

Descriptions Of Self-Criticism and Self-Forgiveness as a Result of Parental Verbal Violence on Early Adulthood

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the descriptions of self-criticism and its protective characteristics, namely self-forgiveness in early adulthood individuals who had experienced verbal abuse from their parents. This research uses qualitative research with descriptive design. The result of this study shows that the two subjects experienced both forms of self-criticism, namely inadequate self and hated self as a result of verbal abuse by parents. Both subjects also experienced the stages of avoidance motivation, revenge motivation and benevolence motivation to achieve self-forgiveness.

Keywords

Self-criticism; self-forgiveness; early adulthood; parental verbal abuse

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui gambaran self-criticism, salah satu dampak yang ditimbulkan kekerasan verbal dan karakteristik pelindung yaitu self-forgiveness pada individu dewasa awal yang pernah mengalami kekerasan verbal dari orang tuanya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan desain deskriptif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kedua subjek mengalami kedua bentuk self-criticism yaitu inadequate self dan hated self sebagai dampak dari kekerasan verbal yang dilakukan oleh orang tua. Kedua subjek juga mengalami tahap avoidance motivation, revenge motivation dan benevolence motivation untuk mencapai self-forgiveness.

Kata Kunci

Kritik diri; pengampunan diri; dewasa awal; kekerasan verbal oleh orang tua

Introduction

As a living being, every human being grows and develops from the stage in the womb to adulthood. The development of children in the early days of life is the defining years for him (Wirawan et al., 2016). Out of the several factors that influence the development and growth of children in their childhood, one of which is psychosocial factors that provide the right stimulus during growth and development (Mahmud, 2020). Most parents want to encourage their children to do the best in life. However, not everyone knows how to best deal with children to do their best without making them feel pressured or burdened. Giving children injustice punishment is a form of violence against children.

Based on the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (2020) every year in Indonesia the number of cases of complaints of violence against children increases significantly since 2011 there were 2,178 cases, and the highest number of cases was in 2014 recorded at 5,066, in 2016 there were 4,620 cases of child violence. As reported by VOA Indonesia, in 2020 it was recorded that from January to July there were 4,600 cases of violence against children, 60% of the violence occurred at home. It can be concluded from the data that 1,111 children experienced physical violence, 979 children experienced verbal/emotional violence, 2,556 children suffered sexual violence, 68 children became victims of exploitation, 73 children became victims of human trafficking, and 346 children became victims of neglect (Mahmud, 2020).

Campbell & Humphrey explained that when people who should be responsible for the welfare of children do things that hurt their children, such as violence against children (Yani S. Achir, 2008). According to Wong (2009) forms of violence against children consist of physical violence, sexual violence, verbal abuse and neglect. This verbal abuse is characterized by words that demean the child. Verbal violence is a form of verbal behaviour that has a detrimental emotional impact (Fitriana et al., 2015). In verbal violence, the impact that can occur is psychological wounds, wounds that are not visible. This is in line with what Soetjningsih (2002) said that the impact of verbal violence cannot be seen physically, but the emotional wounds that occur can develop into adulthood. The emotional wounds that parents inflict on their children can be deeper than rape.

Verbal violence committed against children will have an impact until the child becomes an adult. At each developmental period, humans have different tasks and changes from one another, however, each developmental period will influence each other. Individuals in early adulthood are in a period of change and adjustment and there is a change in old roles with new roles that can cause confusion and even emotional tension (Shulman, 2005). Hurlock (2009) said that early adult individuals have new developmental tasks such as; beginning to enter the workforce, start looking for a life partner, and building a new family where these developmental tasks have new problems and obstacles as well.

When children are exposed to threats in childhood, which can be violence, neglect, and unrealistic expectations that parents expect of their children as they grow and reach early adulthood, there will be an increased risk of developing problems. Mental health can impact self-schemas such as self-devaluation, self-condemnation, and self-criticism (Blatt & Zuroff, 1992; Gilbert, Clarke, Hempel, Miles, & Irons, 2004; Schore, 1994). Self-critical individuals

have negative beliefs or beliefs about themselves that can occur at various points in their lives or can also occur consistently over time (Blatt, 1974; Whelton, Paulson & Marusiak, 2007).

Negative stimuli that have become negative thought patterns and ideas will also become the voice of "self-criticism" that will come from time to time when the child makes a mistake or when the child is unable to meet the expectations that other people have of the child. According to Gilbert (2004), the forms of self-criticism are inadequate self and hated self. Inadequate self is individuals who feel they are incapable to keep up with the expectations and obstacles or problems in front of them. While the hated self, focuses more on the individual's desire to hurt and punish themselves when something has happened beyond their expectations, are unable to meet the expectations of others or after making a mistake. However, not all individuals who have self-criticism will continue to hurt themselves with negative "self-criticism" voices, it can happen because there are intrapersonal protective characteristics within the individual, such as self-forgiveness, which act and function as a protector (Nsameng et al., 2013).

Enright and The Human Development Study Group (1996) argued that self-forgiveness is to release anger or hatred that individuals feel because of their behaviour. Self-forgiveness occurs when the individual knows and admits their mistakes objectively (Enright, 1996). There will be situations where the individual makes mistakes, fails to do something, or does something right with consequences that the individual will feel that they need to forgive themselves. McCullough (1998) reveals that self-forgiveness is shown in three aspects; 1) reduced desire to avoid victims (in this case, themselves), accept negative emotions that come (avoidance motivation), 2) individuals no longer think they have to get revenge, not punish oneself for behaviours and mistakes or not doing things that can hurt oneself (revenge motivation) and 3) after accepting negative emotions without avoiding these emotions and withdrawing from evil thoughts that harming the self, good intention motivation is needed, which means that individuals replace negative emotions and thoughts with well-intentioned efforts to treat themselves properly, namely doing good and not hurting (benevolence motivation).

Researchers conducted initial observations and found several individuals who had experienced verbal abuse from their parents. Then further, the researcher conducted initial interviews showing that these individuals tended to frequently criticize and curse themselves. As time goes on, they realize that the criticism and curses they have been doing on themselves are not necessarily true. As they began to improve negative thought patterns and feelings, self-image and made the experience of violence in their childhood a lesson not to repeat it to their children in the future.

The data and research results that have been described above make researchers interested in examining the description of self-criticism and self-forgiveness as a result of verbal violence perpetrated by parents of early adult individuals.

Method

This research was conducted using qualitative research methods. The qualitative research method is a type of research in which researchers explore and understand the meaning of a social problem experienced by an individual or group of people (Creswell, 2016). The type

of research used in this research is descriptive qualitative research. According to Hardini et al. (2020), descriptive qualitative research aims to provide a systematic and accurate description of the symptoms, facts or events.

The research method and the type of research used in this study are in line with the purpose of the researcher conducting this research, which is to describe a problem or condition and be able to explain phenomena that occur systematically and in-depth so that they can understand and know many things in the phenomenon that previously could not be seen and explained.

Participant

This study took the subject by using a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique that has criteria determined by researchers based on special considerations or selection (Sugiyono, 2008). Researchers compiled predetermined criteria in determining the subject to make it easier for researchers to conduct research. The characteristics of the subjects in this study, namely:

1. Age 20 - 40 years (early adulthood)
2. Individuals who have experienced verbal abuse from parents

Measurement

Interview

Interviews are a technique of collecting data through a communication process with a specific purpose carried out by both parties, the interviewer gives questions as the interviewee gives answers (Meleong, 2017). Researchers conduct interviews to find out small and hidden things in-depth and if the number of subjects studied is small.

This study uses a semi-structured interview technique, which according to Esterberg (Sugiyono, 2007) is an in-depth interview, the discussion is more extensive than the structured interview technique. The purpose of the semi-structured interview technique is for the informant to be more open in conveying and explaining the information or phenomenon that the researcher.

Observation

The observation technique is a systematic data collection technique. The purpose is to strengthen and confirm the data and information obtained from the interviews. The type of observation technique this study uses is a non-systematic observation which researchers do not observe directly.

The researcher uses a non-systematic type of observation because the researcher only acts as an outside observer who is not involved in the subject. Observations were determined to obtain the subject attitudes shown during the interview, and how the subject answered the questions given. In this study, observations were used as supporting data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is a systematic search and compilation process. This research goes through three stages: 1) Data reduction aims to simplify the components of unnecessary and inconsistent data to produce meaningful data accordance with research

objectives, 2) Data presentation is carried out by compiling a set of data to form a pattern of relationships to make them easy to understand, 3) Conclusion and verification to conclude and verify the data. Conclusions can be temporary and can change if there is no evidence to support these conclusions. However, if the conclusions are valid, consistent and accountable, the conclusion deserves to be called a credible conclusion.

Data Validity

The data validity technique was carried out in qualitative research to test the validity of the data obtained. Researchers use three kinds of data triangulation: 1) Source triangulation is done by comparing other sources of information or data with the same problem as the one studied in previous studies. The researcher will compare data observations with data interviews, 2) Theory triangulation is done by utilizing the theories that have been presented by the researcher to look for differences and similarities, and 3) Triangulation methods are used to re-examine the level of validity for the data obtained into a more comprehensive result.

Results

Verbal Violence

Based on the results of the two subjects, both subjects experienced verbal violence from their parents or those who cared for them. In subject NF (23), the forms of verbal violence experienced were labelled negatively, threatened, silent treatment, yelled at, compared, and scolded in public by their father, mother or grandmother. The forms of verbal violence experienced by the subject of AP (20) are being yelled at, scolded, being an outlet for the emotions of their parents, and being labelled negatively by their stepfather and mother. In line with the statement from Martha (2006) that the types of verbal violence include; yelling, scolding children in front of others, not appreciating children's achievements, giving negative labels, and silencing children. Verbal violence that both subjects experienced a negative impact on was self-criticism, where children who were previously hurled bad words about themselves, were blamed, criticized and ignored, would repeat or adapt these experiences to themselves.

Self-criticism

Self-criticism is when individuals tend to evaluate the behaviour they do excessively, are unable to feel satisfied with their achievements, and are excessively worried about the views and judgments of others about themselves (Dunkley et al., 2006). In the same study conducted by Gilbert et al. (2006), self-criticism is related to negative self-evaluations, full of anger, can be discouraged and not easy to ignore or eliminate. In line with the research that both subjects had a tendency to criticize themselves when they made mistakes, failed or were unable to do something. The forms of self-criticism include; an inadequate self in which the subject of NF tries to meet the standards of others because he doubts himself, feels something is wrong with him, feels he is not loved and tends not to believe in his abilities. On the other hand, AP subjects often feel guilty and worthless, do not believe that they have positive qualities themselves, doubt their abilities, and often think about failure. Another form of self-criticism is hated self where NF subjects criticize themselves, have a desire to hurt themselves verbally and

physically, and in AP subjects often criticize themselves and have a desire to punish themselves.

The above explanation is following Gilbert (2004) who says that in the form of an inadequate self, individuals tend to feel disappointed and other negative emotions when faced with a problem or failure. The individual will feel that there is something that is not good enough for him and the individual tends to think about the failures or mistakes that the individual has made. Then on the hated self, Gilbert (2004) that is a form of self-criticism in which an individual has a desire to hurt and punish himself when something has happened beyond his expectations, is unable to meet the expectations of others or after making a mistake. However, the two subjects did not constantly criticize themselves because both subjects developed a protective characteristic, self-forgiveness.

Self-forgiveness

Self-forgiveness is a voluntary desire to heed feelings of self-hatred by realizing the mistakes while cultivating compassion, kindness and self-love (Enright, 1996). Based on the explanation above, in line with the results, the two subjects will still encounter mistakes and failures, and they will feel negative emotions, self-forgiveness makes both be able to manage these negative emotions and feelings of inadequacy.

Both subjects have gone through three aspects of self-forgiveness: avoidance motivation which NF does not accumulate negative emotions, does not release emotions uncontrollably, can interact with perpetrators of verbal violence (parents & grandmothers) and does not avoid. The subject of AP does not accumulate negative emotions, she finds ways to manage these emotions and forgive her parents. Both subjects did not avoid their parents or verbal abuse perpetrators and themselves, they learned to no longer accumulate negative emotions and manage them well. Then on revenge motivation, the NF subject feels sincere about past experiences, she believes that an experience is a lesson, forgives her parents and grandmother and no longer has the desire to punish herself. Meanwhile, the subject of AP has forgiven her past because her situation is no longer like before and no longer criticizes herself excessively and no longer has the desire to hurt herself with the criticism. In this aspect, both subjects have forgiven and let go of their past experiences and taken them as lessons. Then on benevolence motivation, NF subjects focus on themselves and the achievements they want to achieve, make themselves and their loved ones happy and take care of themselves. AP subjects are aware of their condition when they need help and affirm the emotions they feel. Both subjects have good intentions to help, develop and care for themselves.

The above explanation is following McCullough et al. (1998) explained that avoidance motivation intended to reduce the desire to avoid victims who have been hurt, not to throw away negative emotions that come but to provide space for these negative emotions so that these negative emotions do not build up and overflow. On the aspect of revenge motivation, McCullough et al. (1998) explained that it is when individuals no longer think that the perpetrators who hurt themselves should get revenge, do not punish themselves for behaviours and mistakes that have occurred or do not do things that can hurt themselves. The last aspect is benevolence motivation where McCullough et al. (1998) said that it is a forgiveness process that can be seen from the increased motivation to do good intentions and make peace with the perpetrator who has hurt, even though the mistake made is a big mistake.

Conclusion

Based on the research and data analysis, both subjects who had a history of verbal abuse from their parents had self-criticism as the negative impact. They tend to criticize and desire to punish themselves. The forms of self-criticism are inadequate self and hated self. However, both developed a protective characteristic, namely self-forgiveness. Both subjects have gone through three aspects of self-forgiveness to achieve self-forgiveness: avoidance motivation, revenge motivation and benevolence motivation.

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