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The Ways to Teach Children in Decision Making based on Parents Educational Level

Abstract

Every parent worldwide wants their children to make decisions in dealing with problems and determine their future career; however, various things can influence them in making decisions during their growing up process. This study aims to find out how to train children aged 3-7 years to make decisions based on parents educational level in the City of Pangkalan Bun, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, that is because teaching children in making decisions at a young age is an effort to teach kids to think ahead for the great choices in their lifetime. A qualitative descriptive design with a case study method was used to obtain information. Some eight families were chosen as the subject in this study based on the purposive sampling technique. The collection of the data is through observation and in-depth interviews. The researcher employed the triangulation technique to validate data by involving multiple sources such as interviewing the informant parents, teacher, and friends and observation to data gained from the interview. Data analysis is carried out by collecting data, reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions. Parents with a low educational level tend to impose their children on decision making. Furthermore, parents with a middle educational level generally provide limited decisions and choices to their children—meanwhile, parents with higher educational levels training their children by promoting two-way communication.

Keywords: Children, Decisions Making, Parents Educational Level.

Introduction

Children who are capable of making decisions and can see each problem from a different point of view such as; (1) the needs of themselves and others, (2) the rights of

themselves and others, and (3) responsibility for themselves and those around them are the dreams of every parent worldwide; however, various things can influence children in making decisions during their growing up process.

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According to (Miski et al., 2012) parenting directly impacts children's cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and emotional development. The growth of children amidst weak family economic conditions can form deviant social behavior in children, adolescents, and adults (Salim & Safitri, 2020). Lack of attention from parents with mental illnesses results in a lack of sense of responsibility towards their children and even behaves unexpectedly and sometimes acts violently so that the child's psychological condition is damaged (Chang, Schwartz, Dodge, & McBride-Chang, 2003; Liu & Wang, 2015). Furthermore, parents' drug abuse makes them unable to fulfill basic needs neglecting their children (Dore, Stone, & Buchanan, 2014). Parents who are victims of domestic violence tend to lose self-respect in caring for their children (Boediman & Desnawati, 2019).

Children's growth and development need to be supported by training in decision-making capabilities to anticipate any social stimuli they experience (Lee, Kim, & Yang, 2018). In childhood, every child enters a developmental stage in understanding concepts, thinking, and analyzing critically, but tends to seek information without a systematic plan for making decisions. Meanwhile, adolescents' social deviations, such as online media addiction, truancy, bullying, brawls, threatening peers, free sex, and even the use of narcotics, are caused by the lack of skills in making decisions (Rofiq, Islam, & Sunan, n.d.). Parents' attitudes in childhood greatly influence children's decision-making patterns so that they can make decisions independently in limited ways (Baumrind, 1991; Howard & Madrigal, 2018; Levin, Weller, Pederson, & Harshman, 2007). When children are involved through questions and opinions, they will be trained autonomously to make decisions (Miller, Feudtner, & Jawad, 2017). The balance between parental authority and children's independence in growth and development fosters confidence in making decisions (Lundberg, Romich, & Tsang, 2009). For this reason, training children in making decisions is very crucial for every parent to do.

Decision making is the individual's ability to demonstrate behavior that is in line with their motivations and desires. (Miski et al., 2012) explains that the decision-making process is an activity, which shows attitudes, a stance based on cognitive aspects, and the views of individuals who will make decisions. There are two decision models, namely normative and descriptive (Zhang et al., 2016). The normative model is a consistent and logical decision, while the descriptive model is a decision made based on rules of thumb that are influenced by emotions and personal experiences. The decision-making process involves the cognitive ability to select behaviors that are following the trend needs or preferences (Kaşıkaya, Calp, & Kuru, 2017). Children make

adaptive decisions due to affective attitudes related to the ability to anticipate future risks (Levin et al., 2007). In the decision-making process amid complex situations, children identify independently or in groups to find solutions to their problems (Demirtaş & Sucuoğlu, 2009).

Every parent has a different method of training their child in making decisions. (Kagan, 1999; Lundberg & Lundberg, 2007; Martin, 2018a) explain that traditionally the way children make decisions is influenced by parenting styles. Raising children needs parents who are continually developing deep and broad pedagogical knowledge (Gadsden, Ford, & Breiner, 2016). Parents are advised to identify their children's needs, particularly in the developmental stages, so that children can adapt to the various developmental demands they experience (Kiling-Bunga, Margiani, & Kiling, 2020). Inviting children to discuss or negotiate is an investment for children in making decisions in the future (Rosli, 2014). It is better to pay attention to children's views in making decisions than to provide opportunities to express their views (Atwool, 2006; Utting, 2007). Parents need to involve their children in making decisions about sleep, meals, homework, allowances, and shopping (Martin, 2018a).

In general, many parents do not know how important it is to train early childhood in making decisions so that they can develop into wise individuals in deciding issues related to their lives, therefore the condition of parents is a determining factor for the success of training children in making decisions. (Millones, Ghesquière, & van Leeuwen, 2014) stated that competence, communication patterns, and parents' role greatly influence children's decisions at the age of 3-12 years. On the other hand, parents' strategy in training their children to make decisions can be influenced by cultural differences, personal characteristics, psychological factors, and social and economic conditions (Vafaeenejad, Elyasi, Moosazadeh, & Shahhosseini, 2018). Children who have authoritative parents behave more positively than children who have authoritarian and permissive parents (Cláudia Rodrigues Sequeira de Figueiredo & Filomena Valadão Dias, 2012; Lee et al., 2018; Osborne, 2020). Well-religious parents tend to spend more time with their children (Petro, Rich, Erasmus, & Roman, 2018).

In three decades, training children to make decisions in the family context had become a significant issue in various countries in Europe and America, and Africa (Kelch-oliver & Smith, 2015). This is because many parents wish their children to grow up to be ideal figures and not be left behind like them so that in just 20 years, the results of these efforts will significantly shape their children's future careers today. Conversely, as a developing country, in Indonesia, most parents do

not understand the child's condition and how to educate and assist children, especially in making decisions during their growth and development. A scientific study has reported that as many as 29.67% of parents sometimes give opportunities, 27.47% of parents always give chances, and 16.48% of parents often give children opportunities to make their own decisions. Meanwhile, 26.38% of parents never allow the child to make up his mind (Program, Magister, Komunikasi, & Undip, n.d.).

The researchers have made some preliminary study about the role of the parents in the process of children in making the decision. Most parents do not trust their children to make decisions (Lundberg, Romich, & Tsang, 2014). Children in making a decision have directly influenced by their parents' attitude (Martin, 2018b). Children are usually involving the other parties in making decisions regarding their choices in the future (Maccoby, 2000). As a consequence, children become inconsistent and full of uncertainty in making decisions, and later as adults, they will experience dependency and cannot make decisions independently. Various studies have examined children in a period of growth and development. Still, no research has been found that focuses on how children make decisions based on their parents' educational level. Therefore, this study aims to explore the ways to train children aged 3-7 years in making decisions based on parents educational level.

Methodology

A qualitative descriptive design with a case study method was used to develop in-depth description about the case (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This research took place in Pangkalan Bun City, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. The city of Pangkalan Bun is chosen as the research site because the city is known for its pluralistic of its society so that it has a diverse culture and parents educational background. Two families have a low educational level or graduated from elementary school, some three families with a middle education level or secondary school, and three highly educated families who have bachelor degree were chosen as the subject in this study based on the purposive sampling technique. All research subjects must have as many as three children in elementary school, junior high school and senior high school level education. Data are collected through participant observation, which is carried out in several places, including; at home, public areas (tourist objects, recitation place, the location of children's schools for children who attend school, and where the parents work if the child is with them). In-depth interviews conducted using questions that are designed and developed based on relevant literature. Several informants are involved in this study, including parents,

people around children, such as household helpers, and neighbors. Data analysis is carried out by data reduction involves selecting, focusing, simplifying and transforming the unprocessed data into summaries which are organized into themes or patterns based on the original objectives of the research to distinguish between the primary and secondary theme of data.

Findings

Low-educated parents carry out three dominant ways in training their children to make decisions, including; (1) explaining problems, directing decisions, and enforcing parental decisions as in the case that happened to Aa's family against children who wanted to play with neighbors' children, Mm's family wanted to watch television at a neighbor's house. When their children ask for permission, parents say patiently, later, you don't need to go, say no, don't feel right, and other disapproval expressions. Consequently, children shut themselves in the room, cry, get angry, and loudly screaming. Furthermore, as parents with low education, the husband and wife often do not allow their children to wear new clothes after bathing; the child's Mn (father) is silent when his wife explains a little and gives more direction. The reaction is taken, because Mn's wife predicts that her child will ignore the parents' directions, she finally forces them to wear the clothes she wears before taking a bath because it is still clean. In the first and second cases of the Aa and Mn families above, it can be seen that parents had tried to explain the problem to the child, but it was not done optimally because they could not wait for the child to understand and identify the problem, so they took shortcuts by forcing to follow the parents' decisions.

In contrast to parents with low education, parents with a junior high school level of education seem to have several ways to train their children to make decisions such as; explaining, directing, and providing several options that consist of two considered good alternatives, such as a child from the Hh family who asks to buy a drink that is sold by a peddler.

Wife of Hn: Which one do you want to use? The peddler glass or uses your glass? (The child is confused about which one to choose. Wife of Hn helps explain the problems faced by the child)

Wife of Hn: If you use the peddler glass, you have to drink it quickly, and if you use your glass, you may drink your beverage later as you want. (Because the son has not made up his mind, the mother explains again)

Wife of Hn: If you use the peddler glass, you don't need to wash it, but you have to run it out right away, but if you use your glass, the rest of it can be stored in the refrigerator.

Parents with senior high school level of education did the same thing as happened in Dd's family. Dd's wife responded to her son's request for drinking water when he entered the house after playing in the yard.

Wife of Dd: Which one do you want to drink, water, or ice tea? (Because the child has not decided on the two options offered, the parents continue to explain).

Wife of Dd: Please heat the water if you want to drink an ice tea, and get it into the refrigerator if you wish to drink water. (Because the children are still confused, Dd's wife also recommends choosing plain water that is available on the table)

Wife of Dd: There is a glass of water on the table if you want to drink water.

In the case experienced by Nn parents with junior high school level of education, her child asked for permission to borrow ball, Nn (father) tries to provide explanations, directs, and gives children choices with considerations of the pros and cons of the child's decisions.

Nn : The ball does not belong to the father, it belongs to the club.

Child : Please, I want to borrow it for a while

Nn : How if it is damaged or lost? (Children think about risks from what his father explained, confused and not yet giving a decision)

Nn : If you use the other ball, you can take it out, or play club ball but only at home. (The child takes the club ball and plays only at home).

The three families with a middle educational level above have attempted to explain the problems and risks of a decision to their children and direct the child to make decisions that are deemed appropriate for the child, however, children tend to hesitate in making decisions. Eventually, parents give limited choices to children so that children are assertive in making decisions. Thus, there are still deficiencies in carrying out two-way communication between children and parents, because if this is done, the child not only knows the estimated risk of a decision but also gets experience from differences in how to make decisions, as well as other possible risks that will be happening behind the decisions that have been taken.

Highly educated parents have a very different way than parents with low and middle levels of education. Highly educated parents train their children to make decisions by giving them confidence and a sense of power. For example, a child of the Ss family chooses to make milk for his younger sibling instead of silencing his tears. The child takes this decision after communicating and negotiating with his mother, Ss.

Child : Can I make a glass of milk, can't I?

Ss : Don't you afraid of hot water?

Child : Dont worry, I will do it carefully.

Ss : Use hot water available in the bedroom only because it is to you to get it.

Even though what happened was as predicted by the mother, namely being touched by hot water, the child is not blamed for his decision. Ss praised his son by saying, "a good child has become a helper". Although the child feels the risk of the decision being taken is not right, at the same time, the child also feels the parents' love by providing reinforcement and a sense of security for his decision. Ss stated that;

"As parents, we prefer to let our children make their own decisions after being trained to introduce the risks and then continue to monitor and assist them. Although it is not right, children have already gained experience from processes because they will learn from them. Children had identified the problem and evaluated it because they realized each of decisions has its risks".

Parents with higher educational level have more varied ways of training their children to make decisions by providing opportunities for children to find new alternatives in solving problems before making decisions. They communicate with children in two directions so that children know how to identify problems, feel making decisions, be creative in finding new ways to minimize risks, and evaluate every decision taken as requested by the Rr family's son, who wanted to play in the fish pond. Rr's wife already knew that the pool was safe to play with, but it was not feasible because the water was cloudy, muddy, and the ground's contours were hollow.

Child : Moom, can I catch the fish in the pond, please?

Mother Rr : Can small child splash in the pool?

Child : I think it's okay, mom I'll ask first. (After asking with those who have a fish pond, the child tries to convince him her mother)

Child : Moom, I can swim in the pond. There is also a tool to catch the fish, mom.

(Based on communication pattern between mom and the child, the child is confident if her mother allows, and continues to convince her mother)

Child : Mother. I'm wearing these pants. (before his mother answered, son already provided a solution if the shirt and trousers are on take it off so that it can be used after splashing in the pool).

A few minutes later, the child was crying and asking for help. The mother Rr helped with a smile

and said, "It's fun to swim; it turns out that the fish don't want to be caught yet". Even though parents have predicted the risks that occur to children, parents say they are more concerned with the child's process in making decisions than the correctness of the decisions. The decision-making process is built through effective communication between children and parents. Children tend to actively provide alternatives as a way out to solve problems to make decisions.

Furthermore, the child of Oo family, who are devout worshipers, want to play games on the laptop at the agreed time for muraja'ah Al-Qu'ran, after Maghrib prayer until the time of Isha prayer. This child tries to convince parents of their desire to get out of family habits.

- Child : Can I borrow the laptop, please?
 Father : What for?
 Child : I wanna use it to play game! May I?
 Father : Is it okay to play games at this time? What should we do now? (Oo tried to remind him with a mutually agreed habit, namely reading the Koran.)
 Child : But I don't want to recite! I want to play this for a moment, please.

By listening to this conversation, the mother, Oo tries to distract the child by giving a picture book and colored pencil, and deliberately puts it down by saying, "this is a good picture book, I just bought it this afternoon". She intends to stay together with other members in the living room and follow the muraja'ah Al-Quran. The mother, Oo's strategy in distracting her child, has successfully proved because one of the sons

wants to draw a picture beside her. Her intention was fulfilled and did not disappoint the child. After drawing, the children invited the mother, Oo, to play football again after learning to read Iqra, while other family members had not finished muraja'ah Al-Quran. This child reassured his parents by explaining that he would not interfere and offered if he would play ball in the room, he doesn't want to disturb other family members' activities.

It takes parental expertise like the Sh family to follow the child's mind and direct it by looking for alternatives as an option to be made. This thing is required extensive insight into the approach and the right vocabulary to achieve the goals expected by parents. In creating a family value system, parents must realize that children also experience the process and have the right decision-making strategy to make children more confident in controlling and dealing with situations. Parents with a teacher education background implement the above strategy because they are based on the pedagogical knowledge they get in college accompanied by experience in handling students in formal schools. They seem to realize that everything children do is an educational process that maximizes communication in favor of children's interests in making decisions. Thus, children will get used to identifying, predicting risks, being creative in finding solutions to problems, anticipating, and proactively deciding something related to others' interests, as stated by the mother Oo.

"...In training early childhood, we introduce more ways to make decisions to feel the process. If something goes wrong, then that error is the knowledge he gets. By mistake, he knows which one should be".

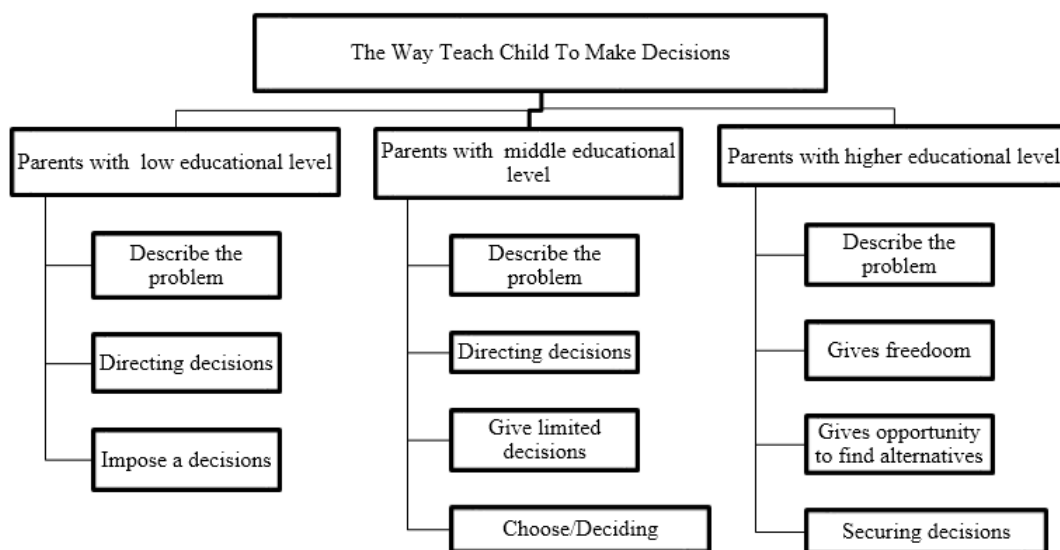


Figure 1.

The Way Parents Teach Child to Make Decisions

The picture above has illustrated that poorly educated parents train children by explaining problems, direct decisions, and enforce judgments. Besides, middle-educated parents teach children to make decisions by explaining issues, directing decisions, providing limited choices, and making decisions. On the contrary, highly educated parents train children to make decisions by explaining problems, giving freedom, providing opportunities to find new alternatives, and securing child processes and choices. There are similarities in how to train a child from each parent, namely explaining child problems during training. However, two-way communication between children and parents with low and middle education looks less than optimal. However, parents with high educational level, especially those with teacher training education, and Islamic education build effective communication with their children in every child's decision-making process.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results showed differences in how to train children aged 3-7 years in making decisions based on their parents' educational background. Each parent has a variety of ways because every parent has a different level of education in a family. The capacity of knowledge obtained from education greatly influences parents in educating and training children in making decisions. In general, parents explain the problems faced by children because children aged 3-7 years do not have the knowledge and experience so that they need a process to find out every risk from the decisions that have been taken. However, parents with low education tend to fail to explain problems to their children while training their children to make decisions, resulting in parents' coercion of decisions. This action is based on the parent's concern if the bad experience that happened to him in childhood will happen to his child again. Parental intervention is considered absolute if the child's decision is deemed harmful to him, but with decisions that are more dominated by parents, it seems that they impose their will on the child to impact the way the child makes decisions.

The lack of communication between children and parents will be a barrier for children to make decisions because good communication is essential in the decision-making process. Unilateral decisions taken by parents do not provide opportunities for children to learn to express opinions, hopes, make choices and make decisions so that children become hesitant and dependent on other parties in making decisions. (Golding, 2000; Smagner & Sullivan, 1998) stated that parents need to know about management strategies such as; provide reinforcement, punishing, correcting mistakes,

encouraging, motivating, shaping, associating, and instructing based on children's behaviour.

Parents are vital in how to make decisions during the growth and development of children. How to train to make the wrong decisions by parents will have an impact on children. Parents are required to be ideal role models in making decisions for that, and parents must be able to provide rewards in the form of praise for every decision that has been taken by the child so that the child feels valued as an individual. Children who are forced to follow their parents' decisions make them contrary to their wishes even though they believe that their parents' decisions are right, but the inability of the child to communicate has an impact on forming children's habits into individuals who are less sensitive to the situations they face. Consequently, children become obedient but do not have a sense of responsibility.

Parents with a middle educational level generally provide explanations of the problems to their previous children, with the aim that the children make their own decisions. But the fact is that the parents' dominance is seen in their directions and the limited choices given as those in the Hh family and the Dd family. The use of this method of training is known as a limited choice (only two options). It is considered appropriate and safe for children at an early age because the parents' role is a stimulus or response provider of every inexperienced child's behavior to form a harmonious relationship between children and parents. On the other hand, if parents only apply a limited choice of training methods after giving an explanation accompanied by directions, it will negatively impact the child mentally. Children unconsciously tend to imitate their parents' attitudes, motivations, beliefs, knowledge, and even work (Furuzawa & Yoshinaga, 2020).

The child will not get the maximum opportunity to find out more about the problems and situations faced by himself, so that the child becomes an individual who has a dependency on other people's decisions, and if the decisions made are wrong, the child will tend to blame others. Parents' role is needed in every process of children making decisions because generally, parents aim to provide the understanding and even make choices to decisions in supporting children's success in their life (Anderson, Minke, & Anderson, 2010; Desforjes & Abouchaar, n.d.; Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017). Therefore, with the child's attitude, who is hesitant in deciding to prevent the child from developing a sense of responsibility, every decision made by the child is not result-oriented but rather a learning process in making decisions.

Parents with a higher educational level especially have a way of training their children to make decisions by promoting two-way communication preceded by explaining the

problem in advance and a question and answer (dialogue) to find alternative solutions to problems. (Rooth & Forinder, 2018; Yurumez, Yazici, Gumus, Yazici, & Gursoy, 2014) mentioned parenting that promotes two-way communication is an act of mediation that should be equipped with competencies expressed through actions to interpret children's behavior and reflect the relationship between children and parents. Parental education has a direct impact on children's development, learning, and achievement (Sharif, 2015). Parents play a role in teaching values and thinking processes so that the child can actively make decisions. Educating children to make decisions by giving freedom accompanied by parental control makes children have room for movement to develop their identity as individuals in decision making. In this way, children have two abilities, such as the ability to express and describe their feelings and build a collective awareness that prioritizes common interests rather than personal interests to form a wise child's personality in making decisions.

Furthermore, parental guidance is needed because, generally, children are impatient in dealing with situations and are more likely to take alternatives and decide instantly. For this reason, the delay in thinking processes experienced by

children when the decision-making process does not harm children's development in the future. (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017) parents who devote love accompanied by support to the child will form self-confidence for the child so that it makes it easier for him to pursue a career and find happiness and success. Parents' attitudes, knowledge, and education play a significant role in shaping children's character early (Libraries, 2015; Rai & Tiwari, 2018). Children will better understand themselves, are aware of complex problems, and are better trained to use decision-making strategies in uncertain situations.

Giving punishment and reward is a manifestation of parental love for children to form children's self-confidence in making decisions because, in this way, children can be selective individuals in identifying, processing, solving, and evaluating problems. Training boys and girls aged 3-7 years to make decisions is refer to guide and teach the decision-making process to children because, in this vulnerable age, their character building is still temporal. Therefore, it needs to be understood that armed with experience how to make decisions from an early age that carried out continuously will shape children's character to make decisions in the future.

Parental Way	Educational Level	Value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the problems 	All educational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the correct benchmarks Critically to identify problems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impose a choice 	Low educational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe against harm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directing decisions Giving limited option Choose/Deciding 	Middle educational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breaking off hesitation Safe for a while Strengthening parent-child relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving freedom Securing child decisions Securing child decisions 	Higher educational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops sense of power Sharpening negotiation ability Appreciating other Feel confidence and willing to accept risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving opportunity to find a new alternative 	Higher educational level (Teacher training education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops a sense of power Feel confidence and willing to accept risks Creative and flexible decision-making

This article describes the various ways to train children by parents from various educational backgrounds. The findings have revealed that there are three ways to train children to make decisions made by parents. Parents with low educational level are; first explain problems, direct choices, and enforce decisions. Furthermore, parents with middle academic level teach their children to make decisions by explaining the situation, direct options, provide limited choices,

and choose the decisions. Conversely, the way to train children to make decisions made by highly educated parents is by explaining problems, provide freedom, provide opportunities to find new alternatives, and secure children's processes/decisions. It is hoped that parents will be more welcome to understanding how crucial pedagogical knowledge is in training children in making decisions. Thus through the findings of this study, it can be; (1) theoretical framework in

psychosocial programming that focuses on training parents in caring for children, (2) able to produce a more comprehensive knowledge base, especially in the field of education, parenting and developmental psychology.

Suggestions

Based on the finding of this study, it becomes the starting point for further researchers to explore how to teach adolescence in making decision based on the parents educational level.

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