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Family Functioning and Moral Reasoning among Early Adolescence

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to test empirically correlation between family functioning and moral reasoning in early adolescents. This research was carried out on 143 primary high-school students in Balikpapan. This research used a quantitative approach with moral reasoning scale and family functioning scale to measure variables. Result of data analysis showed that there was a significant positive correlation between family functioning and moral reasoning. And for the analysis between family functioning and each dimension of moral reasoning, the results were no correlation between family functioning and pre-conventional moral reasoning, family functioning correlate with conventional moral reasoning, and no correlation between family functioning and post-conventional moral reasoning.

Keywords: family functioning; moral reasoning; adolescence

INTRODUCTION

Moral is derived from the Latin "mos" (plural: mores) which means custom or custom. The word "mos" (mores) in Latin is synonymous with ethos in Greek, the word mores and morals are morphologically adjectives (Sukardi, 2003). Still in Sukardi (2003), as for what is meant by morals is in accordance with generally accepted ideas about human actions that is related to the meaning of good and reasonable. In other words, morals are a virtue tailored to measures of action accepted by the public, encompassing a certain social or environmental unity. The word moral always refers to the good and bad of human acts as human beings. While the meaning of morality according to Poespoprodjo (1988) is the quality in the actions of human beings by which we say that the act is right or wrong, good or bad or in other words morality includes the notion of good bad deeds of human beings. Good and bad deeds are called moral values. Moral possessed in the individual has values such as honesty, justice, and others (Ibung, 2009). Santrock (1996) defines moral development as a development related to rules and conventions about what man should do in his interactions with others. Morals of moral development include affective morale, behavior, and moral reasoning.

Adolescence, especially during early adolescence (13-16 years) occurs very rapid physical changes, emotional imbalances and instability in many ways, seeking identity and social relationships that change (Hurlock, 1980). Then Hurlock (1980) also says that moral change in adolescents such as individual moral change is increasingly becoming abstract and less concrete, moral conviction is more focused on what is right and less on what is wrong and justice emerges as the dominant force, cognitive, which encourages adolescents to be more courageous to make decisions about morals, moral judgment becomes less egocentric, and moral judgment is more expensive and emotional and causes psychological tension. According to Piaget (Santrock, 1996), adolescents are able to consider all possibilities to solve a problem and account for it based on a hypothesis or proportion. That is, hopefully adolescents can view the problem from various sides and solve it by taking many factors as the basis of consideration and control.

Moral control can come from the outside can also be replaced with internal control. Basically, humans are able to control their morale. Man grows and develops with knowledge and regulation from various parties such as religion, family, culture and country. But in fact, in these days, many people have moral damage. Moral damage to adolescents every year decreases, but the case is increasingly sharp and leads to sexual behavior. The survey results from the National Family Planning Coordinating Board (BKKBN) in JABODETABEK published by harapanrakyat.com on May 2, 2013 revealed a fact that 51 out of 100 teenage girls are no longer virgins, a teenage age range who had had sex outside marriage between 13 -18 years. Then in a detik.com article dated April 23, 2014, stated that in Samarinda circulated a video abusive ABG by 5 teenage boys of junior high age who raped a woman of junior age as well. In Balikpapan, there is a brawl that brawlers are not just teenage boys, but also there are young women. The cause of teenage brawl that spans the age of 13-15 years was originated from social networking (kaltimpost.co.id, 2014). All these disturbing events are the facts and proof that adolescent morale is now experiencing a deterioration that must be prevented and stopped immediately. There are still many teenagers who have not been able to control and consider his actions. That is, the moral development is still lacking so cannot analyze what is good and which is bad. Because moral reasoning is an indicator of maturity of moral development. And the indicator that causes a person's height of reason is behavior and behavior model, cognitive conflict and equilibration affect thinking, and the movements of libido and superego overwhelm feelings (Rest, 1979).

Gunarsa (2002) reveals there are two views about the influence of society on the human moral value order. First, man is born with virtue and will develop into a moral person if society does not damage his personality and behavior. Second, human beings are born with a selfish nature so that society must control and educate them to be good and moral. Of these two views does not diminish the meaning of social elements such as parents and teachers with their influence on children. The role of this social element can benefit the child, but can also damage the child's development. According to Anshar & Alshodiq (2005), the dominant factors that influence the formation and growth of children are families, schools, and

environments that are all interconnected. The family is a very important institution in the process of childcare although not the only factor, but the family is a decisive element in the formation of the personality and abilities of children (Anshar & Alshodiq, 2005). Theoretically Gunarsa (2002) says that, can be ascertained in a good family, the child has basic growth and development that is strong enough to become an adult human. The earlier the moral is taught the greater the capacity of the child to achieve a solid character, that is to grow to think, believe, and act morally (Coles, 1999). Like the recent murder case by Mia, a 16-year-old girl who was killed by her former lover by smashing a motorcycle gear onto her head. Events that occurred midnight is questionable where the location of care for his family. The logic is that a 16-year-old should not stay out of the house at night. In the absence of a family role that nurtures him, events such as Mia's murder may recur.

Around 2300 years ago, Aristotle (Schwab, Gray-Ice, & Prentice, 2002) defines the family as the basic social unit and describes its social function. Two thousand years later Rousseau (Schwab et al. 2002) states that, the family is a natural institution, and over the centuries, the importance of family in society has been confirmed by the mutual effect of individual-family-interaction societies. Family interactions determine the health or feelings of each of the three levels of biosocial organizations and thus influence the formation of individual character and personality development, the integrity of the family unit and its functioning, and the welfare of society. Every individual can acquire and learn moral knowledge from social background, family, home environment, school environment, nation, and religion. And the role of the family is very big and most important. It is from this family that the society's order begins, because the family is the smallest community unit.

Kohlberg (Santrock, 1996) also believes that some types of experience between parent and child can cause children and adolescents to think with higher levels of moral thinking. Parents who are willing to engage in conversation and encourage their children to talk about value-related things will make their children have higher moral thinking. Unfortunately, most parents do not give their children a

chance to take on a role like this. Then added by Walker and Taylor (Santrock, 1996), from a research note that the moral development of children is also related to the form of discussions conducted with parents, including asking questions and supportive interactions. There is an increasing emphasis on the role of parents in moral development (Santrock, 1996). The role of parents is the result of family favors where parents are able to create strong family ties to instill good morals for children.

METHOD

Respondents of this study were 143 primary high-school students, age 13-16 years old, didn't come from religious based school. The scale used to reveal the variable of moral reasoning in this study is the result of an adaptation of the Moral Reasoning Questionnaire developed by White, Crafford, Schepers (Kruger, 2012). The scale is based on the theory of moral reasoning developed by Kohlberg. The scale used in this study consisted of 40 items, with 5 items measuring the morality of punishment and the orientation of obedience, 6 items measuring aspects of individualism and objective morality, 6 items measuring aspects of interpersonal morality, 6 items measuring aspects of social system morality, 6 items measuring aspects of morality human rights, and 5 items measure the universal aspect of morality. The 40 items are contained in 7 situations, each situation consisting of six statements in accordance with the six phases of moral reasoning proposed by Kohlberg. Each statement in a situation is given a scale of one to seven to choose from, the extent to which the subject agrees or disagrees. While the scale used to reveal the variable of family functioning in this study is an adaptation of The McMaster Family Assessment Device by Epstein, Baldwin, and Bishop (1983) of 35 items, with 5 items measuring problem solving, 5 items measuring communication, 5 items measures affective responsiveness, 5 items measure affective involvement, 5 items to measure behavior control, and 5 items measure general functioning. This scale contains four answer choices that indicate the frequency of the answers given to the respondents. The assessment is based on the summated rating method, consisting of 4 levels of assessment with a score of 1 to 4.

FINDINGS/RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of normality and linearity test, the data obtained from the research subjects are abnormal distributed data and linear correlated. Then, based on the result of correlation analysis between family functionality with moral reasoning in early adolescence, it can be seen that $r = 0.155$ with $p = 0.032$ ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate that there is a significant relationship between family functioning and moral reasoning. Not only that, data analysis also showed the results of correlation tests between family functioning and each dimension of moral reasoning. The results are no correlation between family functioning and pre-conventional moral reasoning ($r=0.113$, $p=0.179$), family functioning correlate with conventional moral reasoning ($r=0.188$, $p=0.024$), and no correlation between family functioning and post-conventional moral reasoning ($r=0.119$, $p=0.158$).

Seeing the acceptance of this research hypothesis in accordance with the statement that Freud (Santrock, 1996) about the function of the family as a place of moral development of children. If since childhood the relationship with the family is not harmonious, then the child is difficult to develop their superego so it is possible will violate social norms. Families should have a strong role in instilling morals in children. The function of the family affects the child's moral reasoning is also appropriate as in the research of Tarry and Emler (2007) that the attitude of family authority has a relationship with moral reasoning and moral value.

The result of hypothesis test is p value = 0.024 ($p < 0.05$) which states that moral reasoning at conventional level is very significant to emphasize that family function that can help children to distinguish what is right and wrong. Because according to Kohlberg (1980), at the conventional level individuals adhere to some standards of others (external), i.e. family, community groups, and others. Because at the conventional level, individuals not only adhere to external standards such as family, but also community and social groups, so it can be explained by Hurlock (1997) statement that four roles as a place for children to learn moral attitudes, namely the role of law, custom, and regulation in moral development; the role of conscience in moral development; the role of guilt and shame in moral development;

and the role of social interaction in moral development. In the role of social interaction in moral development is one of them is a social group. According to Hurlock (1997), social groups strongly influence the moral development of children. If the social group is a group whose interests cause a commotion, the child may develop into a mischievous teenager. Conversely, if the social group has a good moral code, then moral behavior will lead to good personal and social adjustment. This happens because in early adolescence (puberty), the interest to play decreases due to physical changes and anxiety of these changes increases, the child needs more intimate friends than playmates. Since family members rarely meet the needs of friends at this time, the child will choose his best friend (Hurlock, 1997). As acknowledged by ND, one of the respondent, that he personally feels his social environment greatly affect the way of thinking and attitude. Thus, it can be concluded that in early adolescence, the influence of a person in the attitude and understand the moral sense derived from external influences, namely family and social environment.

This research also cannot be separated from the weaknesses that exist. One of the weaknesses of this study, namely in the process of data retrieval, not all measuring instruments filled by the subject can be observed and observed directly by researchers. This causes some information is not filled completely. In addition, the scale used in this study has been through the process of review and professional judgment of experts in the field, but did not rule out that the scale still contains many weaknesses. It is therefore expected to be an evaluation for subsequent research.

CONCLUSIONS

The results showed that there is a positive relationship between family functioning and moral reasoning among early adolescence, so that the hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there is an effect of family functioning to high and low score of moral reasoning in early adolescence. Also, there is a correlation between family functioning and conventional moral reasoning, no correlation between family functioning and pre-conventional and post-conventional moral reasoning.

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