

## Self-Adjustment in Early Adult Period Individuals Who Have Stepparents

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to see how the adjustment of individuals in early adulthood who have stepparents and the factors that influence this. Researchers used qualitative research with a case study approach. The subjects in this study were four early adults who had stepparents. The data collection method uses natural observation techniques and unstructured interviews. Data analysis techniques in this study are data reduction, data presentation and verification (drawing conclusions). The results of the research obtained show the adjustment of individuals in early adulthood who have stepparents, namely: the AR subject is able to adjust to the presence of the stepparent and accept the stepparent, in contrast to the DL subject making adjustments where the stepparent is more adaptive the subject's family, the DK subject can also make adjustments but does not accept his stepparent, and the EC subject can make adjustments well to his stepparent and has accepted his stepparent.

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## BACKGROUND

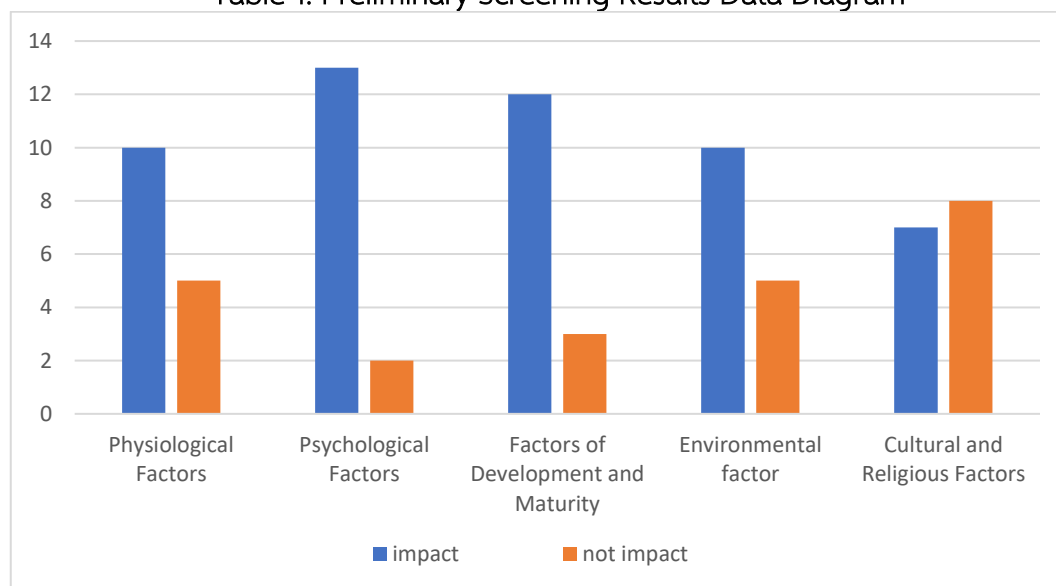
The family is the first social environment for early, intermediate, and late adults that provides the basis of developmental behavior, attitudes, and life values from internal aspects. One of them is learning to respect older people and aid in solving various problems. Parents are expected to help children in adjusting in the environment to overcome problems with *good problem solving*. Therefore, parents are considered as a place to manage and condition the provision of positive values in children.

But on the other hand, the family is often a source of conflict for some people, one of which is a divorce that occurs in parents that will have a bad effect on the child's mentality, although in certain cases divorce is considered the best alternative

than letting the child live in a family with a bad married life (Martina in Amelia, 2008).

After separation, some parents may choose to live alone to take care of their children, but there are also parents who are looking for a replacement or life companion after parting with a previous partner, to be balanced in guiding children in the future. Accepting and adjusting to new parents or stepparents is not as easy as imagined. Some children into early adulthood are sometimes still unable to accept the presence of someone new in their lives therefore researchers want to try to make early screening to know that this case study is very important to study. Early screening uses factors found in self-adjustment. Researchers shared the initial screening by spreading questionnaires with 10 questions in it through social media conducted by 15 subjects who had cases of early adult individuals who had stepparents, as follows:

Table 1. Preliminary Screening Results Data Diagram



Early adults who have stepparents feel that there are several factors that occur currently, where the subjects are less active interaction with their stepparents in behaving, acting, and behaving. From the results of the above scoring, it can be concluded that of the five factors have a significant impact on the adjustment of individuals who have stepparents, such as previous research that the five factors are very influential on the adjustment of early adult individuals and adolescents (Fatimah, 2006).

This makes anxiety stemming from parental divorce inhibit early adulthood from building a whole family (Musbikin, 2008). Individuals who can control their emotions will form actions that turn these problematic events into something that is beneficial to him. Divorce as a traumatic experience can make children become resilient, mature personality or vice versa (Kartono, 2003).

According to Dagum (2002) children with good adjustment after divorce parents and remarried will find a positive meaning of divorce and remarriage to create a brighter future, but if the child cannot adjust and dissolve in post-divorce stress his parents and parents remarry, there will be disorientation (changes in mental condition) for the future.

Self-adjustment is a human struggle to achieve a goal. Facing and accepting change and resolving a conflict that occurs in life is not easy. It should and should be someone who has finished in the teenage phase is able to have a good adjustment after the individual enters the early adult phase. Early adulthood should be able to adjust easily and quickly if the early adult knows exactly what the environment expects him to play, early adult can think calmly so that he can find the

right way to deal with the conflicts that exist in his life (Mappiare in Barbara and Hartini, 2013).

Early adults who make good adjustments according to their developmental tasks tend to be individuals who are warmer, open, sociable wherever they are and can face others and are able to accept one's shortcomings and advantages (Hurlock, 2006). The success of an individual is not only determined by himself but there are several factors that can affect him, namely physiological factors, psychological factors, developmental factors and maturity, environmental factors, family factors and cultural and religious factors. All these factors, family factors are considered as factors that are quite important for the successful achievement of early adult self-adjustment. Educational institutions and socialization institutions are the first for individuals, the family is the main determining factor that greatly affects the quality of individuals in the family (Yusuf, 2002).

Every early adult who has participated in screening or who has been interviewed by several people can be concluded there are many factors that are influenced by the presence of stepparents in their lives. (Amato, 2000) parents who are divorced but do not have children may not cause a deep trauma effect so that it will have an impact on a divorce that eventually the parents decide to remarry becomes important for children who have grown up changes in unstable feelings due to various emotions, behaviors and actions before the divorce process until finally the parents choose to remarry, Eventually they must be able to adjust themselves to the stepparents who live with them with the circumstances and

feelings they feel when they have new parents (Hurlock, 2006).

Based on the research conducted obtained results that the adjustment of early adult self-esteem who have stepparents is divided into several problems. First early adult who initially has stepparents refuses to adjust himself but finally tries to adjust to the presence of stepparents, second is an early adult who from the beginning has stepparents and until now cannot adjust his stepparents, while the third is an early adult who from the beginning has stepparents sometimes feel unable to adjust to the existence of a figure. Stepparents but on the other hand can well adjust the existence of stepparents (Martina in Amelia, 2008).

For this reason, researchers are interested in researching about a case study of early adult individuals who have stepparents in Samarinda by exploring how in Samarinda many experienced such cases. It is hoped that the researcher easily analyzes the case study and in the end all the problems that the researcher proposes can be answered and answered in detail and systematically to the current research.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Types of Research

This research uses a qualitative approach with case study methods. According to Sugiyono (2012) qualitative research method is a research method used to examine natural objek conditions, where researchers are as key instruments, data collection techniques are carried out in a triangulation (combined), data analysis is inductive, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization. Qualitative research methods are often called naturalistic methods because

their research is carried out under natural conditions or (*natural settings*).

### Research Subject

The subjects in the study were early adults who had stepparents. The total number of subjects is 4 subjects, while the subject details consist of AR subjects, DL subjects, DK subjects, and EC subjects with key informants namely informant AB, AC informant, informant, AD, and informant AE. Data obtained from informants through in-person interviews. The sampling technique used in this study is *purposive sampling*.

The subjects involved in this study have the following characteristics:

1. An individual who has stepparents (stepfather or stepmother).
2. Individuals are in early adulthood, over the age of 20 years.
3. Individuals who have stepparents.
4. Has no disturbances in communication, so that when conducting interviews can run smoothly and researchers do not find it difficult when communicating with subjects.
5. Willing to participate in the research.

### Data Collection Methods

Data collection techniques are the way that researchers use to obtain data in a study. In this study, researchers choose the type of qualitative research and the data obtained must be specific, clear, and concrete. Furthermore, it was explained by Sugiyono (2012) that data collection can be obtained from observations, interviews, documentation, and combinations/triangulations. In this study, researchers used data collection techniques by means of observation and interviews.

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Early adulthood can be said to be one of the most dynamic stages of development, over the span of human life. Because a person can experience many progressive changes physically, cognitively, and emotionally psychosocial, to lead to an increasingly mature and wise person. The early adult stages begin at the age of 18 years to 40 years, during physical and psychological changes (Hurlock, 1999). Furthermore, Hurlock emphasized that to achieve emotional maturity must learn to get an idea of the situations and conditions that cause emotional relationships.

The arrival of stepparents will certainly bring a change in the order of one's life which must be needed adjustments long enough for a child who is young and large. As a result, it allows an individual who is domiciled as a child to perform two possible attitudes including, the child will resist or withdraw and try to accept or adjust to the existing circumstances (Sujanto, Lubis & Hadi, 2008). Self-adjustment is a process that must involve a mental response and behavior, which will cause a person to try to overcome matters related to needs, frustrations, and inner conflicts and harmonize the demands imposed on the individual (Semiun, 2006). Semiun (2006) also added related to self-adjustment that concerns the fulfillment of needs, skills in dealing with frustration and conflict, peace of mind or soul. And that means a person is learning how to fit well into others and face the demands that exist.

A new life as an early adult who has stepparents is dependent between individual transitions with stepparents and status independence to achieve identity. They must be able to behave to be independent,

responsible, mature, have good adjustment, and be able to solve the problems faced (Handono & Bashori, 2013). According to Schneider (in Nurdin, 2002) is the ability of a person or individual to cope with a pressure, the ability to cope with stress, frustration, and conflict that arises. According to Schneider (in Nurdin, 2002) a person who has a good adjustment, can be seen from the achievement of satisfaction in the individual's efforts to meet needs, as well as how to overcome tension, and free from various disturbing symptoms, such as anxiety, depression, obsession, frustration, or conflict that is being experienced.

Individuals who succeed in self-adjustment according to Schneider (in Nurdin, 2002) can be seen with the following characteristics, namely, have knowledge and understanding of themselves, accept themselves, have personal integrity, clearly to step on their goals, have humor, have responsibility, show maturity of good response, good development in daily habits, free of negative responses, can cooperate and show interest towards others, having a great interest in work, the presence of satisfaction in work, having a strong orientation towards reality. Conversely, individuals who fail in self-adjustment according to Whittaker (in Nurdin, 2002) can be seen with the following characteristics, namely, have a low spirit of life, have a little pleasure in many things, often experience anxiety, often experience feelings of inferiority, have insight and low self-understanding.

The four subjects, namely AR, DL, DK, and EC, underwent adjustments related to their status of early adults who had stepparents. According to Partosuvido theory (1993) when the individual is faced

with many things or problems, the individual will find it difficult to make decisions, he will easily engage in emotional disorders, such as feeling helpless, anxious, tense, and irritable. Individuals who have good self-adjustment according to Schneider (in Nurdin, 2002) when the individual can achieve satisfaction to meet needs, overcome tension, and be free from various negative symptoms.

In the first subject, namely the AR subject who has a stepmother, the adjustment made is related to early adults who have stepparents, on the aspect of excessive emotionality, the subject explains when having stepparents, the subject feels shocked because the subject is a shy type when there are other people around the family. The first beginning of the subject does not want to call his stepfather as father because the subject has not been able to accept the presence of his stepfather. The subject said that before his father got married, it was his father who became the mother figure and replaced the existing homework. The subject said that he missed a complete life but over time the subject began to be able to come to terms with the situation and was grateful that both his parents were still living enough to this day and accepting his stepparents. This acceptance is characterized by a positive attitude, and the recognition or appreciation of individual values, where this acceptance can support good personal and social adjustment (Mufidatu & Sholichatun, 2016).

The factors that affect adjustment in the dominant AR subject are psychological factors where AR subjects have done deviant things such as going to *clubs*, getting drunk, and other things. The subject explained that this was done because he was still unable to accept his parents who remarried. The subject felt so down at the time that he did

something deviant. This is in accordance with the opinion of the condition of divorced families has a negative effect on self-adjustment (Ariani, 2012).

In the second subject, namely the DL subject who has a stepmother, the adjustments made are related to early adults who have stepparents, on the aspect of excessive emotionality, dl subjects also consider that when he used to be very less understanding of existing problems that it was difficult to control his emotions when dealing with both his parents and both stepparents. However, now begin to understand everything that happened his family so that he can behave more mature when facing conflicts that occur in his family. This acceptance is characterized by a positive attitude, and the recognition or appreciation of individual values, where this acceptance can support good personal and social adjustment (Mufidatu & Sholichatun, 2016).

As for the factors that influence adjustment in the dominant DL subject, namely the development and maturity factors in which the subject can already accept and reconcile with himself related to the problem he has not received, the subject is just trying to focus on what he is doing now. The subject feels the changes that exist in him, where he who used to be unable to control his emotions, slowly now can control his emotions.

Furthermore, the third subject is the subject of DK who has a stepmother, self-adjustment made about early adults who have stepparents, on the aspect of excessive emotions, DK subjects respond that the problems that occur in his life are very difficult. Because he who does not only have one mother, so sometimes the subject of DK can only vent his emotions through writing and telling stories with his closest

friends. In the aspect of psychological mechanisms, the subject cannot accept his stepmother now because his stepmother is rude to the subject's sister, his stepmother does not dare to hit the subject because the subject is big enough so that he can fight while his younger brother sometimes gets harsh treatment from his stepmother. Roughly the mother told the subject is only in verbal form, which makes the subject's sister think that her sister is not the biological child of the subject's father. Hurlock (in (Mufidatu & Sholichatun, 2016) asserts that when there is a gap between the real self and the *ideal self* of a person still maintains his expectations and the gap between expectations and reality is greater than the possibility of the person rejecting himself also increases.

As for the factors that affect the adjustment of the dominant DK subject, namely the psychological factor, the subject said that because of the problems he had experienced with his family, he had felt the night world, he also liked to drink and go to nightclubs to relieve emotions in him. The subject has also thought about suicide because he feels tired of his life, the subject has also felt stressed by the absence of his daily needs so he thinks that the path he must take is suicide. He also felt bad with the presence of stepparents, but the subject began to think about himself so as not to care too much about it. This is in accordance with the opinion of the condition of divorced families has a negative effect on self-adjustment (Ariani, 2012).

And on the fourth subject that is the subject of EC who has a stepfather, the adjustments made with regard to early adults who have stepparents, on the aspect of excessive emotions, the subject of EC said

that his feelings when his biological mother remarried were ordinary, because the subject at that time thought of whatever his parents did would be fine as long as the subject knew about it, because at the time when the biological mother was about to get married, the previous subject was introduced and told when she would marry, so that when her biological mother remarried, the subject felt that there was no problem. Aspects of psychological mechanisms, the subject admits because he feels restrained finally, he goes out of town to be able to feel the freedom where he is not prohibited by his stepfather or mother, if the things done do not have a negative impact on himself. When the subject feels restrained, he will be angry back to his stepparents, until finally silent and not reprimanded for several days.

The factors that influenced the adjustment to the dominant EC subject were psychological factors in which the subject admitted that he had done deviant things such as drinking alcohol and going to nightclubs on the grounds of wanting to try as well as because of his life problems. This is in accordance with the opinion of the condition of divorced families has a negative effect on self-adjustment (Ariani, 2012).

When parents remarry, children who are facing tasks in development will cause children to easily falter or fragile, especially when they have stepparents. When the child is looking for identity and is related outside the family or external environment, the presence of stepparents can increase stress (Santrock, 2002). The presence of stepparents means that changes in family relationship patterns will change. Stepparents often cause increased pressure in a family (Wise, 2003). In addition, problems that arise in the family are also caused by

changes in the role, function, and pattern of relationships between families (Carter & McGoldrick, 1980). The four study subjects, namely AR, DL, DK, and EC subjects also experienced factors that influenced self-adjustment based on Fatimah's theory (2006) where these factors include physiological, psychological, developmental and maturity factors, environment and culture and religion, so that some subjects undergo a process of adjustment in which these factors affect the four subjects of research.

In the four research subjects, namely AR, DL, DK and EC subjects, conflicts and changes that result in the subject having to be able to adjust to the new circumstances that will be lived. Stepparents who are strangers to the subject where they must be able to adjust to each other to a new life. Researchers in the United Kingdom and the United States have concluded that children who have stepparents show a lot of changes or increases in the risk of academic and behavioral problems, psychological problems are also experienced by children who have stepparents (Amato & Keith, 1991). Essentially Sobur (2003) asserts that development is essentially a process of change related to the life of one's soul. These changes are reflected in behavior.

Individuals who can adjust well are individuals who have limits for themselves, learn to react to everything in a mature, useful, efficient, and satisfactory way, and can resolve existing conflicts and internal and external difficulties without experiencing behavioral disorders (Adriyani, 2016). Adjustments when having stepparents can be influenced by factors of family conflict, closeness between biological parents and stepparents, social stigma, social pressures, reorganization of family boundaries, loss of attention, financial changes, and role

conflicts. These factors can result in short- or long-term behavioral, emotional, interpersonal, and academic difficulties (Brooke, 2017).

So that from the four research subjects, namely AR, DL, DK, and EC, they can adjust and respond to any conflicts with their stepparents. and the accuracy of perception of reality must be necessary in self-adjustment, so that the subject can make every decision and can know the consequences of each decision that leads to the action to be taken. In addition, the four subjects had the ability to cope with the stress that occurred so that the four subjects managed to adjust the presence of stepparents in their lives.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been done, it can be concluded as follows:

1. All four subjects were early adults and had stepparents and had different adjustments to the family conflicts they faced. With the adjustments used by these subjects to be able to adapt to their stepparents, the four subjects were able to adjust themselves to the presence of their stepparents even though the four subjects had different adjustment processes. So that it can make the subjects able to accept the presence of stepparents. This is also illustrated by the digs and factors of adjustment in all four subjects.
2. Self-adjustment is not an easy thing for early adults to do, especially early adults who have stepparents and get a little pressure from their families. AR took time to begin to understand why his parents remarried when he stepped into high school and began to adjust and accept his stepparents. While DL also began to



understand and adjust to living with his stepparents, was in high school and tried to understand and understand why his parents chose to remarry, DL also said that he was also able to accept his stepparents. Then for the subject of DK, starting to adjust to the presence of his stepparents when he stepped on college, DK admitted that he was quite able to adjust but was unable to accept the presence of his stepparents. While ec subjects can adjust to the presence of stepparents when he is in junior high school so that he is better able to adjust himself to his stepparents and accept the existence of stepparents.

3. The achievement of self-adjustment of the four subjects is influenced by physiological factors, psychology, development and maturity, environment, and culture and religion. While the largest component owned by the two in the formation of self-adjustment is the environment. For the four subjects the environment is very important with the adjustment they have because the surrounding environment of the four subjects is very supportive and supports the positive things done by the subject.

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