The Role of Interpersonal Communication in Students’ Self-control to Avoid Substance Abuse

Baby Poernomo¹, Ade Tuti Turistiati²
¹STIAMI-Institute of Social Sciences and Management, Indonesia
²Universitas Amikom Purwokerto, Indonesia
¹ade.tuti@amikompurwokerto.ac.id

Abstract
This study aims at answering the questions what causes many junior high school students fall into drug abuse, and what kind of treatment must be done so that students have self-control and are not subject to drug abuse. This study employed a phenomenological approach of a qualitative research design. In this study a semi-structured interview is used to understand how participants experienced the phenomenon. The research revealed that the interpersonal communication has a major role in students’ self-control so as not to fall into drug abuse. This study contributes significantly to educational field particularly teachers in secondary schools so that it can be used as a reference to provide counseling to parents about the importance of interpersonal communication to build students’ self-control to prevent teens from falling into drug abuse.

Keywords: substance abuse, interpersonal communication, self-control

A. Introduction
Adolescence is a period that is very vulnerable and critical, therefore, the attention of parents is very important for the development of children, especially when children reach adolescence. There have been many studies that prove that if adolescence is passed by failure, then in the next phase the adolescent will fail as well, except if treatment is done immediately to improve his attitude and behavior, then adolescents will be able to demonstrate their success in the next period. Therefore, adolescence is often used as a key indicator of success in one’s life. Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood that is still very dependent on parents to adolescents who are more independent but cannot be said to have full strength and responsibility (Sofyan, 2010). Meanwhile, when viewed from the age limit, one expert and another expert gave different definitions.

The age range of adolescents is 16 to 23 years, which is marked by pleasant events, and changes occur physically, psychologically and socially (Sarwono, 2011).
While in Indonesia alone, it was found differences related to adolescent age restrictions. The first is a statement in the Republic of Indonesia's Minister of Health Regulation No. 25 of 2014 which states adolescents are residents in the age range of 10-18 years, while the World Health Organization defines adolescent age limits as 10 to 19 years. WHO also defines three criteria for adolescents, namely biological, psychological, and socio-economical aspects (World Health Organization, 2014).

Substance abuse will damage physical and spiritual health (emotional disturbances, permanent disability, decline in socio-cultural values, family breakdown, moral damage to society, and increase crime). As explained by (Kopak et al., 2014), factors of substance abuse which are mainly caused by internal factors and environmental influences, namely curious motives, opportunities, facilities and infrastructure, low self-esteem, emotional and mental. Someone who gradually becomes a drug addict is mainly caused by internal factors, such as personality factors, age factors, intelligence, or curiosity about something big (Purba et al., 2008). The above mentioned behaviors are generally experienced by adolescents at the puberty stage. Teenagers who have problems with family at home, do not have an ideal figure that can be used as a role model, or a place to ask, which in turn makes them generally will find another place to ask questions, discuss or just talk. This will make teens dependent on these people so it is difficult for them to refuse what is asked or offered. What is very worried is if they ask the wrong person. As a result, adolescent emotional development is hampered by feelings of anxiety, always overwhelmed by fear, being passive, reactive, tend to be irritable and temperamental, depressed, showing an inability to express emotions naturally, aggressively, and tend to be depressed. In its development, adolescents will have a negative self concept and low self esteem.

Harboenangin as quoted by Yatim (Purba et al., 2008) also explained that in addition to internal factors, other factors that cause adolescents and students to fall into drug use are external factors. External factors are factors that are outside of a person, consisting of family factors, peer groups, and opportunity factors. From these factors, family is the factor that most often causes a person to become a drug user. Parents' background and family life will determine their children's behavior. Even parents' speaking or communicating style will be a daily example for their children and parents will not realize that the formation of a child's character is also determined by the behavior, the communication style that is applied, the leadership style, values passed down and the trust given by parents to their children. Besides that, the 'opportunity' factor also triggers a person's fall into substance abuse. An example is Indonesia, which has now become an international drug market destination. Availability of medicines and easy access become an opportunity for users to meet their needs (Purba et al., 2008). Dirdjosisworo in his research classifies the purpose of adolescents using illegal drugs, which are divided into 3 (three) groups, namely: (a). teenagers who want to find new experiences; (b) teenagers who intend to avoid problems or facts of life and seek comfort; and (c) teenagers who have a desire to change their personalities. Generally, it’s because they have the desire to be someone who is idolized (Dirdjosisworo, 2013).
If a family wants to build a good relationship among all family members then the most important thing that must be built is effective communication (Devito, 2013). The effectiveness of interpersonal communication includes: openness, positive behavior, empathy, supportive behavior, and equality. Openness can unite two people who are tight. Interpersonal closeness (proximity) causes a person to be able and able to express his opinions freely and openly. The purpose of interpersonal communication is to maintain relationships and develop closeness or familiarity. Interpersonal communication enables us to establish love and affection. In addition, interpersonal communication aims to share and increase happiness which ultimately develops positive feelings about ourselves. Another purpose of interpersonal communication is to influence the others’ attitudes and behavior. In social life, we often invite and persuade someone to determine certain ways to get together to engage in activities and so on, and the last is to entertain someone. We can also entertain others with jokes to tell interesting stories. Such goals become important when people are too serious and getting stressed out in carrying out work.

One of the competencies in communication skills is self-control. Every individual must have self-control. Without self-control, humans will not be able to control themselves and cannot refrain from things that are contrary to rules, or norms in society. Self-control is also a set of behaviors that focus on the success of changing oneself for the better, having independence, avoiding self-destructive actions, having responsibilities, having the ability to separate between rational and emotional (Singgih, 2009). From the above opinions, it can be concluded that self-control is the ability to arrange, guide, regulate and direct behavior that can lead to positive consequences. Self-control is the potential that can be developed and used by individuals during life processes, including in dealing with conditions contained in the surrounding environment.

In everyday life, every individual is very demanded to be able to control himself. This is very important because humans as social beings always communicate with many people and often must be faced with decision making. To be able to avoid mistakes when choosing and making decisions, one must have strong self-control because this self-control is our controller when socializing. Many people think that self-control will develop by itself as a child grows up, even though this is not the case. The formation of self-control is not merely built practically, but gradually and continuously so that it becomes something inherent in the individual. One's level of self-control will be different from others.

Every individual must have self-control so as not to be involved in violations of family, school and community norms. According to Santrock (Rangkuti & Hermingtyas, 2016), there are 2 types of violations committed as a result of someone violating norms that require strong self-control, namely: (a) Types of acts of minor violations (status-offenses) which include actions that are not accepted by surrounding communities because they conflict with values and prevailing norms in society, such as rude talk with parents and teachers, running away from home and ditching; (b) Types of serious violations (index-offenses), which include criminal acts such as robbing, killing, and using illegal drugs. The statement above is in
accordance with the explanation of Unger et al. (2016) that self-control has a very big role in creating positive changes in one’s life. If an individual has low self-control, then this illustrates that he is unable to control himself and does not think about long-term consequences. Meanwhile, individuals who have high self-control can refrain from dangerous things by considering the long-term consequences as stated by (Ray, 2011).

We can see the difference between individuals who have good self-control and those who are not good by observing special characteristics when responding to everything. According to Logue individuals who have self-control, will continue to work on the task even though there are obstacles or disturbances, behave in accordance with the rules and norms in force where he is, do not show behavior that is affected by anger (able to control negative emotions), tolerance towards stimulus that is not expected to obtain benefits or large profits (Sriyanti, 2012).

Self-control can be divided into two factors, namely internal factors and external factors (Ghufron, 2012). Age is an internal factor that contributes to self-control. From an early age, a child learns by seeing how his parents are disciplined, communicate effectively with their family, and communicate politely. These things include how children learn about self-control. Communities that affect a teenager will increase with the growing age. Teenagers will learn from the various experiences they feel and see from day to day. They learn to respond to dislike, failure, and try to control it so that self-control will appear in him. Internal factors are closely related to one's cognitive factors. Baumeister & Boden suggested that cognitive factors are when a person uses his mind and knowledge to achieve a goal with a strategy that has been thought out in advance. In addition to internal factors, self-control is also influenced by external factors, including the environment and family. In the family, parents are the main factors that determine the ability to control a child's self. If parents introduce their children to rules and discipline from an early age, children's self-control will be formed because discipline can determine good personalities and can control individual behavior. Discipline applied to life can develop self-control and self direction so that a person can be held accountable for all actions taken (Ramadona & Mamat, 2019).

There are three aspects of self-control, namely behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control. Behavioral control is related to one's behavior in controlling themselves in uncomfortable or unpleasant conditions. Meanwhile, cognitive control is related to an individual's ability to process unwanted information by interpreting, assessing, or linking an event into a cognitive framework as a psychological adaptation to reduce the pressure faced. So it can be concluded that this cognitive control aspect is closely related to information namely information gain and appraisal. The third aspect of self-control is decisional control, which is defined as the ability of individuals to control themselves to choose an action based on something that is believed or agreed. This aspect is closely related to how one finally has to make a decision. Without good self-control, it is difficult for an individual to make choices (Mukhtar et al., 2016).
Baumeister, et.al (2007) in Judistira and Wijaya (2017) state that students who have high self-control will have the ability to make good adjustments, as well as a good psychological state, while students who have low self-control will be seen from increased complaints, increased susceptibility to various addictive substances, violence and eating disorders. Individuals who have low self-control will be prone to falling into negative things, such as one example of falling into addictive substances. Therefore, self-control has a very big role in the prevention and even treatment of individuals who experience drug addiction.

Research related to the abuse of drugs has been carried out by several previous researchers. Iga Serpianing Aroma & Dewi Retno Suminar analyzed the relationship between the level of self-control and the tendency of juvenile delinquency behavior. This research was conducted with a quantitative approach using a data collection tool in the form of a psychological scale. This study proves that the higher the score on self-control, the lower the tendency of delinquent behavior in adolescents (Aroma & Sumara, 2012). Meanwhile, another researcher focused her research on adolescent self-control, which according to her was largely determined by the effectiveness of parents' interpersonal communication and emotional maturity (Yuyuk Neni Yuniarti, 2009). Other researchers who also examined interpersonal communication. The research proves that a student's interpersonal communication skill will be better if the communication intensity is higher and can create harmony, a sense of empathy, increase social intelligence, and build a better human character (Latifah & Hermi., 2013).

The fundamental difference between previous research and this research is that this research focuses more on the problems of interpersonal communication and self-control of junior high school students who fall into illegal substance. While previous research only focused on interpersonal communication among teenagers and juvenile delinquency in general. This research is expected to be able to provide benefits and add empirical evidence about self-control related to juvenile delinquency behavior particularly the abuse of illegal substance, for the development of communication sciences. This research is also expected to be useful
as information material for secondary school students to improve self-control in new situations, conditions and environments, including new communities, in order that students are able to control themselves and avoid behavioral tendencies that are not in accordance with the rules and existing norms. This also can help educational institutions in the development of intervention programs with assistance so that students can avoid drug abuse that can easily be transmitted by the community and the new environment. This study also contributes significantly to educational field particularly teachers in secondary schools so that it can be used as a reference to provide counseling to parents about the importance of interpersonal communication to build students’ self-control to prevent them from falling into substance abuse. The purpose of this paper is to answer the research questions of what the causes of high school students fall into substance abuse, and what kind of treatment must be done so that students have self-control and do not fall into drug abuse.

B. Method

In this study, qualitative research methods are applied. The qualitative method is employed to explore participant’s perspective, experience and opinions. Qualitative research techniques include ‘small-group discussions’ for investigating beliefs, attitudes and concepts of normative behaviour; ‘semi-structured interviews’, to seek views on a focused topic or, with key informants, for background information or an institutional perspective; ‘in-depth interviews’ to understand a condition, experience, or event from a personal perspective; and ‘analysis of texts and documents’, such as government reports, media articles, websites or diaries, to learn about distributed or private knowledge (Hammaberg, et.al.,2016). This study is intended to answer the questions why many high school students fall into drug abuse, and what kind of treatment must be done so that students have self-control and do not fall into substance abuse. Both of these research questions require detailed elaboration in narrative form and cannot be answered only with statistical data and numbers. Therefore, a qualitative approach is the right method for this research.

The type of data needed in this study includes primary data and secondary data. Data were collected by interview and documentation techniques. A semi-structured interview was employed in this study because it can direct interview more closely and enable the researcher to explore more deeply the answers obtained from the open ended questions. Robson also said that it is appropriate to use interviews when the interviewer can explore more questions in order to get deeper answers, if the answers do not match expectations (Colin, 2002).

In this study, a phenomenological approach was used. Phenomenology is a qualitative research approach that focuses on the similarity of life experiences in a particular group. The fundamental purpose of this approach is to arrive at a description of the nature of a particular phenomenon (Cresswell, 2014). He states that a phenomenological study describes the meaning of some individuals’ life experiences from a phenomenon. When the research problem is to understand the general experience of some individuals about a phenomenon, phenomenological studies are appropriate. As well as expecting some of the research, phenomenology
also has some strengths or limitations. Phenomenology is known as being able to review the phenomena that must not manipulate the data in it. However, researchers must analyze our thoughts about culture, beliefs, religion and knowledge so that the research results obtained are truly objective. In addition, phenomenology views the object under study as a unity (holistic) that is inseparable from other objects (partial). However, apart from some of these advantages, the study of phenomenology also has disadvantages. (Sohn, 2017) stated that researchers stated that they used a phenomenological approach but in their analysis they did not relate it to the philosophical principles of phenomenology. Therefore, this study uses a phenomenological approach because it explores the experiences of participants.

The participants for in-depth interviews consist of 22 people: 20 junior high school students who had been involved in drug abuse and 2 therapists. Researchers took junior high school students as research participants because they were very young adolescents, having just finished elementary school with an age range of 13-17 years. They are in a transition stage from childhood to adolescence who are experiencing many new things that have not encountered before. In addition to junior high school students, researchers also interviewed 2 therapists from the rehabilitation center to get their perspectives on what students must do to prevent falling into drugs and what parents must do to protect their children from being involved in substance abuse.

Analysis of phenomenological studies is done by processing data from in-depth interviews using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Smith as quoted by Bayir and Lomas states that in IPA several stages are applied: (a) reading and re-reading, (b) initial noting, (c) developing emergent themes, (d) searching for connections across emergent themes, (e) moving the next cases, and (f) looking for patterns across cases. The purpose of this IPA analysis is to be able to reveal the personal and social experiences of research participants, because the main focus of this phenomenological study is the experience, events and status of research participants (Bayir & Lomas, 2016).

C. Result and Discussion

Based on data obtained from interviews with junior high school students, it can be concluded that there are 3 factors that cause students to fall into substance abuse, namely: family factors, environmental factors and self-factors. Of the 20 students interviewed, all said that they rarely communicated with parents because of the business of the parents either working in companies or building their own businesses. Many teenagers in Jakarta come from families whose parents have to work or earn money from businesses, so that they do not have sufficient time to meet their children, moreover, to build effective communication. The low frequency of communication between children and parents ultimately causes children feel lack of attention, so that they thought that parents never control what they are doing.

From the above-mentioned cases, it is known that all teenagers have a deep disappointment with their parents. Seventeen participants said that almost every day there are conflicts in their homes. The problem is very diverse, but the dominant one
is finance, starting from the number of households bills up to school needs. These teenagers are also disappointed because their parents always have different opinions in many things so that the rules set at home are different and make their children confused. Their parents also have very strong character. They set very high targets for their children. They want their children to have high achievements, but unfortunately, this is not accompanied by good interpersonal communication. Parents never communicate briefly and heart to heart about this, so miscommunication occurs, as said by one of the participants disappointed with his parents' behavior:

“My parents want me to have high achievements to be proud of, both academically and non-academically. They often praise the children of their colleagues who have frequently been sent by universities abroad to represent their country. I feel my parents have never appreciated my efforts all this time, even though I have tried to be a good child and show them that my grades are not too bad either.”

The second factor is the environment. Of the 20 students interviewed, it turns out that 12 students said that they were seduced by friends and asked to try. After feeling comfortable, then these students are asked to buy. For students who don't get enough attention from their parents, it is fun to be able to communicate with their friends, let alone be persuaded that they will feel happy and free from problems at home. Meanwhile, 4 others said that they were forced by several friends who did not attend the same school. Every time they come home from school, they have been awaited by several students, and forced to go somewhere, then asked to take drugs. If they refuse, they will be bullied on social media as stated by Borsari et.al., (2014) and Lisa, (Kopak et al., 2014). Of the twenty participants interviewed, only 4 students said that they fell into drug abuse because of an encouragement from himself, with the aim to forget about problems at home, do not have achievements in school but still want to show their existence in the youth community (Dirdjosisworo, 2013).

From the above data, it can be seen that adolescents who fall into drug abuse are a result of the lack of self-control against the negative influences from the environment (Fatimah & Umuri, 2014). From interviews conducted with 20 adolescents, it was found that they did not have self-control, both in terms of behavioral control, self-control to process information, explain, and control when to make decisions (Mukhtar et al., 2016).

When asked whether they saw their parents' attitudes have changed when they met them at the rehabilitation center, it turned out that the 20 students said that they were very happy because their parents want to communicate and listen to them. Parents also want to provide input and advice that have been needed so long. When parents met their children at the rehabilitation center, parents were no longer angry and blamed the children. Parents even wanted to apologize to children and promised to improve their attitude. What made the teenagers happy is that the atmosphere when parents had a communication with them. The situation was not rigid, unlike what they experienced at home, it even interspersed with jokes, and the relationship
with siblings was getting better. The answers of students were in accordance with the statement of Devito which says about the goals of interpersonal communication, namely to maintain relationships and develop closeness or familiarity. Through interpersonal communication we want to establish love and affection. Interpersonal communication aims to share and increase happiness which ultimately develops positive feelings (Devito, 2013). In additions, parents should become a role model for their children. Turistiati said that interpersonal communication would be more powerful if it is followed by a living example which means that their parents a good role model (Turistiati, 2019).

Meanwhile, interviews with 2 therapists provide data that students who were affected by problems with substance abuse did not have a desire to have interpersonal communication either with their parents, with therapists, staff or with other teenagers who were also in the rehabilitation center. They also had very low self-control and always showed behavior that is influenced by anger. Thus it can be said that they have no means of control in themselves. As a result, they often take actions that violate norms such as speaking harshly, disrespecting parents (minor violations). This minor violation if not immediately corrected, will enable students to do a serious offense such as robbing, killing and using illegal drugs (Rangkuti & Herningtyas, 2016).

When asked what parents should do so that their teenage children don't fall into drug abuse, the two therapists say that:

"Parents must be able to build effective interpersonal communication with their children. There must be openness, empathy, positive behavior, supportive and equality. So parents must be able to play a role not only as a parent, but sometimes they must be able to act as older siblings or even friends so that their children are not afraid to express their feelings and share their problems. With the establishment of effective interpersonal communication between parents and children, good self control will be embedded which will lead children to become independent, responsible for their behavior, can ward off self-destruction (self-destructive), and free from the influence of others, free setting goals with responsibility, having the ability to separate feelings and rational thoughts."

This statement is in accordance with that conveyed by Messina & Messina (Singgih, 2009). Thus it can be concluded that the role of interpersonal communication is very large in shaping adolescent self-control so as not to be involved in violating norms in the family, school and community.

D. Conclusion

From the analysis of the data above, it can be concluded that the factors cause many junior high school students in Jakarta to fall into drug abuse are the lack of attention from parents so that interpersonal communication between children and parents does not run effectively which causes children do not have self-control. Therefore, to prevent high school students from falling into drug abuse, teenagers
need to be equipped with self-control by building good interpersonal communication with parents and siblings. The limitation of this study is that this research only focuses on adolescent drug users who are junior high school students, so it cannot be extended to higher secondary students. Therefore, for further research, the researcher recommends that a study be conducted on building self-control of adolescents from higher school levels with a different approach.

Bibliography


