenance, in order to assess the flexibility of fiqh norms in contemporary social contexts.

This research was conducted in Medan Tembung District, Medan City. The selection of this location is based on several academic considerations. First, the area is characterized by a heterogeneous population with diverse social, economic, and cultural backgrounds, providing a relevant social context for examining the practice of fulfilling orphan maintenance obligations. Second, the presence of active social and religious institutions offers opportunities to observe various forms of support for orphans. Third, social phenomena related to orphan care and the fulfillment of their needs in this area demonstrate dynamic interactions between religious norms and social practices.

The data in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly through interaction with informants who are factually involved in the practice of fulfilling orphan maintenance obligations. These informants include

⁸ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2018), 13–15.

⁹ Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2018), 45–48.

guardians of orphans, orphans themselves, religious leaders, community leaders, administrators of social and religious institutions, and local government officials. They were selected due to their relevant knowledge and experience regarding caregiving practices, forms of maintenance provided, and societal understanding of maintenance obligations in Islamic law. Secondary data are used to construct the normative and theoretical framework of the study. These include primary sources of Islamic law such as the Qur'an and hadith, classical fiqh literature and contemporary Islamic legal thought addressing maintenance obligations and guardianship, research methodology books, Islamic family law texts, scholarly journal articles, legislation related to child protection, and documents from social institutions concerning assistance to orphans.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, field observation, and documentation study. First, in-depth interviews were carried out in a semi-structured manner to explore the understanding, experiences, and social considerations of informants regarding the fulfillment of orphan maintenance. This technique allows the researcher to obtain detailed information on the level of legal awareness in society and how religious norms are internalized in social practice.¹⁰ Second, non-participatory observation was conducted to obtain an empirical picture of the social conditions of orphans, caregiving patterns, and forms of material and non-material support received in daily life. This observation helps the researcher understand the social context underlying the practice of fulfilling orphan maintenance. Third, documentation study was conducted by examining documents from social institutions, aid reports, and policy archives related to orphan maintenance. This technique serves as both a supplementary data source and a means of verifying information obtained through interviews and observation.

Data analysis in this study follows qualitative data analysis procedures, including data reduction, categorization, data presentation, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involves selecting and grouping data relevant to the research focus, such as forms of maintenance provided, the role of guardians, and social and economic factors influencing the implementation of these obligations. The reduced data are then presented in the form of analytical narratives that connect empirical findings with the normative framework of Islamic law.

This analysis also integrates normative approaches with empirical social analysis. Field findings are compared with normative provisions in Islamic law as well as the

¹⁰ Sharan B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016), 110–115.

concept of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* to assess the extent to which social practices reflect values of child protection and welfare. This data analysis approach refers to qualitative analysis models developed by research methodology scholars.¹¹

To ensure data validity, this study employs several validation techniques. First, source triangulation is used by comparing information obtained from various informants, such as guardians, religious leaders, and social institution administrators. Second, method triangulation is applied by comparing data collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. Third, empirical data are cross-checked with Islamic legal literature to ensure consistency between field findings and the normative framework. In addition, inter-informant confirmation is conducted to ensure the accuracy of the information obtained. These strategies are essential in qualitative research, as they enhance the validity of interpretation and minimize bias in data analysis.¹²

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Regulation of Orphan Maintenance in the Perspective of Islamic Law and National Law

From the perspective of Islamic law, the protection of orphans constitutes a moral and legal principle with a strong normative foundation in the primary sources of the *Sharī'ah*. The *Qur'an* explicitly emphasizes the obligation of society to care for and safeguard orphans, while strictly prohibiting any form of neglect toward them. Verses such as Q.S. al-Nisā' [4]:10 affirm that those who unjustly consume the property of orphans will face severe moral consequences, while Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]:220 encourages society to treat orphans in ways that promote their welfare (*maṣlaḥah*).¹³

These provisions demonstrate that Islam regards the protection of orphans not merely as a social obligation, but also as a legal duty with ethical and spiritual dimensions. In the classical *fiqh* tradition, the obligation to provide maintenance for orphans is explained through a hierarchical framework of family responsibility. When the father, as the primary provider, has passed away, this obligation may be transferred to the closest agnatic guardian (*walī nasab*) who possesses the financial capacity. This principle is

¹¹ Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2014), 31–33.

¹² Sharan B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016), 243–245.

¹³ Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (Maryland: Amana Publications, 2015).

known in fiqh as *al-aqrab fa al-aqrab*, meaning that responsibility is assigned progressively to the nearest relatives.¹⁴

Beyond family mechanisms, Islamic law also provides instruments of social protection through institutions such as zakat, *infāq*, and *ṣadaqah*. Within the Islamic economic system, zakat funds serve a redistributive function to assist economically vulnerable groups, including orphans. Therefore, the fulfillment of orphan maintenance does not rely solely on family responsibility, but can also be strengthened through mechanisms of social solidarity within the Muslim community.¹⁵

In the context of Indonesian national law, the protection of orphans also has a strong constitutional foundation. Article 34 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution stipulates that the poor and neglected children shall be cared for by the state. This provision is further reinforced by Law Number 35 of 2014 on Child Protection, which positions the state, family, and society as jointly responsible for ensuring the rights of children.¹⁶

Moreover, the Compilation of Islamic Law (*Kompilasi Hukum Islam / KHI*) provides a relevant normative framework in the context of child care following the death of the father. Several of its provisions affirm that the responsibility for child care does not rest solely with the mother, but may extend to guardians and the paternal family, provided they are capable of ensuring proper care for the child.

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2. Empirical Practices of Fulfilling Orphan Maintenance in Medan Tembung District

The results of field research in Medan Tembung District indicate that the fulfillment of orphan maintenance occurs within complex social dynamics. In general, the community demonstrates a fairly strong moral awareness to assist orphans; however, this awareness has not been fully articulated as a structured legal obligation. In many observed cases, the fulfillment of orphans' needs relies largely on family solidarity and social assistance from the surrounding community. Close relatives, particularly from the maternal side, often assume the primary role in caring for children after the father's

¹⁴ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu* (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2007).

¹⁵ Monzer Kahf, "Islamic Charity and Social Welfare Systems," *Islamic Economic Studies* 28, no. 1 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1108/IES-2020>

¹⁶ Republik Indonesia, *Undang-Undang Nomor 35 Tahun 2014 tentang Perlindungan Anak*.

death. Nevertheless, such responsibility is often not accompanied by a clear distribution of roles among other family members.

This condition shows that, in social practice, orphan maintenance is more often perceived as a form of social charity or moral duty rather than as a binding family legal obligation. This phenomenon aligns with several studies on Islamic philanthropy, which indicate that Muslim communities frequently rely on mechanisms such as zakat and charity (*ṣadaqah*) to support orphans, while family responsibilities are not always carried out systematically.¹⁷

From a socio-legal perspective, this situation reflects a gap between *law in books* and *law in action*. While Islamic legal norms clearly regulate the obligation to care for orphans, their implementation in society is influenced by cultural, economic, and legal awareness factors.¹⁸

3. Forms of Orphan Maintenance

Based on field findings, the fulfillment of orphan maintenance in Medan Tembung District can be classified into three main forms: material maintenance, educational maintenance, and non-material maintenance.

First, material maintenance is the most dominant form. It includes basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. Most guardians or close relatives strive to meet these needs according to their economic capacity. However, the standard of maintenance provided is often minimal and not based on adequate standards of child welfare.

Second, educational maintenance is a relatively more neglected aspect. Many orphans are able to continue their education only due to assistance from social institutions, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), or government programs. In the perspective of Islamic law, however, education is an integral part of child maintenance. It plays a crucial role in preserving intellect (*ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*), which is one of the primary objectives of the Shariʿah.¹⁹

Third, non-material maintenance includes aspects of caregiving, affection, and psychological protection. This aspect often receives insufficient attention in social practice, despite its significant influence on children's psychological development. Some orphans in this study experienced the absence of a stable caregiver figure following the death of their father, which may lead to long-term psychosocial vulnerability.

¹⁷ Muh Ruslan Abdullah et al., "Islamic Philanthropy: The Fulfilment of Orphans' Needs in Islamic Philanthropy Institution," *Laa Maisyir Journal of Islamic Economics* 9, no. 2 (2022). <https://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/lamaisyir/article/view/31818>

¹⁸ Brian Z. Tamanaha, *A General Jurisprudence of Law and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

¹⁹ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *The Objectives of Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2019).

4. The Role of Guardians, Family, and Social Institutions

The analysis of social practices indicates that the fulfillment of orphan maintenance involves three main actors: guardians, extended families, and socio-religious institutions. Guardians hold the most crucial position in caring for orphans. However, in practice, their role is often understood within a moral and social framework rather than as a structured legal responsibility. There is generally no long-term planning for maintenance or clear standards regarding the needs that must be fulfilled.

The extended family functions as a social buffer, providing additional support when guardians are unable to fully meet the child's needs. However, such contributions are often incidental and not institutionalized. This pattern reflects strong social solidarity within the community, but at the same time indicates weak mechanisms of collective responsibility in orphan care. Meanwhile, social and religious institutions—such as mosques, zakat institutions, and social organizations—play a significant role in supporting the needs of orphans. Studies on Islamic philanthropy show that zakat institutions have great potential to enhance orphan welfare through educational programs and economic empowerment initiatives.²⁰

Nevertheless, the involvement of social institutions should not replace family responsibility. From the perspective of Islamic law, such institutions should function as a form of *ta'āwun* (mutual assistance) that strengthens family-based systems of child protection.

5. Factors Contributing to Variation and Neglect of Maintenance

This study identifies several key factors influencing variation and potential neglect in fulfilling orphan maintenance. The first factor is the economic limitation of families. Many guardians or close relatives possess moral awareness to support orphans but lack sufficient financial capacity to meet all their needs.

The second factor is the low level of legal awareness among the community regarding the obligation of orphan maintenance. In many cases, guardians do not understand that caring for orphans constitutes a family legal obligation with a strong normative foundation in Islamic law. This condition can be explained through the theory of legal awareness proposed by Soerjono Soekanto, which asserts that the effectiveness of law largely depends on the level of public understanding and attitudes toward prevailing legal norms.²¹ The third factor relates to changes in family structure in modern society. In traditional communities, responsibility for child care was often shared collectively

²⁰ Abd. Kholik Khoerulloh, "Transformation of Zakat and Waqf in Society 5.0," *Journal of Islamic Economics* (2025). <https://journal.sebi.ac.id/index.php/jiebsf/article/view/1023>

²¹ Soerjono Soekanto, *Kesadaran Hukum dan Kepatuhan Hukum* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2002).

among extended family members. However, in modern contexts, such responsibility is frequently borne solely by the immediate guardian.

The fourth factor concerns weak coordination among social institutions, government, and families in ensuring the continuity of orphan maintenance. Several studies indicate that without proper coordination, social assistance programs often fail to guarantee sustainable child protection.²²

6. The Relevance of Islamic Law to Social Practice

The analysis of this study shows that Islamic law actually provides a highly adequate normative framework for protecting the rights of orphans. However, in social practice in Medan Tembung District, these norms have not yet fully functioned as *living law* governing community behavior. From the perspective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, fulfilling orphan maintenance is not limited to meeting basic needs, but also involves ensuring the long-term welfare of the child. The *maqāṣid* approach emphasizes that the primary objective of the Shari'ah is to promote human welfare (*maṣlahah*) and prevent social harm.²³

The findings of this study can also be analyzed using the legal system theory proposed by Lawrence M. Friedman. According to Friedman, the effectiveness of law depends on the interaction between three key elements: legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture. In this context, the substance of Islamic law already provides clear norms regarding the obligation to care for orphans. However, the prevailing legal culture, which tends to view orphan maintenance as a form of social charity, has prevented these norms from being fully internalized as binding family obligations. Therefore, strengthening the protection of orphans requires a more comprehensive approach that not only emphasizes normative legal aspects but also takes into account the social, economic, and cultural factors influencing the implementation of law in society.

CONCLUSION

This study affirms that the obligation to provide maintenance for orphans in Islamic law rests upon a strong normative foundation and is multidimensional in nature. This obligation is not merely based on moral considerations or ethical encouragement, but constitutes a legal responsibility attached to guardians and close relatives based on lineage (*nasab*) and financial capacity. When such individual obligations cannot be

²² Muhammad Fahmi Siagian and Hasbullah Ja'far, "Challenges of Social Services in Child Welfare Protection," *Al-Risalah: Journal of Sharia and Law* (2024). https://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/al_risalah/article/view/51973

²³ Jasser Auda, *Maqasid al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law* (London: IIIT, 2008).

fulfilled, Islamic law provides for collective responsibility through social and institutional mechanisms, including the roles of society and the state. Thus, the concept of orphan maintenance in Islamic law encompasses interconnected personal, social, and institutional dimensions aimed at ensuring the continuity of life and the welfare of orphans.

Empirical findings in Medan Tembung District indicate that the fulfillment of orphan maintenance has not been fully implemented as a binding legal obligation. Variations and even neglect in maintenance are influenced by a combination of economic constraints, low legal awareness among guardians and families, and social constructions that perceive maintenance as a voluntary responsibility or one that has been transferred to social and religious educational institutions. This condition reveals a gap between the ideal norms of Islamic law and the pragmatic realities of social practice, where maintenance obligations are more often realized in the form of charitable concern rather than as sustainable rights protection.

The discrepancy between Islamic legal norms and social practice has direct implications for the effectiveness of orphan protection. The partial and unplanned fulfillment of maintenance risks hindering the realization of orphans' fundamental rights, particularly in the areas of education, healthcare, and psychosocial protection. This situation indicates that the objectives of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*—especially the protection of life, the preservation of lineage, and the safeguarding of orphan property—have not been optimally achieved in the studied social context. Therefore, this study underscores the importance of strengthening legal awareness, restructuring the roles of guardians and extended families, and integrating the roles of social institutions and the state, so that the fulfillment of orphan maintenance evolves from mere moral solidarity into a just and sustainable system of legal protection.

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