

Efforts of Religious Counselors in Enhancing Self-Acceptance Among Adolescents at the Muslimin Orphanage, Kramat, Central Jakarta

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to: (1) identify and explain the efforts of religious counselors in enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents in the orphanage. (2) to identify and explain the obstacles faced by religious counselors in enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents in the orphanage. This study is grounded in the theories of counseling, self-acceptance, and adolescence. The methodology of this study employs a qualitative approach, with data analysis conducted using a descriptive analysis method. The results of the study indicate that the efforts of religious counselors in enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents at the Muslimin Orphanage include religious counseling, academic guidance, creative classes, theater performances, and monthly programs supported by donors. The obstacles faced by religious counselors in enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents at the Muslimin Orphanage include the use of gadgets by the foster children or adolescents, as well as the personal struggles of the religious counselors or caregivers in striving to become better individuals themselves.

Keywords : Efforts to Enhance, Self-Acceptance, Adolescents, Muslimin Orphanage

Introduction

In the stages of human development, adolescence represents a continuously advancing phase. It is considered the most sensitive period for the formation of attitudes and character, as adolescents are easily influenced, prone to imitation, and often lack a clear life principle. During this stage, the fulfillment of physical, psychological, and social needs is essential for personality development, as adolescence is regarded as a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence is also considered an unstable phase, in which individuals strive to find their identity and are highly receptive to external information without deeper reflection. (Zakiyah, 2018).

As is known by every individual, in each developmental phase—including adolescence—there are developmental tasks that must be fulfilled.

When these developmental tasks are successfully accomplished, individuals experience satisfaction, happiness, and acceptance from their environment. Success in completing these tasks also supports the individual's ability to meet developmental challenges in the next phase. During adolescence, these tasks are accompanied by the development of intellectual capacity, stress, and emerging expectations. These factors often make adolescents vulnerable to disturbances in thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Stress, sadness, anxiety, loneliness, and self-doubt can lead adolescents to take risks, including engaging in delinquent behavior. (Netrawati, 2018).

According to Spear, as cited by Carol Wade and Carol Tavris, there are three issues that tend to arise more frequently during adolescence compared to childhood or adulthood: conflicts with parents, mood swings and depression, and a higher incidence of reckless behavior, law violations,

and risk-taking actions. If left unaddressed, these problems can gradually develop into what is known as juvenile delinquency and adolescent criminality. (Obby, 2019).

Juvenile delinquency and adolescent criminality have become common occurrences in today's society. Numerous cases and criminal acts involving adolescents are still frequently reported through various media sources. These include incidents such as youth violence, premarital sex, motorcycle gangs, drug and alcohol abuse, theft, and even murder.

The role of parents is crucial for adolescents in navigating developmental tasks. The presence of parents, the fulfillment of basic needs, and acceptance from the family can help an individual feel wanted, loved, valued, and accepted—enabling them to appreciate themselves. A sense of security and affection received from the family plays a significant role in the development of healthy self-acceptance during adolescence.

In reality, not all adolescents have the presence of parents who can support them in fulfilling these developmental tasks. Many are unable to experience parental love and affection. Some adolescents are forced to separate from or lose their parents due to various reasons or circumstances, leading them to live their lives without parental presence and affection, often residing in orphanages. (Nurenzia, 2020).

The Muslimin Orphanage is a social institution aimed at fostering a way of life that ensures the proper growth and development of children—physically, spiritually, and socially—based on Islamic principles. However, in its implementation, various issues have been encountered. One such case involves an orphanage adolescent who felt ashamed to admit that they lived in an orphanage. This falsehood continued for three years and requires serious attention, as well as appropriate counseling for the adolescent involved.

Adolescent behavior can be influenced by both the individual's personality and psychosocial aspects. The psychosocial aspect here refers to the general psychological condition of the adolescent and its relationship with the social environment in which they interact. One of the key psychological aspects that significantly affects adolescent behavior and shapes their personality is self-acceptance.

Research Method

This study employs a qualitative research design. According to Denzin & Lincoln (1994), qualitative research is a type of research that takes place in a natural setting with the aim of interpreting phenomena as they occur, using multiple existing methods. Erickson (1968) states that qualitative research seeks to discover and narratively describe the activities carried out and the impact of these actions on individuals' lives. (Albi, 2018).

The approach used in this study is the phenomenological approach. Phenomenology is a type of qualitative research that seeks to understand the meaning of events and their relationship to specific situations. (Guntur, 2010).

The design of this study uses a descriptive method. According to Moleong, the descriptive method is a type of research that utilizes data analysis techniques in the form of words and language. (Sutinah & Bagong, 2005). The reason for selecting a qualitative approach is to understand and explain the answers to the research questions in greater detail and depth. By employing the descriptive method, the researcher aims to depict and systematically explain the facts or characteristics of a particular population in a factual and accurate manner.

Results

The researcher concludes that the efforts of Islamic religious counselors and caregivers in enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage, Central Jakarta, are implemented through several programs, including:

1. Religious Counseling – aimed at fostering spiritual awareness, moral values, and inner strength as the foundation of self-acceptance.
2. Habituation Programs, in the form of:
 - Discipline Culture – encouraging time management, consistency, and respect for structure.
 - Responsibility Culture – instilling a sense of accountability through daily duties (*piket*) and communal service (*kerja bakti*).

Analysis of Changes Related to Self-Acceptance Among Adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage

When discussing change, the focus is directed more toward the perspectives of the adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage in Central Jakarta. The researcher aims to examine the changes that have occurred within the adolescents after joining the orphanage and participating in various activities designed to enhance self-acceptance.

One notable change observed is in the aspect of having a firm stance (*berpendirian*). This is demonstrated by the emergence of strong personal determination and conviction, as seen in adolescents who now possess a clear goal and determination to continue their education to the university level. This shift reflects a growing sense of purpose and self-direction, which is a crucial indicator of increased self-acceptance.

Changes in the aspect of a sense of equality (*perasaan sederajat*) are particularly evident in how adolescents no longer frequently compare their lives with those of others around them. This marks a shift toward greater self-acceptance and contentment with their own circumstances.

One of the adolescents, Berlian, shared that since joining the orphanage, she has experienced significant growth in the aspect of responsibility, especially in her role as a role model for the younger children at the orphanage. This reflects an internalization of personal accountability and leadership.

Furthermore, several adolescents reported noticeable changes in the aspects of awareness of personal limitations and acceptance of human nature, which have been demonstrated through increased patience and emotional regulation, especially when dealing with anger. These improvements are attributed to their participation in the structured programs and activities at the Muslimin Orphanage, which are intentionally designed to support emotional development and foster a deeper sense of self-acceptance.

Adolescents have shown significant changes in the aspects of self-confidence and outward orientation. These changes are reflected in their growing belief in their own abilities and the recognition of personal talents developed through participation in creative class programs and special programs provided by donors.

Based on excerpts from interviews conducted with the fostered adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage, it can be concluded that the activities organized by Islamic religious counselors as concrete efforts to enhance self-acceptance have had a tangible positive impact. These activities have brought about meaningful changes in the adolescents, as reflected in the development of various aspects of self-acceptance, including stronger personal conviction, increased responsibility, emotional regulation, a sense of equality, self-confidence, and outward orientation.

Analysis of Obstacles in the Process of Enhancing Self-Acceptance Among Adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage, Central Jakarta

The term “*obstacle*” (*penghambat*) in the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia is defined as a condition, situation, or cause that hinders, obstructs, or delays progress. Similarly, Muhibbin (2008) explains that an obstacle is anything that may impede the progress or achievement of a particular goal.

In this study, obstacles refer to all factors—both internal and external—that can hinder the process of enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage, Central Jakarta. These hindrances may not only come from the environment or circumstances around the adolescents, but also originate from within the individuals themselves. Internal barriers may include low self-esteem, emotional instability, or lack of motivation, while external barriers might involve limited resources, peer pressure, or insufficient support systems.

In this study, the researcher seeks to identify the obstacles in the process of enhancing self-acceptance, both from the perspective of the Islamic religious counselors and from the perspective of the adolescents as the recipients of the guidance.

Based on the research conducted, one of the key factors hindering the process of enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage, Central Jakarta, is the use of gadgets.

Ka Rani Nurhasanah, a caregiver at Muslimin Orphanage, stated that one of the major obstacles in enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents is the use of gadgets. At the orphanage, adolescents are permitted to use gadgets for educational purposes and other beneficial activities. However, many of them still struggle to control their usage.

Ka Rani emphasized that gadget use is a double-edged sword: when used for positive purposes, it can have a beneficial impact on learning and personal development. Conversely, when misused—for example, for entertainment that promotes unrealistic comparisons, excessive gaming, or exposure to harmful content—it can negatively affect the adolescents' emotional well-being, self-esteem, and ultimately impede the development of self-acceptance. This highlights the need for guidance and monitoring to ensure that technology serves as a tool for growth, not a hindrance.

Discussion

Effort refers to the act of striving to convey intentions, use reasoning, and make endeavors. It also encompasses all actions aimed at achieving certain goals so that they become useful and successful in accordance with the intended purpose, function, and benefit of the activity being carried out. (Poerwadarminta, 2006).

In another reference, effort is defined as an attempt to convey an intention, to improve, elevate, enhance, intensify, or uplift something. (Utami Munandar, 1995).

Efforts to enhance self-acceptance involve intentional actions aimed at instilling the aspects of self-acceptance within an individual, so that these can be applied in daily actions or behaviors through habituation, guidance, and teaching. Efforts to enhance self-acceptance involve guidance, advice, teaching, and mentoring aimed at embedding self-acceptance aspects into an individual's daily behavior. There are seven key aspects of self-acceptance that should be developed and instilled in everyday conduct: having a firm stance, a sense of equality, self-confidence, responsibility, outward orientation, awareness of personal limitations, and acceptance of one's human nature.

The efforts referred to in this context encompass all activities that support the improvement of self-acceptance among adolescents at the Muslimin Orphanage in Central Jakarta. The efforts discussed in this study specifically relate to the programs and activities carried out at the Muslimin Orphanage, with the goal of enhancing the adolescents' self-acceptance.

Activity refers to a state of being occupied or engaged in action. More broadly, activity can be defined as any action or endeavor carried out by an individual in daily life, which may take the form of speech, behavior, or creative expression within their environment. (Poerwadarminta, 2006).

Based on interviews with Islamic religious counselors, orphanage administrators, and adolescents under the care of the Muslimin Orphanage, the methods used by the orphanage to enhance self-acceptance include: delivering religious lectures, sharing exemplary stories, implementing habituation practices, helping adolescents recognize and manage their emotions, and applying a system of equal rewards and punishments for all adolescents.

At the Muslimin Orphanage, specific programs have been designed to stimulate the enhancement and development of self-acceptance aspects among the adolescent residents. These programs align with the orphanage's vision: to establish a way of life and livelihood that ensures the proper growth and development of children—physically, spiritually, and socially—based on Islamic principles.

To realize this vision, the orphanage has developed care programs aimed at nurturing well-rounded individuals, one of the key components being the ability to accept oneself.

The programs developed at Muslimin Orphanage in Central Jakarta include the following:

Religious Programs:

1. Tilawah Al-Qur'an – Qur'anic recitation sessions to strengthen spiritual connection and discipline.
2. Muroja'ah – Qur'anic memorization review to maintain and deepen religious knowledge.
3. Kultum – Short religious sermons delivered by adolescents to build confidence and communication skills.
4. Ceramah – Religious lectures given by counselors or guest speakers to provide moral and spiritual guidance.

5. Tahlil – Collective remembrance and prayer gatherings to foster unity and spiritual reflection.

Developmental Programs:

1. Creative Class – A space for adolescents to explore and express their creativity through arts, crafts, or design.
2. Theater Performances – Activities aimed at developing confidence, teamwork, self-expression, and emotional processing.
3. Special Programs from Donors – Monthly or periodic programs supported by donors that offer skill-building, recreation, or personal development opportunities.

In enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents, the above-mentioned programs serve as concrete efforts aimed at fostering self-acceptance through structured activities. Each program targets different aspects of self-acceptance, contributing uniquely to the adolescents' personal development.

Programs specifically designed to improve self-acceptance include:

- Religious counseling – to build inner strength, moral awareness, and a sense of spiritual identity.
- Habituation of daily activities – to foster routine, responsibility, and self-discipline.
- Time discipline culture – to instill awareness of responsibility and respect for structure and commitments.
- Theater performances – to encourage self-expression, confidence, and emotional processing.
- Leadership training – to develop decision-making skills, a sense of responsibility, and belief in one's abilities.

Based on the interview with Kak Vieka, the most challenging aspects to improve are awareness of personal limitations and acceptance of human nature. To enhance these aspects, it is essential to implement programs that strengthen the knowledge, internalization, and practice of values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*) and patience (*sabar*). These values are fundamental in helping adolescents accept their imperfections and understand that being human means having both strengths and limitations.

Efforts to develop the aspects of self-confidence and outward orientation are realized through theater performances, creative classes, and religious counseling sessions using discussion and presentation methods. During religious counseling sessions that focus on *sirah nabawiyyah* (the life of the Prophet) or exemplary stories, adolescents are encouraged to speak and present in front of their peers and engage in discussions about the material. Over time, this habituation helps adolescents become more comfortable expressing their opinions and perspectives, as well as learning to listen and respect the views of others.

Theater performances also play a key role in building the adolescents' mental readiness to perform and express themselves in public. Kak Rani Nurhasanah highlighted the effectiveness of using discussion and quiz methods in religious counseling to attract adolescents' interest and engagement, particularly when learning about exemplary figures from Islamic teachings.

The efforts of Islamic religious counselors in enhancing self-acceptance in the aspect of having a firm stance (*berpendirian*) are implemented through consistent and continuous habitual activities or routines. In agreement with Mr. Suparman's statement, Mr. M.Z. Arifin emphasized

that this aspect cannot be developed quickly; rather, repetition and continuous habituation are considered the most effective strategies for nurturing a strong personal stance.

Meanwhile, efforts to enhance the sense of equality (*perasaan sederajat*) are carried out by ensuring equal treatment of all adolescents in the orphanage, without discrimination. This is reflected in daily routines, such as providing the same meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, ensuring that no adolescent feels less valued than the others. These practices aim to instill a sense of fairness, belonging, and self-worth among the adolescents.

Efforts to enhance the aspect of responsibility in adolescents are carried out by establishing routines such as assigned duties (*piket*) and communal work (*kerja bakti*). These activities focus on fostering a sense of responsibility for cleanliness and shared spaces. Daily *piket* is conducted every morning and evening, while *kerja bakti* takes place on Saturdays and Sundays and is carried out collectively. Through these regular practices, adolescents are trained to take ownership of their environment and develop a responsible attitude in their daily lives.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research conducted at Muslimin Orphanage regarding the efforts of Islamic religious counselors in enhancing self-acceptance among adolescents, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Religious counselors at Muslimin Orphanage implement several efforts to enhance adolescents' self-acceptance, focusing on the seven core aspects of self-acceptance: a sense of equality, awareness of limitations, self-confidence, outward orientation, firm personal stance, acceptance of human nature, and responsibility. The following are the core efforts carried out by the counselors to improve self-acceptance among the adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage:

a. Religious Counseling. Religious counseling is conducted routinely and according to a set schedule by the religious counselor every day. The materials presented include Islamic teachings such as *fiqh*, *aqidah akhlak* (creed and ethics), exemplary stories, and lessons on patience (*sabr*) and sincerity (*ikhlas*).

b. Creative classes are held regularly every Saturday and Sunday, along with theater performances in collaboration with *Wayang Orang Bharata*. In addition, monthly creative workshops are conducted by donors or partner institutions.

These activities are supervised and guided by religious counselors or caregivers, with the aim of building self-confidence and enhancing the talents and abilities of the adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage.

c. Supervision and Rules Enforcement. In addition to providing religious counseling and creative activities, the religious counselors and caregivers at Muslimin Orphanage also carry out daily supervision and implement rules and regulations for the adolescents.

2. Obstacles Faced by Religious Counselors in Enhancing Self-Acceptance Among Adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage, Central Jakarta

The religious counselors at Muslimin Orphanage face several challenges in the process of fostering self-acceptance among adolescents, which can be categorized into external and internal factors:

- External Factors:
 - Gadget Usage: Adolescents are permitted to use gadgets for educational and other purposes. However, uncontrolled or excessive use can lead to distractions, reduced

focus during guidance sessions, and negative comparisons through social media, all of which hinder the development of self-acceptance.

- Differences in Personality and Character: Each adolescent at the orphanage has a unique background, temperament, and personal experience. These variations require individualized approaches and often make it challenging to apply a uniform method of guidance effectively.
- Internal Factors:
 - The internal challenges are more reflective of the personal struggles of the religious counselors and caregivers themselves. These include the continuous effort to grow as better individuals, to maintain emotional resilience, and to consistently optimize their own quality of life while guiding and supporting the adolescents. Balancing personal development with the demanding role of caregiving requires dedication, patience, and emotional strength.

Based on the research findings on the Efforts of Religious Counselors in Enhancing Self-Acceptance Among Adolescents at Muslimin Orphanage, Central Jakarta, it is evident that the role of the religious counselor is crucial in carrying out various efforts to help adolescents develop better self-acceptance.

Through the various efforts carried out by religious counselors—such as providing religious counseling and facilitating additional activities like creative classes, dance training, theater, and others—both in content and practice, there has been a significant improvement in the self-acceptance of the adolescents at the orphanage.

This improvement is evident in their daily behavior, including their ability to accept their circumstances, remain surrendered to God's will while still striving for the best, and become more aware of their strengths and limitations. They also show signs of being grateful for their life achievements, having increased self-confidence, being disciplined and respectful, and thinking positively about themselves. Moreover, they demonstrate the ability to accept constructive criticism and suggestions from others and continue to develop their skills in pursuit of achieving the best possible outcomes for their future.

The results of this study are expected to encourage religious counselors and instructors to give greater attention to psychological factors, particularly self-acceptance, in those they guide. Recognizing and nurturing self-acceptance is essential in supporting individuals—especially adolescents—in their developmental process, helping them reach their full potential and ultimately improve their quality of life.

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