
The influence of fatherlessness on resilience in children aged 5–6 years in Surabaya

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out the influence of fatherlessness on children's resilience in Surabaya City. The background of this research is based on the increasing divorce rate, and research findings indicate that the minimal involvement of fathers in children's lives has the potential to have psychological impacts on children, which can subsequently affect their ability to build resilience. This research uses quantitative research methods with data collected thru a questionnaire survey. The sample in this study consisted of 5-6 years old children in the city of Surabaya, with 155 children serving as the research sample. The analysis tests consisted of validity tests, reliability tests, and simple regression tests. The data was then analyzed using SPSS 25 software for hypothesis testing. Based on the research findings, it is concluded that there is a significant influence of the fatherless variable on the resilience of 5-6 years old children in the city of Surabaya. This is indicated by the Sig. value from the Regression test, which is $0.000 < 0.05$. This means H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected. The higher the level of fatherlessness in children, the lower their level of resilience.

Keywords: early childhood, fatherless, resilience

INTRODUCTION

In an era of ever-evolving challenges, ranging from global pandemics, climate change, armed conflict, to economic crises, children are the group most vulnerable to experiencing long-term psychosocial impacts. According to various reports from UNICEF and WHO, hundreds of millions of children worldwide live in vulnerable conditions due to poverty, violence, and displacement, which can affect their resilience to face future challenges (Unicef, 2021). Mental health problems cover a wide range of aspects that are very broad and complex, and are interrelated with one another. (Saroinsong et al., 2020).

The National Association for the Education of Young Children defines early childhood as children between the ages of 0 and 8. During this period, children experience a golden age. Psychologist Erik Erikson identified several stages in childhood, particularly between the ages of 3 and 6, which include the Initiative vs. Guilt stage. Children learn to plan and execute their actions independently. If this stage is not successfully completed, children are at risk of developing a fear of taking initiative or making decisions due to fear of making mistakes. During this time, the role of the family is crucial in educating children, providing affection, nurturing, and guiding them throughout their development. Sejalan dengan pendapat (Adhe et al., 2020) parents play a crucial role in shaping positive personality development. However, the Center for Policy

Research, Research and Development, and Books of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) states that the role of childcare in Indonesia is still predominantly carried out by mothers, at 66.7%. Not only that, based on statistics from the Ministry of Social Affairs, it is estimated that there are around 5.4 million children in Indonesia who have lost the role of a father or often referred to as the Fatherless phenomenon (*Peran APBN Di Tengah Fatherless Country*, 2024) In addition, Hasto Wardoyo, Head of the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN), regretted the fact that every year there are 500,000 divorces in Indonesia (Muliantari, 2024), of course in some areas divorce cases occur a lot, especially in the city of Surabaya, based on BPS divorce data in Surabaya in 2024 as many as 4,869 out of 2 million or 66.16% of the total population caused by one of the two parties leaving, or divorce cases caused by one party choosing to leave their partner.

This is also supported by the results of an interview at one of the institutions in Surabaya, specifically at Khadijah Kindergarten Surabaya, where the homeroom teacher said that there were several children who experienced a lack of paternal involvement because their fathers worked out of town. This condition had an impact on the behavior of children who tended to be unable to manage their emotions and liked to disturb their peers. The event of divorce between a father and mother could leave deep wounds for children, especially during childhood which could have a serious impact on the child's development. (Nurkayatin et al., 2024).

The loss of a father can also trigger feelings of loneliness, the loss of a role model, and a decline in self-control in children. Children need to be prepared to resolve and demonstrate the ability to adapt to themselves and their circumstances, a process known as resilience. According (Reivich & Shatte, 2002) Resilience refers to the ability to face and adapt to difficult events or problems that occur in life. (Brooks & Goldstein, 2024) said that resilience in children includes the ability to manage emotions and stress better, to face various challenges in everyday life, and have the ability to bounce back after experiencing disappointment and difficulties. Basically, resilience is an important part of the child's growth and development process and an important factor that influences the child's psychological process. Because the loss of a father figure will cause feelings of loss, loneliness, jealousy, and low self-esteem in children which have an impact on being less brave in taking big risks or getting involved in problems that cannot be resolved naturally such as depression. The urgency of this study lies in the limited study and in-depth study of the topic of resilience, especially in Indonesia with a special focus on the phenomenon of fatherlessness which has attracted quite a lot of attention, especially recently, one of which is about Indonesia being ranked 3rd in the fatherless country. This condition has the potential to have a negative impact on child development in the future, the lack of father involvement in the child's life can reduce resilience in children. Based on the existing phenomenon, the results of this study aim to provide ideas in this study would be examined about whether there is a relationship between fatherlessness and the resilience of children aged 5-6 years in Surabaya.

METHOD

This study used a purposive random sampling technique by considering certain criteria. The sample criteria in this study were (1) children aged 5-6 years, (2) domiciled in Surabaya, and (3) children who have a living father. The number of samples was determined using the Solvin formula. The sample was then determined proportionally to 155 to meet the minimum sample requirements needed. Respondents in this study consisted of 155 children aged 5 to 6 years with their parents who domiciled in the city of Surabaya, Indonesia. In filling out the questionnaire, the parents played a role in helping the children as respondents.

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method as a data collection technique. The questionnaire instrument is prepared in a closed format, designed so that the questions are structured, clear and easy to understand by respondents. The questionnaire was distributed in 2 ways; (1) distributing the questionnaire to parents in several Kindergarten (TK) institutions in Surabaya City, (2) distributing the questionnaire online using a Google form link to reach respondents more widely and efficiently.

The purpose of presenting descriptive respondent data is to describe the respondent's condition as additional information for understanding the research results. The respondents in this study have the following description:

Table 1. Data Results

Characteristics		Frekuensi	Total Responden
Gender	Female	54	155
	Male	101	155
Child's age	5 years	75	155
	6 years	80	155
Father's working hours	4-6 hours	14	155
	7-9 hours	96	155
	10-12 hours	45	155

Based on the information in Table 1, the most common gender is male, with 101 and female, with 54. The most respondents were aged 6 years, with 80 and male, with 75, so the age data is considered balanced.

In this study, variable X uses a fatherless instrument, namely the Father Presence Questionnaire (FPQ) from Krampe & Newton (2006). This scale is specifically designed to measure the role of fathers in involvement in childcare. While variable Y uses a measurement scale from the theory of Reivich and Shatte (2002). This scale measures the assessment of resilience abilities in children. Analysis of the data obtained in this study was processed with the help of SPSS software program version 25 and also the analysis carried out by the researcher was a validity test, a reliability test, and a regression test.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The instruments in this study will be tested for validity and reliability. There are two instruments: fatherlessness and resilience. Researchers first piloted the instruments with a sample of 30 respondents. The following are the results of the SPSS calculations:

Table 2. Validity and Reliability test results

Validitas	Total item	Variabel	Nilai Croncobach'c Alpha	=	Role of Thumb	Ket.
12 item valid	13	Fatherless	0.867	>	0.6	Reliabel
13 item valid	14	Resiliensi	0.848	>	0.6	Reliabel

Based on the table, the results show that the total fatherless question items are 13 with 12 items declared valid and the total resilience question items are 14 with 13 items declared valid. The Cronbach's Alpha value for fatherless and resilience is more than 0.06 so it can be concluded that all items from both variables are declared reliable.

Table 3. Regression test results

Variabel	Unstandardized B	t	Sig
(Constant)	26.635	14.662	0.000
Fatherless (X) >	0.423	8.746	0.000
Resiliensi			
R square	0.335		
F hitung	76.501		

The level of influence of fatherlessness on children's resilience was assessed using a simple linear regression test. The purpose of this study was to test the hypothesis that resilience is significantly influenced by fatherlessness.

Based on the results of research conducted with IBM SPSS 25. The R square number or coefficient of determination is 0.335, this means that 33.5% of the dependent variable, namely child resilience, can be explained by the independent variable. While the rest is caused by other variables. The ANOVA test or F-test produces an F count of 76,501 and a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$, so it can be interpreted that the fatherless variable can affect the level of child resilience. The t-test is used to test the significance of the constant and each independent variable with the results showing that, the fatherless variable has a Sig. 000 < 0.05 and the resilience variable has a Sig. 000 < 0.05 , which means H_a is accepted. In conclusion, the fatherless variable simultaneously affects child resilience with a Sig. 000 value, which means H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected.

Discussion

The results of this study also show that there is a significant influence between fatherlessness and resilience. The significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ means (H_a is

accepted), and the level of fatherlessness in children is related to the resilience that children have. Fatherless is a term used to describe a condition where a child grows up without the presence of a father figure in their daily lives, this can happen for various reasons, such as parental divorce, death of a father or a father who is not actively involved in the child's upbringing and life. The condition of the absence of a father's role is not only physical, but can also be interpreted as a lack of emotional father involvement, support and guidance from a father.

This is supported by Lerner's (2011) theory that the absence of a significant father figure can lead to low self-confidence in children as adults. This can also potentially lead to feelings of anger and shame due to feeling different from other children, as well as the loss of opportunities to experience the closeness with a father that other children experience. This is in line with research (Romadhona & Kuswanto, 2024) which shows that the absence of a father figure in educating and caring for children has a significant impact. Children raised without a father figure are at high risk of experiencing emotional problems, such as challenges in recognizing, expressing, understanding, building self-confidence, and regulating their emotions. In line with Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, it explains that at the age of 3-6 years, children are in the initiative vs. guilt stage, where children begin to develop self-confidence and initiative in acting. The absence of a father can disrupt this development, making it difficult for children to build self-confidence, which is an important part of resilience. In addition, research from (Fajar et al., 2024) confirms that fatherlessness has an influence on children's academic resilience. When the condition of fatherlessness is considered severe or low, it will have a negative impact and reduce their academic resilience. Children who do not receive emotional support, motivation or guidance from father figures tend to be more easily insecure and have difficulty facing challenges. They are also more at risk of experiencing concentration problems, low enthusiasm for learning, the absence of a father's role can reduce important sources of support in children's academic development, in addition to playing a role as a provider of security, fathers also contribute to forming a resilient mindset in children who make them role models.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion that has been described, in this study it was found that fatherlessness on the resilience of children aged 5-6 years has a significant influence. With the results of the Sig.000 value <0.05 . the higher the level of fatherlessness in children, the lower the resilience in children. The influence of father involvement is very important in terms of childcare, and also without the presence of a father as an emotional and social support figure, children are more vulnerable to emotional and behavioral problems, but with the right support, children will be able to develop resilience through strengthening emotional regulation, self-efficacy and optimism, therefore, it is important to provide adequate emotional and social support to children to increase their self-esteem and resilience in facing challenges in their lives.

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