Smoking Behavior as a Social Influence of Teenagers in Association in Sungai Beliung Urban Village

Perilaku Merokok sebagai Pengaruh Sosial Remaja dalam Pergaulan di Kelurahan Sungai Beliung

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Abstract
This research aims to find out how the social influence of teenagers in the social process influences the formation of smoking behavior in minors as a form of social influence in the Sungai Beliung District. Researchers tried to examine the smoking behavior orientation of minors which was determined to be the influence of teenage social interactions. This research is in the form of a case study and uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques, namely interviews, observation and literature study. The results of the research show that smoking behavior by minors is starting to become more common nowadays. The widening influence of relationships and the environment makes teenagers follow this behavior. Initially, teenagers are influenced by their social friends and the community, especially those around their home environment, most of whom are smokers.

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INTRODUCTION

The influence of society, coupled with the rapidly expanding technological advancements, has had a significant impact on the surrounding environment, especially on underage children. This is evident in the behavior of teenagers today who exhibit a more free-spirited nature. The broadening progress of the times has led to various behaviors among underage children that do not align with societal norms and rules. There are various types of social deviations frequently carried out by minors, ranging from bullying, fighting, online gambling, to snatching, and even smoking, despite their young age. Given that they are still underage, these behaviors undoubtedly have numerous negative effects on them, including health issues, academic performance decline, cognitive impairments, and a decrease in learning abilities, as well as other deviant behaviors.

Smoking is a behavior that endangers health, yet many people continue this habit. From various perspectives, smoking is highly detrimental, both to oneself and to those around. Smoking can also cause serious health problems and even death. However, many people still lack understanding or awareness of the issues caused by smoking, which is why the habit persists, particularly among today's younger generation (Cahyani et al., 2024). Smoking is a common activity in society, practiced by almost all age groups, from children to adults. Although there are regulations that restrict smoking to individuals aged 17 and above, it is not uncommon for underage children to smoke as well. Many smokers are either individuals who had previously quit smoking and then relapsed or those who had never smoked but were curious and decided to try it. Most underage children who smoke do so because they have a high level of curiosity and are easily influenced by their surroundings. During adolescence, when they are searching for their identity, they may feel that smoking makes them appear more masculine and cool, whereas not smoking might make them feel like cowards (Andriyani, 2011). Teenagers who smoke typically associate with other teenagers who smoke. Conversely, if a teenager who smokes spends time with friends who do not smoke, they are less likely to continue smoking. Peer influence is a critical factor to consider, as interactions with peers have a significant impact on underage children. There are various reasons why underage children start smoking. According to research by Mulyadi (2015), peer relationships tend to influence smoking behavior in teenagers. Initially, the physical sensations of smoking, such as a bad taste, nausea, dizziness, a dry throat, and coughing, are unpleasant. However, teenagers often continue to experiment with smoking. This persistence is due to the strong group bonds with peers who also smoke, which provides them with feelings of comfort, relaxation, sociability, and increased confidence. Peer influence is significant, and teenagers will go to great lengths to maintain their group solidarity, which is a value that underpins their actions and attitudes toward others, regardless of the potential consequences to themselves, whether beneficial or detrimental (Ali & Asrori, 2014).

Smoking among underage children is a deviant behavior that remains difficult to address, with the number of teenage smokers increasing annually. According to the Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA), about 19.4% of teenagers in ASEAN countries, particularly in Indonesia, are smokers, with the highest number of smokers found among teenagers (Chugh et al., 2020). Research from the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) in 2019 indicates that 35.5% of students aged 13-15 in Indonesia who smoke are male, and 2.45% are female (World Health Organization, 2020).

This situation raises significant concerns, as many teenagers are choosing to smoke at an underage. For many teenagers, smoking serves as an outlet for their psychological or...
physical distress. Although most people initially experience discomfort when they first try smoking, including symptoms such as coughing, nausea, and dizziness, these reactions are caused by the harmful substances in cigarettes, which have negative effects on the body of the smoker. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2015), smoking is a global health threat that kills up to 8 million people each year, with nearly 1.2 million of these deaths being non-smokers exposed to secondhand smoke. Smoking also poses a risk for various diseases, including cataracts, pneumonia, lung cancer, throat cancer, emphysema, bronchitis, stroke, heart attacks, and cardiovascular diseases, with 90% of lung cancer cases attributed to smoking (Satriawan, 2022).

The government has issued a policy that includes warning images on cigarette packaging to illustrate the impacts of smoking. This effort aims to reduce the number of smokers and encourage smokers to understand and decrease their smoking habits (Santoso, 2017). However, images depicting diseases caused by smoking or its social impacts have not made a significant difference among smokers. Scary images on cigarette packages are particularly ineffective in influencing teenagers who already have a high level of addiction to smoking. Therefore, alternative methods are needed to focus on helping teenagers quit smoking. One such method is using videos of individuals suffering from the effects of smoking, as videos can enhance cognitive, metacognitive, and exploratory processes, theory building, and evaluation. Efforts to help teenagers quit smoking are more effective because their nicotine use has not been long-term; the longer the nicotine use, the higher the dependency (Andriyani, 2011).

Smoking behavior among teenagers is a particular issue in the Sungai Beliung sub-district, where many school-age teenagers are seen smoking in the community. Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting further studies on the increasing number of underage smokers, despite the warning illustrations on cigarette packaging. The researchers aim to understand what perceptions underage smokers have that give them the courage and tendency to smoke. The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the smoking behaviors of teenagers. The results will benefit all parties, especially parents and underage teenagers, by encouraging them to change their behavior from smoking to non-smoking, motivating themselves to quit smoking, and providing insights to non-smoking teenagers about the dangers of smoking. For parents, researchers hope to encourage increased supervision of their children. For researchers, the goal is to gain knowledge and motivate teenage smokers, as well as to gain experience in conducting research.

**METHODS**

The method used in this research is a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is based on postpositivist or interpretive philosophy. It is used to study natural conditions of objects, where the researcher is the key instrument. Data collection techniques include triangulation (a combination of observation, interviews, and documentation), with the data obtained being predominantly qualitative. Data analysis is inductive and qualitative, and the results of qualitative research aim to understand meaning, uniqueness, construct phenomena, and propose hypotheses. States that qualitative research involves data in the form of words, sentences, and images, which are descriptive in nature (Sugiyono, 2018).

This research is qualitative, utilizing a descriptive method to observe the realities in the field, ensuring that the data obtained aligns with field results. Descriptive research aims to describe phenomena, events, or occurrences happening in the present. The research form
used by the researcher is a survey study. According to Kerlinger, survey research is conducted on large or small populations, but the data studied comes from samples taken from these populations. This allows for the identification of relative occurrences, distributions, and relationships between sociological and psychological variables. The subjects of this research are four underage children in the Sungai Beliung sub-district, West Pontianak. The primary data for this research consists of information from underage smokers. Secondary data is obtained from scientific articles, journals, and books. Data collection techniques used in this research include observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation involves daily human activities that use the senses as the main tool. In other words, observation is the ability to use one’s senses to recognize observed phenomena. What has been previously recorded is noted, and these notes are then analyzed.

States that interviews are used as a data collection technique when conducting preliminary research to identify issues to be studied, or when the researcher wants to gain deeper insights from respondents and the number of respondents is small. Interview is a conversation between the researcher, who seeks to obtain information, and the informant, who is believed to have important information about a subject. This method is used to gain in-depth information and explore information thoroughly from the informants (Sugiyono, 2018). The documentation method involves collecting files such as notes, transcripts, books, diaries, journals, minutes, photos, videos, etc., which are obtained for use in research and can serve as the primary basis for conducting field research. Data validation in this research uses source triangulation. Source triangulation is used in data collection where the researcher uses various sources. The research begins with a preliminary stage, including a survey of underage smokers and supported by relevant literature. The second stage involves collecting as much data as possible. The final stage is the completion stage, where the researcher analyzes the data based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the data collection procedures previously used in this research, the researcher identified the following factors causing underage children to smoke:

1. **Subject 1**

   Based on the interview with the subject, Farid Amru, the internal factors causing him to smoke include his desire to be accepted by his friends and his use of smoking as a way to assert his identity. He has been smoking for three years, starting from the fifth grade of elementary school until now. To obtain cigarettes, he sometimes buys them with his allowance and occasionally takes them from his brother's shop without his brother’s knowledge. Farid Amru started smoking because he often refused his friends' invitations but eventually joined them to avoid feeling left out.

   The interview also revealed several external factors contributing to Farid Amru’s smoking: his parents smoke, most of his school friends smoke, and the general smoking culture in his community. Additionally, observations of Farid Amru’s parents during the interview and in his home environment confirmed that his parents smoke and most people in his community smoke. These interview findings were further reinforced by the observations made during the interviews and in the area where Farid Amru lives.
2. Subject 2

Based on the interview with Rafi Akbar, the internal factor causing him to smoke is his curiosity about the taste of cigarettes. He has been smoking for one year, starting from elementary school until now in the first grade of junior high school (SMP). He obtains cigarettes by setting aside his allowance and sometimes receiving them from friends. The interview with Rafi Akbar also revealed several external factors contributing to his smoking: his older brother smokes, his school friends encourage him to smoke, and the dominant smoking culture in his community. Additionally, interviews with Rafi Akbar’s peers confirmed these external factors: his older brother smokes, his school friends encourage him to smoke, and the majority of people in his community smoke. These interview findings were further reinforced by observations made during the interviews and in the area where Rafi Akbar lives.

3. Subject 3

Based on the interview with Angga Saputra, the internal factor driving him to smoke is his curiosity about the taste of cigarettes. He started smoking nearly a year ago, since he was in fourth grade of elementary school. He obtains money to buy cigarettes by setting aside his pocket money, and sometimes, when his pocket money runs out, he borrows money from his friends to buy cigarettes. Initially, he smoked out of curiosity about the taste of cigarettes, but over time, it became addictive.

The interview with Angga Saputra also revealed several external factors contributing to his smoking: his parents smoke, his friends around his house smoke, and there is a prevalent smoking culture in his community. Additionally, interviews with Angga Saputra’s peers confirmed these external factors: his parents smoke, his friends around his house smoke, and many people in his community smoke.

Discussion

Based on the research results, there are internal factors that cause underage individuals in West Pontianak to smoke.

Desire to be accepted by the group

Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. Hence, it is common to see teenagers demonstrating behaviors that reflect the norms of their peer groups. Research findings indicate that underage individuals smoke because they want to be accepted by a certain group. This study supports the research conducted by Wijayanti and colleagues, who stated that adolescents strive to be accepted by their peers, leading many to follow invitations to smoke. The need for acceptance within the group is a significant factor (Wijayanti et al., 2017).

Desire to experience the taste of cigarettes

Teenagers are generally characterized by a high level of curiosity about various things, supported by their transitional phase and tendency to experiment due to their curiosity, such as curiosity about the taste of cigarettes. This research supports the findings of Wulan’s study, which stated that for teenagers, curiosity about cigarettes is the primary factor driving smoking behavior (Sutha, 2016).
Desire to express one's identity

Identity is a concept that encompasses how one presents themselves, often including aspects such as status, personality, and other traits. Research findings indicate that underage individuals smoke to showcase themselves as mature and not childish, as well as to be accepted as peers within a group. These findings also support research conducted by Wulan, which suggests that cigarettes have been used as a symbol of status and maturity among adolescents, with smoking viewed as behavior indicative of maturity and signaling an almost adult status. Therefore, this research aligns with the findings of Wijayanti and colleagues, who argue that for teenagers, especially boys, smoking symbolizes power, masculinity, and maturity. Adolescents do not want to be perceived as 'cowardly' (Wijayanti et al., 2017).

There are also external factors that cause underage individuals in Sungai Beliung District to smoke.

Family environment

The family environment is the first and most influential learning environment, especially for children in their formative years. Smoking habits within the family, whether it's parents, siblings, or other family members, can significantly influence a child's perception and attitude towards smoking, normalizing it as something acceptable in adulthood. The research results above indicate that parents and siblings are the causes of students smoking.

Additionally, findings from research conducted by Munir also state that smoking behavior within the family greatly influences the behavior of many teenagers in starting or trying smoking for the first time, then progressing from occasional smoking to regular smoking (transitioning from monthly to daily smoking) (Melda, 2017).

Community environment

The environment is also a significant factor in shaping smoking behavior among underage individuals. In the environment of the informants, smoking is seen as a normal activity, with many underage children also engaging in smoking. This research supports the findings of Florenly and colleagues, who stated that the environment plays a significant role in students’ smoking behavior. In an environment where smoking is not seen as undesirable, even young children are seen smoking, especially students (Surbakti, 2018).

Peer environment

Peer group is a group of individuals of the same age range. Peer groups have a significant impact on a person's development as the behavior of a child can be influenced by the nature of their peer group. If peers exhibit negative behavior, it can influence other group members to adopt similar behaviors. Research conducted by Widiansyah indicates that both school friends and playmates influence adolescent smoking behavior. Due to their closeness and frequent interactions, smoking peers can easily influence non-smoking peers to start smoking (Sutha, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and data analysis, the researcher has drawn conclusions regarding the social influence of adolescents in social interactions. Through in-depth analysis of the discussions conducted in various studies, it can be concluded that the factors causing underage smoking in Sungai Beliung Subdistrict. The findings obtained from in-depth
interviews with four informants who are adolescent smokers reveal several conclusions regarding the formation process of social influence among adolescents in their interactions. These conclusions are as follows: (1) the desire to be accepted by a group, (2) the desire to demonstrate identity, (3) curiosity about the taste of cigarettes, (4) smoking family environment, (5) smoking peers and social circles, and (6) the surrounding environment where smoking is prevalent. The consumption of cigarettes by underage children in Sungai Beliung Subdistrict occurs almost daily. These children obtain money through various means, one of which is saving their pocket money or even borrowing money from friends to buy cigarettes. The main reasons for their smoking are curiosity about the taste of cigarettes and the fact that the surrounding environment mostly consists of cigarette consumers, especially their parents. Based on the research findings, the researcher intends to convey several points regarding future research. Researchers conducting similar studies in the future can develop the research to enhance precision and focus on the specific aspects being investigated.

REFERENCES