

NAVIGATING ADOLESCENCE: UNDERSTANDING HEDONISTIC LIFESTYLES AMONG INDONESIAN TEENAGERS

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ABSTRACT

During adolescence, teenagers are often influenced by various factors that shape their lifestyle choices. This study investigates the hedonistic lifestyle among "X" students at SMP 16 Palembang, focusing on the impacts of parental influence, financial management, environmental factors, and social dynamics. Employing a qualitative descriptive research method, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that parental neglect and excessive pocket money contribute to students' consumptive behavior, exacerbated by societal trends and peer pressure. The allure of a hedonistic lifestyle, characterized by materialistic pursuits and gadget dependency, poses risks to students' well-being and social development. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for parental guidance and societal support in promoting balanced lifestyles and responsible behavior among adolescents. These findings underscore the importance of addressing the root causes of hedonistic tendencies to ensure the holistic development of today's youth.

Keywords: adolescence, hedonistic lifestyle, parental influence, social dynamics, gadget dependency

INTRODUCTION

Teenagers, from middle school to college, have a responsibility to pursue education, excel academically, and avoid falling into social circles that lead to fulfilling materialistic desires. During adolescence, curiosity peaks, prompting teenagers to explore various aspects of life that will shape their lifestyle. Presently, teen-themed soap operas are becoming increasingly prevalent on television. This inadvertently worsens the image of education in Indonesia. Soap operas, a part of popular culture, are generally favored by teenagers and even housewives. These soap operas, with significant popularity among teenagers, should ideally serve as educational media. However, the reality is that many soap operas mislead their viewers. Due to the portrayal on television, students are influenced to emulate the lifestyles depicted in soap operas. Television viewers, especially teenagers, tend to easily mimic what they watch and spread it among their peers. The portrayal on television is perceived as a truth worth following. This is evidenced by how the actors in these teenage soap operas are depicted. Teenagers, predominantly still in middle school (SMP) and high school (SMA), are portrayed as leading luxurious lives, with a modern lifestyle complete with the latest gadgets and various mischievous activities.

The widespread use of gadgets among students may indeed help them complete their tasks more efficiently. However, behind this convenience lies dangers to students' well-being. The habit of using gadgets indirectly makes students lazy as everything can be done instantly. The emergence of a lazy generation may pose a latent danger to the nation's future workforce. Therefore, excessive gadget use should be avoided. Living in an increasingly advanced world does not mean that users should become addicted and lazy. Gadget use can also distance children from their real social world. Children who are glued to gadgets tend to neglect face-to-face interactions and prefer communicating via the internet. This is feared to affect children's social skills. Moreover, soft skills such as communication, teamwork, adaptation to the environment, and self-confidence may also be underdeveloped.

Popular cultural products such as soap operas, which are widely consumed by teenagers, should convey good moral values to their viewers. They should begin by portraying an image of education that is rich in knowledge and ethics, rather than presenting glamorous entertainment filled with luxurious lifestyles. The government and the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission should evaluate the potential impacts of the habit of watching soap operas filled with hedonistic lifestyles. The influence of hedonistic lifestyles is evident among society, especially among school students. Students are the nation's future generation still experiencing identity crises as they search for their identities, and they begin to recognize themselves through their surroundings. Students are very enthusiastic about new things, and the hedonistic lifestyle is considered attractive, given its allure to student life.

Students who still rely on their parents, when faced with unmet desires, feel threatened by the demands and changes in lifestyle that constantly evolve with the times. They feel afraid of failure, anxious, and stressed about being labeled as outdated if they do not follow current trends, which if left unaddressed can lead to pressure. In this regard, parents are one of the most responsible factors in controlling their children's behavior patterns. Every parent naturally desires and longs for the best results from their child; however, sometimes the freedom given by parents is misinterpreted by some individuals. A commendable attitude from parents is not to pamper and fulfill every monetary request without considering whether it is beneficial or not.

The phenomenon of lifestyle is evident among teenagers. According to Monks et al. (Nashori, 2012), teenagers wish for their appearance, behavior, attitude, and so forth to attract the attention of others, especially their peer groups. Teenagers want to be recognized by their social environment, so they strive to follow the developments that occur, such as appearance. The need to be accepted and to be the same as others or their peer group causes teenagers to strive to follow various trends, such as fashion choices, using the latest and high-quality mobile phone services and brands, shopping at famous shopping centers like malls rather than traditional markets, or just hanging out with peer groups and so on. Teenagers choose to buy what they want rather than what they need. This is reflected in an interview with a 8th grade student at SMP Negeri 16 Palembang, referred to as HIS, who stated that she is more interested in new items often marketed at the mall or on Instagram. In fact, HIS often buys new items such as bags, watches to appear more fashionable and modern. This phenomenon is a hedonistic lifestyle where the subject chooses items that the subject desires, not what the subject needs, and the subject spends time at the mall to hang out and buy these items to appear more fashionable and modern.

METHOD

In this study, the researcher employed a qualitative descriptive research method. The researcher focused more on investigating the actions of hedonistic lifestyle in interpersonal communication, based on detailed informant views on a particular issue. By using qualitative methods, the data obtained will be more comprehensive, in-depth, and meaningful, thus achieving the research objectives. Qualitative research is descriptive in nature. The data collected consists of words, images, and not numerical figures. This is due to the application of qualitative methods. Additionally, everything collected may potentially serve as keys to what has been researched. (Moleong, 2004: 11). This type of research aims to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the facts and characteristics of a particular population or object. (Kriyantono, 2014: 69).

To obtain comprehensive information appropriate to the research focus, the researcher presents the following data collection techniques: a) observation technique, b) interview technique, and c) documentation technique. Miles and Huberman (Sugiyono, 2010: 294) suggest that activities in qualitative data analysis are interactive and ongoing until saturation is reached, indicating that the data is sufficient. The activities in data analysis include data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis at this stage of the study, researchers here use medel Miles and Huberman (1994) which aims to express from the analysis of data that has been obtained research on the Case Study of Hedonism Lifestyle Against "X" Students at SMP 16 Palembang, which researchers obtained when researching observations and interviews at SMP 16 Palembang who conducted on April 19 to April 24, 2023 in depth and continuously the truth can be assured and believed. Based on observations and interviews from the school and parents and close friends, at this stage researchers focus and group things that are very important according to the data based on problems regarding case studies on student X who has hedonistic behavior, this researcher also interviews parents "X". The parent "X" does not know what has happened to his own child, if now he knows what his child has done with his actions, parent "X" realizes the mistake made by "X" realizes that "X" excessively gave pocket money to his child, parent "X" knows what happened all because of the reprimand from the school to his parents. Eventually his parents figured it out by what "X" did. With the knowledge of a reprimand from the school regarding their child's behavior, finally the parents of student "X" realized that they had been wrong to give excessive money to student "X". All this is because unfortunately the parent "X" in their child causes their child to behave consumptively and wastefully. The parents of student "X" are open by accepting suggestions and advice from the school regarding hedonistic behavior and violations at school. With this event, it is hoped that the parents of student "X" to the school can always provide supervision to student "X" regarding hedonism behavior can recur.

The next stage of conducting data analysis is that the researcher presents the data in the form of a brief description, based on the results of observations and interviews conducted by the researcher directly into the field so that an overview or problem of the case study is obtained on student X who has hedonism behavior. Presentation of data obtained from informants to student "X" as a result of excessive provision of pocket money and lack of supervision from parents of student "X". Because his parents who were too busy with his work finally did not remember his son's attention, with excessive pocket money, student "X" could shop and eat at restaurants in Palembang City Mall. All this is because parents spoil their children too much because they have their only child. As a result, the behavior of student "X" is excessive in using pocket money from his parents by shopping at the Mall to buy mobile phone accessories, buy clothes and others. After shopping, student "X" eats at fast food restaurants such as Mc Donald's and KFC with his close friends. This activity is carried out by student "X" when returning home from school by inviting his close friends. Excessive provision of pocket money by parents causes student "X" to behave consumptively by following the trend of the times. Seeing the rapid development of gadget technology resulted in hedonism behavior growing into a person who is consumptive towards student "X". Parents of student "X" always obey their child's desire to change mobile phones when there is a new release of mobile phones, and student "X" looks confident with the change of new mobile phones just to follow trends and follow the latest gadget developments. Students are often caught carrying mobile phones at school with some incomplete offences, wearing school attributes and wearing headscarves with visible hair.

After the data reduction and presentation stage, the next stage that researchers can do is to draw conclusions from data analysis regarding the case study problem in student "X" who behaves hedonically at SMP Negeri 16 Palembang. Against "X" because of lack of attention by parents and excessive in giving pocket money and always obeying the wishes of children by always buying their children the latest mobile phones. As a result, the behavior of student "X" is excessive in using pocket money from his parents by shopping at the Mall to buy mobile phone accessories, buy clothes and others. Parental supervision is very necessary in this case regarding the excessive consumptive behavior of student "X".

The lifestyle makes "X" students now more existent or highlight themselves both in front of their friends and in the surrounding environment, the style of language today among teenagers uses more sign language

or slang. Student "X" now tends to be happier outdoors than indoors with his family. Furthermore, the identity where student "X" enjoys a lifestyle that follows emerging trends, they tend to be indifferent and ignore whether the appearance they wear is good to wear or not. They seem to have a world of their own.

The tendency to group is that students "X" only have friends who share their hobbies with their lifestyle, with what they use they express that it is a character they like, sometimes student "X" tends to follow the flow of the developing era or follow the idol they like. Regarding the interaction of student "X" where he interacts with the surrounding environment, they when they are in the home environment tend to be ordinary children or children like in general and when outside the home ordinary so they become the teenagers they want or just imitate the style or interaction of others who have a hedonic lifestyle. And this consumptive behavior makes student "X" feel comfortable with what he does, with what they use how to wear that is all lively and always follow the current trend, and with the style of language that is always used when gathering with his friends, usually they use slang or trending language that slang children usually talk about they tend to follow, Also the way they interact with their surrounding environment or with their group mates. "X" students tend to have their own group of friends, they prefer to spend time with their friends and having fun is a lifestyle.

Parental Influence and Financial Management

Based on the results of observations and interviews that have been conducted by researchers for approximately a week at SMP Negeri 16 Palembang on April 19, 2021 to April 26, 2021. Lack of attention by parents and excessive in giving pocket money and always obeying the wishes of children by always buying their children the latest mobile phones. As a result, the behavior of student "X" is excessive in using pocket money from his parents by shopping at the Mall to buy mobile phone accessories, buy clothes and others. Parental supervision is very necessary in this case regarding the excessive consumptive behavior of student "X".

Parents who are too busy with their work finally do not remember the attention of their children, with excessive pocket money "X" students can shop and eat at restaurants in Palembang city Mall. All this is because parents spoil their children too much because they have their only child. As a result, the behavior of student "X" is excessive in using pocket money from his parents by shopping at the Mall to buy mobile phone accessories, buy clothes and others. After shopping, student "X" eats at fast food restaurants such as Mc Donald's and KFC with his close friends. This activity is carried out by student "X" when returning home from school by inviting his close friends. Excessive provision of pocket money by parents causes student "X" to behave consumptively by following the trend of the times. Seeing the rapid development of gadget technology resulted in hedonism behavior growing into a person who is consumptive towards student "X". Parents of student "X" always obey their child's desire to change mobile phones when there is a new release of mobile phones, and student "X" looks confident with the change of new mobile phones just to follow trends and follow the latest gadget developments. Students are often caught carrying mobile phones at school with some incomplete offences, wearing school attributes and wearing headscarves with visible hair.

Environmental Factors and Social Influence

From interviews obtained from BK teachers of SMP Negeri 16 Palembang that student "X" is affected by environmental factors. The prevailing trend always keeps up with the times can lead to the development of excessive child behavior in managing money, and this includes the waste made by student "X". For parental supervision and giving enough money to their children, it may be possible to change student "X" not to be wasteful using the money given to his child every month. Giving excessive money can have a bad

impact on a child, especially the rapid development of technology causes someone to be tempted by buying and changing gadgets every time there is a new output of the gadget.

Hedonistic Lifestyle and Personal Satisfaction

Student "X" is attracted to a hedonistic lifestyle that he thinks is appropriate to the circumstances of parents who are able to meet their material needs. Student "X" feels that using the latest mobile phones, shopping at the mall and eating with friends makes him more confident so that "X" does not miss the existing trends. The monthly money given by parents is quite a lot, but "X" claims that if the money runs out before a week, "X" will ask his parents for it back. Student "X" admitted that there is nothing memorable in hedonism lifestyle, but with hedonism style, "X" is free from the burden of problems faced because it can be an alternative to eliminate boredom. In the past, Student "X" was not a hedonistic person, but because of the influence of friends, Student "X" imitated a hedonistic lifestyle.

Gadget Dependency and Risk Awareness

Most of today's teenagers in the use of gadgets are very excessive, so the average Indonesian teenager cannot live without gadgets. They are more willing not to eat than to remove their gadgets from their hands, if this happens it may have arisen the effects of addiction. The best way to overcome this problem is to get used to not being too dependent on the gadgets you have, do activities that are more fun and more useful as we know in every gadget has high enough radiation and is dangerous if exposed excessively. For that be wise in its use and utilization so that in every use we benefit and avoid the possibility of bad risks.

Social Dynamics and Peer Affiliation

Another factor is that because of the tendency to group that makes student "X" only have friends who are in the same hobby with his lifestyle, with what they use they express that it is a character they like, sometimes student "X" tends to follow the flow of the developing era or follow the idol they like. Regarding the interaction of student "X" where he interacts with the surrounding environment, they when they are in the home environment tend to be ordinary children or children like in general and when outside the home ordinary so they become the teenagers they want or just imitate the style or interaction of others who have a hedonic lifestyle. And this consumptive behavior makes student "X" feel comfortable with what he does, with what they use how to wear that is all lively and always follow the current trend, and with the style of language that is always used when gathering with his friends, usually they use slang or trending language that slang children usually talk about they tend to follow, Also the way they interact with their surrounding environment or with their group mates. "X" students tend to have their own group of friends, they prefer to spend time with their friends and having fun is a lifestyle.

Relevance to Existing Research

The results and discussion of the above research are in line with the findings of research by Trimartati, M (2014), it was explained that the results of the research that had been conducted showed that the hedonistic lifestyle of guidance and counseling students of the class of 2011 was motivated by external factors, namely family and social friends. Disharmony within the family and lack of attention, affection, rules both within the family and society that create pressure in the individual, as well as the persuasion of friends, make it difficult to escape the trap of a hedonistic lifestyle. The results of the study are useful in providing information for parents who have children as students about the hedonism lifestyle of students, besides that the results of the study can help parents in preventing children's behavior for a hedonistic lifestyle. Furthermore, the results are in line with Anggraini, L (2017), the conclusion obtained is that there is a relationship between self-control and hedonic lifestyle in adolescents in Surabaya. This indicates that

the higher the self-control a teenager has, the lower the hedonic lifestyle he has. Teenagers should need to get the right guidance about today's lifestyle which tends to be more sociable and certainly shows a more "wow" impression. Therefore, not only the teenagers themselves play a role, but parents also play a role in guiding and controlling their children to remain in accordance with the norms that exist in society in their thinking patterns and the attitudes of adolescents themselves.

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive data analysis of the Case Study of Hedonism Lifestyle among "X" Students at SMP 16 Palembang sheds light on several crucial factors influencing student behavior. The study underscores the pivotal role of parental influence and financial management in shaping student conduct, highlighting the need for parental supervision to mitigate excessive consumptive behavior. Moreover, environmental factors and social influences contribute significantly to students' hedonistic tendencies, emphasizing the importance of fostering balanced spending habits and awareness of societal trends. The allure of a hedonistic lifestyle for students like "X" stems from a desire for personal satisfaction and social validation, yet it poses risks of gadget dependency and peer influence. Recognizing these dynamics is essential for guiding adolescents towards healthier lifestyle choices and promoting responsible behavior. Furthermore, the findings resonate with previous research, emphasizing the need for parental guidance and societal support in steering adolescents away from hedonistic lifestyles and towards more balanced and fulfilling pursuits.

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