

# The Involvement of Father, Emotion Regulation, and Aggressive Behavior on Adolescents

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**Abstract**— This study aimed to investigate: (1) the effect of father involvement on the adolescents' emotion regulation; (2) the effect of father involvement on the aggressive behavior of adolescents; (3) the effect of emotion regulation on the aggressive behavior of adolescents; and (4) the effect of father involvement on the aggressive behavior mediated by the emotion regulation of adolescents. The sampling technique in this research was purposive sampling, and the total number of samples was 396 adolescents aged 11-14 years. The data were collected using three scales, namely aggressive behavior scale, father involvement scale, and emotion regulation scale. The data analysis technique in this study was path analysis. The results showed that: (1) the father involvement did not significantly influence the adolescents' emotion regulation (2) father involvement had a significant effect on the aggressive behavior of adolescents, and the effect was 18%; (3) emotion regulation significantly influenced the aggressive behavior of adolescents, and the effect was 37.1%; and (4) the involvement of father had no effect on the aggressive behavior of adolescents mediated by emotion regulation.

**Keywords**— Adolescents, aggressive behavior, emotion regulation, father involvement.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Aggressive behavior is one of the behaviors that usually involves teenagers. Teens show aggressive behavior to express their feelings and solve their problems. Recently, aggressive behavior of teenagers has become a concern in various regions, including Bireuen Regency, Aceh Province.

The issue of aggressive behavior in adolescents, especially among junior high school students in Bireuen Regency is quite concerning. Based on the teacher counseling report in one of the junior high schools in Bireuen, there were 446 cases of behavioral problems that occurred in 2015, and the number increased to 479 cases in 2016. However, there were 461 cases in 2017. The behaviors showed in the cases included disobedient, verbal abuse, money extortion, and bullying. A similar thing happened in other schools in which 452 cases of aggressive behavior and delinquent behavior occurred in 2016 and 451 cases in 2017.

In addition, researchers also interviewed teachers in the schools to collect information about the aggressive behavior of adolescents. Based on the interviews, most students showed some types of aggressive behavior, such as fighting, disturbing others, disobeying, speaking harsh words, and shouting. Furthermore, some eighth-grade students were reported to have blackmailed their friends for money.

Buss & Perry (1992) define aggressive behavior as a behavior that expresses negative feelings intended to hurt others through physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger,

and hostility. One factor that causes the emergence of aggressive behavior in adolescents is the family environment (Myers, 2010). A good family relationship will have a positive effect on adolescent development. In contrast, a bad family relationship has an impact on behavioral problems and psychopathology in adolescents (Lestari, 2012). In addition, the involvement of the father in parenting can result in a close relationship between father and child which is negatively correlated with behavioral problems in adolescence (Svensson, 2004; Lestari, 2012).

Father involvement in parenting can reduce the negative behavior, aggression, and conflict that occurs during adolescence (Allen & Daly, 2007). On the other hand, the lack of father's role in parenting will have an impact on the high frequency of adolescents' negative behavior, such as aggressive behavior and other behavioral problems (Paley, Conger & Harold, 2000; Allen & Daly, 2007). Some studies suggested that there was a negative relationship between the perception of father involvement in parenting with the tendency of adolescent aggressiveness (Putri & Siswati, 2017) and the behavior of juvenile delinquency (Zuhairah & Tatar, 2017).

Lamb (2010) defines father involvement as a father's positive participation by directly interacting with his children, monitoring and controlling the children's activities, and being responsible for all the children's needs. There are several positive impacts of father involvement in child development, one of which is the development of emotion regulation. Septiani & Nasution's research (2017) found that there was a relationship between father involvement and the development of emotion regulation in children. A child begins to learn the ability to regulate emotion since childhood, and father involvement is an important factor that can influence the development of children's emotion regulation.

Emotion regulation is an individual's ability to evaluate, control, and express emotions and feelings to achieve certain goals (Gross & Thompson, 2006). Emotion regulation ability is related to the aggressive behavior of adolescents (Hagman, 2014) so that emotion regulation is also one of the factors that can influence the emergence of aggressive behavior. Teenagers who have good emotion regulation ability will be able to control their emotions so that the behavior displayed is in accordance with the environmental demands.

To sum up, there are two general factors that might cause aggressive behavior, namely situational factors (the family environment without father involvement) and individual factors (emotion regulation). Both factors correlate with the individual's internal conditions that influence the emergence

of aggressive behavior (Siddiqah, 2010). Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the effect of fathers' involvement in aggressive behavior mediated by emotion regulation of adolescents.

II. OBJECTIVE AND METHODS

The aims of this study were to investigate: (1) the effect of father involvement on the emotion regulation of adolescents; (2) the effect of father involvement on the aggressive behavior of adolescents; (3) the effect of emotion regulation on the aggressive behavior of adolescents; and (4) the effect of father involvement on the aggressive behavior mediated by the emotion regulation of adolescents. Participants in this study were 396 adolescents aged 11-14 years. Data were collected using three scales, namely aggressive behavior scale, father involvement scale, and emotion regulation scale. The measurement instrument used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Always.

The aggressive behavior scale was developed based on the aggressive behavior theory by Buss & Perry (1992). The aggressive behavior scale had 28 items with reliability ( $\alpha$ ) = .912.

The scale of father involvement was developed based on the aspects of father involvement theory by Lamb (2010). The father involvement scale had 22 items with reliability ( $\alpha$ ) = .867. The statement on this scale consisted of two forms of statement, namely favorable and unfavorable.

The emotion regulation scale was developed based on the dimension of difficulties in emotion regulation theory by Gratz & Roemer (2004). This scale had 21 items with reliability ( $\alpha$ ) = .893. The statement on this scale consisted of two forms of statement, namely favorable and unfavorable.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data analysis method in this study was a path analysis with a computer program named Lisrel 9.1 for Students. There were two assumptions that must be made for this study including normality test and linearity test. Both assumptions had been fulfilled, so the hypothesis testing with a path analysis could be done. The hypothesis test results were as follows:

TABLE I. Hypothesis test results.

| No | Variable        | Path coefficient | t      | t <sub>table</sub> | p-value (sig.) |
|----|-----------------|------------------|--------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1  | x1 → x2         | -.094            | -1.869 | ±1.96              | .062           |
| 2  | x1 → y          | -.180            | -4.361 | ±1.96              | .000           |
| 3  | x2 → y          | .371             | 8.123  | ±1.96              | .000           |
| 4  | x1 → y (via x2) | -.035            | -1.826 | ±1.96              |                |

x1 = Father involvement  
x2 = Emotion regulation  
y = Aggressive behavior

The first hypothesis in this study was that there was an effect of father involvement on emotion regulation. The statistical test results showed a non-significant p-value = .062 ( $p > .05$ ); thus, this hypothesis was rejected. It means that the involvement of the father did not significantly influence the emotion regulation of adolescents.

The second hypothesis was that there was an effect of the

father involvement on the aggressive behavior of adolescents. The statistical test results showed a significant p-value = .000 ( $p < .05$ ), so this hypothesis was accepted which indicated that the involvement of father had a significant effect on the aggressive behavior of adolescents. Furthermore, the analysis showed that the higher the involvement of the father was, the lower the aggressive behavior of adolescents would be. The effect size of father involvement on the adolescents' aggressive behavior was 18%.

The third hypothesis was that there was an effect of emotion regulation on the adolescents' aggressive behavior. The statistical test results showed a significant p-value = .000 ( $p < .05$ ) which means that this hypothesis was accepted. Emotion regulation had a significant effect on the aggressive behavior of adolescents. It indicated that the better the emotion regulation ability of adolescents was, the lower the aggressive behavior performed by the teenagers would be. The effect size of emotion regulation on adolescents aggressive behavior was 37.1%.

The fourth hypothesis was that there was an effect of the father involvement on the aggressive behavior mediated by the emotion regulation of adolescents. The statistical test results showed that the t-value = -1.826 was lower than t<sub>table</sub> (±1.96) which means that this hypothesis was rejected. It showed that the involvement of the father had no effect on the aggressive behavior of adolescents mediated by emotion regulation.

*Discussion.* Partially, the involvement of father and emotion regulation influenced the aggressive behavior of adolescents. However, emotion regulation did not mediate the influence of father involvement on adolescents' aggressive behavior. According to Lamb (2010), the involvement of father plays a major role in several areas of children and adolescents' development including emotional, cognitive, physical, and social development. However, the role of a father in adolescences is very little in socializing emotion regulation (Bariola, Gullone, & Hugher, 2011). This is because teenagers tend to focus on how they can be accepted by peers and begin to develop themselves as an independent individual (Sabatier, Cervantes, Torres, Rios, & Sanudo, 2017).

The need for adolescence is freedom through authoritative parenting but still under parental supervision. A study by Sabatelli & Anderson (1991; Kocayoruk, 2016) found that adolescents wanted their fathers to show emotional closeness, such as support, involvement, and expression of affection but still appreciate the sense of separateness including independence, uniqueness as a person, and freedom of expression about problems they experienced. Therefore, emotion regulation did not mediate the influence of father involvement on adolescents' aggressive behavior.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that: (1) the father involvement had no significant effect on the adolescents' emotion regulation; (2) the father involvement had a significant effect on the aggressive behavior of adolescents, and the effect was 18%; (3) emotion regulation significantly influenced the aggressive behavior of

adolescents, and the effect was 37.1%; and (4) the involvement of father had no effect on the aggressive behavior of adolescents mediated by emotion regulation. The implication of this study is that the involvement of father directly influences aggressive behavior, not mediated by emotion regulation of adolescents because the father's role in socializing emotion regulation in adolescence is very little.

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