Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling Terapan
Volume 08 | Number 02
ISSN: Print 2549-4511 – Online 2549-9092
http://ojs.unpatti.ac.id/index.php/bkt

Navigating the Impact of Overprotective Parenting on Adolescent Adaptation and Independence

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the correlation between overprotective parenting and adolescent adjustment in an Indonesian educational context, focusing specifically on SMA Negeri 1 Ambon. Utilizing a quantitative research design with correlation analysis, the study examines how adolescents aged 10-18 navigate changes during the transition from childhood, especially in terms of their adaptability and independence. The influence of familial, school, and societal environments on these developments is assessed through purposive sampling of 110 students, using scales that measure overprotective behaviors and personal adjustment. Findings from the study reveal a statistically significant but weak negative correlation between overprotective parenting and adolescent adjustment, indicating that while parental involvement is crucial, excessive control can undermine adolescents' ability to adapt to their environments effectively. This study underscores the complex dynamics between parental behavior and adolescent development, suggesting that balanced parenting is key to fostering responsible and adaptable youths.

Keywords: overprotective parenting, adolescent adjustment, educational psychology, family dynamics, personal development

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INTRODUCTION

The ability of adolescents to be responsible for themselves and their environment is linked to their family, school, and community environments. Hetharia and Huwae (2022) state that the first environment encountered by adolescents is their immediate surroundings, namely parents as family and primarily educators. Adolescents are individuals aged between 10-18 years (Santrock, 2013). Adolescents form a significant portion of the Indonesian population, supported by data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), which reported that there were 22,176,543 adolescents in February 2022. The transition from childhood to adolescence is a critical period as they experience changes in various aspects of life. Therefore, students are encouraged to have skills in adapting to be able to interact within a broader scope (Syarafina & Sugiasih, 2019).

Majidah, Fawaz, and Ritonga (2022) argue that at the adolescent stage, adaptation is crucial for development within their environment. Adaptation is considered important for adolescents to engage in activities they enjoy, especially by teaching them to live independently. In research conducted by Musthofa (2020) on eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Wiradesa, it was found that parents who overly supervise their children can impact the students' adaptation. According to four existing indicators, 1) excessive contact with children falls into the medium category with a percentage of 81.6%. 2) Continuous care or assistance to children also falls into the medium category with a percentage of 86.4%. 3) Excessive monitoring of children's activities is in the medium category with a percentage of 89.6%. 4) Solving children's problems is in the medium

category with a percentage of 84%. It can be seen that an overprotective parenting style is associated with student adjustment, although at a moderate level.

One way to optimize adolescent development from now is the ability to adapt. According to Schneider (1960), adaptation is a process of rapid change, requiring an adaptation process to get through it. Adaptation is also a process by which an individual balances themselves with their environment. Schneider adds that individuals with good adaptation skills can yield mature, efficient results, and provide satisfactory and healthy responses. Schneider also explains that the adaptation process includes adaptive behavior, which is the ability to conform to existing norms and manage the environment. According to Schneider, there are four aspects of adaptation: participation, recognition, social approval, and conformity.

Bahari (2020) mentions that adaptation is a process where individuals achieve self-balance to meet needs according to their environment. Andriyani (2016) argues that the family environment plays a significant and important role in adolescent adaptation. Factors from adaptation, one of which comes from the family environment, where the family is the primary environment and nothing is more important than the family (Pitaningrum, 2013). One of the main factors is the parenting style itself, as the family is the primary vessel for the personal development of family members, especially adolescents in their growth phase. Parents also have a duty to facilitate and provide means for children to broadly know the world. Sometimes parents think they are giving their best to the child and fulfilling what should be provided, making children comply with what they order, which may lead parents to become overprotective.

According to Levy (1943), an overprotective parenting style is excessive protection that dominates children, with parents feeling that children are theirs and inseparable from them. Levy (1943) proposed four aspects of overprotective parenting: 1) Excessive contact with children, 2) Continuously providing care to children, 3) Excessive supervision of children, and 4) Involvement in solving children's problems. Levy's theory is still used until 2022, as applied in the research by Hetharia and Huwae. The negative effects of overprotective parenting mentioned by Harlina et al. (2017) include discomfort in the child, aggressive behavior, nervousness, escapism from reality, dependency and reliance on others' help, craving attention, irresponsibility, being offended by criticism, selfishness, frequent arguments, and social difficulties.

It is undeniable that adolescents experiencing overprotective parenting find it difficult to adapt and become responsible adolescents. According to Hetharia and Huwae (2022), parents with overprotective parenting and providing excessive protection to children can disrupt the physical and psychological conditions of adolescents. This then relates to adolescent adaptation, where adolescents accustomed to strict and disciplined upbringing within the family can lead to rigid social interactions with peers. In research by Malau and Nasution (2021), a low level of adolescent adaptation was found, leading to a poor assessment of the reality they are experiencing. Adolescents may easily feel stressed and anxious, find it difficult to express emotions properly, have a negative self-image, and have poor interpersonal relations. This is based on the high level of overprotective parenting implemented by parents.

Based on statistical analysis in research conducted by Musthofa (2020), it was found that there is a negative correlation between overprotective parental behavior and adolescent adaptation

in SMA Negeri 1 Wiradesa. Conversely, in the research by Hetharia and Huwae (2022), it was found that there is no correlation between overprotective parental behavior and the adaptation of adolescents who study away from home.

Therefore, the author chose this research topic because the present time is a period that must be truly faced by adolescents. Adolescents need to adapt to the realities of the changing times and their problems, so that when faced with various issues, they can handle them and make independent and responsible decisions without fully depending on others' decisions or their parents. The author is also interested in testing whether there is a correlation or no correlation between overprotective parental patterns and adolescent adaptation.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research design with correlation analysis to determine the relationship between overprotective parenting and adolescent adjustment at SMA Negeri 1 Ambon. The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling, which is a method of sample determination based on specific considerations, utilizing inclusion criteria. The participants in this study are 110 adolescents from grades X and XI at SMA Negeri 1 Ambon.

Table 1. Participant Demographics

No.	Participant Classification	N	Percentage
1.	Grade X	34	31%
2.	Grade XI	75	68%

Data collection in this study was conducted using two psychological scales: overprotective parenting and personal adjustment. These scales were constructed using the Likert scale, which is used to measure attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of individuals about social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2019). The data collection method involved the distribution of surveys or questionnaires.

The overprotective behavior scale in this study was adapted by Hetharia and Huwae (2022), referencing the four aspects of Levy's (1943) research, namely excessive contact with children, continuous care or assistance to children, excessive monitoring of children's activities, and solving children's problems. This scale consists of 24 items with four response options: strongly agree (SS), agree (S), disagree (TS), and strongly disagree (STS). From the measurement results of the parental overprotective behavior scale, all items passed the selection with total item correlation coefficient values ranging from 0.551 to 0.709 and a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.869.

The scale used to measure personal adjustment in this study was adapted by Hetharia and Huwae (2022), based on Schneiders' (1964) five aspects of personal adjustment, namely recognition, participation, social approval, altruism, and conformity. The personal adjustment scale includes 30 items, consisting of 15 favorable and 15 unfavorable items, using four Likert Scale response options: strongly agree (SS), agree (S), disagree (TS), and strongly disagree (STS). From the testing results, all items passed the selection, meeting the total item correlation standard of 0.30.

The measurement of personal adjustment behavior uses the statistical validity coefficient standards ranging from 0.303 to 0.466 with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.703.

Data processing in this study utilizes statistical methods, including normality tests using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and linearity tests such as one-way ANOVA. Hypothesis testing employs the product moment of Karl Pearson to examine the correlation between independent variables and one dependent variable. This study also uses SPSS software for assistance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 shows that 35 students (32%) at SMA Negeri 1 Ambon exhibit low parental overprotective behavior. Table 3 indicates that 51 students (46%) at SMA Negeri 1 Ambon have high adjustment levels.

Table 2. Parental Overprotective Behavior Categories

Interval	Category	F	Percentage
>81	Very High	22	20%
70 – 82	High	30	27%
58 – 70	Low	35	32%
<58	Very Low	23	21%

Table 3. Adolescent Adjustment Categories

Interval	Category	F	Percentage
<74	Very Low	15	14%
74 - 85	Low	35	32%
85 - 96	High	51	46%
>96	Very High	9	8%

Table 4. Normality Test

	Parental Overprotective Behavior	Adolescent Adjustment
N	110	110
Normal parameters	Mean: 70.07 Std. deviation: 11.777	Mean: 85.76 Std. deviation: 11.125
Most extreme differences	Absolute: 0.082 Positive: 0.081 Negative: -0.082	Absolute: 0.097 Positive: 0.097 Negative: -0.94
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	0.862	1.017
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	0.447	0.253

The normality test results from Table 4 show a K-S-Z value of 0.862 with a significance of 0.447 ($p > 0.05$) for parental overprotective behavior and a K-S-Z value of 1.017 with a significance of 0.253 ($p > 0.05$) for adolescent adjustment. These results indicate that both variables used in this study are normally distributed.

Table 5. Linearity Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Adjustment Between Groups	5214.164	36	144.838	1.278	0.187
Parental Overprotective	Linearity	514.581	1	514.581	4.539
Deviation from Linearity	4699.584	35	134.274	1.184	0.268
Within Groups	8275.690	73	113.366		
Total	13489.855	109			

The linearity test results from Table 5 show a linearity F-test value of 1.184 with a significance of 0.268 ($p > 0.05$), indicating that the relationship between parental overprotective behavior and adolescent adjustment at SMA Negeri 1 Ambon is linear.

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing

	Parental Overprotective Behavior	Adolescent Adjustment
Parental Overprotective Behavior	Pearson Correlation: 1	-0.195*
	Sig. (1-tailed): 0.020	N: 110
Adolescent Adjustment	Pearson Correlation: -0.195*	1
	Sig. (1-tailed): 0.020	N: 110

*correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

The correlation test results indicate a Pearson correlation of -0.195* with a significance of 0.020 ($p < 0.05$) between parental overprotective behavior and adolescent adjustment at SMA Negeri 1 Ambon, suggesting a weak but significant relationship. This supports the hypothesis that there is a correlation, albeit not strong, between overprotective parental behavior and adolescent adjustment. The results of this study confirm the hypothesis that there is a relationship between parental overprotective behavior and adolescent adjustment at SMA Negeri 1 Ambon, with a correlation of -0.195* and a significance of 0.020 ($p < 0.05$). The descriptive test in this study shows that adolescent adjustment at SMAN 1 Ambon is high, while parental overprotective behavior is low. This demonstrates that students with overprotective parents are still able to adjust themselves in their environment. In relation to this, interviews conducted with eight participants from November 3 to November 7, 2023, revealed that children living with parents do not feel restricted, yet are still given boundaries. Other factors influencing such parental behavior include the environment; parents dare to give freedom to children to socialize but still feel fear, hence not giving complete freedom. Parents also impose limitations during playtime to avoid feared situations, influenced by their own past experiences which make them fearful that their children might repeat their mistakes. These findings indicate that not only overprotective behavior influences adjustment, but other factors also play a role.

The dynamics encountered show that adolescents have difficulty adjusting to their social environments due to excessive parental concerns. The main factor influencing adolescent adjustment is the family, as it provides a social and developmental platform for children. Parental behavior that is too intrusive in monitoring and solving children's problems, even when children

are capable of resolving them on their own, creates discomfort. According to Mutiara (2021), overly protective parental behavior, fulfilling every desire of the child, and meddling in their affairs can make children struggle and become selfish individuals, unaware of their own potential and irresponsible, leading to difficulties in adapting to new environments. This study aligns with research by Musthofa (2020), which found that overprotective parental behavior moderately affects adolescent adjustment. Tampubolon and Siahaan (2023) also found that parental behavior towards children plays a significant role in child development, as the first environment children encounter is their parents. Therefore, parental behavior is crucial for child development. Interactions with the social environment can also be influenced, and overprotective parental behavior can hinder children's social interactions (Sagala & Yarni, 2023). According to Sobur (2013), adjustment is an individual's ability to establish satisfactory relationships between people and their environment. The effects of overprotective parenting are predominantly negative, where adolescents grow to be fragile and have a weak resilience in challenging situations like failures in life (liputan6.com). Adolescents accustomed to overprotective parenting grow to be spoiled and dependent, struggle to express themselves, and have difficulty building relationships in their social environments due to fear, and when faced with a problem, they struggle to resolve it due to parental interference.

Implications for Counseling and Guidance

The findings of this study, which highlight a weak but significant negative correlation between parental overprotective behavior and adolescent adjustment among students at SMA Negeri 1 Ambon, have several critical implications for counseling and guidance services. Firstly, counselors should prioritize addressing overprotective parenting behaviors in their sessions with parents. Counseling services can develop programs and workshops aimed at educating parents about the potential negative impacts of overprotective behavior on their children's adjustment capabilities. These programs can focus on helping parents understand the importance of allowing their children to experience and navigate challenges independently, fostering resilience and self-sufficiency. Secondly, the development of adolescent self-adjustment programs is essential. Given that a significant number of students exhibit high adjustment levels despite low parental overprotectiveness, counselors can build on these strengths by creating supportive environments that further promote autonomy and adaptive skills. Group activities, peer support groups, and role-playing scenarios can help adolescents practice and enhance their social and problem-solving skills in a safe and structured setting. Thirdly, collaboration with educational institutions can enhance the effectiveness of these counseling interventions. Schools can integrate counseling services into their curricula, ensuring that students receive regular guidance on how to manage parental expectations and develop their own coping strategies. Workshops and seminars for both students and parents can be organized to address issues related to overprotectiveness and its impact on student development. Moreover, counselors should incorporate family therapy sessions where appropriate. Family counseling can help address underlying issues within the family dynamic that contribute to overprotective behaviors. These sessions can provide a platform for open communication, helping families to negotiate boundaries and expectations that support the

adolescent's growth while respecting parental concerns. Additionally, counselors need to be aware of the cultural context when dealing with overprotective behavior and adolescent adjustment. In many cultures, including that of the Batak families studied, there are specific expectations and norms regarding parenting. Counselors should be culturally sensitive and consider these factors when designing interventions, ensuring that the guidance provided is respectful and relevant to the family's cultural background. Furthermore, counselors should offer continuous support and follow-up. Given the ongoing nature of adolescent development, it is important for counseling services to provide sustained support. Regular check-ins can help monitor the progress of both parents and adolescents, ensuring that any emerging issues are addressed promptly and effectively. Lastly, empowering adolescents through self-advocacy is crucial. Counselors can teach adolescents skills to communicate their needs and boundaries assertively with their parents. This empowerment can help balance the parent-child relationship, encouraging adolescents to take more control over their personal development while respecting their parents' concerns. By implementing these strategies, counseling and guidance services can significantly improve the adjustment of adolescents facing overprotective parental behaviors. This comprehensive approach will not only enhance individual well-being but also contribute to healthier family dynamics and more supportive environments for adolescent growth and development.

CONCLUSION

This study conclusively demonstrates a significant albeit weak correlation between parental overprotective behavior and adolescent adjustment at SMA Negeri 1 Ambon, with a correlation coefficient of -0.195 and a significance level of 0.020 ($p < 0.05$). Despite the prevalence of low to moderate levels of overprotective parenting behaviors among the parents of students, adolescents displayed a high capacity for adjustment, suggesting that other factors besides parental behavior influence their adaptability. The statistical analyses confirmed that the data were normally distributed and the relationship between the variables was linear. Furthermore, the findings from interviews indicate that while parents do set boundaries, they also try to balance these with allowing some degree of freedom, underlining the complexity of the interplay between parental influence and adolescent independence. The study aligns with previous research underscoring the pivotal role of familial environment in shaping adolescent social and emotional development. However, it also highlights that excessive parental control can hinder this development, leading to difficulties in adapting to new environments and forming social relationships.

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