

Factor Analysis of Closeness to God in Late Adolescence: an Indigenous Psychological Approach

Anggi Puspitasari¹, Ardina Azzahra Raziz², Ivan Muhammad Agung³, and Desma Husni⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Faculty of Psychology, Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau University, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: 12060123704@students.uin-suska.ac.id

Abstract

One of the interesting things about the teenage phase is having a strong relationship with God. Many teenagers feel close to God through positive experiences that give meaning and direction to their lives. This analysis also involves an in-depth understanding of the teachings and beliefs of each religion which illustrates the differences in views that characterize the plural understanding of God. This research aims to find out what experiences make individuals close to God and what factors influence these experiences. The research subjects were 274 late adolescents with an age range of 17 to 22 years who were students and SMA/SMK/MAN students in Pekanbaru City, Riau Province. This research uses qualitative and quantitative methods. Data was collected through an online open questionnaire. Then, the data was analyzed using content analysis which was categorized into three stages, namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Data analysis was also assisted by the SPSS version 25.0 program with quantitative descriptive analysis. The results of the analysis show that the experience factor that makes them close to God is Religiosity (52.6%), religiosity has the highest percentage with the majority of subjects doing worship (35.8%) when facing difficulties and trying to rise from adversity. Late adolescence is a period important in the development of identity and beliefs. Teenagers begin to question various things, including values and beliefs. Therefore, instilling divine symbols during this period is an important step to lead them towards closeness to God. These symbols can serve as a reminder to always interact with God thereby strengthening their spiritual connection.

Keywords: Attachment to God, experience, factors, late adolescence

1. Introduction

Adolescents in the final stages experience a deeper search for identity. Teens try to understand who they are, what they want, and how they want to be seen by others. Cognitive abilities, such as abstract thinking and problem-solving, continue to develop during late adolescence. This period is marked by the development of more advanced reasoning abilities. Late teens can make significant life choices, such as going to college, entering the world of work, or establishing a long-term relationship (Santrock, 2007), this includes understanding their relationship with God. Rapidly developing cognitive and emotional abilities allow them to explore spirituality in greater depth. Research on closeness to God in late adolescents in Indonesia is still minimal, especially in the local cultural context.

According to Sarwono (2012), teenagers in the final stage are looking for their identity which involves self-exploration, values, and life goals. This process may involve experimenting with various social roles and values to determine their identity. This is an important part of adolescent

development, where late adolescents try to understand who they are and find direction and values that suit their personality.

One of the characteristics of individuals who have emotional maturity by the theory of Kusumawana (2009) is the ability to love, including the ability to love God. This ability to love God can be applied in the form of adolescent religiosity in everyday life. Adolescent religious values that are maintained since childhood will shape adolescents into individuals who can develop positive emotions and overcome negative emotions (Fajarini & Khaerani, 2014).

The psychological well-being of adolescents is not only determined by physical and psychological factors alone. Spirituality, including a relationship with God or religious dimensions, can also play a significant role in shaping a teenager's identity and psychological well-being. Religious feelings in teenagers that they absorb from the environment become their personal property. These religious feelings are usually not constant, sometimes teenagers show excessive piety, and at other times they show doubts about the religion they adhere to. On the one hand, teenagers need a sense of faith in Allah to seek peace from various mental turmoil, on the other hand, religion plays a role in curbing their biological turmoil (Nirwana, 2020).

Closeness to God is a dimension of spirituality that is relevant in a religious context that is important to explore, both from a cultural or psychological perspective in influencing the level of closeness of late adolescents to God. With their religiosity, a teenager will have a value system that becomes a frame of reference for behaving and acting in line with the beliefs they hold (Khairudin & Mukhlis, 2019). According to Ellison (in Pramithasari & Suseno, 2019), a person's sense of closeness to God and the frequency with which one prays is one of the predictors that influence subjective well-being. The closer a person feels to God and prays more often, he tends to have higher life satisfaction.

Harpan (2015) stated that the level of religiosity in adolescents will influence behavior. Adolescents who have a high level of religiosity will also show behavior towards a religious life, conversely, adolescents who have low religiosity will also show behavior towards a life that is far from religious. Teenagers have the potential to deviate from the teachings of their religion. This deviation is caused by teenagers lacking experience regarding religious teachings and lacking self-confidence in the existence of God so the behavior they display is never adapted to the teachings of their religion. Closeness to God on psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and the way individuals respond to stress and life challenges are important aspects that need to be understood about closeness to God.

Based on the description above regarding closeness to God in late teens, this research aims to identify the factors that underlie closeness to God in late teens in the city of Pekanbaru, Riau. This research uses an indigenous psychology approach, which can be used to understand how religious values in Riau Malay culture influence the spiritual experiences of late adolescents. Indigenous psychology emphasizes the values, beliefs, and cultural traditions that underlie a particular community group. The context of this research can help us understand how religious values in local culture can influence the spiritual experiences of late adolescents.

Knowledge of these factors can be the basis for knowing the reasons why late adolescents draw closer to God, and so far no previous research has found factors of closeness to God in late adolescents in the city of Pekanbaru, Riau. It is hoped that this research can contribute to the understanding of psychological factors in the context of late adolescence in certain cultures, especially in the city of Pekanbaru.

2. Literature Review

Definition of closeness to God

Closeness to God is a dimension of spirituality that is relevant in a religious context that is important to explore, both from a cultural or psychological perspective in influencing the level of closeness of late adolescents to God. With their religiosity, a teenager will have a value system that becomes a frame of reference for behaving and acting in line with the beliefs they hold (Khairudin & Mukhlis, 2019).

Kirkpatrick (2005) states that the close relationship between humans and God is one of humans' spiritual conditions. Individuals who believe in and maintain a sense of closeness or attachment to God through prayer tend to return to God as a haven when stressed. Religious people often use God as a sense of security and are seen as stronger than others, as omnipotent and omniscient.

Kusumaningrum & Ningrum (in Bahmani et al, 2022) state that closeness to God is the belief in being in a safe place when facing threats because it is the basis for individuals in facing life's challenges. When individuals feel connected to a greater power, they gain confidence that they are not alone in facing adversity. Attachment to God is positively correlated with psychological well-being.

Based on the explanation above, closeness to God is an important factor that needs to be considered in understanding the behavior and well-being of late adolescents. Strengthening teenagers' closeness to God through religious education and instilling spiritual values can have a positive impact on their development into individuals which correlates with the psychological well-being of late adolescents.

Factors of Closeness to God

According to Bowlby (in Kirkpatrick, 2005), three factors influence closeness to God, namely:

1. Attachment to Parents (Attachment Bond)

Attachment bond relationships between parents and children in the early years will continue to develop because childhood experiences, especially relationships with parents, play an important role in shaping a person's attachment patterns. Children who have a secure attachment to loving and supportive parents are more likely to develop a sense of trust and closeness to God later in life. On the other hand, children who experience insecure attachments with parents such as neglect, abuse, or excessive control will have difficulty building a sense of trust and closeness with God.

2. Socialization

Through spiritual activities, the environment around individuals also plays a role in growing closeness to God. A person who is surrounded by religious and supportive people is more likely to develop their own religious beliefs and practices. Religious activities such as praying, reading holy books, and participating in religious activities can help strengthen a person's closeness to God.

3. Situational Factors

FactorSituational refers to stimuli from a person's environment that can influence late adolescents' religious beliefs and practices. There are three levels of stimulus, namely fear, illness, and the effects of separation.

Based on the factors of closeness to God above, there are three factors, namely *Attachments* with parents, socialization, and situational factors.

Late Teenagers

Hurlock (in Ramadhany et al, 2016) said that late adolescents are teenagers aged 16 to 18 years, in this age range there is a process of perfecting physical growth and development of psychological aspects whose direction is the perfection of maturity. Emotional maturity can be achieved if teenagers get an idea of the various conditions that can cause emotional reactions. Late adolescents do not explode their emotions in front of others but wait for the right moment to express their emotions in more acceptable ways.

Emotional maturity must also be balanced with religious provision by paying attention to the development of their religious spirit. Because religious development coincides with the physical and mental development of the teenager. Adolescents' attitudes towards religious teachings and religious actions expressed in adolescents are largely caused by religious factors, so the body and soul must be equipped with religion to live life (Fauzan et al., 2019).

As material to equip teenagers with religion, something interesting is needed so that teenagers want to interact with God for a long time, so religious symbols are needed to attract their attention. Wahab (2011) stated that religious symbols are an important tool in religious education. These symbols help teens understand their religious beliefs and values by distinguishing between right and wrong and building identity and community. Teenagers can also express feelings and beliefs. By understanding the meaning and function of religious symbols, late adolescents can be more confident in living their lives based on religious values.

Based on the statements that have been studied, it can be concluded that emotional maturity and religious provision are two important aspects in the development of late adolescents. Both are interrelated and contribute to adolescent development. Interesting and sustainable religious provision for late teens requires religious symbols as an attraction to help them develop a sense of love in interacting with God.

3. Methods

Participants

The data participants for this research were late teenagers with an age range of 17 to 22 years who were students and SMA/SMK/MAN students in Pekanbaru City, Riau Province, Indonesia, totaling 274 people.

Research Instrument

The data collection method in this research used a questionnaire with open-ended questions. Questionnaires with open questions can give respondents the freedom to answer questions or statements obtained from the questionnaire. The questions presented in the questionnaire aim to find out what factors make teenagers feel close to God, which consists of 1 question. The questions in this research are (1) what experiences or events made you close to God? Give reasons for your answer.

Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique in this research uses quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis methods. The data obtained was analyzed using qualitative analysis carried out in 3 stages, namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Faturochman, et al. 2017). Open coding is the initial stage where researchers identify keywords obtained from respondents' answers. Then the axial coding stage is the collection of categories identified in the open coding stage. Then the categories are grouped based on similarities. The final stage is selective coding, which is the stage of collecting large categories identified from the axial coding stage.

Quantitative analysis in this research used statistical analysis with the help of the SPSS version 25.0 program with quantitative descriptive analysis, then continued by carrying out a cross-tabulation test of categorization data and demographic data.

4. Results and Discussion

Results

After going through the analysis, the results of the respondents' answers are grouped based on the similarity of the answers so that they become one category. The final results of the assessment are factors that can influence teenagers' closeness to God.

Table 1: Participants' responses to experiences that made them feel close to God

What experiences or events brought you close to God?	Frequencies	Percent
Religiosity	143	52.2
Positive experience	16	5.8
Negative experience	9	3.3
Difficult situation	83	30.3
Irrelevant	23	8.4
Total	274	100.0

Based on the results of the data analysis, table 1 shows the results of teenagers' responses to experiences that made them feel close to God. There are several categories, namely religiosity (52.2%), then the second category is positive experiences (5.8%), the third category is negative experiences (3.3%), the difficult situation category (30.3%), and Irrelevance (8.4%).

Table 2: Factors that influence teenagers to feel close to God

No	K3	Frequencies	Percent
1	Religiosity	143	52.2
	– Allah is the most helpful	1	0.4
	– Al-Qur'an	5	1.8
	– Azhan	2	0.7
	– Study Religion	3	1.1
	– Was in boarding school	1	0.4
	– Pray	26	9.5
	– Worship	17	6.2
	– Give thanks	6	2.2
	– Repent	3	1.1
	– Lecture	7	2.6
	– Guidance	1	0.4
	– Migrate	1	0.4
	– Sincere	1	0.4
	– Blessing	1	0.4
	– Life	2	0.7
	– Death	2	0.7
	– Obligation	1	0.4
	– Confidence	6	2.2
	– Complaint	1	0.4
	– Muhasabah	2	0.7
	– Approach	1	0.4
	– Order	4	1.5
	– God's help	1	0.4
	– Instruction	2	0.7
	– Sustenance	10	3.6
	– Pray	20	7.3
– Reprimand	9	3.3	
– Umrah	2	0.7	
2	Positive experience	16	5.8
	– Happy	2	0.7
	– Convenience	3	1.1
	– Passed PTN	5	1.8
	– Making sense of life	1	0.4
	– Value of life	1	0.4
	– Good experience	1	0.4
	– Nice experience	1	0.4
	– Fun event	1	0.4
– Prosocial	2	0.7	
3	Negative experience	9	3.3
	– Other people's doom	1	0.4
	– Lost	1	0.4

	– Unpleasant experience	4	1.5
	– Regret		
	– There is no purpose in life	2	0.7
		1	0.4
4	Difficult situation	83	30.3
	– Trial	4	1.5
	– COVID-19	2	0.7
	– Shunned	1	0.4
	– <i>Down</i>	3	1.1
	– Disappointed	3	1.1
	– Failure	1	0.4
	– Sadness	1	0.4
	– Difficulty	31	11.3
	– Problem	10	3.6
	– Disaster	7	2.6
	– Disease	9	3.3
	– Help	1	0.4
	– Breakup	1	0.4
	– Offended	6	2.2
	– Sad	1	0.4
	– Down	2	0.7
5	Irrelevant	23	8.4
	– Devoted	1	0.4
	– <i>Blank</i>	8	2.9
	– Need a friend to talk to	1	0.4
	– Other people's experiences	1	0.4
	– Natural events	1	0.4
	– Privacy	1	0.4
	– When you want to sleep	1	0.4
	– Everything	2	0.7
	– The whole experience	1	0.4
	– All events	2	0.7
	– There is no a	1	0.4
	– There's no reason	1	0.4
	– Do not remember	1	0.4
	– God is always good	1	0.4
	Missing	0	0.0
	Total	274	100.0

Table 2 shows the results of the analysis of teenagers' reasons regarding experiences and events that make teenagers feel close to God. There are 4 factors consisting of (1) religiosity (52.2%) which consists of several events, including prayer, worship, prayer, sustenance, and gratitude. (2) positive experiences (5.8%) consisting of several of them, namely passing PTN, convenience, happiness, prosociality, and life values. (3) negative experiences (3.3%) including unpleasant experiences, regret, loss, and no purpose in life. (4) difficult situations (30.3%) including difficulties, problems, disasters, illnesses, trials and disappointments. Meanwhile, the number of irrelevant answers was 8.4%, where the majority of subjects answered not according to the question instructions.

Discussion

This research aims to determine the factors of closeness to God that occur in late adolescents. This research finds answers to what experiences or things make late teenagers close to God. In line with research conducted by Bonab, et al (2013) from an attachment perspective, the benefits of a personal relationship with God come from God's function as a supportive attachment figure, acting as a haven where individuals are calmed and comforted in times of threat, and as a sense of security for individuals to explore and find the courage to face life's challenges.

Based on the results of the discussion above, 4 factors of closeness to God in late teens were found, namely the highest result of the factor of closeness to God in late teens was religiosity, 52.6%. Religiosity is a continuous variable, not a separate variable. This means that for most humans, investing in beliefs and practices is not a question of all or nothing, but rather a matter of degree. Measures of religiosity reflect a person's investment of resources in supernaturalism. (Hallahmi, 2015) This is the most important factor and is a continuous variable. Religious late adolescents have strong religious beliefs and practices.

The second factor found was the appropriate situation, namely 29.9%. In psychology, difficult situations are said to be the adversity quotient, namely the ability to be patient in difficult situations (Subandi, 2011). This factor refers to the ability of late adolescents to face difficult situations positively. Late teens who have a high ability to face difficulties tend to be closer to God when they face challenges in life.

The third factor is Positive Experience at 5.8%. Positive experience can be said to be psychological well-being, namely reflecting the holistic state of an individual or group and involving a balance between various aspects of life. And the lowest factor is Negative Experience at 3.3%. Negative experiences are experiences that involve stressful situations and also negative aspects (Anggadewi, 2020). This factor refers to positive life experiences, such as happiness, love, and gratitude. Late teens who have many positive experiences tend to feel closer to God.

The next category is irrelevant, which is the opposite of relevant, which is a respondent's answer that is not in line with or unrelated to the question to be answered. Such as a residence that does not match the residence of the respondents in this study and an inappropriate answer to this question.

Based on the findings of this study, it supports previous research which shows that religiosity, appropriate situations, and positive experiences can influence closeness to God in adolescents. This research can be used to help late teens increase their closeness to God.

5. Acknowledge, Funding & Ethics Policy

Recognition Policy

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Ethics

Policy: obtain informed consent from all participants, and ensure they understand the purpose of the study, procedures, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw at any time.

Considerations: Because religious beliefs are potentially sensitive, ensure the consent form is culturally appropriate and uses language that indigenous peoples can understand. So researchers are considering offering pseudonyms to participants for anonymity. Be transparent about how long the data will be kept and how it will be disposed of after the research.

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