

Attachment to Parents, Teachers, and Peers, as Predictors of Blind Adolescents' Academic Engagement

Widayatri Sekka U.

Komplek Cipinang Indah II

Jl. Rajawali R-18

Jakarta

INDONESIA

sekka@centrin.net.id

wida_su@yahoo.com

Introduction :

A lot of changes happen during adolescents, not only physical changes but also cognitive and social emotional changes. Adolescents need to adjust to these changes and conflict that they faced. Blind adolescents faces not only the usual developmental challenges but also the added strain of his or her physical handicap.

With all the problems experienced by blind adolescents, they could interfere with blind adolescents' academic life. It becomes more difficult for them because they are already in middle level of their school where the lessons are more complex.

Related to academic life, one of the important things to consider is academic engagement. Academic engagement is sometimes linked with support and closeness to significant others. One of the concepts that explains about closeness to significant others is attachment. Adolescents begin to minimize their strong attachment with parent figure and make close relationship with non-parent significant others like peers and teachers. Attachment with some trusted significant others is called multiple attachment.

Referring to studies from Ryan, Stiller, and Lynch (1994), attachment with parents and teachers has positive correlation with academic engagement on adolescents who do not have visual impairment. On the other hand, peers do not have significant correlation with academic engagement. What about contribution of attachment with parents, teachers, and peers to academic engagement in blind adolescents?

Subjects :

- Subjects are blind adolescents in middle school at school for children with visual impairment (SLB-A)
- From SLB-A Lebak Bulus Jakarta, PSBN Tan Miyat Bekasi, SLB-A Pajajaran Bandung
- Total Samples : 53 students

Instruments :

Inventories : attachment to parents, attachment to teachers, attachment to peers, and academic engagement

Description of Samples :

There are 53 samples in this study, consisting of 31 male students (58.5%) and 22 female students (41.5%). If we look to the age of samples, it shows that high percentage of samples is on 17 to 19 years of age (66.1%). Based on the level of visual impairment, it shows that those who experience total blindness (66%) are more than the ones with low vision (34%). Majority of samples stay in dormitory during school days, and only about 15.1% of samples stay with their parents. From the 84.9% of samples who live in dormitory, most of them come home once in every six months, which is during school holidays.

Analysis of Result :

Based on calculation using multiple regression, the results are :

- Attachment to parents, teachers, and peers simultaneously give significant contribution to prediction of academic engagement of blind adolescents in middle school
- Attachment to parents gives significant contribution to prediction of academic engagement of blind adolescents in middle school
- Attachment to teachers does not give significant contribution to prediction of academic engagement of blind adolescents in middle school
- Attachment to peers gives significant contribution to prediction of academic engagement of blind adolescents in middle school

Suggestion :

- More research about attachment in blind adolescent
- As the main predictor to academic engagement : give attention to adolescents' attachment to parents at the very beginning
- Attachment to peers (significant) : educators should develop quality relationship between blind adolescents and their peers, especially in sense of help in academic activities

- Attachment to teachers (not significant) : need follow up study. The follow up study may function to give input on what interventions will be appropriate to increase teacher role on blind students' academic engagement and success.