

Sibling rivalry and its management (A case study of a family in makassar)

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Abstract: This research aims to investigate: 1) the behavior of sibling rivalry in a family, 2) the causing factors of sibling rivalry, 3) the impacts of sibling rivalry, 4) the way parents deal with sibling rivalry, and 5) the appropriate approach in dealing with sibling rivalry in a family. This research implemented qualitative approach in the form of a case study. The instruments used for data collection were interviews and observations. The findings revealed that: 1) the sibling rivalry between research subjects IR and AU was shown through aggressive behaviors. 2) the rivalry was caused by AU's jealousy towards IR, 3) the rivalry caused resentment and revenge. 4) the parents handled the rivalry through punishments, and 5) the approach chosen to deal with sibling rivalry was Adler approach. It can be concluded that sibling rivalry is a complex matter that can ruin the harmony of a family and break brotherhood ties.

Keywords: *sibling rivalry*, Adler theory

Abstrak : Penelitian ini bertujuan 1. Untuk mengetahui gambaran perilaku *sibling rivalry* dalam lingkungan keluarga. 2. Untuk mengetahui faktor penyebab *sibling rivalry*. 3. Untuk mengetahui dampak yang ditimbulkan dari *sibling rivalry*. 4. Untuk mengetahui bagaimana peran orang tua dalam mengatasi perilaku *sibling rivalry*. 5. Untuk mengetahui pendekatan yang sesuai dalam mengatasi *sibling rivalry* dalam lingkungan keluarga. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan jenis penelitian studi kasus. Adapun instrumen pengumpulan data yaitu wawancara dan observasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bentuk *sibling rivalry* yang dilakukan oleh subjek IR dan AU ditandai dengan adanya perilaku agresif. 2. Penyebab *sibling rivalry* karena adanya perasaan cemburu oleh subjek AU terhadap IR. 3. Dampak yang ditimbulkan berupa perasaan benci dan dendam. 4. Pemberian hukuman merupakan upaya yang dilakukan bagi orang tua subjek untuk mengatasi perilaku *sibling rivalry*. 5. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam mengatasi masalah *sibling rivalry* yaitu pendekatan Adler. Penelitian ini mengungkap bahwa *sibling rivalry* merupakan permasalahan yang cukup kompleks yang dapat merusak keharmonisan keluarga serta putusanya tali persaudaraan.

Kata kunci: *Sibling rivalry*, teori Adler

INTRODUCTION

A family is a system consisting of several individuals in which there is the process of socialization and education for the children with each of their own uniqueness. Kumtiah and Mulyono (2015) mentioned that children with their individualities have the right to education. Nugraheni & Fakhrudin (2014); Wahib (2015); Niraraki & Hasan (2013); Syahraini, Yusuf & Helman (2017) stated that a family is the first school for children before they go to formal school and blend in the society. Thus, a family has significant roles in developing a child's characters and behaviors.

Among many families, there have been communication barriers between parents and children. Khasanah (2012) argued that parents need to build a good rapport with their children by making time to get together with them. Yuliasari & Mulyono (2015) added that the implemented parenting style provides children with knowledge on norms, rules, and cultural values of the society.

In families, a brotherhood affects the harmony. A tied brotherhood encourages family harmony. Meanwhile, a broken brotherhood negatively influences a family (Santrock, 2013). Good interactions between siblings are seen through the willingness of the older ones to help the younger in needs. It can also be observed from elder siblings' positive attention to the younger. These work as examples for the young children.

Another example of warm relationship between siblings is an elder's eagerness to help solve younger children's problems and vice versa. Such acts of mutual help are often done by siblings. Yet, there is also the possibility of conflict. For

instance, if an elder assumes that the parents care more about the younger, jealousy might occur. Thus, it causes the occurrence of conflicts among siblings (sibling rivalry).

Sibling rivalry is quite observable. There might be acts of regression and withdrawal done by a child. The child might become quiet, moody, and refuse to spend time together (Wolke, Tippet & Dantchev, 2015). Further, there are more aggressive forms of sibling rivalry shown through physical abuse such as beating and pinching (Howe, Karos & Aquan, 2011).

Volling, Kennedy & Jackey (2010) and Whiteman, McHale & Soli (2011) said that sibling rivalry is a form of envy, revenge, and resentment which cause negative relationship between elder and younger children in families. It can cause direct and indirect negative impacts. The direct impacts can be recognized through aggressive behaviors done by the elder or the younger children in the form of beatings or kicking. Meanwhile, the indirect impacts are rather smooth such as pretending to be sick or crying (Hurlock, 2007). Lestari (2017) stated that there is rarely sibling rivalry among siblings with the age gap of 4-year-old. In addition, siblings with big age gap tend to have a warm relationship.

A family is considered to have a harmonic relationship if its members pay attention, take care of, and help each other. A family with disharmonious relationship experiences conflicts, limited communications, tensions, and discomforts which can cause unhealthy personal and social relationship among family members (Hurlock, 2007).

Such unhealthy relationships between siblings should be resolved soon. There needs to be positive emotion management to avoid envy and revenge

among those experiencing sibling rivalry. The findings of Kolak's & Volling's research (2011) revealed that there is a correlation between emotion regulation and sibling jealousy. Parke & Stewart (2014) mentioned that emotions experienced by children can be expressed and interpreted. Based on the interviews conducted with AU and IR, it was found that AU did not get sufficient affection from the parents. AU also stated that the parents paid more attention to the elder child. It caused AU to resent the elder.

If it continues to happen, there will be rift in the family that can affect the children's education. A student who is often compared with the more academically privileged sibling and is lacking of parents' support and appreciation might be demotivated to learn. It is because the student is not given sufficient appreciations. Further, the assumption that the parents' care and affection is given only to the sibling can cause long term arguments as the sibling is considered an enemy.

Based on the illustration, it is clear that sibling rivalry is an urgent matter therefore the researcher decided to conduct a research on this topic. To deal with the problem, Adlerian counseling approach was chosen. The aims of this study were to reduce individuals' sense of inferiority, find life purposes, improve emotional intimacy with others, and participate in positive activities. In this case, a counselee needed to have insights on their lifestyle, be able to develop their social interests, and reach superiority phase.

Adler counseling was started by building a good rapport between the counselor and counselee, exploring the counselee's problems, providing supports so that the counselee could have orientation and more positive views on life.

A previous research conducted by Turniati & Nusantoro (2015) on sibling rivalry focused only on solutions among counseling groups. Meanwhile, this study focused on the negative impacts of sibling rivalry and the effective techniques to handle sibling rivalry.

RESEARCH METHOD

The approach implemented in this study was the qualitative approach. It is a method to study and explore meanings of individuals' social problems. Creswell (2010) stated that qualitative study is a way to learn and deepen the values and meanings of social problems among individuals.

This research involved two participants namely IR and AU who were siblings. IR was the first of four children aged 18 years old while AU was the second child aged 17 years old. Both were not in a good term. They often fought due to envy.

Primary and secondary data were used in this research. The primary data were obtained through interviews and observations with the informants. AU and IR were the main informants. The obtained data were on sibling rivalry behaviors in the family. Meanwhile, the secondary data were obtained from document analysis, interviews with other informants having close relationship with the subjects (among them are the parents), as well as literature studies on sibling rivalry.

The research started with case identification phase followed by diagnosis process, prognosis process, treatment and evaluation or follow-up. This is in line with other common case studies. To check data validity, the researcher conducted extended and perseverant observation and ended the process through triangulation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the age range of 12-18 years old known as early teen period, there is the tendency of sibling rivalry. It is due to the need of teenagers to build their identity and interact with individuals other than the family members such as their peers and changes on their appearance and way of speaking to show their individual existence. There are similarities between childhood and adolescence in which many have anger issues, strong curiosity, excessive jealousy, and yearn for attention and affection.

The research subjects, IR (the elder) and AU (the younger) fought often daily. Putri (2013) ; Fauziyah, Harsono, & Bhisma (2017) defined sibling rivalry as a form of competition between siblings caused by fear of not getting sufficient attention from the parents as one of the kids was treated differently. It caused problems which hindered one's ability to adapt individually and socially.

IR often gave commands to the younger, AU, which made AU upset. In addition, they often had different views on many things which caused them to fight. IR was given more attention and affection which made AU envy IR. It is in line with Putri (2013) who mentioned that some of the impacts of sibling rivalry were such as unwillingness to help each other and cooperate and tendencies to tattle when problems arose. Such behaviors were aimed to make them feel better about themselves.

To deal with the constant fights of IR and AU, the researcher implemented Adler approach to help change the subjects' life purpose, develop their positive interests and activities, reduce their sense of inferiority, and develop their good rapports

with others. The implemented steps were building a good rapport between the counselor and counselees, putting efforts to explore the subjects' emotions, and providing supports, new perspectives, and orientations.

The steps implemented helped the counselees understand the negative impacts of long-term sibling rivalry. Through the understanding, the counselees were able to support each other and realize that hostility among siblings were terrible for the family. In addition, the researcher informed the parents on the children's sibling rivalry.

Adler theory specifies a child's personality based on the order of birth (Corey, 1995). The interviews revealed that IR (the first child) obtained more attention compared to AU. First children are commonly obedient yet aggressive, and prefer to be the center of attention. They are often given sufficient attention. Such attention would affect their development. They tend to have high motivation to achieve more in life. A first child having younger sibling would want to have their own position and honor. They will be jealous if the attention given to them is reduced due to the presence of their younger siblings.

Meanwhile, the second subject, AU, was more independent, had high achievement motivation, found it easy to establish relationships, and had adventurous spirit. AU was also expressive and had a strong ambition to be better than the elder. Despite the tendency to argue with the elder, it was easy for AU to adapt. AU strongly craved for the parents' attention and thought it was rather hard to get things which were better than the elder's.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions of this study were taken from the:

1. form of sibling rivalry in families

Sibling rivalry between IR and AU was observed from their aggressive behaviors such as beating, kicking, and hurting each other. Meanwhile, the indirect reaction was in the form of weeps.

2. causes of sibling rivalry in families

AU's envy was caused by the assumption that IR was given more affection. Another cause was the small age gap between the two. Further, AU was given limited life alternatives which caused him to withdraw and snapped at the parents. In addition, gender difference also caused sibling rivalry.

3. impacts of sibling rivalry in families

Sibling rivalry could cause resentment and revenge among siblings. It should not be ignored as it could break family ties. AU who was often compared to IR and given limited academic appreciation was struggling on the family, career, and social aspects. A child who was never praised for his hard work would be demotivated to learn and reach his life goals.

4. efforts done by parents to deal with sibling rivalry

Parents should not implement authoritarian parenting style in which children were locked, threatened that the pocket money was withheld, and pinched their children as forms of punishment. It is important for parents to take children to holiday trips to strengthen the family bond.

5. implementation of Adlerian counseling to handle sibling rivalry

The implementation of Adlerian approach in handling sibling rivalry between AU and IR was done by building a

harmonious relationship, recognizing problems, providing supports, and developing more positive orientations and life views. Through the implemented steps, IR and AU started to have initiative and try to rebuild a good rapport between them.

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