PSYCHOLOGICAL MODEL OF ADOLESCENT COMMUNICATION AFTER GRIEF

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ABSTRACT

The death of parents is a very sad event for adolescents because then the family is no longer intact, there will be many changes and adjustments that occur. This also does not rule out the possibility of causing conflict in adolescents due to the grief crisis. This study aims to construct a model of communication psychology that is relevant for adolescents after grief by using an explanatory qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. This approach seeks to describe the meaning of individual life experiences of adolescents according to their own worldview because in the act of reinteraction individuals are active in interpreting and displaying social behavior subjectively. The findings explain that adolescents feel psychologically comfortable through social support from people around them, namely family and peers, because there are shared experiences, emotional reinforcement is felt so that they feel loved, cared for, valued and even a teenager feels mutual need and belonging in any condition through intense interpersonal communication.

Keywords: communication psychology, interpersonal communication, adolescens, post-grief.

Introduction

Identity formation is an important milestone in adolescence, of course, it really needs support from the people it loves, in this case parents. Parents who instill basic values, provide love, support both morally and materially, become role models for their children. In family life, the dynamics that occur in it can form strong values towards their children such as a sense of gratitude, especially in the Christian family environment in Maluku, a sense of gratitude that is the basis of strong values and is inherent in Maluku society in general (Wenno H.Y ddk, 2023). Therefore, the identity formed by a teenager will certainly be given by those closest to them.

The people closest to children are parents, a family with warmth in it will make the

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closeness that exists between children and parents, and that closeness will make children feel safe, comfortable and peaceful. A teenager when faced with an unwanted event in his life will definitely feel heavy to accept it, death is an event that can separate the communication relationship between children and parents, it is difficult for anyone to accept this event because absolutely no one is ready when they have to lose their loved ones.

The death of parents is a very sad event for adolescents because then the family is no longer intact, there will be many changes and adjustments that occur. This also does not rule out the possibility of causing conflict in adolescents due to the grief crisis. This event also begins with the term *"Bereavement"* which is a loss due to the death of the closest person who is grieving and the process of adjusting to the loss (Apriliza, G, 2022). This loss is what makes adolescents in Maluku, which is famous for its high social culture, more dynamic.

Grief affects adolescents in much the same way as adults, but because at this stage of development adolescents often experience "up and down" emotions, they can suffer from depression as a result. Teenagers can be deeply affected by the grief they feel after a relationship breakup, parental separation or the death of someone close to them. They can shut down, become depressed and irritable. They may prefer to get support and spend time with their friends rather than with their family. This condition can lead adolescents into a dark life and future downturn ifit is not addressed and handled by the family as a place where children get warm affection. (Pattiasina, 2023)

Family is the main factor for gaining experience in the form of responses that can provideknowledge and self-assessment in children which will later lead to the formation of children's self-concept to be positive or negative. Ramdhana (2020: 65), explains that self-acceptance by individuals who can know themselves better is part of a positive self-concept. Self-views that arecompletely disorganized emotionally, stability, and integrity in the self are part of the negative self-concept and often children's attitudes and actions such as running away from home and doing other dangerous things are manifestations of negative assessments in themselves.

These problems greatly affect the self-concept and personality of an adolescent who is in school. They can become withdrawn, depressed and irritable. They may prefer to get support andspend time with their friends rather than with their family, conditions like this make adolescents can be mired in a dark life and future downturn if not addressed and handled by the family as a place where children get warm love. The condition described above is a reality phenomenon that also occurs in all the lives of adolescents who experience psychological burdens after grief at SMTPI Dalyes group of Rehoboth Congregation of Ambon Island Klasis.

This research aims to construct a model of communication psychology that is relevant foradolescents after grief.

Methods

The study of communication psychology for adolescents after grief uses qualitative methods that are explanatory in nature with a phenomenological approach (Creswell, 2014, Lawrence, 2014). The phenomenological approach was chosen with the aim of comprehensively describing the experiences of each individual adolescent in his or her efforts to build interactions with others (family) so as to develop the individual's self-concept. This approach seeks to describe the meaning of the life experiences of individual adolescents according to their own worldview because in the act of reinteraction individuals are active in interpreting and displaying social behavior subjectively (Del Pino et al., 2022).

Primary data sources were obtained from adolescents of SMTPI Dalyes group of Rehoboth congregation of Ambon Island Klasis. SMTPI Dalyes group is one of the GPM formal education platforms. The research data collection technique was carried out through an in-depth interview process. The interview technique is optimized in a primary way to be able to obtain data from each individual teenager who has experienced the grief of one of the parents. The determination of informants was carried out by means of a purposive sample. This sample selection aims to detail the information extracted towards the specificity of the data. Further data was obtained from in-depth observations of various adolescent activities in which researchers were directly involved in the field (field research). In addition, data is supported from previous literature studies and those considered relevant to this research.

Results and DiscussionResults

1. Teenagers and Grief

Based on the research setting in the field to obtain factual information, researchers found 6 (six) adolescents who had experienced grief after the death of their parents, as well as 2 (two) close family and 1 (one) friend.

a. Feeling Lost

Feelings and experiences of "Gery", a third year junior high school student, 14 years old.

He was 12 years old when his parents died.

"I *never imagined that I would lose Papa and Mama when I was young. I was the youngest child who was very close to my father and mother. Sapa sapa sangka (who would have thought) Papa collided with a motorcycle then seng sadar sampe mati (did not realize*

himself until he died). Seng lama Mama lai die because of illness. (not long afterward Mama died. I finally gave up hope, I had no one to turn to. Living with aunty seng sama Papa deng Mama jua. (We siblings have no one anymore. Living together withan aunt but not the same as papa and mama). (sad expression with tears in her eyes)

Similarly, "Faldo" is a 15 year old, second year high school student. At the time of his father's death, he was 11 years old.

"Papa is a figure that beta expects vor liat katong pung future. (to see our future). I'm so lost." (sad expression with head bowed).

The same feeling was also expressed by "Sally" who had just experienced the death of her mother 9 (nine) months ago. She is 16 years old, a second year high school student.

"I still don't believe that Mama is gone. (I can't believe that Mama is gone). Beta as the biggest child feels the loss of everything, because beta always shares stories with Mama. (sad expression and tears).

b. **Needs Attention and Affection**.

"Gery" has experienced the death of his parents for 2 (two) years, therefore there is a fulfillment of the desire to get attention and affection from his family.

"I sometimes feel jealous when I see kids my age hanging out with dong pung Papa deng Mama. (I sometimes feel jealous seeing children my age hanging out with their Papa and Mama). I want someone to pay attention to me when I go to school or go home. (I want someone to pay attention to me when I go to school and go home from school)...this is what makes me like to walk to find friends. (makes me like to walk to find friends).

According to "Faldo" he can get attention and affection from his family and friends.

"I am grateful that I still have Mama who always pays attention to me. Even though I live a poor life, I still have Mama's encouragement. (I am grateful that there is still a mama who always pays attention. Even though we live in deprivation, there is a Mama figure)

While the expression of the feelings of "Sally" who just felt the loss of her mother stated that:

"I still miss the attention and caressing hands from Mama when I'm tired of doing my school homework. (I still miss the attention and caressing hands from Mama when I'm tired of doing my school homework).

2. **Adolescents and Family Life after Grief**

"Gery" with the statement expressed about life with Auntie and the rest of the family, looks clearly like this:

I felt strange living with them, I was pressured by many rules. That's what makes me feel uncomfortable living at home.

While "Faldo" through the expression of his heart shows that family is a source of encouragement for him.

"Mama and all my siblings always encourage me to study hard so that I can achieve my goals."

"Sally's" expression of support, especially her family, makes her feel less alone.

"Beta is grateful to have Papa and all my family who always encourage me to keep goingand not feel alone and lonely".

From the various expressions stated by adolescents after experiencing grief due to the loss of parents, the researchers tried to get information from family and friends about changes in adolescent behavior.

"Gery's aunt" stated that the teen's condition had changed drastically. This can be seen in the statements expressed:

"He (Gery) has changed his temperament and behavior a lot. He is rarely at home, never gives news if he is out of the house, even rarely comes home, so he often skips school. I was often called as a parent/guardian by the class teacher and principal. Even though I gave advice and even hit him, he never changed".

Meanwhile, "Om from Faldo" revealed that:

"Faldo's behavior at the beginning of losing his father, changed from a quiet child to a rebellious child. However, when he was advised every time he broke promises and commitments made in the family, he (Faldo) slowly began to change his behavior again".

The statement expressed by "Friend of Sally" that :

"Sally gradually began to feel confident, no longer felt lonely and alone after the death ofher mother because she was always invited to every activity at school and SMTPI".

Discussion
1. The meaning of a teenager's grief

One of the life events faced by adolescents is the death of a beloved family member, namely parents. Facing the death of parents at an early age is a tough test for every teenager. the description of *grief* experienced by adolescents after the death of parents can be seen through thetypes of *grief* (Cahyasari, 2008).namely

a. Physical expressions: loss of appetite, sleeplessness and pain.
b. Cognitive expressions: confusion, distrust, and reliance on memories of the father/mother.
c. Affective expressions: despair and feelings of sadness.
d. Behavioral expression: withdrawal from the environment

Expressions that occur through the stages of *grief* are the initial stage such as disbelief and confusion and expressing feelings through crying which lasts approximately two weeks, the middle stage such as obsessive behavior by repeating memories of being with the father or mother lasts after more than two weeks to one year, and the family stage lasts after one year. Theimpact of *grief* experienced by adolescents after death is the physical effect of becoming thin and having difficulty sleeping, emotional or psychological effects, decreased school performance, and social effects of closing themselves and being closed to the environment.

(Koocher and Gudas, 2009) state that adolescents' assumptions about death are

that adolescents are uncomfortable with death, not the reality of adolescents' ability to understand and cope with death, as a result adolescents have concerns when thinking about death, and concerns about questions about death.

The loss of a loved one is identified as a profound loss. Loss is individualized, as each individual will not feel the same way about loss. Some individuals will feel that loss is a normal thing in their life and can accept it patiently. Individuals who are unable to accept the loss of loved ones in their lives will feel alone and in a downturn. (Cahayasari, 2008)

It can be explained that in the Dalyes group of SMTPI, each adolescent has their own meaning of parental loss, but in general they interpret parental loss as the loss of a figure who will provide affection, loss of direction, loss of security and loss of sharing friends. Loss therefore has both positive and negative impacts on adolescents. The positive impact is the loss of loved ones can make adolescents more independent, otherwise the negative impact of losing parents is the disruption of the development of adolescents.

Social support will be more meaningful to an adolescent if it is provided by people who have a significant relationship with the individual concerned, in other words, the support is obtained from parents, and other family relatives and peers. (Taylor, S.E.1995). Social support is the presence of other people who can be relied upon to provide assistance, encouragement, acceptance and attention, so as to improve the welfare of life for the individual concerned. (Johnson, D.W. & Jhonson, F.P.1991).

It can be interpreted that the role of social support for individuals after grief is very important. This study reveals that social support from the family is needed both for individuals who are adolescents. The existence of social support is expected to enable individuals to get back on their feet so that they can return to living life in a healthier manner.

In the cases described, adolescents have wounds that continue to be hidden because they experience confusion about where to tell the problems experienced after being left by their loved ones (papa/mama). With the conditions that occur, adolescents who experience it seem to be forced to keep the wounds because of the lack of attention of the people around them and attitudes that tend to be alone and individualistic. Unresolved wounds can affect morality and the meaning of life becomes poorly directed. The existence of adolescents who have more time with their peers makes it possible for adolescents to act as personal entertainers for their peers.

2. Adolescent Peer Relationship after Grief

An important factor in the psychological and social development of adolescents is the family. Parents can provide experiences through communication and parenting during adolescence that will influence subsequent development. Likewise, the process of making friends is one of the things that a teenager needs to pay attention to in mingling, finding relationships and so on. Teenagers are actually more likely to easily tell their friends of the same age because they think that people of the same age are more likely to understand what they are feeling. However, the mistakes and evil influence of friends are in the spotlight and must always be considered, none other than so that the self who has accepted all aspects of friends of various natures can always be protected from things that should not be done by teenagers.

Healthy adolescents need direct contact with the outside world. It is very important when adolescents join and begin to open up with friendship groups and are accepted by their peers (peer relationships). Adolescents having many peer relationships can be positive because of the fulfillment of social relationship needs but can also be negative if the level of conflict is high in these relationships (Foulkes & Blakemore, 2021). However, if this need for peer relationships cannot be fulfilled, then adolescents are likely to feel lonely. Adolescents will be less likely to feel lonely if they are socially accepted by their peers and the relationship goes well. (Woodhouse et al.2012)

Self-openness is fundamental during adolescence for achieving key developmental goals with peers. Through self-disclosure, adolescents can gain emotional understanding, hear different points of view from their friends, and protect unwanted feelings. (Vijayakumar and Pfeifer.2020)

Teenagers' targets for self-disclosure are their peers who have shared experiences. The results of the study revealed that peers have a very important role in the formation of the character of adolescents' character development period. There is a tremendous influence from peers, they continue to radiate energy and are always on standby to invest in emotions when friends are in trouble".

In peer groups, individuals feel a sense of similarity with one another such as in the field of age, needs and goals that can strengthen the group.Peer groups are very influential onadolescent self-image. Teenagers become closer to their peers, because they think that peers can understand their wishes so they want to spend time with their friends. Teenagers in associating with peers feel given status and gain sympathy.

This shows that the presence of peers is very important for adolescents. Peer interaction is very important in shaping adolescent behavior. The results of the study stated that there was a highly significant positive relationship between peer social support and self-identity in adolescents.

3.Communication as a consequence of social relations.

The first environment known by children is family, parents need to build relationships by creating good communication that can help children communicate optimally so that they can develop positively and optimally. When family communication occurs with dissonance, it will certainly affect the formation of adolescent self-concept.

The form of parental involvement through intense and good communication is the most important thing and has a real impact on the development of children to achieve common goals and in line with the needs of each individual child (Astuti, 2016).

Conversation in family relationships is not only an exchange of information, but through conversation children and parents can express their feelings, clarify their thoughts, convey ideas and also relate to others. It is a good way to understand and get to know each other in expressing opinions.

The most important factor that must be considered in family education is communication because communication is the basis for human relations. The application of communication patterns carried out in the family certainly affects the development of children's character or personality. (Haulussy,. Lopulalan.2022)

Thus, communication in the family is the main thing needed in child development. The form of communication is not just talking or hearing something but sharing ideas and feelings. Family communication is communication that occurs in a family, is a way for a family memberto interact with other members, as well as a place to form and develop the values needed as a guide to life.   (Lopulalan et. all, 2020)

The elements of communication needed in building relationships are 1) openness; 2) empathy; 3) supportive attitude; 4) positive attitude; 5) equality (De Vito, 2011).

"Openness,

Based on the findings, it can be explained that openness of communication in the familyis achieved if parents can be willing to give real advice to children, be frank about what they say,besides that parents can exchange opinions and are willing to listen to children's complaints; **"Empathy,** in this study it can be explained that empathy occurs when parents are able to putthemselves in the child's position to understand and understand their child's position, it willcreate mutual understanding;

"Supportive attitudes, supportive attitudes from parents are very influential on children's behavior, when parents give children the freedom to express their feelings, the communication between them will be effective. This will make children feel that they are not just used as objectscontinuously, but feel trusted to be themselves;

"The **positive attitude**, despite the misunderstandings that sometimes occur, these parents are really able to make the child have a positive value in their own eyes and understand the positive side of their child's behavior the most;

 "Equality can be seen from how parents can invite their children to contribute in their interpersonal communication, so that parents and children get the same opportunity to

be communicators and communicants, this is what makes their interpersonal relationship closer because children will feel comfortable when parents want to consider them as adults and worthy of exchanging ideas with."

Judging from the description, effective communication by parents provides space for children to experience thinking that they are accepted as a whole, both their weaknesses and their potential. Parents openly support all decisions made by children so that children have confidence. The mistakes / shortcomings that children have are accepted by parents positively so that children do not feel cornered.

It can be interpreted that the function of communication is important for building self- concept, self-actualization, survival, obtaining happiness, avoiding pressure and tension and fostering good relationships with others. This is described in research conducted by Wenno, H.Y,et al (2023), which says that giving thanks is also an important aspect in the formation of adolescent self-concept where this will be related to the dynamics of interpersonal communication built in interacting with others, will strengthen the self-concept of adolescents or individuals experiencing a period of grief.

In addition to the role of the family, the role of the environment is also very helpful for adolescents in their development, one of which is relationships with peers can provide good social support for adolescents who have various problems in the development process, giving rise to positive friendship quality as well. It can be revealed that a person's personal development largely depends on the interaction of individuals with other individuals through good and honest relationships, full of trust, shared ideals and commitments.(Hurlock, 2010)

Social support sourced from peers can provide information related to what adolescents should do in an effort to socialize with their environment, besides that it can also provide feedback on what adolescents do in their groups and social environments and provide opportunities for adolescents to test various roles in resolving crises in forming optimal self- identity.

Dimensions of peer social support: 1. Emotional support: in the form of expressions of empathy, care and concern for the person concerned. 2. Appreciative support: occurs through expressions of positive respect (appreciation), encouragement or agreement with individual ideas or feelings. 3. Instrumental support: can provide direct assistance, such as helping when experiencing stress. 4. Informative support: in the form of giving advice, instructions, suggestions or feedback. (Mahmudi, 2014)

Friends and family play a role in providing the most optimal support for adolescents. Social support in the form of attention, motivation, information, positive interactions, and material support from family members or others can improve the quality of life of adolescents (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991). Social support affects subjective well-being because it generates positive emotions, strengthens self-esteem, builds an

optimistic attitude, and helps solve problems (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

The construction of the model from the research results to understand the phenomenon ofadolescent communication psychology after grief is as follows:
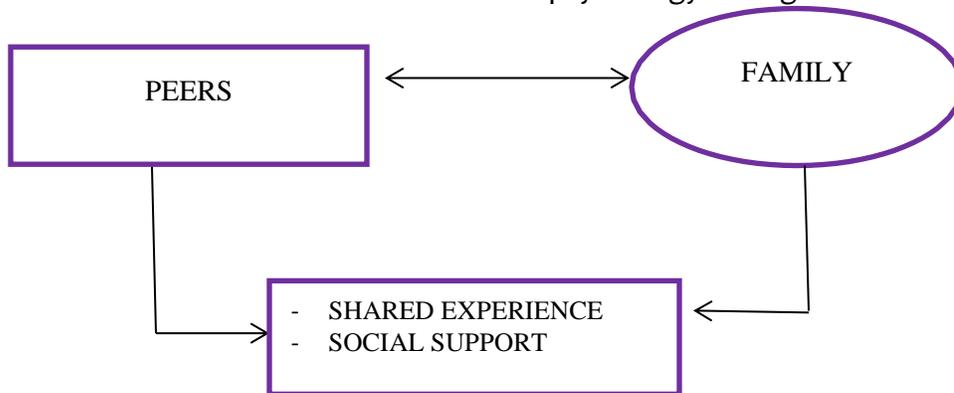

Figure 1: Psychology Model of Adolescent Communication

It can be explained that adolescents feel psychologically comfortable through social support from people around them, namely family and peers, because there are shared experiences, emotional reinforcement is felt so that they feel loved, cared for, valued and even anadolescent feels mutual need and belonging in any condition through intense interpersonal communication.

Conclusion

Adolescents can be deeply affected by the grief they feel after a relationship breakup, parental separation or the death of someone close to them. Social support is more meaningful to adolescents when it is provided by people who have a significant relationship with the individual, in other words, it is obtained from parents, and other family relatives and peers. Communication functions are important for building self-concept, self-actualization, survival, gaining happiness, avoiding stress and tension and fostering good relationships with others.

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