

Relationship between Adult Attachment and Coping on Early Adults Who Experience Emotional Abuse

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Abstract: Emotional abuse is a type of abuse that often occurs but is still little studied. Emotional abuse affects the type of attachment and coping that is used by individuals to solve and deal with problems. This study aims to determine the relationship between attachment and coping in adults who experience emotional abuse. The correlational method which is a quantitative type of research with adult samples aged 18-40 years, experiencing emotional abuse, domiciled in Banda Aceh, and the incidental sampling technique (n=77) was used in this study. Attachment was measured using the Relationship Style Questionnaire (RSQ) and coping was measured using the Brief COPE. Data analysis using The Pearson correlation technique showed there was a relationship between attachment and coping ($r = 0.47$, $p < 0.05$) in adults who experienced emotional abuse. The results showed that the majority of subjects at 76.6% in this study had insecure attachment and had an adaptive type of coping. On another hand, there are subjects with secure attachment but had a type of maladaptive coping as much as 44.6%. Furthermore, the results of the study also discussed the correlation of each type of attachment with coping in details.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) recorded 1,000 cases child abuse during 2016 (Hendrian, 2016). Based on detailed data on child protection cluster cases from 2011 to 2016, there were 84 cases of children victims of physical abuse such as beatings, 37 cases of emotional abuse such as threats and intimidation, as well as 120 cases of child victims of sexual abuse such as rape (KPAI, 2016). Based on three types abuse presented in the data is known that emotional abuse is the least abuse occurred according to KPAI.

During the inauguration ceremony, members of the Commission for Supervision and Protection of Children Aceh Province (KPPA) in 2017, Zaini Abdullah, former governor of Aceh, mentioned that many cases of abuse against children in Aceh occurred both in home and at school (Safdar, 2017). According to Empowerment Agency data Acehese women (BP2A), there are 1,326 cases of abuse against children in 23 district / city (Yusuf, 2015). In 2017, the Integrated Services Center Empowerment of Women and Children (P2TP2A) of Aceh Province, stated the case reaching abuse against women and children in Aceh until March 8,

2017 704 cases (Wardani, 2017). Based on the data above, it can be seen that the amount of abuse against children is high in Aceh.

Life experiences such as abuse in childhood, is important to determine the pattern of individual attachment (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Riggs and Kaminski (2010) stated that individuals who experience emotional abuse have insecure attachment during adulthood. Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) said that individuals with insecure attachments are more often involved in conflicts and tend to adopt maladaptive coping, so they experience problems in social interaction as well as problems in maintaining a balanced relationship with other people. This tends to reduce the quality of relationships and cause relationship instability and in some cases other than that relationships can also pose significant risks in the form of behavioral problems, lack of social skills, low self-esteem, and some emotional disorders that can occur in childhood, adolescence, or in adulthood (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Attachment affects individual perception about stress and how to deal with it (Van der Kloek, 2007).

Research conducted by Riggs and Kaminski (2010) states that individuals with experiences of

emotional abuse in childhood can be predicted to have insecure adult attachments. Experience what happens repeatedly about insecure attachments will affect a self-image and a picture of another person that an individual has so the two dimensions of attachment are difficult to change (Bowlby, 1973; Mikulincer & Shaver 2007).

Early adult individuals often experience various stresses in life, like stress in relationships with family and friends (Folkman, Lazarus, Pimley, & Novacek, 1987). Bjorklund and Bee (2009) which explains that early adulthood is the peak period of physical development and cognitive abilities as well as life periods with changes, such as the transition from students to the world of work. Furthermore, Berk (2012) adds that early adulthood is an energetic period filled with important decisions when compared with the other period in life. Therefore, adult individuals must choose adaptive coping for dealing with stress.

The urgency of this study are, the least study about emotional abuse, the high amount of abuse case, and the effect of experience emotional abuse on adult attachment style thus related to coping used.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Attachment

Bartholomew (1990) explains that attachment is an affective bond which is eternal between certain individuals. Dimensions of the idea of attachment according to Bartholomew (1990) there are two, namely self-image and picture about other people. There are four attachment styles in adult attachment theory Bartholomew, namely secure attachment, preoccupied attachment, fearful attachment and dismissing attachment (Bartholomew, 1990).

2.2 Coping

Coping is all cognitive and behavioral efforts to master, reduce, or tolerate internal and / or external demands caused by stressful conditions (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). There are two types of coping according to Folkman and Lazarus, namely emotion focus coping and problem focus coping. Meanwhile, Carver (1997) who also guided the theories of Folkman and Lazarus, mention there are 14 types of coping namely self-distraction, active coping, denial, substance-use, use of emotional social support, use of instrumental social support, behavioral

disengagement, venting, positive reframing, planning, humor, acceptance, religion, and self-blame.

2.3 Relationship between Attachment with Coping in Experienced Adults Emotional Abuse

The initial experience of individual attachment influences the pattern of attachment in the next development stage of individual, thus is formed based on self-image and the description of others as well experience of attachment to a previous developmental period (Bowlby, 1973; Mikulincer & Shaver 2007). Malekpour (2007) stated that experience of failure in obtaining secure attachments to the developmental period can cause the individual to have insecure attachment at a later stage of development.

Attachment and coping have a relationship because they both include cognitive interpretation of stress and decisions about how much they believe individuals towards themselves and others (Seifge-Krenke & Beyers, 2005). Seifge-Krenke and Beyers (2005) mention the theory of attachment is useful for explaining why individuals have different ways in deal with the causes of stress and to understand how this difference developed from childhood to adulthood. According to Bowlby, attachment is activated when dealing with stress, so experience with attachment figure develop mental representation (internal working models) about himself and others who influence judgment and determination stress levels (Seifge-Krenke & Beyers, 2005).

Seifge-Krenke and Beyers (2005) explain internal working models will continue into adulthood thus helping individuals to predict and manage stress, especially in relationships with other people. They continue that, this conceptualization fits the model of Lazarus and Folkman about coping. According to this model, individual differences believed to mediate the process of assessing the causes of stress, which then has an influence on coping which individuals use to deal with stress. Attachment can affect stress perception, during the process primary assessments and in particular, guide the individual during the secondary assessment to chose effective coping.

3 RESEARCH METHOD

This research used quantitative research methods by type correlational research. The characteristics of the sample used in this study is individuals aged 18-40 years, experienced emotional abuse, male and female, and domiciled in Banda Aceh. The sampling technique in this study was incidental sampling. The study sample consisted of 77 individuals who meet the research needs selected from 500 participants.

This study used two adaptation measures and has been translated into Indonesian. To measure the attachment variable, this study using a scale from Griffin and Bartholomew (1994), namely Relationship Style Questionnaire (RSQ) and coping variables are measured using Brief COPE from Carver (1997).

This study uses a non parametric data analysis method with Pearson correlation techniques because the data are normally distributed.

4 RESULT

Based on the normality test conducted using Kolmogorov-Smirnov with respect to both variables, the results show that the data normally distributed because the significance (p) is > 0.05 . On a scale Attachment obtained significance value (p) = 0.843 ($p < 0.05$), while on a scale Coping significance value (p) = 0.376 ($p < 0.05$). Meanwhile, the linearity test is conducted on both research variables through ANOVA test for linearity the results show that the significance value (p) = 0,000. Significance value (p) = 0,000 ($p < 0.05$) shows that there is a linear relationship between attachment and coping variables.

Hypothesis testing in this study uses statistical analysis with Pearson correlation technique. The significance value (p) = 0,000 ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, there is a correlation between attachment to secure the coping use emotional support ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.05$), denial ($r = 0.25$, $p < 0.05$), use instrumental support ($r = 0.23$, $p < 0.05$), positive reframing ($r = 0.23$, $p < 0.05$) and planning ($r = 0.31$, $p < 0.05$) in adults who experience emotional abuse. Then there is a relationship between preoccupied attachment and self coping distraction ($r = 0.33$, $p < 0.05$), active coping ($r = 0.34$, $p < 0.05$), and religion ($r = 0.24$, $p < 0.05$). Next, there is a relationship between attachment dismissing the coping self distraction ($r = 0.34$, $p < 0.05$), active coping ($r = 0.41$, $p < 0.05$),

religion ($r = 0.30$, $p < 0.05$), and self blame ($r = 0.31$, $p < 0.05$). Meanwhile also there is a relationship between fearful attachment with coping self distraction ($r = 0.35$, $p < 0.05$), active coping ($r = -0.31$, $p < 0.05$), use emotional support ($r = -0.24$, $p < 0.05$), substance use ($r = 0.35$, $p < 0.05$), behavioral disengagement ($r = 0.26$, $p < 0.05$), and self blame ($r = 0.29$, $p < 0.05$). These results indicate that there is a relationship between attachment with coping in adults who experience emotional abuse. Therefore, the research hypothesis is accepted.

5 DISCUSSION

This research was conducted to determine the relationship between attachment with coping in adults who experience emotional abuse. Results research shows that there is a relationship between attachment coping. These results are obtained from the results of statistical data analysis shows the value of the correlation coefficient (r) = 0.479 with a significance value (p) = 0,000 ($p > 0.05$). The results of this study are the same as the research found by Seifge-Krenke and Beyers (2005), Riggs, Cusimano, and Benson (2011), and Ognibene and Collins (1998) which state that attachment related to coping. Ognibene and Collins (1998) say that Secure attachment has a correlation with the type of coping use of emotional support and use of instrumental support. Next the preoccupied attachment is correlated with use of emotional support and escape avoidance. As well as the type of attachment dismissing and fearful correlate with use of emotional support.

Based on the type of attachment, more subjects have insecure attachment types, as many as 59 subjects classified as fearful attachment with 27.3%, preoccupied attachment with 26%, and dismissing attachment with 23.4%, while another 18 subjects with 23.4% were classified in the secure category. Riggs (2010; Riggs and Kaminski, 2010; Riggs, Cusimano, & Benson, 2011; Gay, Harding, Jackson, Burns, & Baker, 2013) said that individuals who experienced emotional abuse in childhood can also be predicted to have insecure attachment in adulthood.

Insecure attachment in adulthood occurs because of an intermediary early maladaptive schemas (EMS) owned by individuals who experience emotional abuse so individuals tend to have a type of attachment insecure (Gay et al, 2013; Riggs, 2010; Riggs & Kaminski, 2010; Riggs,

Cusimano, & Benson, 2011). Early maladaptive schemas are all patterns thoughts about yourself and others formed from various events, experiences, emotions, and thoughts during childhood or adolescents, but can change or settle along with individual development (Gay et al, 2013).

Emotional abuse in this study influenced the type of attachment. Emotional abuse that occurs affects self-image of an individual and individual descriptions of other people (Riggs, Cusimano, & Benson, 2011). Individuals who experience abuse see themselves as victims, helpless, shameful, and worthless. Then, individuals find it hard to believe others because other people are considered to be untrustworthy, unappreciative, individuals, cruel, traitors, and others can hurt the individual. Thus, individuals also assume that no one gives support when needed (Indrawati & Fauziah, 2012). This is the general cause that individual who has insecure attachment also has a maladaptive coping. Meanwhile, secure adult attachment is positively associated with the ability to modulate affects thus correct to choose coping strategies (Craparo, Magnano, Zapparrata, Gori, Costanzo, Pace, & Pellerone, 2018)

According to the total number of coping analyzes, the majority of subjects have active coping with 15.65% who tend to belong to the adaptive coping. This is different from the previous statement from Mikulincer and Shaver (2007; 2012), Riggs (2010), Riggs and Kaminski (2010), Riggs, Cusimano, and Benson (2011), and Gay et al (2013) who said that individuals with insecure attachment tend to have maladaptive coping. After further examination, it is known that the individual with insecure attachment can also have adaptive coping. Like the results Seifge-Krenke and Beyers (2005) research which shows that insecure attachment specifically preoccupied attachment and dismissing attachment can also have adaptive coping namely active coping. The preoccupied attachment also can have high scores on both adaptive and maladaptive coping, so individuals with preoccupied attachment have a what called as ambivalent coping.

The researchers is aware of the limitations in the implementation process this research. First, the unavailability of data about how many individuals who experience emotional abuse. Second, there are still many individuals who not yet familiar with the term emotional abuse so most of it individuals respond not to experience emotional abuse (323 individuals answer not experience emotional

abuse). Third, emotional abuse not specifically measured using a certain scale.

6 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This research was conducted to determine the relationship between attachment with coping in adults who experience emotional abuse. Results in this study shows that there is a relationship between secure attachment with coping use emotional social support, denial, use instrumental social support, positive refreiming, and planning in adults who experience emotional abuse. Then there is a relationship between preoccupied attachment with self coping distraction, active coping, and religion. Next, there is a relationship between dismissing attachment with self-distraction coping, active coping, religion, and self-blame. Meanwhile there is also a relationship between fearful attachment with self-distraction coping, active coping, substance use, behavioral disengagement, and self-blame. Each type of attachment shows a significant correlation with certain types of coping. The most significant relationship among the four types of attachment is secure attachment with positive refreiming.

Most subjects have insecure attachment that is, fearful attachment, preoccupied attachment, and dismissing attachment, while the rest has a secure attachment type. This shows that, individuals with insecure attachments tend to have maladaptive coping but also can have adaptive coping, as is the case with individuals classified as secure attachments tend to have adaptive coping but can also have maladaptive coping. This can occur due to individual diversity factors such as personality, age, gender, early maladaptive schemas (EMS), differences in the process of coping, and the environment.

Based on the results of the study, it is expected to the professional and activist, especially for those who take part in the protection sector as well providing interventions for individuals who experience abuse, so as not ignores the existence of emotional abuse as a form of abuse that is separate. It is expected that adults, especially those in Banda Aceh can improve the approach to the Almighty and improve acceptance of problems that occur. There are various ways that are worth a try to solve the problem, so that the problem experienced can be solved effectively and efficiently. To further

researchers who are interested in conduct research on adult attachment or coping can use other variables too, like depression, religiosity, prosocial, and others. Future researchers can also conduct research on individual coping flexibility or can change adult samples whose age is more specific because of each age in development have different types of problems, and use qualitative research methods for obtaining richer data and deep.

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