Parental bonding as a predictor of hope in adolescents

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Abstract: Hope enables individuals to cope with stressful situations by creating the expectation of a positive outcome. The existence of problematic behavior and psychological barriers in adolescents is partly due to their low level of hope, which is influenced by weak parent-child bonding. This study aims to determine the effect of parental bonding on hope among adolescents. Data were collected with an accidental sampling method from 400 participants in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The data were obtained using the Parental Bonding Instrument to measure the quality of parent-child attachment, and Snyder’s Hope Scale to measure hope. They were analyzed using linear regression to establish the strength of the impact of parental bonding on hope. The results show that care and the autonomous parenting of the father and mother were strong predictors of hope in adolescents, while overprotection by the parents was not proven to predict such hope. The implications of the research can be used as a reference for parenting practice, and to guide adolescents both in the family and school contexts.

Keywords: parental bonding; hope; adolescence


Kata Kunci: kelekatan orangtua-anak; harapan; remaja

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Introduction

Hope has been conceptualized as a psychological force for individuals of all ages (Esteves et al., 2013; Snyder, 2000). As a form of psychological strength, hope not only has various positive consequences and benefits, such as supporting positive physical and mental health, but also influences academic success and positive interpersonal relationships (Esteves et al., 2013; Marques & Lopez, 2014) as well as overall well-being (Day et al., 2010; Magaletta & Oliver, 1999).

Hope theory begins by seeing goals as the main component driving human behavior (Snyder, 2000). Snyder et al. (1991) define hope as an individual cognitive attitude based on a sense of success, which is achieved reciprocally in two ways, namely by pathways created by individuals to achieve goals, and through agency, which refers to an individual’s ability to initiate an action to achieve goals along the paths created and to maintain the action until the goal is achieved. If one path is blocked or deadlocked, the individual can still move to another route to reach the same destination, continuing to do this until the goal is achieved. Seginer (2008) argues that in conditions in which individuals are under pressure, hope plays a role in leading to resilience and positive future expectations despite the external challenges.

According to Snyder (Snyder, 2000), the development of hope in individuals starts at an early age. This shows how important it is to foster it from the time we start our journey of life. Snyder further stated that the existence of expectations at one stage of development is proven to be correlated with the forms of expectations in individuals at later stages. Through a literature review of hope in adolescence, Esteves et al. (2013) suggest that it is a central concept in adolescent life. Expectations are one of the factors that have been shown to significantly influence the formation of future-oriented adolescent problem-solving methods. In this case, hope is often associated with optimism, thoughts about the future, and future orientation, which are reflected in cognitive, emotional, and motivational mental attitudes towards the future (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The hope of a positive outcome motivates adolescents to cope with the stressful situations they face. Accordingly, adolescents who have high expectations often rate stressors as something more challenging (compared to those that are more threatening), and thus these adolescents will have the ability and motivation to find appropriate solutions to various problems.

Stoddard and Pierce (2015) also reinforce the notion that hope is a malleable attribute that encourages youth development in a positive direction. A study conducted by Dufault and Martocchio (1985) found that hope is not a single action, but a complex process involving the reflection of a collection of thoughts, feelings, and actions that change over time.

In adolescence, many goals in life will be addressed in line with their development. At this time, adolescents are expected to balance the need for independence, their dependence on parents and teachers, and the need to undertake challenges related to compliance with social and school rules, as well as the facing the need to increase their competence in academic and various new social situations (Garrochi et al., 2015). The existence of hope as a psychological strength becomes a motivating factor in increasing the likelihood of success in pursuing various goals (Snyder, 2000). In this context, there is evidence that the relationship between
measures of expectation and meaning in life is very close, with correlations of 0.52 to 0.77 (Feldman & Snyder, 2005; Mascaro & Rosen, 2005).

In addition to the issues discussed above, in adolescence young people are also expected to be able to weigh up and plan the future. How they understand their future can have a profound effect on their physical health and well-being (Nummi, in Stoddard & Pierce, 2015). The existence of positive future expectations in adolescents can facilitate optimal development and success while undergoing the transition to adulthood.

However, in reality, some teenagers do not have high or positive expectations. Those who have negative expectations about their future are more likely to exhibit problematic behavior (Stoddard et al., 2011). For them, the prospect of the future appears bewildering. The existence of this confusion gives rise to various problematic or destructive behaviors that are displayed by adolescents. This is confirmed by the results of previous research, which has found that low expectations have an effect on the emergence of behavioral problems, both internalizing ones, such as somatic disorders, and externalizing ones, such as aggressive behavior (Hagen et al., 2005; Valle et al., 2006); drug abuse (Wilson et al., 2005); negative affect (Burrow, O’Dell, & Hill, 2010; Vacek, Coyle, & Vera, 2010); and academic stress while studying (Husnar, Saniah, & Nashori, 2017).

Regarding problematic behavior in adolescents, Figure 1 below shows latest data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) from August 31, 2020 concerning children and adolescents in conflict with the law shows the high number of 704 cases in 2020 (Indonesian Child Protection Commission, 2020).

**Figure 1**
*Cases of Children/Adolescents with the Law*

![Source: https://www.kpai.go.id/publikasi/infografis/update-data-infografis-kpai-per-31-08-2020](image-url)
There is some evidence related to adolescent problems, so it is necessary to study what factors cause their low expectations. From previous studies, it is known that hopes for a positive future are formed through social relationships with the surrounding environment (Snyder, 2000). Conversely, the lack of hope in individuals can be examined through the social relationships that individuals build with their environment. Negative environmental factors are thought to hinder the development of expectations (Lorion & Saltzman, 1993); on the other hand, a positive environment will support the development of positive expectations (Sege & Browne, 2017). Sun and Shek (2012) argue that hopes are generated from past experiences, so individuals who experience success are associated with factors or efforts that they have made, which in turn makes them more likely to feel compelled to achieve their goals. Therefore, providing experiences for success is essential in the development of expectations.

Regarding past experiences, the ability of adolescents who are influenced by positive expectations in overcoming challenges in a positive way is not formed suddenly. According to Snyder (Snyder, 2000), parents are the main teachers in instilling agency (motivational thinking) and pathways (paths to goals). This is achieved when children begin to perceive and understand external events; understand that one event can lead to another, and understand the value of goal-directed behavior. As a result, children gain insight into how to view and motivate themselves, which helps them to plan goal-directed behaviors and deal with whatever obstructs the achievement of their goals. When the cognitive aspects of children develop and move into adolescence and beyond, self-insight will increase and form positive expectations for the future, so that goals or self-goals can be achieved.

The role of parents in forming hopes in adolescents is also strengthened by the research of Otis (2017) who shows that the largest contribution of positive expectations to adolescents comes from parents, rather than teachers or peers. Therefore, hope is not considered to be a hereditary trait, but rather a cognitive process that is learned related to thoughts and behaviors directed at one’s goals (Snyder, 1994), which is formed from a good relationship between parents and children (Snyder, 2000).

When children enter adolescence, parents are also expected to be able to understand the characteristics of this phase of life, as a time to find self-identity and a period of experimenting widely. High curiosity followed by sexual growth and development affects behavior and various other aspects such as emotion and cognition. As a transition period towards adulthood, young people entering late adolescence are expected to begin to design their self, social, and career development from the path chosen (Santrock, 2020). To determine the various choices that will be made, adolescents certainly still need the presence of parents, who function as advisors. Through parenting practices, parents are expected to have a close relationship with their children, by meeting their needs through maintaining a warm attitude and showing affection (care), giving children the opportunity to be independent in making decisions related to themselves and their families, while still providing protection but not restricting children's freedom to act or develop.

Related to the discussion above of the importance of hope for adolescents, it is hypo-
thesized that parent-child attachment can be a predictor of hope in adolescents.

**Method**

**Participants**

The population of the study comprised junior high school (SMP/MTs/equivalent) and senior high school (SMA/MA/equivalent) students in the province of DIY, with a total of 185,224 students (BAPPEDA DIY, 2019). The sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula, with a confidence level of 95% (Ryan, 2013), meaning we obtained a sample size of 400 people.

\[ n = \frac{N}{1 + N \epsilon^2} \]

The study involved 400 junior high and high school students aged 12-19 years who were in their early and late adolescence (82.60% late adolescence; 17.40% early adolescence). The mean age of the subjects was 16.04 years. Sampling was conducted using an accidental sampling method.

**Procedure**

The data collection procedure began by determining the criteria for the research target subjects. The adolescents were targeted through school and included junior high school/equivalent students representing early adolescence, and high school/equivalent-level students representing late adolescence. Data collection was performed through an online form on Google Forms, which captured junior high school and high school students in the Yogyakarta area. The data collection process began by seeking permission from the school, which then sent a link to the research instrument to the Counseling Teachers of SMP/MTs/equivalent and SMA/MA/equivalent in the Yogyakarta Special Region Province to be forwarded to students in their schools. To maintain the validity of the data, the researchers only sent a link to one teacher in several partner schools and asked participating students to fill in their cellphone numbers in anticipation of multiple participation. Furthermore, the research team also made manual verification of the numbers. From the data collection process via Google Forms, 400 students were willing to become participants and completed the distributed research instruments.

**Instruments**

*Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI)*

The PBI instrument is a measure of the quality of the parent-child relationship in terms of the bond between them based on the child's assessment. Parker, Tupling and Brown (1979) used concepts from Bowlby, Rutter, and Ainsworth as indicators of the quality of parent-child relationships. From the three theories, two aspects that influence the dynamics of parent-child bonding are summarized as care (warm and loving care) and psychological control over the child, which is termed overprotection. The PBI instrument used in this study comprises a three-dimensional model (care, autonomy, and overprotection), which has been validated in Malaysia (Muhammad et al., 2014). The reliability of the three-dimensional model shows scores of 0.86 - 0.88 (care); 0.69–0.70 (autonomy); and 0.54–0.56 (overprotection). To establish the content validity, the instrument was translated into Indonesian and assessed by two experts. It was then analyzed using Aiken's V formula. The results show that the instrument had high validity (paternal PBI = 0.95; maternal PBI = 0.99).
Snyder’s Hope Scale

Snyder’s Hope Scale is an instrument for measuring expectations, developed from the concept of expectation proposed by Snyder et al. (Snyder et al., 1991). Expectations are defined as cognitive patterns that result from a reciprocal sense of accomplishment from (a) agency success, with agency here referring to a sense of confidence in succeeding to achieve goals, either in the past, present, or future; and (b) the availability of pathways to achieve goals. The path component refers to a sense of being able to devise a plan that meets the objectives. Snyder’s Hope Scale is an expectation measurement instrument consisting of 12 items, four of which measure agency, four of which measure pathways, and four that measure the fillers. In addition to validity, various research indicated the scale’s reliability in terms of internal consistency showed a range of estimates for Cronbach’s alpha from .74 to .84 (Snyder et al., 1991). Additionally, Snyder et al. (1991) also indicated in terms of temporal reliability with test-retest reliability, .85, p <.001 (3-week interval); .73, p <.001, (8-week interval); and .76 and .82, p <.001 (10-week interval). In this study, the instrument was translated into Indonesian, then assessed by two experts. The results of the assessment of the experts were analyzed using content validity with the formula from Aiken’s V and showed that the instrument had high validity, with a value of 0.83.

Data Analysis

The first step in analyzing the data was to determine whether it could all be analyzed or not by using Little’s MCAR test. The results show the pattern that data was missing completely at random (χ² = 1.89 DF = 83, p > 0.05), meaning that analysis could be made with all the data. Any missing data were automatically excluded from the analysis through case deletion.

The Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted to test the normality of the data. The results presented in Table 1, that the predictor variable (parent-child attachment) and the dependent variable (expectation) were not normally distributed. The next step was to perform analysis using the bootstrapping method in accordance with the suggestions of Pek, Wong, and Wong (Pek et al., 2018). Bootstrapping was performed using the 95% bias-corrected accelerated (BCa) method, with a total of 2000 resamples. The BCa method generates a random sample that replaces that from the researcher’s dataset and calculates the accuracy of each sample generated through resampling. The reason for choosing the BCa method was because this method produces a smaller coverage error than the percentile method (Carpenter & Bithell, 2000).

Furthermore, linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of parental attachment to children from the aspects of love (care), autonomy, and overprotection.

Results

The regression results show that paternal care (B = .37, P <.001, 95% CI [.20, .54]) made an effective contribution of 6.4% of the total variance; while maternal love (B = 47, P <.001, 95% CI [.25, .70]) made an effective contribution of 6.6% of the total variance.

In Table 2, it is shown that each value of the effective contribution, both of father and mother, can be predictors of adolescent expectations in the sample studied. Meanwhile, the autonomy aspect with regard to the father (B = .52, P <.001, 95% CI [.22, .82]) shows an effective contribution
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Table 1
Descriptive Statistics Analysis Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ptw</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Hope</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Care</td>
<td>Aut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>25.09</td>
<td>22.31</td>
<td>47.40</td>
<td>32.64</td>
<td>32.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>9.61</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>6.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shapiro-Wilk</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Ptw: Pathways; Aut: Autonomy; Ovp: Overprotection

Table 2
Linear Regression Test Result

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Care – Father</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>26.54***</td>
<td>.37***</td>
<td>.21, .53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy – Father</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>17.74***</td>
<td>.52***</td>
<td>.25, .79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overprotection – Father</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.43, .42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care – Mother</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>27.12***</td>
<td>.47***</td>
<td>.26, .72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy – Mother</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>7.54**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.08, .68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overprotection – Mother</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.61, .27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit

* $p ≤ .05$; ** $p ≤ .01$; *** $p ≤ .001$

of 4.3% of the total variance, while the maternal autonomy aspect ($B = .38, P < .01, 95\% CI [-.63, .69]$) indicates an effective contribution of 2% of the total variance. It can be concluded that the two aspects of father-child and mother-child attachment, namely aspects of affection (care) and ones of autonomy, proved to be predictors of adolescent expectations. In contrast, the overprotection aspect was both from the father ($B = .03, P > .05, 95\% CI [-.43, .42]$) and and the mother ($B = -.18, P > .05, 95\% CI [-.61, .27]$) so were not predictors of adolescent expectations.

Discussion

The results indicate that the affection and autonomy perceived by adolescents obtained from their fathers and mothers are predictors of hope in adolescents, while overprotection is not. The results corroborate those of previous studies (Pedersen, 1994; Peterson & Seligman, 2004), that parental care and autonomy influence positive aspects, such as being yourself (authenticity), and having courage, persistence, kindness, love, social intelligence, justice and self-regulation, while parental control or overprotection has a significant negative effect on character strength.

The psychological dynamics of how the role of parent-child attachment can be a predictor of hope in adolescents are described below. The concept of parental attachment was proposed by Bowlby.
(2005) more than three decades ago and illustrates the fundamental bond between parent and infant that is essential for the survival and development of babies. The concept is corroborated by the results of this study, that initial attachment has a significant effect on subsequent development, and this attachment can change following any disruption to the parent-child relationship (Waters et al., 2000; Weinfield, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004). In this case, family life is an important context, in which daily experiences influence personality shapes and the patterns of family interaction over time, as well as other behavioral features of children and adolescents (McAdams & Adler, 2010; Roberts & Wood, 2006).

During adolescence, there is a significant transformation in almost every function of the developmental domain, be it physical, cognitive, or socio-emotional (Santrock, 2020). Rapid neurological development, and the integration of new and diverse experiences, mean adolescents may experience socio-cognitive dilemmas (Moretti & Peled, 2004). At this time, there is a dilemma in attachment, namely maintaining relationships with parents, but also needing to explore social roles that are not related to family, such as developing relationships with peers. The success of adolescents in developing the social aspects of this transitional period is not achieved by moving away from the parent-child relationship (Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995). In this case, a healthy transition to autonomy and maturity is facilitated by secure attachments and emotional relationships between parents and children.

Allen et al. (Allen et al., 2003) show that secure attachment in adolescence has the same effect on development as it does in early childhood, namely that a feeling of security will encourage exploration and development of cognitive, social, and emotional competencies. The existence of secure attachments in adolescence also predicts more constructive problem-solving skills (Howard & Medway, 2004) and significant increases in social skills between the ages of 16 and 18 (Allen et al., 2002). Adolescents who are securely attached are seen to manage the transition to secondary school well, enjoy more positive relationships, and experience less conflict with their family and peers than those who are insecurely attached (Ducharme et al., 2002). In addition, safe attachment has been shown to play a role in good adolescent adjustment, especially in supporting the need for autonomy (Allen et al., 2003). In this context, adolescents who feel understood by their parents and believe in the importance of commitment to a relationship will be confident in moving forward to early adulthood, and also when they face conflict. Safe attachment is also associated with less involvement in high-risk behaviors, fewer mental health problems, and improved social skills and coping strategies (Moretti & Peled, 2004).

Safe parental and adolescent attachment refers to the capacity of adolescents to seek comfort from meaningful figures when they are in trouble, to explore environments, and to gain new learning experiences, such as transitioning to adolescence or adulthood (Dubois-Comtois et al., 2013). In this case, parents play a dual role. On the one hand, they ensure comfort and protection, while on the other, they must encourage the desire of adolescents to explore. In other words, adolescent attachment is the result of the ability of adolescents and parents to redefine their attachment relationship by considering the process of individuation, namely developmental changes at
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the social, cognitive, and emotional levels (Dubois-Comtois et al., 2013). The joint construction of such a relationship is a key element in maintaining or developing a secure attachment.

Regarding the autonomy and overprotection factors, what is striking from the process of adolescent individuation is the increasing need for distance from parents. In this case, adolescents need parental trust to act autonomously or independently. Young people’s trust in the availability and accessibility of parents in times of need is a major feature of secure attachment during this period (Gamble & Roberts, 2005). In this case, parents can still be reached through effective communication, which will gradually encourage youth’s self-exploration process. If stimulation of adolescent independence is not given, and parents are overprotective, this can result in issues which may hinder teenagers. Overprotective parents (sometimes referred to as helicopter parenting) are shown to protect their children in such a way as to avoid any difficulties and to prepare a set of instructions for their children to follow regardless of their uniqueness (Hirsch & Goldberger, in Ganaprakasam et al., 2018). In this case, parenting refers to a typical process that never allows children to make mistakes and educates children by always providing solutions to solve problems without giving the children the opportunity to develop their own problem-solving and decision-making skills. It confirmed by LeMoyne and Buchanan (2011) that parents who are too protective, such as always deciding what to do for their current and future children, will mean they are unskilled in solving problems; face anxiety at school or college (Lythcott-Haims, 2015); have increased feelings of dependence; and are inhibited in terms of self-confidence (Odenweller et al., 2014).

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that parent-child attachment is a very important factor in shaping the development of expectations in adolescents. Warmth and compassion, providing opportunities for exploration, and parents who do not restrain their children are very important in the process of 'scaffolding' adolescents into the next period of their lives. Parents are the closest social environment to children, followed by peers and educators at school. The importance of the role of the social environment in the development of expectations is also reinforced in the literature review conducted by Esteves et al (Esteves et al., 2013), who found nine studies that demonstrated that social support was significantly correlated with expectations in adolescents. Their findings indicate that the correlations in the studies ranged from $r = .19$ to $r = .63$, all of which are positive and statistically significant. Therefore, this study confirms that adolescents who develop strong social support, in this case in terms of attachment to their parents, will have hopes of achieving a positive future.

Conclusions

Warm and affectionate parenting, and the provision of autonomy from the father and mother, are proven to be predictors of hope in adolescents. The existence of hope will lead adolescents to look for various positive solutions for each problem faced and find various paths to achieve their goals. On the other hand, over-protection from either the father or mother is not a predictor of hope in adolescents, but instead becomes an inhibiting factor for adolescent self-development, as shown in feelings of anxiety, low self-esteem, dependent behavior when acting and deciding something, and problematic behavior.
The results of this study can be implemented in the practice of nurturing and mentoring adolescents both at home and at school, such as showing affectionate behavior by listening and appreciating; open and two-way communication; providing opportunities for adolescents to find solutions to their problems, and developing them themselves, and matching talents and interests with unfettered supervision.[]

References


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