



THE ADOLESCENT'S CHARACTERISTICS IN THE CONFLICT WITH MOTHER

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ABSTRACT

Interpersonal conflicts are often experienced by adolescents, including conflicts with mothers. Conflict is a normative in adolescent development. However, the increased incidence of conflict accompanied by poor conflict management can cause psychological problems for adolescents. This study aims to determine the relationship between adolescent characteristics and the incidence of conflict between adolescents and mothers. The analytical research design used cross sectional approach. The population was the students of Junior High Schools in Padang City with the sample of 384 people through purposive sampling. The study used a Respondent Demographic Questionnaire and Conflict Behavior Questionnaire. Data were analyzed by Univariate and Bivariate with the results of variables related to the incidence of conflict with mothers, including gender (P value = 0.004), number of children in the family (P value = 0.011), and parents' income (P value = 0.018). The adolescents and mothers are advised to improve the quality of relationship with mutual understanding, openness and spend more time together so that conflicts can be minimized.

Keywords: Characteristics, Conflicts, Adolescents, Mother.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a unique developmental stage that occurs between the ages of 11 and 20, during which changes occur in physical, cognitive and emotional growth and development ⁽²⁵⁾. This relatively rapid changing will cause many problems that must be faced by adolescents, including social issues such as the causes of conflict, economic, cultural and formation of behavior ^(7, 11). Reports in the last 20 years, violence and interpersonal conflicts were often experienced by adolescents ⁽²⁹⁾. Interpersonal conflicts that were often experienced by adolescents occurred between themselves and their peers and family, especially mothers ⁽⁷⁾. Mothers and adolescents have more opportunities to experience conflicts ⁽¹⁸⁾. The research conducted by Nanglu in 2014 with a total sample of 400 male and female

adolescents, 52% of them had conflicts with parents ⁽¹⁷⁾.

The conflict between adolescents and parents can be interpreted as a dispute, differences of opinion that are not well conveyed, quarrels and verbal communication disorders that occur between adolescents and parents ⁽⁹⁾. Conflict can be expressed through verbal, physical or emotional exchanges between mothers and adolescents ⁽⁶⁾. The conflicts that often occurred are due to the limited understanding of adolescent development patterns by parents and normative in individual development ⁽¹²⁾.

Adolescents in their development will face biological, psychological, cognitive, emotional and psychosocial changes. Biological changes in brain development and immature hormones will make adolescents happier to prioritize emotions and not be able to reduce the stress response that comes ⁽²⁰⁾.



Cognitive changes in adolescents are in the form of finding reasons for various things ⁽²⁵⁾. According to Cookston *et al* in 2014, maladaptive mechanisms often appeared in adolescents who are too eager to find out an explanation for something to the mother that could create an uncomfortable atmosphere and cause conflicts ⁽³⁾. The emotional immaturity of adolescents can lead to the formation of negative emotions in response to others, especially mother ⁽⁶⁾. Psychosocial changes occur when adolescents try to develop their identity in the social environment by coordinating a sense of security and intimacy in social life ⁽³⁰⁾. The family environment, especially mothers with high hopes for children's academic achievement, strict rules in choosing friends and demands to follow family moral values and ineffective communication between mother and child will cause conflict ⁽³¹⁾.

The frequency of conflicts that are too frequent and severe, and not accompanied by good conflict management will cause problems for adolescents. The problems that occur include aggressiveness, anxiety, low self-esteem, depression in adolescents, social relationship disorders, and suicide attempts ^(4, 10, 19). In addition, it can also lead to juvenile delinquency such as running away from home, skipping school, smoking, decreasing academic achievement, pregnancy and early marriage and also using drugs ^(18, 20). There are several factors that influence the incidence of conflict between adolescents and mothers, including the characteristics of adolescents. The characteristic factors are constitutional factors in order to understand the problem of conflict between adolescents and mothers. The characteristic factors include age, gender ⁽¹⁾, number of children in the family ⁽¹⁴⁾ and economic status ⁽²¹⁾.

Based on the data from a Junior High School in Padang City, it was found that various kinds of characteristics of adolescents were seen from various aspects such as socioeconomic level, gender and family background. Data from the Counseling Guidance (BK) teacher showed that around 24% of all students experienced conflicts with their parents, especially mothers. This caused the students did not focus on learning so that the learning achievement decreases. Based on that case, the purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between adolescent's characteristics and the conflict occurred with mothers at Junior High Schools in Padang City.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used an analytic design with a cross sectional study approach. The independent and dependent variables in this study are the characteristics of adolescents and the conflict between adolescents and mothers. The sample of this research was the students of Junior High School in Padang City after conducting purposive sampling with a total of 384 teenagers. The sample criteria in this study are adolescents aged 12-16 years, still have mothers and live with mothers, and are willing to be respondents. The measuring tool for adolescent characteristics is respondent *Demographic Questionnaire*, while for conflict is *Conflict Behavior Questionnaire* (CBQ) ⁽²⁾ with a validity value of 0.74 and reliability of 0.869. This research was conducted after obtaining permission to carry out research and has been tested through an ethical test process by the Ethics Committee of FK UNAND. The research analysis used frequency distribution and *Chi Square*.



RESULTS

The results of this research included the adolescent's characteristics, conflicts,

the relationship between characteristics and conflicts.

Tabel 1 Univariat Analysis

Variables	Categories	f	%
Age	Early Adolescent	176	45,4
	Middle Adolescent	212	54,6
Sex	Male	200	51,5
	Female	188	48,5
Number of Children in The Family	Many	148	38,1
	Few	240	61,9
Parents' Income	Low	272	70,1
	High	116	29,9
Adolescent and Mother Conflicts	Conflicts	184	47,9
	No Conflict	200	52,1

Based on Table 1, it is known that more than half of the respondents (54.6%) were in the middle adolescent age range as many as 212 respondents, 200 respondents were male (51.5%), 240 respondents (61, 9%) came from families with a small number of children

and most of the respondents with low maternal income were 272 respondents (70.1%). In addition, less than half of the respondents (47.9%) often experienced conflicts with their mothers as many as 184 respondents.

Tabel 2 Bivariat Analysis

Respondent's Characteristics	Conflict Between Adolescent and Mother				<i>P value</i>	OR 95%CI
	No Conflict		Conflicts			
	f	%	F	%		
Age						
Early Adolescents	95	54,6	79	45,4	0,427	0,832
Middle Adolescents	105	50	105	50		(0,556 – 1,244)
Sex						
Male	89	44,7	110	55,3	0,004	1,854
Female	111	60	74	40		(1,236 – 2,782)
Number of Children in The Family						
Many	64	43,5	83	56,5	0,011	1,746
Few	136	57,4	101	42,6		(1,153 – 2,646)
Parent's Income						
Low	129	48	140	52	0,018	1,751
High	71	61,7	44	38,3		(1,121 – 2,735)

Table 2 shows that there is a relationship between gender, the number of children in the family and parents' income with

the incidence of conflict with the mother, with *P value* of each variables are 0.004, 0.011 and 0.018.



DISCUSSION

The result of the Univariate analysis showed that more than a half of the respondents were in the middle adolescent age range, male, came from families with a small number of children and most of the respondents with low maternal income as well as less than half of the respondents often experienced conflicts with their mothers.

At the stage of adolescent development, conflict problems with parents, especially mothers often occur. The results of this study indicated that in the middle adolescent category conflicts with mothers often occur. According to Curtis ⁽⁵⁾, in the middle stage of adolescent, the frequency of conflict with parents has begun to decline, but the emotional intensity of disapproval is increasing. The conflict that occurred was more “heated” but the frequency had started to decline until the late adolescence stage ⁽²³⁾.

The results showed that many adolescents were male. This is in line with the research conducted by Januarti in Jakarta where the proportion of male sex is higher than that of female adolescents ⁽⁹⁾. Boys have more difficulty in communicating their feelings and problems at home ⁽²⁶⁾. In addition, male adolescents tend to show angry responses to the process of building relationships with mothers, while female adolescents are able to achieve better problem resolution resolutions ⁽¹⁵⁾.

In this study also found that the characteristics of adolescents come from families with a large number of children. This result is in accordance with the opinion of Linares *et al*⁽¹⁴⁾ that conflicts often occur from families with large numbers of children. This family will have new challenges in creating

harmonious interactions between children. Parents must be able to give attention in accordance with the development pattern of each child so that it can create interactions between siblings and between children and parents. This is also in line with the opinion from Smetana ⁽²³⁾ which stated that the relationship between parents and the few children in the family will have different quality of interactions compared to parents with a large number of children. The quality of interaction between parents with a small number of children will be better when compared to a large number of children. In addition, the characteristics of adolescents who came from low-income families will generally find it difficult to meet all the needs of the family in achieving a prosperous standard of living and achieving maximum health, so that this will lead to conflict with the mother.

The result of the bivariate analysis showed that there was a relationship between sex and the incidence of conflict between adolescents and mothers. Boys pay more attention to self-esteem, while girls are more concerned with interpersonal and social aspects, so that young girls do not often experienced conflicts ⁽²⁾. This statement is supported by the opinion of Sher ⁽²²⁾, which also reinforces that male adolescents tend to be more demanding for high self-autonomy compared to female adolescents. The inability of male adolescents to develop close relationships with their parents coupled with the desire for high self-autonomy causes the risk of conflict between adolescents and parents.

The characteristic that related to the conflict between adolescents and mothers is the number of children in the



family. This is in line with research by Weymouth & Buehler in 2016 where many children in the family may spend their parents' resources effectively engaging with adolescents, so that parents employ more coercive and hostile tactics towards adolescents⁽²⁷⁾. This will have an impact on the relationship between adolescents and parents which will lead to conflict. The large number of children in the family will cause a lack of attention and affection for the child, especially if the birth distance is too close⁽²⁴⁾. This is reinforced by research conducted by Whiteman *et al* in 2011 which found that the order of birth and departure of the first child leaving the home was significantly related to the frequency of conflict between adolescents and parents⁽²⁸⁾. This means, the adolescents born first experienced greater conflict with their parents than the second children or so on.

In addition, adolescents who come from low-income families will cause more frequent conflicts. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Saxena, Srivastava & Naithani in India which shows that the majority of respondents with low family income experience frequent conflicts with their parents (21). In this study, it was found that conflicts occurred almost every day and all of the respondents had experienced conflicts. For families with low income, interactions will arise that contain conflict and debate which in turn triggers conflict⁽¹³⁾. In addition, this will cause family economic stress which will reduce the quality of the relationship between parents and family and cause symptoms of depression and conflict⁽⁸⁾.

The characteristic of adolescents that is not related to conflict is age. The age factor is the variable that has the strongest influence on the frequency of conflict between adolescents and parents. The occurrence of conflict between

adolescents and parents is influenced by the adolescence's maturity where a person's maturity cannot be seen from his age⁽¹⁶⁾. A person's maturity can be seen from how he is able to develop his cognitive abilities in solving a problem. This is supported by the opinion of Santrock⁽²⁰⁾ where adolescents who are able to hone their thinking become more able to build hypotheses about how to solve problems and systematically conclude the best way to solve the problem. In addition, what made age unrelated to the incidence of conflict was the number of early adolescents (55%) and middle age adolescents (45%) which were not much different.

CONCLUSION

In this study, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between gender characteristics, the number of children in the family and parents' income with the incidence of conflict between adolescents and mothers. Adolescents and mothers are advised to improve the quality of their relationship with an understanding, open attitude and spend more time together so that conflicts can be minimized.

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