

The Role of Attachment to Mother and Self-esteem toward Aggression Behavior in Depok City, Indonesia

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Abstract

Background and Purpose: Attachment is an emotional relationship that is built by the child and mother from birth and becomes one of the factors forming the child's behavior. One of the behaviors that can be related to mother-child attachment is aggression. Another thing that might help determine the emergence of aggression behavior in adolescents is self-esteem. This study aims to (1) determine the effect of attachment on mothers and self-esteem with aggression behavior in adolescents, (2) determine the effect of attachment on mothers with aggression behavior in adolescents, and (3) determine the effect of self-esteem with aggression behavior in adolescents.

Methodology: The subjects in this study were adolescents in PIT Junior High School in Depok city, totaling 130 students. The technique used is multiple regression techniques.

Results: The results showed $P = 0.01$ meaning that there was a strong significant relationship between the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem with aggression behavior. Partially, there is the influence of the quality of attachment to the mother with aggressive behavior at a fairly strong level with a negative direction ($R = -0.377$, $P = 0.01$), and there is an effect of self-esteem with the behavior of the aggression at a weak level with a negative direction ($R = -0.277$, $P = 0.01$), meaning that the lower the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem, the higher the aggression behavior. The quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem contributed effectively to 28.6% of the behavior of aggression.

Conclusion: There is a strong significant effect between the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem with the behavior of aggression in adolescents in PIT Junior High School in Depok city. That is, the lower the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem, the higher the aggression behavior.

Key words: Aggression, Attachment, Self-esteem

INTRODUCTION

Aggressive behavior is a deviant behavior in adolescents. Negative family climate that is full of disputes and colored by more general conflicts can spread the atmosphere of the house which makes the atmosphere between family members uncomfortable so that it can cause teens to feel stress, insecurity, and discomfort. Teenagers in such an environment are at high risk of developing problematic

behaviors such as aggressive, abusive behavior, and depression.

Hurlock (2005) defines aggression as a reaction of spontaneous anger, can be physical or verbal. This anger reaction is usually used by adolescents as an instrument of power over their environment. For example, teens will slam things when their desires are not fulfilled. The tendency to show aggressive behavior generally appears prominently starting from childhood so that social interaction that occurs in adolescents is usually characterized by aggressive behavior such as hostility, anger, shouting, slamming, and damaging objects. Not only that, when aggressive behavior occurs at school, this can make classmates become frightened and make the classroom not conducive anymore. Adolescents who behave aggressively at school and at home certainly cause concern for parents. Teens who behave

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aggressively have the potential to endanger themselves and others so that no parent wants their child to be a victim of aggressiveness or aggressors.

Murray (Hall and Lindzey, 1993) says that aggression is a way to overcome resistance strongly or punish others. Aggressive according to Baron (Cahya, 2018) is the behavior carried out by individuals with the aim of injuring or harming other individuals. Myers said that aggressive behavior was physical or verbal behavior to hurt others (Cahya, 2018).

Hall and Lindzey (1993) described any behavior that is an outlet for feelings of frustration to overcome resistance strongly or punish others, which is intended to injure others physically or psychologically to others that can be done physically or verbally called aggression.

Teenagers are a phase of development experienced by all humans. Adolescence means the development of a transition involving physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes in various forms in different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds (Papalia and Feldman, 2015). Adolescence offers many opportunities for growth not only from the physical dimension but also in cognitive, emotional, autonomy, self-esteem, and intimacy competence. Adolescents who have supportive relationships with parents, schools, and communities tend to develop in positive and healthy ways (Papalia and Feldman, 2015).

The adolescent phase according to Monks, Knoers, and Hadinoto (2006) takes place between the ages of 12 and 21 years, with a division of 12–15 years of early adolescence, 15–18 years of middle adolescence, and 18–21 years of late adolescence. Stanley Hall explained that adolescence is a time filled with pressure and a period of upheaval influenced by conflict and mood swings (Santrock, 2007).

The social development of adolescents can be seen in the presence of two kinds of movements, namely, separating from parents and toward peers. De Wuffel explained that the quality of relationships with parents plays a very important role in the development of adolescence (Monks *et al.*, 2006). Basically, the family is the smallest unit of society and has become the primary social institution for raising children. Bronfenbrenner explained that the family environment (home), neighbors, schools, and workplaces are the smallest systems (microsystems) that can affect individual development (Papalia and Feldman, 2015). This shows how important the role of the family as one microsystem in the life of a teenager. The role of the family in influencing adolescent development is inseparable from

the relationship between parents or caregivers with children in the home.

Relationships that are established in a family can form an emotional bond that is commonly known as attachment. Attachment is a bond that reinforces and is reciprocal, usually occurs between infants and caregivers (caregivers) who contribute to each other to build a quality relationship (Papalia and Feldman, 2015).

Bowlby argues that attachment can occur at any age level, as in the stages of adolescent development (Santrock, 2002). Children can learn about themselves by the attachment experience they get. Ainsworth (Helmi, 2004) defines attachment as an affective bond to someone who is aimed at a sticky figure and this bond lasts a long time and continuously. Furthermore, Ainsworth also explained that secure attachment in the 1st year provided an important foundation for future psychological development (Santrock, 2002).

The nature of adolescent attachment to parents determines a lot, insecure attachment (insecure attachment) if it occurs together with independence raises excessive attention to self-interest, while insecure attachment together with dependence leads to conformity orientation or full isolation of anxiety (Monks *et al.*, 2006). According to Erikson, adolescents try to break away from parents with a view to finding themselves called the process of searching for ego identity (Monks *et al.*, 2006). Development experts reveal the new role of attachment of parents in adolescents play an important role in the formation of behavior (Santrock, 2002).

Mother was ranked first as a teenage main stick figure. Mothers usually interact more with children and function as people who meet their needs and provide comfort (Eliasa, 2011). Parental attachment is an adaptive function that provides a foundation for adolescents to interact with the wider environment. According to Santrock (2002), a strong attachment can protect teens from anxiety and feelings of depression or emotional distress associated with the transition period between children to adults. Stickiness can make teens think that they have a warm family and can tell of any complaints they experience.

The quality of the relationship between parent and child is related to the ability to adapt to children during pre-school, elementary, and middle school. The results of Dallaire's research (Paramita and Soetikno, 2018) show that the more sensitive and responsive parents are in responding to their children need, the teenagers will increasingly develop a feeling of security in relation to their parents (securely attached). A strong tendency in children to attach

themselves to the father or mother can be interpreted as a way to reduce their potential to do something that can be harmful or hurtful behavior (Bowlby, 1988). This is corroborated in research conducted by Chang *et al.* (Sari *et al.*, 2018) which says that there is a positive correlation between negative parenting and the appearance of problematic behavior in children.

In addition to the attachment of mothers to adolescents, self-esteem is one factor that can also influence the occurrence of aggression behavior. Good self-esteem can help teens control their behavior, so they will think before doing something. Self-esteem is a term that is literally interpreted as self-esteem (Echols and Shadily, 1997). One of the pioneers who put forward the theory of self-esteem, Morris Rosenberg (Mruk, 2006) suggests that self-esteem is a positive or negative attitude of an individual toward a particular object called self. Rosenberg further explained that high self-esteem expresses the feeling that the individual is “good enough.” Individuals will feel that individuals are valuable people; respecting him as he really is, but not admiring himself or hoping that others will be impressed with him. Individuals do not consider themselves superior to others.

Conversely, individuals with low self-esteem will have characteristics such as hypersensitivity, feeling unstable or insecure, insecure, more caring to protect themselves from painful things than to actualize opportunities and enjoy life, inability to take risks, have depressive symptoms general, pessimistic, lonely, and feelings of alienation that refer to one of the negative behaviors such as aggressive behavior (Rosenberg and Owens, in Mruk, 2006).

Based on the background described above, the problems that will be examined in this study are as follows: (1) Whether there is an effect of attachment to the mother and self-esteem with aggression behavior in adolescents, (2) whether there is an effect of attachment in mothers with aggression behavior in adolescents, and (3) whether there is an influence of self-esteem with aggression behavior in adolescents.

METHODOLOGY

The subjects in this study were adolescents who were registered as students of PIT Junior High School in Depok city, totaling 130 students. This study uses three types of scales as a measurement tool to obtain the necessary data provided directly on the research subject.

The Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) scale is a scale used to measure the attachment between mother and child proposed by Armsden and Greenberg, in 1991

(Armsden *et al.*, 1991). The IPPA scale uses a Likert scale consisting of 25 items and provides four answer choices, including SS (strongly agree), S (agree), TS (disagree), and STS (strongly disagree). An example of the item is “I feel I need to know what my mother thinks about the things I think about.” The trial results show 20 valid items with a reliability coefficient of 0.858.

Aggression behavior scale is used to measure aggression behavior. In this study, the scale of aggression behavior was used which was adapted from the scale of aggression Buss and Perry (1992). An example of the item is “If my friend is looking for problem with me, I can just hit him.” The trial result shows 20 valid items with a reliability coefficient of 0.821.

Self-esteem is a form of positive attitude and giving appreciation from individuals toward themselves (Murk, 2006). In this study, the self-esteem scale was used which was adapted from the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES) in 1965 (Albo *et al.*, 2007). An example of the item is “Sometimes, I feel that I’m not good at all.” Test results show seven valid items with a reliability coefficient of 0.772.

This research is a multiple regression analysis study. Before conducting a hypothesis test, a basic assumption test and a classic assumption test are performed. Calculation of data analysis using a Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) computer program.

RESULTS

The basic assumption test results are normality for aggression behavior scale, IPPA scale, and RSES using one-sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, that is, 0.200 ($P > 0.05$), so it can be concluded that the data of this study are normally distributed.

Linearity test results show that the relationship between the variables of aggression behavior with the quality of attachment to the mother and between the variables of aggression behavior with self-esteem there is a linear relationship, with a linear variable of 0.000 ($P < 0.05$).

Multicollinearity test results for the variable quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem variables have a tolerance value of 0.850 and a variance inflation factor (VIF) value of 1.176. Tolerance value is >0.1 and VIF value is <10 . This means that there is no multicollinearity between independent variables.

Heteroscedasticity test results can be known with the help of SPSS showing the distribution of scatterplot images which in this study showed no clear patterns, and the points

Table 1: Multiple regression analysis

R	0.535
R ²	0.286
Uji F	25.430
Sig.	0.000

spread above and below the number 0 on the Y-axis; then, there was no heteroscedasticity, so it can be concluded that did not occur heteroscedasticity.

Furthermore, Table 1 summarized that based on the results of the study using multiple regression analysis, techniques obtained value of $R = 0.535$; calculated $F = 25.430$ and $P = 0.01$. These results indicate that there is a strong significant influence between the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem with aggression behavior. The results of this study are in accordance with the hypothesis put forward by researchers, that is, there is a strong significant effect between attachment to the mother and self-esteem with aggression behavior in adolescents. The two independent variables, namely, the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem together have an influence with the need for aggression in adolescents.

The value of $R^2 = 0.286$ which means that the variable quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem together contribute up to 28.6% in the emergence of aggression behavior. The remaining 71.4% is by other variables not tested empirically in this study. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem can be used as predictor variables to predict aggression behavior.

The second and third hypothesis test results in this study were conducted using a partial correlation test to determine the relationship between the two variables, namely, the independent variable and the dependent variable. It is known that the significance value on the partial test of aggression behavior variables and the quality of attachment to the mother is 0.000 ($P < 0.05$) with $R = -0.377$. This shows that the second hypothesis is accepted, which means that the influence between the qualities of attachment to the mother with aggressive behavior is at a fairly strong level. The direction of the formed influence is negative, which means the lower the quality of attachment to the mother, the higher the aggression behavior, so it can be concluded that there is a negative and significant effect between the qualities of attachment to the mother with aggression behavior. Furthermore, based on the results of the partial correlation test on the variables of aggression and self-esteem behavior, a significance value of 0.001 ($P < 0.05$) with $R = -0.277$ is known. This shows that the third hypothesis is accepted which means that the influence between self-esteem and

aggression behavior is at a weak level. The direction of the formed behavior is negative which means the lower the self-esteem, the aggression behavior will be higher, so it can be concluded that there is a negative and significant difference between self-esteem and aggression behavior.

The result of the significance value of 0.000 on the attachment variable <significance of 0.001 on the self-esteem variable ($P < 0.05$) indicates that the attachment variable is more influential than the self-esteem variable in predicting aggression behavior in adolescents.

DISCUSSION

Attachment to the mother is needed throughout the lifetime of the child, this is very important for children (Santrock, 2014). The mother is ranked first as the child's best stick figure. Mothers usually interact more with children and function as people who meet their needs and provide comfort (Eliasa, 2011). The quality of attachment to a good mother will affect adolescents in interacting with the surrounding environment. Stickiness gives teens emotional security. The sense of security that has developed since childhood will underlie its success in establishing social relationships in the future. Conversely, when children who have become teenagers do not have a trust in the environment, adolescents will feel afraid to relate to others, under certain conditions will lead to aggression behavior.

The results of the analysis mean that insecure attachment has a positive relationship with the form of aggression, meaning that the more a person insecure, the higher the aggression behavior as revealed in the Dubois-Comtois (2013) study. In addition, the analysis also means that secure attachment can help reduce the level of aggression. This result is in line with Savage (2014) and Moretti and Peled (2004) research which states that secure attachment is associated with low aggression behavior in children and adolescent involvement in harmful behavior.

Good self-esteem can help teens control their behavior, so they will think before doing something. Conversely, individuals with low self-esteem will have characteristics such as hypersensitivity, feeling unstable or insecure, insecure, more caring to protect themselves from painful things than to actualize opportunities and enjoy life, inability to take risks, have depressive symptoms general, pessimistic, lonely, and feelings of alienation that refers to one of the negative behaviors such as aggressive behavior (Rosenberg and Owens, in Mruk, 2006).

Based on the results of research and discussion that has been described, researchers have answered research

hypotheses regarding aggression behavior in adolescents in terms of the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem in students of PIT Junior High School in Depok city simultaneously. This is supported by other researches which say that insecure attachment with mothers contributes effectively to aggression by 16.5% of 388 students of SMAN 2 Ungaran (Tungga and Desiningrum, 2018).

However, this study is inseparable from the limitations that research can only be generalized to a limited extent in the study population, namely, students of PIT Junior High School in Depok city so far application to a wider population with different characteristics requires further research. It is hoped that further research can find more comprehensive results by expanding the scope of research and also adding other psychological variables.

In addition to limitations and weaknesses, this study also has several advantages that can be considered as a reference source for research related to aggression behavior. This research can prove the proposed hypothesis, namely, the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem affect the behavior of aggression in adolescents in PIT Junior High School in Depok city. This research can be used as a reference to strengthen existing theories. In addition, this study is accompanied by additional analysis that can provide more information for readers. Another advantage is that this research can increase the awareness of readers, especially students, parents, and the school of the importance of raising awareness of aggression behavior due to its detrimental effects on actors, others, and the environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that there is a strong significant influence between the quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem with the behavior of aggression in adolescents in PIT Junior High School in Depok city. Furthermore, there is an influence between the qualities of attachment to the mother with aggressive behavior at a quite strong level with a negative direction in adolescents in PIT Junior High School in Depok city. This means that the lower the quality of attachment to the mother, the higher the aggression behavior. In addition, there is also an influence between self-esteem and aggression behavior at a weak level with a negative direction in adolescents in PIT Junior High School in Depok city. This means that the lower the self-esteem, the higher the aggression behavior. The quality of attachment to the mother and self-esteem contributes effectively to 28.6% of the behavior of aggression in adolescents in PIT Junior High School in Depok city.

SUGGESTION

Through the above review, researchers suggest that teens can train themselves in controlling emotions, for example, with deep breathing techniques such as regulating deep breathing while counting the numbers 1–10 repeatedly while feeling emotions that lead to aggression behavior until the emotions subside and disappear. In addition, adolescents can divert excessive emotional drive for more positive things such as being active in joining extracurricular activities at school or sports activities. Furthermore, for parents, this study presents that attachment with parents, especially in mothers, can help reduce the level of aggression in adolescents. Therefore, active parental roles are needed to build secure attachments to adolescents so that aggression behavior that leads to deviation can be prevented, for example, by being supportive and sensitive to the needs of adolescents, building good communication within the family, and make teens feel safe and trust in parents. For further researchers to be able to develop other psychological variables outside the variables that have been used in this study such as friendship variables or school environment variables. In addition, it is also suggested that conducting research with a larger population so that research generalizations will become wider.

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