

## The Effect of Attachment with Parent on the Emotion Perception of 8-10 Year Old Children

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*Abstract.* School-age children usually do activities with peers, teachers, or school officials, they learn to communicate, and understand each other, but sometimes also argue and interfere with social adjustments. This shows that children need ways to learn to understand events, which will help children deal with changes and environmental demands. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of parental attachment on the emotional perception of children aged 8-10 years. This study involved 403 girls and boys who attended elementary school education in Malang. Subjects were selected using cluster sampling techniques. The method of data collection in this study used the attachment questionnaire with parents and emotional perception. Data analysis using linear regression with the results of 0.535;  $p = 0.02$  with  $p < 0.05$  (significant). The results showed that the closeness between parents and children had a significant influence on the ability of children to understand the emotions of themselves and others.

*Keywords:* Proximity to parents, emotional perception, children.

### Introduction

The results of research on bullying in children in school settings conducted by researchers in several cities in Indonesia found that school-age children often display negative actions when relating to friends, as well as with older people, such as teachers or school officers, both verbally, physically and psychologically. For example: yelling, mocking, hitting, pushing, forcing, damaging, pinching, kicking, intimidating, ostracizing and discrimination (Wulandari & Mustikasari, 2014; Siswati & Widayanti, 2009; Danang, 2010; Marjohan, 2014). The results of the study indicate the phenomenon of school-age children who are easily offended and reactive in responding to an event. While school-age childhood is a period of achieving strong physical development, optimal logical ability and socioemotion (Santrock, 2013). This situation is quite alarming if it is not immediately dealt with, because it is feared that it will trigger the next greater difficulties in the period of further development.

Fraley (2006) in his research entitled *Adult Attachment and Perception of Emotional Expressions: Probing the Hyperactivating Strategies of Underlying Anxious Attachments*, source: *Journal of Personality*, 74: 4 explains that stickiness will influence individual differences in important emotional and social cues from emotional facial expressions. Uncomfortable attachment is indicated by a state of high alertness, which will cause

accuracy in assessing lower emotional facial expressions. This shows that the experience of interacting with a child with sticky figures will be stored as a child's memory and a guide for the child when interacting with others. Attachment to parents also determines the ability of children to understand their emotions and the emotions of others.

The descriptive study of the attachment of children to mothers conducted by Fasikhah, (2015) in children aged 7-8 years a number of 58 children in Elementary School in Malang found that children tend to have a positive perception of their mothers (98%), but there are 45 % of children feel that the mother does not take care of it properly, possibly this is what causes trust and communication with the mother is still in the moderate level. In addition, 17.5% = 1 out of 58 children clearly showed an attitude of disliking their mother and 17.5% = 1 child seemed depressed and hiding their feelings towards the mother, but also did not show a positive perception to her mother. In addition, it was also found that 22% of children still felt less open in communicating with mothers to tell personal things. In relation to feelings of isolation there are 34.5% of children feel alone, generally because they feel ignored and 26% of children feel that the mother's attitude is often annoying. This finding suggests the need for a more in-depth study of the effect of attachment with parents and emotional perception in children aged 8-10 years.

## Literature Review

### Concept of stickiness with parents The

Definition of *attachment* according to Bowlby is an emotional bond that survives with strong intensity. The main concern of stickiness theory is the implications or effects of optimal or not optimal social adjustment for psychological well-being (Bowlby, 1981; Bretherton, 1985).

Organized behavioral patterns that develop and maintain affective ties are seen as something that persists throughout the life span and is activated to maintain or regulate the degree of closeness to certain people (Bowlby (1981). The sense of security is obtained from a maintained bond where trust is in availability (accessibility and responsiveness) from figures *attachment needed*. In when contrast, anxiety, sadness, depression and anger may result from actual threats or losses from figures *attachment*, or from relationships *attachment* unresponsive or unpredictable (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987).

Bowlby (1969/1982) concluded that humans at any age will adjust well when they have confidence in the accessibility and responsiveness of the people he trusted. In his view, *the attachment* throughout the life span can be derived from the behavior to seek kedekata or contact with other people when they are fragile, scared and sick.

The definition of *parental attachment* proposed by Armsden & Greenberg (2004) is the individual's perception of how well a parent figure is able to provide psychological security for him. *Internal working models* of figures *attachment* can be identified by measuring: (1) Positive affective / cognitive experience of trust in the accessibility and responsiveness of figures *attachment*. (2) Affective / cognitive experience of anger or helplessness produced by figures *attachment* that are unresponsive or inconsistent in responding (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). The dimensions of parental attachment: (1) aspects of trust: measuring the degree of mutual understanding and mutual respect in relationships *attachment*. This aspect is indicated by the presence of confidence in their parents. Children feel their parents listen to their opinions and have good parents. (2) aspect of communication measure the amount and quality of oral communication. This aspect is indicated by the expression of feelings, problems and difficulties experienced by children in parents. Children ask for their parents' opinions and parents ask and help solve problems experienced by their children. (3) aliation aspects, namely measuring anger and internal alienation. This aspect is indicated by the inconvenience, which is not noticed by children to parents.

### Concept of Emotion Perception Emotional

Perception is the ability to interpret emotions of oneself and others appropriately (Gilbert, 2001). A person's emotional perception is generally determined by his perception of the six basic facial emotional expressions, namely happy, sad, shocked, angry, hate and fear. Emotional perception requires cognitive aspects in dealing with a situation that can trigger different emotional responses that are influenced by personality and situational factors. Therefore the process of motivation is an important factor in emotional perception (Campos & Barret, 1989).

According to Gilbert (2001) the dimensions of emotional perception consist of two, namely; intrapersonal and interpersonal. The intrapersonal dimension is the individual's ability to feel emotions properly. while the interpersonal dimension is the ability to respond to emotions appropriately.

## Methods

This research uses a quantitative approach, namely research conducted to examine the relationship of independent variables (stickiness with parents) with dependent variables (emotional perception). The research subjects were 413 boys and girls aged 8-10 years who attended elementary school education in Malang and lived with their mothers and fathers. The sampling technique uses cluster random sampling. Data collection method using attachment questionnaire and emotional perception Data analysis using linear regression analysis with SPSS.

## Results and Discussion

The results of data analysis showed the effect of parental attachment to emotional perception with a coefficient of 0.535;  $p = 0.02$   $p \leq 0.05$  (significant). This means that the attachment between parents and children influences the ability of children to understand emotions themselves and others properly. According to Saarni (2013) the skill of perceiving emotions appropriately relates to regulating and expressing emotions. Conversely, if the emotional perception skills are not appropriate to have consequences for low emotional adjustment (Schulz et al, 2000). The ability to understand one's own emotions is related to internal thinking and internal processes (Flavel & Green, 2001). Children who experience behavioral problems have low internal emotional perceptions and low quality emotional experiences (Izard 2001), consequently children will respond confrontationally to emotional signals from others.

Emotional perception is influenced by experience and emotional schemes. The tendency to react

unfriendly to others occurs in children with aggressive reactive patterns, rather than proactively aggressive. Children who are aggressively reactive show aggressive behaviors that are spontaneous (Dodge & Somberg, 1987 in Meredith, 2008). Aggressive reactions are explained as spontaneous aggressive behavior triggered by ordinary events, but the child feels unfriendly or threatening. The opposite of proactive aggressiveness is planning, predators, but in general it seems calm. Children with aggressive reactive tend to be rejected by friends (Bloomquist & Schnell, 2002 in Meredith, 2008).

Children learn to regulate emotional responses based on their emotional perceptions in responding correctly, how people who are closely related to children respond to emotions displayed by children and how important someone displays their emotions, but that interpretation is not always objective because it is influenced by past experiences and bad events. Children with low emotional regulation abilities will tend not to yield and show manipulating behavior (Meredith, 2008).

Children who are able to interpret emotional signs or stimuli, at the same time show healthy emotional development that significantly improves their cognitive development in the early years (Dunn, 1995). Other experts also stated that to improve children's cognitive, can understand their emotional state earlier (Bartsch & Estes, 1997 in Meredith, 2008). An important part of emotional development is understanding emotional triggers, which can arise from within themselves as part of mental processes, such as stimulation from the environment, such as the behavior of others). The initial emotional response is generally direct to the goal (want / don't want), and at the age of 2-3 years develops likes or dislikes in others (Wellman & Banerjee, 1991). Ages 4-5 years old children can guess the expectations that are desired / liked by other people who are different from their own expectations, this becomes the basis for children to predict the emotional response of others different from themselves (Wellman & Banerjee, 1991).

Children show a happy response when they see a happy face to their mother, and show a sad response if the event is different. Children aged 18 months have been able to interpret the wishes of their mothers from facial emotions that are displayed such as happy or disappointed. At the age of 2 years the ability to interpret the appearance of other people's emotions develops and selects it according to the emotional response shown, and at 3 years old children are able to recognize facial emotions with correct predictions (Izard, in Meredith, 2008). But to feel the emotions of yourself and other people still cannot, because of the limited attention of the child.

Emotional perception is influenced by personal experience and related to cognitive (Meredith, 2008).

Early childhood children are quicker to understand more complex emotions, such as situations that trigger disappointment or belief, rather than facial expressions. Emotions displayed by the mother are regulators of children's behavior in these situations. Understanding emotion refers to cognitive complexity, a similar situation can be responded differently from different people depending on situational factors and personality, besides that motivational factors are essential factors in perceiving emotions in an uncertain environment (Campos & Barret, 1989).

Middle-aged children will internalize their imagination, how other people behave towards it and how it hopes for other people's treatment, based on personal experience in relation to the main figure (Weiss, 2002 in Meredith, 2008). The needs of children who have been met in a manner that is as good as they expect from their parents, will strengthen their positive attitudes, whether at home with a parent relationship figure, or at school with the figure of the teacher's relationship. If the relationship with the main figure is good, then the internalized imagination will be positive, and if the relationship with the main figure is problematic, then it will give negative internalization (Meredith, 2008).

The experience of relating to parents will be recorded in the child's information process which can affect the child's ability to feel and respond appropriately. Children who have low attachment qualities will show biased facial expressions, will tend to be rejected by their friends, so they will also perceive biased facial expressions.

Emotional perception is influenced by emotional experience, and emotional experience does not depend on internal conditions, but experiences more emotional constructiveness, which uses perceptions such as perceptions of the nature of experience, past history, responses of others. Emotional experience does not depend on internal conditions, but emotional experience is more of a cognitive construct. Cognitive processes involve complex interpretations and evaluations and involve many processes of perception, memory and elaboration.

Based on these views, shows that emotional experience is a unique and specific condition. The ability to express correctly is related to the ability to respond appropriately in emotional situations. Children who have an insecure relationship with parents will experience a low risk of perceived emotions. Especially shows the low ability of empathy, responsiveness and understanding of emotions towards others. The next risk will be to reflect on his life experience with younger children

by means of unsafe relationships. Furthermore, they must overcome the situation with an emotional response that is not optimal, so that the patterns of comfortable relationships with caregivers, especially mothers are important.

Children will save their knowledge of a relationship, especially knowledge about safety and danger. Children who have parents who love and can meet their needs will develop a positive relationship model based on trust. Then simultaneously the child will develop a parallel model in him. Children with loving parents will see themselves as "valuable". This model will then be generalized to children from parents to other people, for example to teachers and peers. Children will argue that teachers and friends are trustworthy people. Conversely, children who have unpleasant caregivers will develop *mistrust* and grow up as an anxious child and less able to establish social relations.

Another finding from the results of this study is that there were 67.5% of research subjects having close interactions with parents, and 32.5% of interactions with parents were not sticky. This shows that the role of parents in building close relationships with children must still be treated and improved. While a number of 87% of research subjects have the ability to understand emotions themselves and others who are high, and 13% of research subjects have the ability to understand emotions of themselves and others who are low. The results of this study indicate that children have been able to do the right emotional perception. Based on observations during the research, it was seen how the teacher treated children by respecting and communicating well. Possible interactions with the teacher also support children's emotional perceptions. As stated by Pianta (2012) that attachment with teachers will help children overcome academic and non-academic difficulties.

### Conclusions

The results of this study can be concluded that the close interaction between parents and children has an influence on the ability of children aged 8-10 years to understand emotions themselves and others properly (0.535;  $p = 0.02$  with  $p \leq 0.05$  (significant). Suggestions for the next study can be investigated the effect of attachment to teachers on emotional perceptions of school-age children

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