

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THE DYNAMICS OF PROMISCUITY AMONG HIGH SCHOOL TEENAGERS

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Abstract: Adolescent promiscuity is one of the social problems that often becomes a concern among the community, especially in the high school environment. This study aims to understand the role of parents in preventing adolescents' involvement in promiscuity and the factors that can influence their social behavior. By understanding the relationship between parental attachment and adolescent promiscuity behavior. This study used a qualitative approach. The data collection method was conducted through in-depth interviews. Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling technique, with the main criteria of adolescents aged 16-18 years with a total of 6 participants. The results show that balanced supervision, open communication, and moral education from parents play an important role in shaping adolescents' attitudes towards relationships. The moral values taught by parents have a great influence on how adolescents choose friends and avoid promiscuity

Keywords: High School Adolescents; Promiscuity; Psychology; Role of Parents

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence signifies the transition period from childhood to adulthood. Delinquent behavior is often attributed to teenagers, whose behavior is influenced by their surroundings, potentially contributing to promiscuity (Mia et al., 2021). According to Estefania Monaco et al. (2019), this phase brings a heightened risk of stress due to the need to adapt to significant changes and navigate new social landscapes. Among the social issues that arise during this stage, teenage promiscuity is a major concern, particularly in senior high school (SMA) environments. This behavior not only poses risks to the health and safety of adolescents but also has broader implications for their social and emotional development. The roots of adolescent behavior can often be traced back to their upbringing and the quality of the environment they were exposed to during childhood. (Jahja, 2015 :Arif Widodo, 2020) emphasize that morals and ethics are learned through family and social environments, underscoring the critical role of parenting in shaping adolescent behavior. A child's ability to navigate the complexities of adolescence is heavily influenced by the quality of attachment and support they receive from their family. This is echoed by Elena Delgado et al. (2022), who argue that adolescents' exploration of autonomy requires a delicate balance of support and independence, where parents play a crucial role in providing a secure foundation.

The development of autonomy during adolescence involves a continuation of the exploratory tendencies of childhood, paired with the need to adapt to new social and emotional contexts. Bowlby's attachment theory provides a framework for understanding how secure relationships with parents can serve as a foundation for healthy social interactions outside the family. According to Bowlby (1969) and Angela Keyzers et al. (2019), attachment is defined as a "deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space." This bond is instrumental in forming the basis of adolescent social behavior, with secure parental attachment linked to positive outcomes such as increased self-confidence and better decision-making in social contexts. On the other hand, adolescents with weak or insecure attachments to their parents are more likely to engage in negative behaviors, including risky promiscuity. This behavior is often

fueled by a lack of emotional support and the need to seek validation or connection elsewhere, often leading to unhealthy social relationships. Adolescents who do not feel supported at home may become more vulnerable to peer pressure and the temptations of risky social environments. They might struggle with low self-esteem and a lack of clear moral guidance, which can increase their likelihood of engaging in promiscuity.

Promiscuity, a social phenomenon identified in scientific literature, can cause harm to individuals and society. The phenomenon is associated with various factors, including biology, orientation, sociocultural and moral values, and behavior (Yafie, 2017). Parents often assume that sexual issues are only associated with marital relationships, but such issues can also be a result of promiscuity in children, particularly adolescents (Rulianti & Mukminin, 2022). Adolescent promiscuity can disrupt social and emotional development, especially during the transition from childhood to adulthood, when judgment and self-regulation are still developing. Peer pressure and weak parental attachment often increase the risk of risky behaviors, underscoring the critical role of a supportive family environment. According to research by (Stary, 2020), uncontrolled promiscuity frequently leads to a rise in sexually transmitted infections, which severely impacts public health. Furthermore, (Dreweke, 2019) study revealed that engaging in promiscuous behavior can result in elevated rates of teenage pregnancy, jeopardizing the education, social development, and well-being of adolescents. Close and trusting relationships with parents empower adolescents to resist negative influences, establish healthy boundaries, and make informed social choices. Conversely, emotional distance and poor communication between parents and adolescents can erode trust, increasing vulnerability to problematic behaviors. This study examines the relationship between parental attachment and adolescent promiscuity among high school students, aiming to highlight how parental involvement shapes behavior and resilience, offering insights for parents, educators.

Through this understanding, more effective prevention strategies can be developed to combat promiscuity among adolescents. This includes promoting healthy family dynamics, encouraging open communication, and equipping parents with the tools they need to guide their children through the challenges of adolescence. By emphasizing the importance of secure attachments, this research aims to contribute to a broader effort to support the well-being and healthy development of adolescents as they transition into adulthood.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach aimed at deeply understanding the experiences, views, and perceptions of respondents regarding the role of parents in the dynamics of adolescent promiscuity. This approach was chosen because it allows for the exploration of descriptive and in-depth data, aligning with the study's objective to holistically investigate this social phenomenon. By using this approach, the researcher seeks to obtain a richer picture of how parental roles influence adolescents' social behaviors and the contributing factors behind risky social behaviors. The research focuses on the context of social interactions and emotional dynamics experienced by adolescents within their families and social environments. The data collection method utilized in this study is in-depth interviews, which are considered the most appropriate technique for exploring participants' subjective experiences. This method enables the researcher to obtain detailed and profound information about the respondents' experiences, perceptions, and perspectives. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format, guided by a set of open-ended questions designed to gather information relevant to the research focus. A semi-structured approach was chosen for its flexibility, allowing the researcher to adapt questions based on the interview's flow while maintaining the framework of the study. At the same time, respondents were given the freedom to elaborate on their experiences in a detailed and unrestricted manner, ensuring that the data collected authentically reflects their perspectives.

Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, which aims to choose individuals who meet specific criteria relevant to the study's objectives. The primary criteria for participants were adolescents aged 16–18 years who are high school students with direct experience interacting with parents regarding boundaries in social interactions. A total of six participants were chosen to take part in this study. These participants are expected to provide diverse insights into how parental roles influence their social choices, particularly in avoiding risky behaviors like promiscuity. The data gathered from the interviews were recorded with the participants' consent to ensure accuracy and completeness of the information. Subsequently, the data were transcribed verbatim to facilitate further analysis. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, which involves coding the data to identify key themes relevant to the study's focus. This analytical process includes several stages, such as familiarization with the data, initial coding, identifying themes, reviewing themes, and interpreting the data. Thematic analysis was chosen for its ability to systematically organize data, resulting in comprehensive and structured findings.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

This study highlights the significant impact of parental roles in the social lives and decision-making processes of adolescents, particularly in how they navigate issues such as risky peer interactions. Based on interview findings, communication between parents and adolescents emerges as a critical factor influencing social behavior. Most respondents described having good relationships with their parents. Open and non-judgmental communication, as experienced by respondents 3 and 4, provided them with a safe space to share their experiences without fear of negative judgment, fostering positive social behavior. However, challenges were evident among some respondents, such as respondents 1 and 5, who felt unheard or judged prematurely during discussions. This indicates that communication dominated by parents, rather than mutual dialogue, can reduce adolescents' comfort in expressing themselves openly. Parental involvement in adolescents' social lives also varied significantly. Most respondents reported experiencing a balance between freedom and light supervision. This approach allowed them to develop independence while still feeling guided. For instance, respondent 6 described a positive experience with parents who were actively involved in their social life without restricting their freedom to choose friends. On the other hand, respondent 2 felt overly constrained by rigid rules, leading to feelings of pressure and a lack of trust in their ability to make decisions. These findings emphasize the importance of a balanced approach that combines supervision with the freedom to enable adolescents to learn responsible decision-making in their social interactions.

The impact of promiscuity that occurs is that many adolescent boys and girls engage in deviant behavior without thinking about the consequences. They are often indifferent to the negative effects it has on themselves, their families, and the country. This can lead to problems such as drug addiction, contracting sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV, increased crime, and damaged relationships with family. Being pregnant out of wedlock, losing enjoyment in worship, and distancing yourself from the Creator can also have negative consequences. In addition, adolescent boys and girls who are unable to concentrate in school, desperate to study, and have difficulty concentrating often have a negative impact on their academic performance. Moral values taught by parents also play a crucial role in influencing how adolescents choose friends and avoid risky peer behavior. Respondents 3 and 4 highlighted that the moral principles instilled by their parents served as important guides for determining their social relationships. They credited these values with helping them distinguish between positive and negative social influences. Meanwhile, respondent 6 described having full freedom to choose friends but still respecting the family values taught at home. This suggests that the effectiveness of parental influence on moral values depends heavily on the emotional bond shared between parents and children. Strong emotional connections make adolescents more likely to embrace and uphold their parents' values.

In terms of education about the risks of peer influence and social behavior, most parents provided basic knowledge about dangers such as drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, and juvenile delinquency. However, the depth of this education varied. For example, respondent 2 felt that the information

provided by their parents was insufficient compared to that of other respondents. Parents must always be there for their children and provide support in avoiding promiscuity. They should also guide their children in choosing positive friends and engaging in healthy activities. This will help children understand the importance of taking care of themselves and selecting a healthy and positive environment. (Agung Wijaya et al., 2023). This underscores the need for more proactive communication from parents to offer a deeper and more contextually relevant understanding of the social challenges adolescents face. When education from parents is shallow or limited, adolescents may lack a comprehensive awareness of potential risks, leaving them more vulnerable to negative influences. Most respondents reported not feeling pressured to meet their parents' expectations regarding their social lives. However, some, such as respondent 2, mentioned that their parents' views on what constitutes "good friends" often differed from their own, creating emotional tension. Respondent 6 similarly noted that the pressure to align with parental expectations could sometimes restrict their social freedom. Such mismatches between parental expectations and adolescents' social realities can lead to conflicts that affect the parent-child relationship.

This study confirms that parent-adolescent relationships built on open communication, balanced supervision, and relevant moral education are effective in preventing adolescents from engaging in risky behaviors. Parenting styles that are overly controlling or, conversely, overly disengaged, tend to hinder the development of healthy social behaviors. Furthermore, according to Darmawan et al. (2024), education on sexual issues remains inadequate, leading to promiscuity among teenagers. Therefore, education on sexual matters should be included as a topic in school lessons and even integrated into the curriculum, so this subject can be taught to all teenagers, helping to reduce promiscuity among them. Thus, parents need to adopt a flexible and adaptive approach to support adolescents' optimal growth. These findings align with Bowlby's attachment theory, which posits that secure emotional bonds between parents and children provide a foundation for positive social behavior. When these bonds are strong, adolescents are better equipped to withstand social pressures and make decisions that align with family moral values. Consequently, this research provides valuable insights for parents, educators, and other stakeholders in fostering family environments that support adolescents' development into responsible and socially adept individuals.

CONCLUSION

The interview results highlight significant variations in how respondents communicate and interact with their parents, reflecting diverse family dynamics that influence adolescents' ability to navigate social challenges, including promiscuity. Most respondents acknowledged the importance of family values in guiding their social behavior, but the effectiveness of these values depended on the quality of emotional bonds with their parents. Open communication was a key factor in fostering trust and confidence. Respondents with supportive parents felt comfortable sharing experiences, which helped them make better social decisions. In contrast, those who felt judged or unheard experienced emotional distance, reducing the impact of parental guidance.

Balanced supervision also emerged as essential. Many respondents appreciated having freedom within reasonable boundaries, which supported their independence while maintaining parental oversight. However, overly strict rules, as reported by some respondents, created feelings of pressure and resentment. Parents' education on the risks of promiscuity was another critical element, though its depth and effectiveness varied. Respondents who received clear and relevant guidance were better equipped to make informed choices, while others felt the information provided was insufficient. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of a parenting approach that combines open communication, balanced supervision, and relevant education. This approach aligns with Bowlby's attachment theory, which highlights secure emotional bonds as crucial for positive social development. By fostering trust and providing thoughtful guidance, parents can help adolescents avoid risky behaviors and develop into responsible individuals.

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