



The influence of overprotective parenting patterns on adolescent identity formation and social adaptation: A family communication and relationship perspective

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ABSTRACT

Background: Many people say that adolescence is a beautiful period because during this period, a person can have more social interactions with friends, begin to feel attracted to other types and is a time to find one's identity. It has broad implications for teenagers' lives outside the family in their relationships with peers, teachers and other adults. The emotional atmosphere of the family, the way parents train and teach their children can shape the future direction of a teenager's life. **Methods:** This research uses a qualitative approach with library research methods. The data that has been collected is analyzed using the content analysis method, which aims to understand and interpret the meaning contained in the texts read. **Findings:** This article highlights the influence of parents' overprotective behavior on adolescents' adjustment to their identity. It is important for parents to strike a balance between providing support and allowing adolescents to face their own challenges. Providing space for teenagers to make decisions, learn from mistakes, and develop independence will help them in the process of adjustment and forming a healthy identity. This balanced approach will encourage teenagers to become individuals who are more confident, independent and able to adapt to their social environment. **Conclusion:** Parents' overprotective behavior can cause children's bad behavior towards their parents. And parents must know that teenagers need to adapt to the environment, the people around them, teenagers are rebels and if they are forbidden, they will act more aggressively because adolescence is a time of rebellion, unstable emotions, so adjusting to the people around them or their friends is difficult. **Novelty/Originality of this article:** This study explores the specific impact of overprotective parenting on adolescent identity formation and social adaptation, highlighting the need for a balance between parental control and independence.

KEYWORDS: identity; over protective; teenagers.

1. Introduction

Family, especially parents, is a place for personal development of family members, especially children or adolescents who are experiencing physical and psychological changes, thus the position of parents is very fundamental for the development of children (Chase-Lansdale et al., 1995). Parents are obliged to provide facilities and means for their children to get to know the outside world widely (Creswell et al., 2024; Hasanah, 2021). Parents often assume that they have given the best for their children and parents also often think that a good child is a child who is obedient and obeys without arguing at all. As an

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individual who is experiencing growth, a child, especially one who is entering adolescence, really needs the attention and guidance of parents, so that their development is directed positively. Forms of parental behavior that are less beneficial in development such as parental behavior that always spoils by fulfilling all desires and is too protective will result in children being unable to be independent, always in doubt and not believing in their abilities (Kartono, 2000).

Every parent must have felt anxious about their children, but each parent's level of anxiety is different (Cosso et al., 2023; Rapee et al., 2022). There are parents who worry about their children without any reason, so they are very careful in treating their children, not wanting their children to experience the slightest harm, so parents provide extra protection for their children.

Some parents fortify their children with a wall of "no", don't do that and this. Within certain limits, namely giving affection but still giving children the opportunity to take care of their own needs, make plans, make their own decisions and be responsible for their decisions is indeed necessary, but if parents are too protective, it makes teenagers become closed and hampered in development. When individuals enter adolescence, it is a period between children and adults, at this time most parents have not changed in giving treatment, teenagers are still treated like children, teenagers do not get much opportunity to determine the actions they want.

The habit of parents who always spoil their children, children cannot be responsible for what they do, in general children become unable to be independent, do not believe in their abilities, feel their scope is limited. A teenager whose parents are overprotective rarely experiences conflict, because they often get protection from their parents, with this situation, teenagers have less opportunity to learn various procedures or manners of socializing in their environment, so it is natural for teenagers to have problems adjusting (Arslan et al., 2023; Mathijs et al., 2024; Saragih et al., 2023).

Parents should understand that all things excessive, including in raising their children, never produce anything good. Likewise with excessive protection. Thus, the potential impacts of this parenting style on a child's growth and development may include the following, (1) the child may develop fearfulness and a lack of self-confidence, (2) exhibit dependency on others and limited problem-solving abilities, (3) display a tendency to engage in dishonest behavior, and (4) experience heightened levels of anxiety and stress.

Parents' behavior towards children can vary, some give their children the freedom to act independently, but there are also parents who are too protective and always help their children with small things or are known as overprotective (Choirunnisa et al., 2025; Khaerunnisa et al., 2022). According to Kartono (2015), overprotective parental behavior is where parents protect and protect their children too much from various daily difficulties and always help them, in general children become unable to be independent, do not believe in their abilities, feel that their scope is limited and cannot be responsible for their decisions so they experience difficulties in adapting. Nowadays, we often find parents who give their children whatever they want, but do not give responsibility to their children, so a child who receives excessive and easy supervision will have difficulty adjusting to conditions outside the home.

Overprotective parental behavior is an act of protecting children excessively, which often hinders the independence and development of adolescent identity. Adolescence is a critical period in identity formation, where individuals try to recognize and understand themselves and their role in society. Overprotective parental involvement can significantly affect this process.

Research shows that parental overprotective behavior has a negative impact on adolescent adjustment. Sutafit & Rasyid (2022) found that parental overprotective behavior had a significant effect on children's adjustment abilities, as evidenced by the t-test results of -6.481 with a significance of 0.000 < 0.05. Being protective does not mean bad, because of course all parents want to be able to protect their children (Morris et al., 2021; Wilmot et al., 2023). But if your desire to protect your child becomes excessive, this can affect the child's character and even have a bad impact on their future, especially their mentality. And

because being overprotective can also cause children to have difficulty finding their identity because they do not have free space from both parents (Meichati, 1983).

2. Methods

This research adopts a qualitative approach using library research methods to explore the phenomenon of overprotective parental behavior and its influence on adolescent self-adjustment and identity formation. The qualitative approach allows for a deep interpretation of the meanings and patterns embedded in theoretical and empirical literature. The primary data sources consist of books, academic journals, theses, and research reports related to parental behavior, adolescent psychology, and developmental adjustment theories.

The data collection process involves identifying, selecting, and reviewing relevant references that discuss overprotective parenting, adolescent identity, and self-adjustment. The literature is systematically organized based on recurring themes and conceptual frameworks. This stage ensures that the analysis encompasses both classical and contemporary perspectives, as reflected in works by Chaplin (2006), Panerai et al. (1998), Meichati (1983), and more recent studies (Ching et al., 2023; Lerner, 2021; Rachim et al., 2024).

Data analysis employs the content analysis method, emphasizing the process of interpretation and conceptual synthesis. Each text is examined to identify central ideas, theoretical relationships, and implicit meanings regarding the dynamics between overprotective parental behavior and adolescent adjustment. The analysis proceeds through three stages: (1) data reduction, by classifying and simplifying information based on relevant subthemes such as parental roles, adolescent identity, and adjustment factors; (2) data presentation, by organizing findings into conceptual categories and thematic tables (e.g., internal and external factors of self-adjustment); and (3) conclusion drawing and verification, by comparing theoretical assumptions with findings across different sources to ensure validity and coherence.

The validity of findings is strengthened through triangulation of sources, which compares interpretations from multiple authors and disciplines, ensuring that conclusions are based on consistent theoretical and empirical insights. Ethical considerations are maintained by acknowledging all sources and ensuring accurate citation of referenced works. Through this methodological design, the study not only synthesizes existing knowledge but also develops an integrated conceptual understanding of how overprotective parental behavior affects adolescents' ability to adjust and construct their identity during a critical stage of development.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Over protective behavior of parents

Family, especially parents, is a place for personal development of family members, especially children or adolescents who are experiencing physical and psychological changes, thus the position of parents is very fundamental for the development of children. Parents are obliged to provide facilities and means for their children to get to know the outside world widely. Parents often assume that they have given the best for their children and parents also often think that a good child is a child who is obedient and obeys without arguing at all (Ching et al., 2023; Partain et al., 2022). As an individual who is growing, a child, especially one who is entering adolescence, really needs the attention and guidance of parents, so that their development is directed positively. Forms of parental behavior that are less beneficial in development such as parental behavior that always spoils by fulfilling all desires and is too protective will result in children being unable to be independent, always in doubt and not believing in their abilities (Panerai et al., 1998).

Overprotectiveness is a tendency on the part of parents to protect their children excessively, by providing protection against physical and psychological disturbances and dangers, to such an extent that the child does not achieve freedom or is always dependent on the parents (Chaplin, 2006).

It can be concluded that overprotective parental behavior is always protecting teenagers from physical and psychological disorders excessively, not giving teenagers enough opportunities to make plans, develop alternatives, take care of their own needs and make decisions. Parents prevent teenagers from small daily difficulties, prevent teenagers from doing work that is not necessarily dangerous, parents provide excessive control so that teenagers are not free to do the actions they actually want to do (Panerai et al., 1998).

3.2 Self-adjustment

Adjustment is defined as a continuous interaction with oneself, namely what is already in oneself, body, behavior, thoughts and feelings, with others and with the environment (Calhoun, 1995). Adjustment can be interpreted as mastery, namely having the ability to make plans and organize responses in such a way that it can overcome all kinds of conflicts, difficulties and frustrations efficiently (Sari et al., 2016).

Table 1. Factors influencing adolescent self-adjustment

Category	Factors	Description
Internal factors	Motive Factors	Social motives such as the need for affiliation, achievement, and dominance influence how adolescents interact and adapt to their environment.
	Self-Concept Factors	How adolescents perceive themselves in physical, psychological, social, and academic aspects determines their confidence and adaptability.
	Perception Factors	Adolescents' observations and evaluations of objects, events, and life experiences—through cognitive and affective processes—shape their understanding and responses.
	Attitude Factors	Adolescents' tendencies to behave positively or negatively influence their approach to resolving challenges and adapting to situations.
	Intelligence and Interest Factors	Intelligence provides the foundation for reasoning and analysis, while strong personal interests accelerate the process of self-adjustment.
External factors	-	External factors (not detailed in the excerpt) generally include environmental influences such as family, peers, school, and societal conditions that shape adolescent adjustment.

Adjustment is not something that is absolute or absolute. No individual can make adjustments perfectly. Adjustment is relative, meaning it must be assessed and evaluated according to the individual's capacity to meet the demands on him/herself (Kaliasy & Handayani, 2024). This capacity varies depending on the personality and developmental stage of the individual. Adjustment that is considered good at one age stage may be considered less good at another age stage (Agustiani et al., 2016). Self-adjustment is influenced by many factors, broadly speaking these self-adjustment factors are grouped into two parts, namely internal and external factors (Table 1) (Soeparwoto et al., 2004). As a generation that will be the mainstay, the problem of adolescent adjustment is a problem

that needs attention, because adjustment is one of the keys to an individual's success both in school and in society. An individual is required to be able to adjust, especially during adolescence, because at this time individuals begin to interact with a wider scope (Jones et al., 2022; Lerner, 2021).

3.3 Teenagers

Adolescence can be defined biologically as the physical changes marked by the onset of puberty and the cessation of physical growth; cognitively, as changes in the ability to think abstractly or socially, as a period of preparation for adulthood. Adolescents are people who are in transition from childhood to adulthood (Herting et al., 2021; Niu et al., 2023; Senger-Carpenter et al., 2024). According to WHO, adolescence occurs in the age range of 12-24 years (WHO, n.d.). Meanwhile, according to the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 25 of 2014, the meaning of adolescents is the population aged 10-19 years. Children in adolescence also tend to have a high sense of curiosity. Without proper control from themselves or their parents, this can lead them to fall into juvenile delinquency. Therefore, it is important for parents to pay attention and supervise their teenagers properly. And, today's adolescent relationships are often associated with juvenile delinquency, such as fighting, brawls, free sex, or even the use of illegal drugs. So it is not surprising that parents behave overprotectively towards their children, especially teenagers. Parents must always want their children to grow up healthy and always be in a safe condition? That is why, it is natural for parents to often worry about their children. However, if the worry is excessive, this is what can make parents overprotective of their children. Well, this is what we need to pay attention to together. Because being overprotective can cause new problems later.

According to Lents (2016) stated, parents who implement protective parenting can cause children to experience mental disorders. Remember, mental disorders do not always mean crazy, but rather an abnormal or disturbed mental condition. According to Nathan, there are two mental disorders that may be experienced by children who grow up under protective parenting, namely short-term and chronic stress. Short-term stress can still be easily overcome (Meichati, 1983).

3.4 Identity

Identity is a characteristic based on nature or behavior, either individually or in a group. Such as: friendly, forgiving, polite and so on. Identity can mean an assessment from outsiders of a person or group observing them (Meichati, 1983). Furthermore, identity is an important component that shows an individual's personal identity. The better the structure of one's self-understanding, the more aware one is of one's strengths and weaknesses in living life.

On the other hand, if someone does not understand their identity, then the individual will be increasingly dependent on external sources such as friends, social groups for self-evaluation. The process of forming identity does not happen instantly, but rather through a process since the childhood of the teenager. If his childhood is pleasant, he will have a positive self-concept, but if not, it is certainly the opposite. Entering adolescence, a person is increasingly aware of his existence in this life. Parents need to help him get to know himself more deeply, by providing adequate stimulation, finding and recognizing the talents and potential of their teenagers. Parents can also help children recognize their temperament so that they can easily adapt to their social environment (Meichati, 1983).

3.5 The influence of overprotective parental behavior on self-identity

Many parents consider the "hardest" time in raising children is when they are babies to toddlers. Because everything depends on the parents. Super tiring. And when the child is considered a teenager, parents feel they can "relax", because teenagers are considered to no

longer need as much attention as when they were children. In fact, this is a wrong way of thinking. Teenagers may not need much help physically, but psychologically they are in a vulnerable period.

Lack of attention and positive support from parents can cause teenagers to do things that endanger themselves, including criminal acts. Therefore, during adolescence, there is no need to be too overbearing, because adolescence is a period of rapid growth, so if they are treated *overprotectively*, they will find it difficult to adjust.

Overprotection from parents can result in adolescents having less opportunity to develop the social and emotional skills needed for adjustment. They may become less confident, dependent on parents for decision-making, and have difficulty dealing with challenges or conflicts in their social environment. This can hinder the process of healthy and adaptive identity formation.

In addition, overprotective behavior can cause teenagers to feel pressured and have less space to express themselves. According to Gunarsa (2008), frustration or failure to satisfy needs or delayed satisfaction of needs can increase resistance to frustration and increase teenagers' perseverance in overcoming developmental obstacles.

Lack of opportunities to face challenges independently can hinder the development of resilience to frustration and perseverance. Thus, it is important for parents to strike a balance between providing support and letting teens face their own challenges. Giving teens space to make decisions, learn from mistakes, and develop independence will help them in the process of adjusting and forming a healthy identity. This balanced approach will encourage teens to become more confident, independent, and adaptable individuals in their social environment (Rachim et al., 2024).

3.6 The influence of overprotective parental behavior on adolescent adjustment

Overprotectiveness greatly influences adolescent adjustment. Because adolescence is a time of searching for identity, a time of rapid development, and if treated with overprotectiveness it will reduce the child's space to move, limit him, make him dependent on his parents, so that it is difficult for the child to find his identity. Usually teenagers will gather with their age, no longer gathering with children or adults. At this time, teenagers want to show their existence so that they are considered in social life, such as joining organizations at school, or in society. So if the space for teenagers to move is limited, it will also have a bad impact on the nature of teenagers.

A child whose parents are *overprotective* rarely experiences conflict, because they often receive protection from their parents, with this situation, the child does not get the opportunity to learn various procedures or manners of socializing in their environment, so it is natural that the child has problems adjusting. *Overprotective* parental behavior is a tendency on the part of parents to protect their children excessively, by providing protection against physical and psychological disturbances and dangers, to such an extent that the child does not achieve freedom or is always dependent on the parents. Aspects of overprotective parental behavior are excessive contact with the child, continuous care or assistance to the child, excessive supervision of the child's activities and solving the child's problems (Meichati, 1983).

The results of this study are in line with Ani's research: 2013 concluded that factors that influence self-adjustment in Kindergarten children are psychological factors, prenatal environment, learning experiences, environmental conditions, parenting patterns of parents/family. These factors are more dominated by external factors. The dynamics of self-adjustment in Kindergarten children begins with anxiety from children when separated from their parents, crying, and withdrawal at the beginning of school.

The cooperation between teachers and parents in providing more intensive motivation and guidance makes children begin to adjust to school. The conclusion in this study is that external factors have more influence on adjustment in kindergarten children. The dynamics of adjustment in children who initially had poor adjustment, with the cooperation between

teachers and parents in providing more intensive motivation and guidance makes children begin to adjust to school (Sutafti & Rasyid).

There are parents who give freedom to their children on the grounds that the child can develop his/her potential. There are also parents who give freedom to their children but still give control, and there are also parents who overprotect their children by providing protection against physical and psychological disturbances and dangers, until the child does not achieve freedom or is always dependent on the parents, this parental behavior is called overprotective on the grounds that the child does not experience harm, and because the child cannot think logically, extra protection is needed.

In treating children, of course, parents do not act carelessly, they have their own way with the hope that their children will develop as expected. Parental behavior towards children plays a big role in the development of children in the future, because childhood is a critical period that is the basis for the success or failure of carrying out further development tasks, such as the ability to adapt. Children who have self-confidence will dare or not be afraid to try to do various activities (Panerai et al., 1998).

4. Conclusions

Adolescence is a transitional age where humans search for identity. At this time the individual's personality will tend to change depending on what they see, hear and feel. In the process of forming an adolescent's identity, a teenager needs to know and sort out what things can affect their future teenage life, both positive and negative. Based on this, teenagers will always socialize and mingle with the environment they like and the environment that makes them feel comfortable. Overprotective behavior of parents can cause bad behavior in children towards their parents, and parents must also know that teenagers need to adjust to the environment, the people around them, teenagers are rebels who, if prohibited, will be more aggressive in doing because adolescence is a time of rebellion, unstable emotions, so that adjustment to the people around them or their friends is difficult.

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