Family Resilience: Traits, Positivity, and Close Relationship in Adolescents

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Abstract:

High stress can be experienced by all family members, including adolescents. This can cause the family to function less optimally and interfere with the adaptation of each family member. A family that has resilience is one solution for the family to be able to still adapt well when experiencing strong pressure. The purpose of this study is to determine the role of traits in family resilience with the mediators of close relationship and positivity. Data were collected using reliable instruments. The research participants consisted of 312 adolescents aged 15-18 years old. The data were processed by using the mediation analysis technique using Model 4 from Hayes PROCESS. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between traits and family resilience through close relationship and positivity. The role of the five traits in family resilience can occur if they are mediated by the mediator variables. From the three mediators, namely close relationship, positive emotions, and negative emotions, it was found that positive emotions had the strongest role as a mediator of the five traits in family resilience. Implications for theory and practice are discussed.

1 INTRODUCTION

Mental health is an asset that is needed by individuals to work and face challenges, problems, and pressure in life. A quick change in all aspects of life can make an individual feel nervous. If a person does not quickly, deftly, and effectively adapt to the changes, then it can lead to a state of confusion that will erode his/her mental state.

These days, the number of individuals with severe mental disorders keep increasing. *Riset Kesehatan Dasar 2018* stated that 7 of 1000 households in Indonesia had members with schizophrenia, which meant that if there were 69 households, then 480,000 people were suffering from schizophrenia (Kompas, October 7, 2019). The increase in the number of people with severe mental illness is something that needs to be paid attention to in terms of human resources. Significant losses in economic, social, political, and educational areas as well as individual

performances will be borne by the state if it is not handled well.

Family is the first and foremost agent of individuals. Families that can overcome problems and conflicts that arise and can also adapt to the environment are the kind of families expected by each individual. A family is a system with individuals who are members of the family (Anderson & Sabatelli, 2011). Each member is connected and influences one another. If a member of a family is facing a problem and pressure, then the rest of the family members will also be affected. In system theory, the basic premise is that serious and persistent crises in life affect all family members (Walsh, 2016a).

Adolescents are family members who are in transition from childhood to adulthood. Educational demands, association with peers, desire to be accepted, conflict with parents because of differences in opinion or differences in value instilled by parents and by friends often cause great pressure on adolescents. Furthermore, adolescents tend to be

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moody and emotionally unstable (Rosenblum & Lewis, 2003, in Santrock, 2016). This situation can make adolescents experience great stress which often hinders their adaptation process. Adolescents who experience stress put their families in stressful conditions too.

A resilient family is one of the solutions for family members to remain adaptive amid stressful situations and even to develop themselves and improve their self-quality. As stated by Rajeev & Kunjachan (2014) that empowerment in a family and a community can be assisted by building resilience inside them. Walsh (2003, in Simon, 2005) argued that by having family resilience, families as a system could provide a process that could reduce stress and vulnerability in high-risk situations, speed up the process of healing and getting out of a crisis, and empower families to cope with prolonged hardship.

According to Walsh (2003, in Walsh, 2016b), family resilience is the ability of a family as a system to recover after experiencing adversity/obstacles in life. Lee (2004) stated that family resilience could change the dynamics of family function in order to solve problems associated with stress.

There are three key processes in family resilience, namely family belief systems, organizational patterns, and communication (Walsh, 2016b). First, family belief systems have a strong influence on family members in viewing crises, adversities, and choices. Families need challenges in order to develop their members. There are three aspects in belief systems; making meaning of adversity experienced by the family, hope/positive outlook, and transcendence and spirituality.

Second, families as a system carry out organizational patterns. There are also three aspects in organizational patterns. The first one is flexibility in facing challenges in terms of adapting to changes and having leadership in directing and working together between family members in facing challenges. The second aspect is about the connectedness, bonds between family members to support each other, respecting the needs and uniqueness of each family member, and the commitment to overcome problem together. Then, the third aspect is the ability to mobilize social and economic resources by asking for help from appropriate and significant people to solve problems together.

Third, in the process of communication and problem solving, there are three aspects. The first aspect is the clarity of communication, which is getting clear and reliable information to make ambiguous situations understandable. The second

aspect is building positive interactions with love, appreciation, humor, gratefulness, relaxation, and happiness. Family members share their suffering, sadness, fear, anger, disappointment, and regret with each other. The third aspect is the ability of family members to solve problems together with constructive and creative discussions by focusing on goals, resolving conflicts through negotiation, being honest and fair, and developing plans for solutions. There are efforts to prevent the emergence of stressful problems/situations, although in reality, not all problems can be prevented, but at least they can be reduced.

Based on earlier research (Edwina, 2019), it is found that 37.10% of family resilience is determined by mindset. This shows that there are 62.90% of other factors or variables that become predictors in family resilience. Mindset is a cognitive variable of individuals. Individuals have other dimensions, such as trait, emotional, and social variables. In this follow-up research, other factors/variables that can play a role in adolescents' family resilience will be examined. Walsh (2016) stated that many previous studies of resilience had focused on individual traits and dispositions, but subsequent studies have shown that resilience involves dynamic interactions of risk and protection factors, which include individuals, socio-economic, interpersonal, and influences (Cicchetti, 2010; Garmezy, 1991; Rutter, 1987, in Walsh, 2016). Each individual has a variety of traits that tend to be inherited. Traits will determine the way individuals think, feel, and behave (Cervone & Pervin, 2019). McCrae & Costa (2006) revealed that the theory of trait could best predict a person's behavior. Trait is the basic tendency of individuals who interact with the social and physical environment to form characteristics in adaptation. In this study, adolescents with their traits interact with their families and form close relationships within family members. They also interact with the society in everyday life and produce a certain emotional appreciation, which in turn will play a role in their family resilience.

There are five types of traits, which are neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Traits are seen as a cause that influences an individual's psychological development (McCrae & Costa, 2006). The traits that are owned by adolescents will affect other psychic dimensions, such as emotion, social relation, and other kinds of abilities.

Neuroticism identifies an individual's tendency to experience psychological distress, unrealistic ideas, excessive desires, and maladaptive responses. Extraversion refers to the quantity and intensity of personal interactions, level of activity, need for stimulation, and capacity for pleasure. Openness means being proactive in seeking and appreciating experiences because of their own will, being tolerant, and exploring things that are not yet known. Agreeableness refers to the personal orientation quality of an individual who is trusting, believing the best of others and rarely suspecting hidden intents, meek, deferring, and humble. Conscientiousness shows the degree of individual regularity, perseverance, and goal-oriented motivation. Sadati, Honarmand, and Soodani (2015), Watson and Clark (1984; White et al., 2004. in Saeed Abbasi et al., 2018) stated that neuroticism and negative emotions had a very close relationship. Letzring (2015) showed that extraverts experienced more positive emotions and fewer negative emotions. Neurotics experienced more negative emotions and fewer positive emotions. Individuals with a high agreeableness level experienced fewer negative emotions, but they did not experience more positive emotions either. Individuals with higher conscientious levels experienced more positive emotions, but they also experienced a high amount of negative emotions. Last, individuals with openness experienced more positive emotions. Zanon (2013) also stated that openness had no correlation with negative emotions and conscientiousness had a good correlation with positive emotions.

Frederickson (2009) argued that individuals who experienced positive emotions more frequently had a more open heart and mind. They would be more responsive and creative, skilled in managing relationships, and physically healthier. Individuals need to experience more positive emotions than negative emotions. Positivity is overall positive emotions, such as appreciation, love, joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pleasure, inspiration, selfworth, etc. The positivity ratio between positive emotions and negative emotions is expected to be at least 3:1. This comparison shows that negative emotions is necessary in human life. No one can thrive without negative emotions, such as anger, shame, humiliation, disgust, guilt, hate, sadness, fear, stress, insult, etc.

Liu's research (2012) shows that neuroticism and resilience are mediated by positive and negative emotions, and resilience is consistently associated with positive emotions. Moreover, Sahar (2017) stated that positive emotions and resilience had a positive relationship. Ruswahyuningsih (2015) argued that positive emotions in adolescents were a positive aspect that supports and facilitates the

formation of their resilience. Chou's research (2016) on kindergarten teachers obtained a result that if their positive emotions increased, their resilience would also increase, job stress would decrease, and they could handle the impact of negative emotions.

The relationship between adolescents and their families affects their way of overcoming the problems and pressures that they face. During adolescence, adolescents' relationships, especially with their parents, will undergo some changes. With the increasing need for independence and their peers' becoming the center of their attention, adolescents often experience conflicts with their parents which can cause certain stress to them. There is a mutual influence between adolescents and their parents, and in a broader context, between adolescents and their families.

Branje (2004) examined the relationship between the big five traits and the perceived relational support received by adolescents in the family, and the results show that agreeableness and interpersonal relationships in a family have the strongest relationship. Winterheld (2018) revealed that the success of a relationship between individuals depended on their traits and dispositions, and neuroticism is the strongest and most consistent predictor of relationships compared to other traits.

In families, there will be an intense relationship between each member. The close relationship in families is seen as a relationship that involves interdependent strengths and frequencies from many different areas of life (Smith et al., 2015). Rajeev (2014), who examined families in India, stated that interpersonal relations and collective responsibility were the core strength of families. Thomas (2017) stated that family relationships were a source that could help individuals cope with stress, exhibit healthier behavior, and promote a sense of self-worth as well-being.

Close relationship is a connection involving strong and frequent interdependence in many different areas of life. Interdependence shows that a person's mind, emotion, and behavior influence one another. There are three main aspects of interdependence, namely cognitive, behavioral, and affective interdependences (Smith et al., 2015).

The first one, cognitive interdependence, is a tendency of individuals to think of themselves and their partners as parts that influence one another as attached individuals rather than as separate individuals. The second one, behavioral interdependence, shows that each individual has an impact on his/her partner in every decision, activity, and plan that he/she makes. Group/family members

spend a lot of time together and they do a variety of different activities. Affective interdependence, the third type of interdependence, refers to affective attachments that connect close relationships of family members. There are two points in affective interdependence: intimacy and commitment.

Cognitive, behavioral, and affective interdependencies reflect a unique way of relating. Relationships help individuals to meet their basic needs, such as connection with others and mastery of skills and rewards. The close relationship includes these three basic aspects.

In this research, the target population is adolescents in the range of age 15-18 years old. At this stage of adolescence, adolescents already develop several characteristics, for example, hypothetical thinking, thinking of the possibilities, and a greater inclination to think their thoughts as they arise (Santrock, 2016). In addition, adolescents experience changes in their relationship with their parents and their emotions tend to be moodier than before. The traits in adolescents appear to be more colorful and steady.

This study hypothesizes that close relationship and positivity mediate the relationship between traits and family resilience in adolescents aged 15-18 years old.

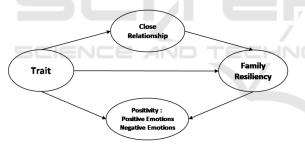


Figure 1: Hypothetical model.

2 METHODS AND MATERIALS

The population of this research is adolescents aged 15-18 years old who live in the City of Bandung with one or both of their parents. The data were collected through questionnaires. The Trait questionnaire was adapted by researchers from the Big Five Inventory (BFI) that is based on A Five-Factor Theory concept from Robert R. McCrae and Paul T. Costa, Jr (2006), which is made up of 45 items with 6 answer choices and has reliability values of 0.698 for Neuroticism, 0.762 for Extraversion, 0.795 for Openness, 0.645 for Agreeableness, and 0.789 for Conscientiousness. The

positivity questionnaire was translated by the researcher based on the positivity measurement tool compiled by Barbara Fredrickson (2009), which includes 20 items, with 10 items measuring positive emotions and 10 items measuring negative emotions. Each item has 5 answer options. This measuring instrument has reliability values of 0.885 for positive emotions and 0.874 for negative emotions. The family resilience questionnaire was modified by researchers based on Walsh Family Resilience Questionnaire (WFRQ) theory, contains 35 items with 5 answer choices, and has a reliability value of 0.876. The close relationship questionnaire was structured based on theoretical concept of Close Relationship from Rusbult and Lange (1996, in Smith 2015) which measures interdependence, behavioral interdependence, and affective interdependence. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to measure the suitability of each aspect of the Close Relationship Questionnaire. The CFA test shows that the 15 items of the close relationship questionnaire have a score of λ between 0.028 to 0.931. The reliability of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.765.

This data analysis used a regression model between each trait variable and family resilience. Furthermore, mediation analysis techniques will also be used, especially Model 4 from Hayes PROCESS (Hayes, 2018), so that the relationship between each trait and family resilience through the mediation of close relationships and positivity (positive emotions and negative emotions) will be known.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Respondents Overview

The number of respondents who are willing to become participants in this research are 312 adolescents. The age range is 15-18 years old (M = 16.41, SD = 1,052) and 63.5% of the participants are female. The majority of the participants are Muslims (35.6%). Almost half of the participants are Sundanese (49.7%). Most of the participants are at a high school education level (61.9%). Most of the participants are the oldest child (35.9%) followed closely by the youngest child (34.6%), and almost all of the participants live with both parents (76.6%) and almost all participants have parents with married

Table 1: Mediation test results of trait and family resilience through close relationship and positivity.

Variable	Effect	SE	t	P	95% CI
		Neur	oticism Trait		
T1→FR	.0080	.0495	.1611	.8721	[0895; .1054]
T1→M1→FR	0125	.0091			[0349; .0001]
T1→M2→FR	1305	.0342			[1974 ;0637]
T1→M3→FR	0982	.0294			[1579;0434]
Extraversion Trait					
T2→FR	.0319	.0502	.6355	.5256	[0669; .1308]
T2→M1→FR	.0186	.0117			[.0008; .0460]
T2→M2→FR	.3145	.0357			[.2435; .3862]
T2→M3→FR	.0360	.0138			[.0121; .0662]
Openness Trait					
T3→FR	0219	.0569	3842	.7011	[1338; .0901]
T3→M1→FR	.0038	.0067			[0073; .0201]
T3→M2→FR	.3002	.0337			[.2350; .3680]
T3→M3→FR	0005	.0107			[0222; .0213]
Agreeableness Trait					
T4→FR	.1022	.0536	1.9069	.0575	[0033; .2077]
T4→M1→FR	.0169	.0107			[.0002; .0423]
T4→M2→FR	.2318	.0320	7		[.1726; .2973]
T4→M3→FR	.0308	.0142			[.0078; .0644]
Conscientiousness Trait					
T5→FR	.0679	.0452	1.5024	.1340	[0210; .1569]
T5→M1→FR	0002	.0063			[0123; .0141]
T5→M2→FR	.2135	.0308			[.1546; .2724]
T5→M3→FR	.0213	.0122			[.0012; .0481]

Note: CI = Confidence Interval; T1 = Neuroticism Trait; T2 = Extraversion Trait; T3 = Openness Trait; T4 = Agreeableness Trait; T5= Conscientiousness Trait; M1= Close Relationship; M2 = Positive Emotions; M3 = Negative Emotions; FR = Family Resilience; N = 312

status (88.5%). Most participants come from the upper-middle economic class (76.9%) and many participants come from the working-class (37.8%) and the lower economic class (33.3%).

3.1.2 Hypothesis Test Results

Based on the results of hypothesis testing on each trait (table 1), it is found that neuroticism trait does not have a direct impact on family resilience (Direct effect = .0080, SE = .0495, 95% CI [-.0895; .1054]). There is a role of meditation of positive emotions (Indirect effect = .1305, SE = 0342, 95% CI [-.1974; -.0637]) and negative emotions (Indirect effect = -

.0982, SE = .0294, 95% CI [-.1579; -.0434]) on the relationship between neuroticism trait and family resilience. However, a close relationship in a family does not mediate the relationship between neuroticism trait and family resilience. A close relationship's role is more of an independent variable on family resilience.

Table 1 also shows that the extraversion trait does not have a direct impact on family resilience (Direct effect = .0319, SE = .0502, 95% CI [-.0669; .1308]. Meanwhile, the three mediators that are close relationship (Indirect effect = .0186, SE = .0117, 95% CI [.0008; .0460]), positive emotions (Indirect effect

= .3145, SE = .0357, 95% CI [.2435; .3862]), and negative emotions (Indirect effect = .0360, SE = .0138, 95% CI [.0121; .0662]) mediate the relationship between extraversion trait and family resilience.

Openness trait does not have a direct impact on family resilience (Direct effect = -.0219, SE = .0569, 95% CI [-.1338; .0901]), while positive emotions mediate the relationship between openness trait and family resilience (Indirect effect = .3002, SE = .0337, 95% CI [.2350; .3680]). The two other mediators, namely close relationship and negative emotions play a bigger role as an independent variable on family resilience in adolescents who have openness trait.

In Table 1, it appears that agreeableness trait does not have a direct impact on family resilience (Direct effect = .1022, SE = .0536, 95% CI [-.0033; .2077]). There are indirect roles of the three mediators, namely close relationship (Indirect effect = .0169, SE = .0107, 95% CI [.0002; .0423]), positive emotions (Indirect effect = .2318, SE = .0320, 95% CI [.1726; .2973]), and negative emotions (Indirect effect = .0308, SE = .0142, 95% CI [.0078; .0644).

The conscientiousness trait does not have a direct impact on family resilience (Direct effect = .0679, SE = .0452, 95% CI [-.0210; .1569]). Positive emotions (Indirect effect = .2135, SE = .0308, 95% CI [.1546; .2724]) and negative emotions (Indirect effect = .0213, SE = .0122, 95% CI [.0012; .0481]) mediate the relationship between conscientiousness trait and family resilience. However, close relationship plays a bigger role as an independent variable for family resilience.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the research results, it is known that traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) have no direct role in family resilience in adolescents aged 15-18 years old. The role of the five traits on family resilience can occur when they are mediated by the mediator variables, close relationship in a family, positive emotions, and negative emotions. These three mediating variables have a variety of roles in mediating the relationship between traits and family resilience.

This provides an opportunity for family resilience to be increased through the role of nurture (close relationship in a family, positive emotions, and negative emotions) instead of nature (trait) which tends to be inherited and has less chance to modify compared to nurture variable. This condition gives optimism that family resilience is more flexible to be increased.

For adolescents who have extraversion and agreeableness traits, close relationship in their families acts as a mediator for family resilience in addition to positive and negative emotions. However, for the other three traits that are neuroticism, openness, and conscientiousness, a close relationship in a family does not mediate these traits' role in family resilience.

Extraversion and agreeableness are traits that are closely related to relationships with other people. Individuals with high extraversion trait levels prefer quantity and intensity of personal interactions, level of activity, warmth, and likes to live in groups (McCrae & Costa, 2006). Likewise with agreeableness, individuals with agreeableness trait trust people, believe the best of people, rarely suspect hidden goals from people's actions, want to help others, are humble, obedient, and polite (McCrae & Costa, 2006). With this trait, it is easier for adolescents to have close relationships with their families. The combination of traits and close relationship within family members can increase the strength of their family resilience (Sagita, 2020).

The other three traits are more self-oriented. According to McCrae & Costa (2006), individuals with high neuroticism levels more easily experience psychological distress and have unrealistic ideas, excessive desires, and maladaptive coping responses. Individuals with high openness levels will proactively seek and appreciate experiences because of their own will and like to explore things that are not yet known. Individuals with high conscientiousness levels show a degree of regularity, persistence, and goal-oriented motivation. For adolescents, these three traits play a very weak role in close relationship with their families. Therefore, other variables are needed to increase family resilience. In this study, positive emotions are one of the strongest factors to increase family resilience in adolescents.

Not only the three traits that have been mentioned, but also all of the five traits have a significant effect on family resilience when mediated by positive emotions. Positive emotions can appear in the form of love, humour, optimism, and having positive solutions and suggestions. Positive emotions can influence each other between family members and will build a stronger family (Sagita, 2020). Adolescents with their traits, when interacting with the society in everyday life, can produce certain emotions. Not only positive emotions, but also negative emotions play a role in adolescents' resilience (McCrae, 2006). However, from the results of this study, negative emotions do not mediate the role of the openness trait in family resilience.

As stated by Zanon (2013), openness does not correlate with negative emotions. According to McCrae (2006), individuals with high openness trait tend to seek and value experiences because of their own desires. The existence of their initiative to explore the environment does not make them experience negative emotions if they do not do that exploration. Negative emotions contribute significantly to a person's social adjustment (Sahar, 2017). The way adolescents adjust into the family will have an impact on their family system.

The large number of negative emotions experienced by family members have the effect of weakening family resilience. Fredrickson (2009) stated that negative emotions caused individuals to think negatively. Individuals who think negatively about something will be easily disappointed, worried, and embarrassed hopeless. when they experiencing big enough problems. In these conditions, it is difficult for adolescents to have positive beliefs to overcome difficulties. They also find it difficult to find alternative solutions if they fail to deal with a problem and it is difficult to build positive relationships with family members or other people. This shows the low family resilience (Walsh, 2016).

When compared to negative emotions as mediators, positive emotions have a stronger impact on family resilience in the sense that positive emotions have a stronger effect in mediating the relationship between adolescents' traits with family resilience. Adolescents who experience strong positive emotions, even though they experience negative emotions, are likely to have high family resilience. As stated by Frederickson (in Donaldson, 2011), positive emotions can erase the trace of negative emotions.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that:

- 1. There is a significant relationship between traits and family resilience through close relationship and positivity.
- 2. For extraversion and agreeableness traits, the close relationship in family acts as a mediator of family resilience, while for neuroticism, openness, and conscientiousness traits, a close relationship in a family does not mediate the relationship of the three traits to family resilience.
- 3. The five traits have a significant impact on family resilience when mediated by positive emotions.

- For adolescents who have openness trait, positive emotions are the only mediator that can mediate the trait's relationship with family resilience.
- 4. Neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness traits have a significant impact on family resilience when mediated by negative emotions, while for openness trait, negative emotions do not mediate the impact of this trait on family resilience.
- 5. Positive emotions are the most powerful mediator compared to the other two mediators in terms of mediating traits with family resilience.

Suggestions that can be made based on this research are:

- Parents and every member of the family can each play a role in creating positive emotions within the family.
- Negative emotions cannot be avoided and are also needed in family life; however, families need to strive, so that every member of the family, especially adolescents, experiences more positive emotions than negative emotions.

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