A Study on the Behavior of Students from Broken Home Backgrounds at Rantau Utara High School

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Abstract

Family is a fundamental entity in individual development, and family background can influence student behavior and academic performance. This research aims to investigate the impact of separated families on student behavior in a school environment. Using a qualitative approach, the researchers analyzed the determining factors associated with the behavior of students from separated families. The study involved a sample of 10 eleventh-grade students from broken homes, focusing on family interaction, emotional support, and personality. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations. The results of the study showed a correlation between separated family backgrounds and student learning behavior, revealing significant variations in students' responses and coping strategies to the situation. Factors such as social support, parental education, and the availability of family resources were also found to play important roles in shaping student behavior

Keywords : *behavior, broken home, family*

Abstrak

Keluarga adalah entitas mendasar dalam perkembangan individu, dan latar belakang keluarga dapat mempengaruhi perilaku dan kinerja akademik siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki dampak keluarga yang terpisah terhadap perilaku siswa di lingkungan sekolah. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, para peneliti menganalisis faktor-faktor penentu yang berhubungan dengan perilaku siswa dari keluarga yang terpisah. Studi ini melibatkan sampel 10 siswa kelas sebelas dari keluarga yang tidak utuh, dengan fokus pada interaksi keluarga, dukungan emosional, dan kepribadian. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya korelasi antara latar belakang keluarga yang terpisah dan perilaku belajar siswa, mengungkapkan variasi yang signifikan dalam respons dan strategi penanggulangan siswa terhadap situasi tersebut. Faktor-faktor seperti dukungan sosial, pendidikan orang tua, dan ketersediaan sumber daya keluarga juga ditemukan memainkan peran penting dalam membentuk perilaku siswa.

Kata kunci : perilaku, broken home, keluarga

INTRODUCTION

The family serves as the primary and foremost arena for social interaction and for understanding the behaviors of others. It is also the initial pillar in the introduction to societal cultures, where family members learn about the personalities and characteristics of individuals outside of themselves. Therefore, the family is a significant entity in the formation of character, kinship, social relationships, and the creativity of its members. This makes the study of the family's urgency in its various dimensions a compelling topic for both scientists and practitioners. One of the first scientists to study the family was George Murdock. In his book "Social Structure," Murdock explains that the family is a social group characterized by co-residence, economic cooperation, and reproductive processes (Maghfiroh et al., 2022).

The study of student behavior with a broken home background is becoming increasingly relevant amidst the rising cases of divorce and family separation. Families, as the basic unit of society, play a crucial role in the psychological and social development of children. Children who grow up in intact families tend to have better emotional stability compared to those from broken homes. Various studies have shown that children from broken families often face additional challenges, such as emotional disturbances, decreased academic performance, and behavioral issues. This instability can be caused by various factors, including parental conflict, reduced attention and emotional support, and changes in family dynamics. By understanding the behavior of students from broken homes, schools, counselors, and educational policymakers can develop more effective strategies to support their unique needs, help them overcome difficulties, and maximize their academic and social potential.

According to (Aini et al., 2023), the family is defined from the aspect of the closeness of relationships among its members, describing it as a social environment that is very intimately connected with an individual. Within the family, a person is raised, resides, interacts with others, and forms values, thought patterns, and habits. The family also functions as a filter for external cultures and influences the dimensions of a child's relationships with their environment.

In the interaction between parents and children, parents express their attitudes, values, and interests, which ultimately shape the parenting style (Rahmasari et al., 2023). According to (Srihartini, 2011) the family is believed to have the primary responsibility for socialization in daily life, ensuring individuals can sustain their lives. The family is viewed as a small group, the center of an individual's life, a crucial vessel for social expectations, and a source of growth.

Brodey, as cited in Anderson and Carter (Putra, 2023), emphasizes the importance of the family in shaping a child's behavior. A child's behavior is significantly influenced by the behavior of their parents through reciprocal interactions. Children growing up in a cold and bleak family environment will not experience peace of mind and confidence. Gradually, they will lose trust in everything and everyone, including themselves.

The functions of the family encompass six main aspects: education, religion, protection, biology, socialization, and affection. Initially, the family was the sole informal educational institution, but this role has now been formally taken over by schools. The family's religious function, as the controller of religious values, is threatened by secularization influences. The family also serves as a place for physical and social protection for its members. Biologically, the family is the birthplace of individuals, a critical role for child development. Additionally, the family remains the dominant institution in socializing children, shaping their personalities through social interactions and instilling societal values. Finally, the affection function arises from loving relationships within the family, fostering bonds of kinship, friendship, habits, and shared perspectives on life's values.

According to the Kamus Besar Psikologi (Mumtaz et al., 2024), "broken home" refers to a fractured family or a disrupted household. Sofyan S. Willis (Cholifah et al., 2023) explains that a broken home can be seen from two aspects: either the family structure is no longer intact because one head of the family has died or the parents have divorced, or the family structure

remains legally intact but the parents are often absent or fail to show affection, frequently arguing, resulting in a psychologically unhealthy family environment.

Observations in society show that families experiencing frequent conflicts often end up in divorce. Save Degun (Mamuly, 2023) notes that divorce in families usually starts from conflicts between family members. When these conflicts reach a critical point, divorce becomes imminent. While conflicts are common in any household, persistent or prolonged conflicts can be detrimental to all parties involved.

"There has been an increase in divorce rates in Indonesia, reaching 516,000 per year. Meanwhile, the number of marriages is declining, from 2 million to 1.8 million per year," he said during the National Coordination Meeting of the National Amil Zakat Agency (Baznas) 2023 in Jakarta, Thursday.

The Phenomenon of Student Behavior from Broken Home Backgrounds

The study of student behavior with a broken home background has been conducted to understand the potential impact on children from non-harmonious families. Here are two phenomena that can be observed in such studies:

Aggressive Behavior, one frequently observed phenomenon in the study of students with a broken home background is aggressive behavior. Children from broken homes may be more prone to exhibiting aggressive behavior, such as physical or verbal violence (Pratama et al., 2016). Factors such as emotional instability, family conflict, and feelings of insecurity can contribute to this aggressive behavior.

Psychological Disorders, studies also indicate that children from broken homes may experience psychological disorders. They might feel loss, confusion, and emotional instability due to their parents' separation. Some psychological disorders that children from broken homes may experience include mood swings, behavioral disorders, and mental health issues. This can affect their well-being and performance in school.

Several factors influence a person's learning behavior. Behavior encompasses all activities or actions of humans, whether observable or not. Behavioral changes can be created by altering events within the environment that trigger such behavior. Children from broken homes often exhibit deviant behavior in their daily lives. Their family background shapes their personalities and affects their academic performance. For instance, at school, such children may feel inferior to their peers due to their family circumstances, exhibit laziness in studying, isolate themselves, display aggression, lack confidence, and struggle to adapt to their surroundings (Pratama, 2016).

William J. Goode outlines the forms or criteria of fractures in broken home families as follows:

Invalidity refers to a family that is incomplete because the father (husband) or mother (wife) is absent and does not fulfill their duties and responsibilities properly. Annulment involves separation, divorce, or abandonment where family ties are severed when one or both partners decide to part ways and stop fulfilling their obligations. An "empty shell family" describes members who live together but lack communication, cooperation, and emotional support for each other. The absence of one spouse can occur due to reasons like death, family breakdown, imprisonment, or being separated due to war, depression, or other disasters. The failure of important roles refers to severe mental, emotional, or physical illnesses that hinder fulfilling one's responsibilities.

Research on the behavior of students from broken homes at SMA N 1 Rantau Utara is an important issue as it can provide in-depth insights into the social and psychological impacts experienced by students in fragmented family environments. A broken home, or parental divorce, often affects the emotional well-being and behavior of children, including in educational settings such as schools. Through this study, researchers aim to understand the impact experienced by students from broken family backgrounds and seek ways to assist them in facing their challenges. This research is crucial for understanding how family factors can

influence the development and behavior of children and for identifying the effects of separated families on student behavior in the school environment at SMA N 1 Rantau Utara.

Student behavior at school reflects the character and values they bring from home and their surrounding environment. For example, students who are accustomed to receiving positive support from their families tend to exhibit polite and disciplined behavior in class. This can be seen in their punctuality in attending school and their diligence in completing assigned tasks. Furthermore, the way students interact with teachers and peers demonstrates how they respect others and their ability to work collaboratively in groups. Students with good behavior are usually more easily accepted in social circles and often become role models for their friends. Therefore, student behavior is influenced not only by formal education at school but also by their upbringing and social experiences outside of school (Halawati, 2020).

A broken home can significantly impact a child's psychological and emotional development. Children from families experiencing separation often face various emotional challenges, such as insecurity, anxiety, and deep sadness. For instance, they might feel confused or uncertain about the love and attention they receive, given the unstable family situation. Additionally, the environment of a broken home often results in children receiving inconsistent attention and support from both parents, which is crucial for their development. This inconsistency can lead to issues in their academic performance and social relationships, as they may feel less motivated or find it difficult to trust others. Furthermore, children from broken homes are at higher risk of developing behavioral problems, such as rebelliousness or aggression, as a way to cope with the stress and pressure they experience. Therefore, it is essential for parents and the surrounding community to provide extra support to children from broken homes, helping them to overcome challenges and develop in a healthy manner (Ariyanto, 2023).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs qualitative methods, which aim to explore and understand the meaning of a phenomenon occurring within the human life environment. In qualitative research, researchers directly engage with the events or phenomena under study, paying comprehensive attention to their contexts (Hasibuan, 2023).A case study is a method of collecting in-depth, detailed, intensive, holistic, and systematic data and information about individuals, events, social contexts, or specific groups. This approach involves various techniques and methods to thoroughly understand the objective meanings within the relevant contexts (Hasibuan, 2023).

Participation in this research involved school counselors who assisted us by providing information about students experiencing broken homes. During the interviews with the counselors, several students were identified by the counselors themselves. This study's sample consisted of 10 students from broken home backgrounds. These 10 students were selected based on interviews conducted with the school counselor, identifying those who have experienced or come from broken home environments. The interviews were conducted over three days: on the first day, 3 students were interviewed; on the second day, 3 students; and on the third day, 4 students.

Preparations before interviewing the students included bringing an interview guide to ensure all necessary aspects for this research were covered, such as criteria for students from broken home families. The identification of students from broken home backgrounds at this school was facilitated by information provided by a counselor who frequently deals with these students and keeps records of students from broken home families.

To collect data, we conducted in-depth interviews with students who have such backgrounds. The interviews were conducted at the school, with the consent of the school authorities and the students' parents or guardians. The interview process was face-to-face, using a semi-structured interview guide that allowed students to freely discuss their experiences and feelings.

The research procedure began with the selection of student samples based on predetermined criteria, namely students known to come from broken home families. After obtaining permission, we scheduled interviews at times convenient for the students. Each interview lasted approximately 20-30 minutes and was recorded to facilitate data analysis. The data obtained from the interviews were then transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis methods. The analysis process involved coding the data to identify the main themes that emerged from the interviews. The results of this analysis were then used to understand the behavioral patterns of the students and the factors influencing them in the context of a broken home family. With this approach, the research aims to provide deeper insights into the challenges faced by students from broken home backgrounds and how they cope with these situations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSION

Based on the recorded observations, there are 10 children from various grade levels who come from broken families. According to teachers' notes from research on "problematic students," all of them are affected by issues stemming from their problematic family backgrounds.

The first case is named ZAP, who experienced a broken home due to parental discord and frequent arguments. The main issue faced by ZAP's family is that his father does not fulfill his financial responsibilities and often asks for money from ZAP's mother (Interview with the first student, January 19).

The second case is RA, whose broken home resulted from his father remarrying, leaving RA to live with his mother. RA never feels comfortable at home, which makes him unmotivated to study at school. RA does not daydream but often cries alone in his room (Interview with the second student, January 19).

The third case is YR, who experienced a broken home because her mother remarried due to constant conflicts and incompatibility. During the interview, YR cried, expressing her desire for a harmonious family. Since the age of 4, YR has not met her mother and has not experienced a mother's love (Interview with the third student, January 19).

The fourth case is RS, whose broken home is due to his father's excessive possessiveness towards his mother, accusing her of infidelity and resorting to violence. RS feels uncomfortable at home due to frequent conflicts with his mother. RS often cries and gets angry with anyone close to him. RS becomes sensitive, especially when he sees friends with harmonious families (Interview with the fourth student, January 22).

The fifth case is KS, who experienced a broken home because KS's father was once imprisoned and communication with his mother faded. KS lives with his father. KS's father remarried briefly, but KS's mother remains alone until now. KS often isolates himself in class and daydreams due to the problems he faces (Interview with the fifth student, January 22).

The sixth case is FS, who experienced a broken home because both of FS's parents had affairs, leading FS to live with their grandmother. FS is more sensitive than usual and envies their close friends who have intact and harmonious families (Interview with the sixth student, January 22).

The seventh case is CAP, who experienced a broken home because CAP's father had multiple affairs, causing frequent arguments at home. CAP feels ashamed and never feels comfortable at home, often coming home late. CAP has been involved in physical violence, hitting their head, and once caused an accident by driving recklessly. CAP frequently intervenes in their parents' fights, but instead of stopping them, CAP becomes the outlet for their parents' frustrations (Interview with the seventh student, January 23).

The eighth case is RY, who experienced a broken home because RY's father had an affair. RY lives with their mother but frequently fights with her, making RY uncomfortable at home. RY once attempted suicide by drinking poison but was discovered and advised by their

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mother. RY regrets the action and has since participated in a futsal competition, winning first place at the district level (Interview with the eighth student, January 23).

The ninth case is NS, who experienced a broken home because their mother ran away and NS does not know her whereabouts. NS is the eldest of three siblings and harbors resentment towards their mother, similar to their father's opinion. NS is a diligent student and consistently ranks first in class (Interview with the ninth student, January 23).

The tenth case is MGR, who experienced a broken home because their parents do not live together, and MGR does not live with one of their parents either. MGR often feels lonely, resorts to excessive drinking and smoking, and daydreams frequently in class (Interview with the tenth student, January 23).

Students from broken home backgrounds often exhibit various behaviors reflecting their emotional and psychological instability. Here are some behaviors identified during the research involving students with such backgrounds. Preferring Solitude, students from broken homes tend to withdraw from social environments. They prefer spending time alone due to discomfort or lack of confidence in interacting with others. This behavior often makes them appear closed off and difficult to approach. Students who are easily offended or angered often display unstable emotions and are easily triggered by minor incidents. These exaggerated emotional reactions may be their way of expressing frustration or unhappiness experienced at home. Among male students, negative behaviors such as smoking or consuming alcohol can serve as coping mechanisms to alleviate emotional pain. The desire to self-harm is also evident in some students who feel lonely, indicating their inability to handle emotional pressure and their need for attention and professional help. During teaching and learning activities, students from troubled families often daydream, their thoughts wandering to personal issues they are facing, making it difficult for them to concentrate on lessons. Some students rarely go home and prefer to spend time at friends' houses due to the discomfort or unhappiness they feel at home, seeking a more supportive and comfortable environment. (Observations from January 15, 2024, to January 23, 2024).

What researchers have found cannot be generalized that students from broken homes exhibit bad behavior, as it is also experienced by other students. The guidance counselor at SMA N 1 Rantau Utara holds the same affirmation that students from broken homes and those who are not face similar issues, with school attendance being the prominent one. According to (Hurlock, 1990), a Broken Home is the culmination of poor marital adjustment and occurs when the husband and wife are no longer able to find a solution to their problems that satisfies both parties. It should be noted that many marriages do not result in happiness but are not ended in separation. This is because these marriages are based on religious, moral, economic, and other considerations. Separation or annulment of a marriage can be done legally or secretly, and there are also cases where one spouse (husband or wife) leaves the family. Research on the behavior of students from broken homes often highlights the complex psychological and behavioral impacts on children and adolescents. The term "broken home" refers to situations where parents have divorced or separated, leaving children with significantly altered family dynamics. This discussion integrates findings from recent literature to explore these behavioral impacts on students.

Psychological and emotional impacts, studies indicate that children from broken homes often experience higher levels of psychological stress compared to those from intact families. Feelings of loss, confusion, and sadness frequently arise due to the substantial changes in their lives (Amato, 2001). This can affect their concentration in school and their overall attendance. Some students may struggle to adjust to these changes, which may manifest in more problematic behaviors at school. Social and academic behavior, research also shows a correlation between broken homes and an increased risk of deviant behavior such as delinquency, substance abuse, and other behavioral issues (Amato, 2005). Children from broken homes tend to have a higher tendency to engage in negative peer relationships or even juvenile

criminality. These factors can directly impact their academic performance and social interactions with peers. Protective factors and interventions, despite these significant risks, it's important to note that not all children from broken homes experience the same impacts. Protective factors such as strong social support, positive relationships with one parent, or psychological interventions can help mitigate potential negative effects (Pryor, 2001). Educational programs and counseling in schools can provide a safe space for students to express their feelings and address the challenges they face.

To support students from broken homes effectively, teachers can adopt several strategies. First, providing emotional support is crucial; teachers should listen attentively and empathetically to students' feelings, ensuring they feel understood and cared for. Building positive relationships with these students is also vital; teachers can act as stable, trustworthy figures to create a safe and nurturing school environment. Using positive discipline approaches helps reinforce good behavior while teaching students about consequences fairly. Involving parents in understanding students' behavior at home fosters open communication and allows for collaborative solutions. Technology, like online classroom applications, can aid in monitoring student behavior and gathering data to inform targeted interventions. Additionally, developing support programs such as counseling sessions, either individually or in groups, provides students with opportunities to address and overcome emotional challenges effectively. These comprehensive approaches help create a supportive ecosystem that enhances the well-being and academic success of students from broken homes.

Research on the behavior of students from broken home backgrounds is an important and complex field that requires a holistic approach. For other researchers interested in exploring this topic, it is recommended to use a mixed-methods research approach that includes both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative approaches, such as surveys and questionnaires, can provide relevant statistical data on the prevalence and patterns of certain behaviors. Meanwhile, in-depth interviews and participatory observations can delve deeper into the personal experiences and emotional dynamics of students from broken homes. Researchers should also consider contextual factors such as culture, economy, and social environment, which can influence student behavior. Additionally, collaborating with school counselors, teachers, and parents is crucial to gain a comprehensive perspective and support effective interventions. Involving students in the research process through participatory approaches can also provide deeper and more relevant insights. This research not only contributes academically but also has the potential to create impactful intervention strategies for the well-being of the students involved. Advice for future researchers or further research should be to master counseling techniques better in approaching students who sometimes find it difficult to talk about their families. This could be a barrier in the research. Additionally, they should improve their language proficiency and eloquence in speaking.

CONCLUSION

Students from broken homes often exhibit behaviors reflecting emotional and psychological instability, such as withdrawing socially, being easily offended or angry, and engaging in negative behaviors like smoking or consuming alcohol. Some students may even have self-harming tendencies and struggle to concentrate during learning. Observed cases highlight that family conflicts, domestic violence, infidelity, and the loss of a parent trigger various negative emotional reactions in students, such as shame, loneliness, or a tendency to daydream and withdraw from social interactions. Research underscores the importance of a holistic and sustained approach involving various stakeholders like families, schools, and communities to create a supportive environment for children experiencing broken homes. Advice to future researchers should emphasize a deeper understanding of approaching students,

especially since the nature of this research is somewhat sensitive, focusing on children from broken homes.

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