

The Correlation Between Family Functioning and Self-disclosure Among Emerging Adulthood

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the correlation between family functioning and self-disclosure among emerging adulthood. Family functioning is a process of physical and emotional interaction between family members in carrying out their duties and striving for the welfare of each member from the physical, social, and psychological aspects. Self-disclosure is the act of providing information about oneself that is usually hidden and not shared with others. This study used a quantitative method involving 111 college student respondents aged 18-25 years who study in West Jakarta and live separately from their parents. Family functioning is measured using the McMaster Model of Family Functioning adapted by Boterhoven de Haan. Meanwhile, self-disclosure is measured using the Self-Disclosure Scale based on the self-disclosure aspects according to DeVito and has been modified to the research context. The research analysis result showed that based on Pearson's correlation analysis, the family functioning has a significant and positive correlation with self-disclosure among emerging adulthood. The better family functioning and better self-disclosure help emerging adulthood in carrying out their academic activities. This study recommends for emerging adulthood to implement good communication patterns and self-disclosure to express themselves, share experiences, and deliver opinions to parents.

Keywords: academic, emerging adulthood, family functioning, parent, student, self-disclosure

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji hubungan antara fungsi keluarga dan keterbukaan diri pada masa dewasa awal. Fungsi keluarga merupakan suatu proses interaksi fisik dan emosional antar anggota keluarga dalam menjalankan tugasnya dan mengupayakan kesejahteraan setiap anggotanya baik dari aspek fisik, sosial, dan psikologis. Keterbukaan diri merupakan tindakan memberikan informasi tentang diri sendiri yang biasanya disembunyikan dan tidak dibagikan kepada orang lain. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif dengan melibatkan 111 responden mahasiswa berusia 18-25 tahun yang bersekolah di Jakarta Barat dan tinggal terpisah dari orang tuanya. Fungsi keluarga diukur menggunakan McMaster Model of Family Functioning (skala versi singkat) yang diadaptasi oleh Boterhoven de Haan. Sedangkan keterbukaan diri diukur menggunakan Skala Keterbukaan Diri berdasarkan aspek keterbukaan diri menurut DeVito dan telah dimodifikasi sesuai dengan konteks penelitian. Hasil analisis penelitian menunjukkan bahwa berdasarkan analisis korelasi Pearson, fungsi keluarga mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dan positif dengan keterbukaan diri pada masa dewasa awal. Fungsi keluarga yang baik dan keterbukaan diri yang baik membantu individu pada masa dewasa awal dalam menjalani aktivitas akademiknya. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan agar masa dewasa awal menerapkan pola komunikasi yang baik dan keterbukaan diri untuk mengekspresikan diri, berbagi pengalaman, dan menyampaikan pendapat kepada orang tua.

Kata kunci: akademik, fungsi keluarga, keterbukaan diri, masa dewasa awal, orang tua, siswa

Introduction

Emerging adulthood is one of the developmental stages proposed by Arnett (2007a), this developmental phase is the result of the Erikson's psychosocial theory which was identified in the life span between adolescents to young adults with an age range of 18 to 25 years. This stage of development is a crucial period of individual development transition from adolescence to adulthood, which is characterized by identity exploration, instability, focus on self, feeling in between childhood and adulthood, and focus on possibilities (Arnett, 2007b). This period is dominated by enthusiasm, especially when the individual is planning to overcome the challenges that exist on the way to adulthood. Miller explains that there are several developmental goals that individuals must fulfill during this transition to adulthood, such as living apart from parents, career, and academic advancement, building intimate and deep interpersonal relationships, self-determination of life choices, and emotional maturity (Miller, 2002). Other research says that individuals in emerging adulthood will prioritize their own qualities to take attitudes, be responsible for their actions, make decisions independently, and release themselves from financial dependence on parents (Nelson & Barry, 2005).

During emerging adulthood, most individuals have left their homes so they are more free to express themselves because they have a higher level of freedom than adolescence who still live with their parents. This allows individuals in this period to have a more independent life, freedom in choosing a lifestyle, and determining their career and education. Ikhsani says that the emerging adulthood period is synonymous with relative independence from social roles and normative expectations, where individuals in this phase have matured in terms of age and have begun to leave their dependence in childhood and adolescence but still do not fully play a normative role as adults (Fachnadia, 2020). In general, individuals have not been able to take responsibility for entering the adult role to the fullest because they have not yet achieved financial independence, which makes individuals still financially dependent on their parents (Miller, 2002).

According to Arnett, individuals in emerging adulthood begin to conduct self-exploration related to their lives, especially in terms of romance, work, and individual worldview (Arnett, 2000). Individuals have a role as builders of their own developmental paths, in providing adaptive responses to various contexts such as biological, cultural, political, and physical environmental issues that influence or affect them (Fachnadia, 2020). The main goal during this developmental period is for individuals to achieve independence, therefore individuals at the age of emerging adulthood conduct self-exploration and experimentation by trying various jobs and others to find out what they like and what suits them. Emerging adulthood is the age group that most often experiences residential moves, this is because individuals in the transition from adolescence to adulthood will generally leave home a lot to go to college, work, and live independently (Arnett, 2000). In addition to developmental tasks involving self-exploration, emerging adulthood also experiences instability in love, work, education (Arnett, 2007c). Based on the description of the developmental goals of emerging adulthood, it can be said that emerging adulthood is an intense and unstable stage of development because individuals must overcome all their efforts, decisions, and failures by themselves (Arnett, 2000)

Arnett defines the five characteristics of the emerging adulthood developmental stage towards adulthood as an individual's identity exploration of individual academic, career, and love choices (Arnett, 2007b). During this period, individuals also explore ideologies, individual perspectives on the world, lifestyles, religion, talents and abilities of interest, aspirations, and hopes for the future. Then the second characteristic is the age of instability, where there are many changes that cause instability in residence, work, academics, romance, and individual financial circumstances. The third characteristic is that individuals at this time are also more self-focused, because they are freer in making individual choices without being pressured by the direction of parents and society. Next is feeling in between, where individuals feel they are between the stages of adolescence and adulthood where individuals already feel responsible for themselves but have not separated from their attachment to their parents.

Lastly, this period is the age of possibilities and opportunities that are filled with a sense of optimism to have a better life than their parents with the hope of changing lives and becoming successful.

At this phase, the egocentric nature of individuals slowly decreases because individuals begin to be able to think and put themselves in the perspective of others. Individuals have also seen parents as whole people, unlike how they saw their parents before when they were teenagers (Arnett, 2006). Based on research conducted by Parra, Oliva and Reina, it is explained that; "during emerging adulthood, communication with parents and affection begins to decrease, adaptation and cohesiveness with parents increase, and conflict with parents decreases." (Parra et al., 2015). Fitriani revealed that emerging adulthood does not see itself as a teenager or an adult, is unstable, and focuses on itself which causes a lack of commitment of emerging adulthood individuals in committing for the long term, Fitriani also mentioned that most individuals experience a series of love relationships during emerging adulthood with several episodes of free sex but most of them are temporary, this is caused by individual instability stemming from previous explorations of identity (Fitrianti et al., 2022).

Self-disclosure is the act of providing information about oneself that is usually hidden and not shared with others (Devito, 2016). According to Morreale et al. (2007) self-disclosure is a form of individual interpersonal communication in providing personal information to others voluntarily or intentionally in an honest and accurate manner. Devito (2016) reveals that an individual can self-disclose to encourage relationship growth, maintain relationships, improve relationships, or even as a strategy to end a relationship. This is an evolving process, where self-disclosure patterns change as the relationship changes. Openness or self-disclosure will increase if the relationship develops from initial contact to involvement and closeness, otherwise, the relationship worsens, then self-disclosure may decrease.

The relationship between parents and children usually undergoes significant changes during the transition from adolescence to adulthood, this is caused by feelings of individual differentiation and independence that grow to create unique identities and result in individual separation and individualization of parents (Kins et al., 2012). Based on the Interpersonal Process Model of Intimacy (Reis & Buhl, 2008), self-disclosure is conceptualized as an interpersonal process where self-disclosure and parental responsiveness received by individuals can influence self-disclosure patterns and individual perceptions of parent-child relationship quality. Devito (2016) also explains the main factors that can affect individual openness in disclosing information, including who the individual is, what the individual's gender is, what the individual's culture is, what topic the individual wants to disclose, who the individual listeners are or to whom the individual will disclose it.

Devito (2016) said that individuals can get to know themselves better and ease the burden borne by individuals by not keeping secrets and making self-disclosure to others so that individuals also have closer relationships with others and are better able to deal with the problems they face when they get support from others around them. In addition, by making self-disclosure, individuals can direct relationships to be more honest and open because individuals show trust in other individuals. Devito (2016), suggests five dimensions of self-disclosure including amount (frequency and intensity of time in self-disclosure), valence (positive and negative qualities of disclosure), accuracy (accuracy and honesty of the information provided), intention (purpose and intention of self-disclosure), and intimacy (intimacy or depth of personal information disclosed).

The concept of family functioning proposed by Epstein, Bishop and Baldwin, they defines family functioning as a process of physical and emotional interaction between family members in carrying out their duties and striving for the welfare of each member from the physical, social, and psychological aspects (Epstein et al., 1983). Furthermore, Walsh (1994) stated that a healthy family function is a family system with a structure and interaction process involving family members that runs well. Based on the McMaster Model of Family Functioning theory developed by Epstein (Epstein et al., 1978) it is described that the perspective of family functioning is viewed from six dimensions, which are problem solving (effectiveness in solving problems), communication (intensity and patterns of good and effective communication), affective responsiveness (forms of concern and empathy in responding according to

appropriate expression), affective involvement (involvement in family activities), roles (division of roles of each family member), behavior control (flexible behavior control based on the situation).

Based on previous research analyzing family relationships during emerging adulthood, interaction patterns during this period are more prominent than other factors that predict the quality of family relationships in this period (Thornton et al., 1995). Research conducted by Noack & Buhl (Buhl et al., 2015) shows that during this period family relationships usually improve with lower levels of conflict, especially in families with grown up children who no longer live with their parents (Aquilino, 1997). Based on certain studies, the factor of living together is very important in predicting the level of conflict between parents and their offspring during this period. It was revealed in the research of Dubas & Petersen (Dubas & Petersen, 1996), that children over the age of 21 who still live with their parents show worse levels of depression, poor relationships and conflicts with parents that are worse than individuals who live alone, so it can be said that children's well-being during emerging adulthood is closely related to the quality of their relationships (Roberts & Bengtson, 1993). According to Holdsworth & Morgan (Holdsworth & Morgan, 2005), family is a fundamental support in this period, and relationship quality continues to be important as an adjustment in this developmental stage (Powers et al., 1989)

To strengthen the phenomenon in this study, researchers have conducted a preliminary study on 40 students aged 18 to 25 years old who live in Jakarta. Based on the survey, it is shown that 60% of them live with their parents and 40% live separately from their parents. However, the question regarding the comfort of living with or apart from parents showed 50% each on the grounds of more adequate facilities, being able to save more money, and having their physical needs fulfilled (eating, sleeping comfortably, etc.). Meanwhile, the reasons for respondents who are more comfortable living apart from their parents say they feel freer, can be more independent, have private space, and avoid conflicts with parents. This is supported by the statements of 30 respondents who stated that conflicts with parents decreased when they lived separately from their parents. Although the majority of respondents live with their parents, 60% of respondents stated that they are not always open in communicating with their parents because they are afraid of being judged by judgmental thoughts from their parents, which will lead to arguments and conflict between children and parents. Furthermore, 30% of respondents stated that they felt they did not have an important role or involvement in family decisions. As many as 61% of respondents claimed to have experienced symptoms of depression due to their family problems, and 75% of them did not discuss their problems with their parents because they did not get moral support from their parents. As many as 53% of respondents stated that they were not always honest and open in expressing their opinions and feelings to their parents, for example in matters of finances, romantic relationships, sexual orientation, college, and mental health.

According to the background description above, and the research about family functioning and self-disclosure among emerging adulthood is still scarce, the researcher is interested in conducting research on the correlation between family functioning with self-disclosure in emerging adulthood towards parents, especially in emerging adulthood who live alone or separated from their parents. The purpose of this study is to examine whether there is a correlation between family functioning and self-disclosure among emerging adulthood who live separately from their parents, with the following research hypotheses:

H₀: There is no significant correlation between family functioning with self-disclosure in emerging adulthood.

H₁: There is a significant correlation between family functioning with self-disclosure in emerging adulthood.

Methods

Research participants

This study involved by a total sample of 111 research participants. They were recruited to participate using a non-probability sampling method with a convenience sampling technique. The research participants who involved in this study are student in the stage of emerging adulthood that eligible for the research criteria as written below:

1. Aged between 18 to 25 years old.
2. Unmarried.
3. Active undergraduate students.
4. They study in the campus located in West Jakarta.
5. They live separately from their parents.

The age criteria above follow the theory of Arnett (2007a). The following **Table 1.** depicting the demographic information of the participants:

Table 1. Participant Age Information

Age of participants	n of participants	Percentage
18 year old	11 participants	10 %
19 year old	17 participants	15 %
20 year old	41 participants	37 %
21 year old	25 participants	22 %
22 year old	13 participants	12 %
23 year old	2 participants	2 %
24 year old	2 participants	2 %
Total	111 participants	100 %

The above data shown that most of research participants are from the age of 20 with 41 participants, and the least of research participants are from the age of 23 and 24 with 2 participants consecutively. We do not have participant from the age of 25. The total research participants are 111 respondents.

Research Design

This research was conducted using a quantitative approach with a correlational research design that aims to determine whether there is a correlation between variables (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Latipah, (2014) also states that a correlational research design can be used to predict the level of correlation between existing variables. There are two variables to be measured in this study, namely family functioning and self-disclosure. The data analysis technique used in this study is the Pearson correlation statistical test, to prove how strong the correlation between the two variables is (Rea & Parker, 2014).

Measuring Instruments

The measuring instrument used to measure family functioning variables in this study is the McMaster Model of Family Functioning (short version scale) adapted by Boterhoven de Haan (Boterhoven de Haan et al., 2015). This scale is based on six dimensions of family functioning which consist of problem-solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness, affective involvement, and behavior control (Epstein et al., 1978). The short version of the scale that has been adapted and simplified by Boterhoven de Haan et al., (Boterhoven de Haan et al., 2015) has 12 questions with 4

answer scales, such as strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Based on the results of research conducted by Risqi (2021), this instrument can be said to be valid and reliable with a Cronbach's alpha reliability index value ($\alpha = .804$) and a validity index of $.372 - .677$. The reliability value of this measuring instrument using used data is $.877$.

In measuring self-disclosure variables, researchers used a Self-Disclosure Scale designed by Putri (Putri, 2019) based on five aspects of self-disclosure indicators according to Devito (2016), namely amount, valence, accuracy, intention, and intimacy. This scale consists of 23 questions with 4 answer scales including very suitable, suitable, not suitable, and very unsuitable. This instrument has been used by previous researchers with a validity value of $.331 - .547$ and a reliability value of $.870$. The value of the reliability test results of this measuring instrument using used data is $.935$.

The table below is the result of the reliability test for both measuring instruments using used data:

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Reliability Statistics		
Measuring Instruments	N of items	Cronbach's Alpha
McMaster Model of Family Functioning (Short Version Scale)	12	.877
Self-Disclosure Scale	23	.935

Based on the reliability test results of the two measuring instruments above, the McMaster Model of Family Functioning (Short Version Scale) has a Cronbach's Alpha value of $.877$ with a total of 12 items and the Self-Disclosure Scale has a Cronbach's Alpha value of $.935$ with a total of 23 items.

According to the results of the reliability value of these two measuring instruments, it can be concluded that the Family Functioning and Self-Disclosure scales have a good reliability index because it has a Cronbach's Alpha value of more than $.6$.

Results and Discussion

Result

Normality Test

The normality test is a test that is used to determine whether data is normally distributed based on residual values (Widodo, 2017). In the normality test in this study, researchers used the one-sample Kolmogorov Smirnov test. The valuation criteria in the Kolmogorov Smirnov normality test is if the significance value is more than $.05$ then the data is normally distributed, but if the significance value is less than $.05$ then the data is not normally distributed.

Based on the data analysis with the output on the **Table 3.**, it can be seen that this research data has a significance value of $.20 > .05$. Therefore, it can be concluded that this research data is normally distributed because it has a significant value of more than $.05$. With the normal data, this study proceeds with parametric test to analyze the available research data. The following **Table 3.** are the results of the normality test of this research data seen from the residual value:

Table 3. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Unstandardized Residual		
N		111
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.00
	Std. Deviation	6.73
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.06
	Positive	.04
	Negative	-.06
Test Statistic		.06
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.20 ^{c,d}

- Test distribution is Normal.
- Calculated from data.
- Lilliefors Significance Correction.
- This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Hypothesis Testing

As the research data is normally distributed, this study applies the analysis technique to test the hypothesis with the Pearson correlation statistical test using SPSS. This analysis technique used to prove how strong is the correlation between the two research variables: family functioning and self-disclosure. The Pearson correlation test is one of the correlation coefficients in statistical methods which aims to measure the significance or closeness of the relationship between two variables, to determine whether a variable has a correlation or not determined based on the significant value and correlation coefficient.

The following are the results of data analysis using the Pearson correlation test:

Table 4. Pearson Correlations

		Family Functioning	Self-disclosure
Family Functioning	Pearson Correlation	1	.64 ^a
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	N	111	111

^a. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the **Table 4.**, it can be seen that there is a significant correlation between family functioning and self-disclosure. This significant correlation is indicated by a significance value of $.00 < .05$ so it can be said that there is a significant correlation between family functioning and self-disclosure because the significance value is less than $.05$. Then it can be seen that the value of the correlation coefficient of the family functioning variable on self-disclosure is $.64$, which shows that the two variables have a correlation that is classified as strong if it is interpreted based on the interval in the guidelines for the correlation coefficient interpretation table according to Sugiyono (2013). The results of data analysis in this study indicate a positive relationship between variables, so the research hypothesis can be accepted that there is a significant relationship between family functioning and self-disclosure in emerging adulthood. The positive direction of the correlation means that the higher family functioning will relate with the higher self-disclosure among emerging adulthood. Contrary, the lower family functioning will relate with the lower self-disclosure among emerging adulthood.

Discussion

This study was conducted with the purpose of discovering whether there is a significant relationship between family functioning and self-disclosure among emerging adulthood towards parents, especially in emerging adulthood who live separately from their parents. The reason for researchers to undertake this study was to prove previous research on family relationship intimacy in emerging adulthood, which said that the factor of living with parents affects the closeness and openness of emerging adulthood to parents.

Based on the results of research data analysis that has been obtained by researchers, it is revealed that there is a significant correlation between family functioning and self-disclosure in emerging adulthood so that it can be concluded that the first hypothesis of the study formulated by researchers, (H_1); "There is a significant correlation between family functioning and self-disclosure in emerging adulthood" is accepted and (H_0); "There is no significant correlation between family functioning and self-disclosure in emerging adulthood" is rejected. The positive direction of the correlation means that the higher family functioning will relate with the higher self-disclosure among emerging adulthood. Contrary, the lower family functioning will relate with the lower self-disclosure among emerging adulthood. This imply that the good family functioning will help in increasing the self-disclosure of emerging adulthood.

This is in line with the results of previous research undertaken by Buhl et al., (2015), which showed that in this period the family relationship between children and parents usually improves with lower levels of conflict, especially in families with young people who no longer live with their parents (Aquilino, 1997). Based on certain research, co-residence factors are very important in predicting the level of conflict between parents and children in emerging adulthood. It was revealed in Dubas & Petersen's research, that children over the age of 21 who still live with their parents show worse levels of depression and relationships and conflict with parents than individuals who live alone (Dubas & Petersen, 1996).

The findings of this study support the results in previous studies which state that the higher the level of family functioning, the higher the level of self-disclosure in emerging adulthood towards parents, and vice versa if the lower the level of family functioning, the lower the level of self-disclosure in emerging adulthood towards parents.

The benefits obtained through this research for parents are the importance of maintaining all aspects of family functioning to improve the quality of relationships and children's self-disclosure to parents, this research is also expected to contribute to the science of Psychology, especially in the field of Social Psychology to become a source of information and comparison material for future researchers.

Despite the interesting result that was found in this study, this study carried out with several limitations. The limitations are the researchers limiting the research participants only to the participant in West Jakarta area, as the consequence, this study cannot be a generalization for all emerging adulthood. The other limitation is the researcher also only limits the study with two research variables which are family functioning and self-disclosure, despite there are several other variables that can be considered in future research. For further study, it is recommended to include broader research participants, wider range of student, not only limited to undergraduate students. It is also recommended to include more related research variables that can affect self-disclosure such as parent-child conflict, overprotective parents, attachment patterns, well-being, support, and others.

Based on the result of the study, this study proposes several recommendations. One of the recommendations that can be given by researchers for emerging adulthood are expected to implement good communication patterns and self-disclosure to express themselves, to share experiences, and to deliver opinions to parents. The good communication patterns and self-disclosure can maintain the quality of the relationship between emerging adulthood and parents by providing opportunities for parents to understand their emerging adulthood and provide input and advice. The better family functioning and better self-disclosure help emerging adulthood in carrying out their academic activities (Lian, 2008; Hicks, et al 2015). The further recommendation is for parents. The parents are expected to show their acceptance, trust, and support for their emerging adulthood by listening and paying attention their emerging adulthood when they are expressing their opinions, feelings, and experiences. Finally, this study can be counted as factual contributions in the related research area.

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis, this study concluded that there is a positive and significant correlation between family functioning and self-disclosure in emerging adulthood. The positive direction of the correlation means that the higher family functioning will relate with the higher self-disclosure among emerging adulthood. Contrary, the lower family functioning will relate with the lower self-disclosure among emerging adulthood.

Limitation

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Recommendation

Based on the result of the study, this study proposes several recommendations. One of the recommendations that can be given by researchers for emerging adulthood are expected to implement good communication patterns and self-disclosure to express themselves, to share experiences, and to deliver opinions to parents. The good communication patterns and self-disclosure can maintain the quality of the relationship between emerging adulthood and parents by providing opportunities for parents to understand their emerging adulthood and provide input and advice. The better family functioning and better self-disclosure help emerging adulthood in carrying out their academic activities (Lian, 2008; Hicks, et al 2015). The further recommendation is for parents. The parents are expected to show their acceptance, trust, and support for their emerging adulthood by listening and paying attention their emerging adulthood when they are expressing their opinions, feelings, and experiences. Finally, this study can be counted as factual contributions in the related research area.

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