

Dynamics of Female Adolescent Moral Reasoning

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Abstract

This study aims to uncover the dynamics and position of moral reasoning among female adolescents in Minangkabau, based on age, education, and place of residence. The method used is a combination of methods with an explanatory design. The study included 190 Minangkabau female adolescents. A moral reasoning scale instrument was used to collect quantitative data based on age, education, and place of residence based on age, education, and place of residence, which was then analyzed using two-way ANOVA. According to the study's findings, there are significant differences in women's moral reasoning based on age and education. There is an interaction between age and place of residence on moral reasoning. Overall, the moral reasoning of Minangkabau women is in transition stage 1, which is the stage from selfishness to responsibility. These findings can be used to guide counselors or future researchers in developing appropriate interventions to improve the moral reasoning of female adolescents in Minangkabau.

Keywords: Female; Minangkabau culture; Moral Reasoning

Introduction

Low moral reasoning is to blame for the rise in criminal behavior and juvenile delinquency (Beerthuisen et al., 2013; Herzog and Einat, 2016). Moral reasoning is a skill that must be developed during adolescence (Vera-Estay, Dooley, and Beauchamp, 2015). The ability of a person to make decisions or engage in behavioral actions influences his level of moral reasoning (O'Flaherty and Doyle, 2014; O'Flaherty and Gleeson, 2014; Sadler and Zeidler, 2005). Consideration is required before choosing good or bad behavior, right or wrong (Rose, 2012), and the answers from cognitive considerations of this behavior are referred to as moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1971, 1978). Adolescents with good moral reasoning abilities can weigh good and bad actions according to the values and norms they hold personally and those held by their community (O'Flaherty and Doyle, 2014).

Gender and culture are not included in the factors that influence the formation of moral reasoning, according to Kohlberg (1978), this statement is refuted by research results, several factors that influence moral reasoning, namely, parenting, peers, education, mass media, culture, religiosity, gender, and changes in biological conditions (Blasi, 1980; Hardy et al., 2019; Hart and Carlo, 2005; Jia et al., 2019; Tietjen and Walker, 1985;

Tokan, 1999). Culture has a significant impact on the development of moral reasoning (Endicott et al., 2003; Lo et al., 2019; Turiel, 2012). Individuals from various cultural backgrounds will develop moral reasoning in different ways (White et al., 1978). Kohlberg's moral reasoning has been criticized for being biased toward women (Baumrind, 1986; Bussey and Maughan, 1982; Gilligan, 1977a, 1982a; Haan et al., 1968; Holstein, 1976). Women were not included in the study because Kohlberg only used men as subjects. Men view morals as a form of justice, whereas women view morals as a form of care and responsibility, emphasizing aspects of relationships or relations, as Gilligan popularized with Morality as Care (Blasi, 1980; Gilligan, 1977a, 1982b, 1982a, 1998; Gilligan and Attanucci, 2013). According to research Cowell et al.(2017) and Kalsoom et al., (2012) culture and gender influence moral reasoning.

The Minangkabau culture of West Sumatra Province is one of the many cultures found in Indonesia. Minangkabau culture is well-known for its matrilineal kinship system. According to some experts, the Minangkabau culture is the world's largest matrilineal adherent (Evers and Korff, 2000; Schrijvers and Postel-Coster, 1977), with lineage and inheritance from the mother (Hadler, 2008). This gave women a unique position and role in Minangkabau (Blackburn, 2004; Blackwood, 2001; C. Davis, 1995; Jong, 1980; Kato, 2014; Sanday, 1992; Syaputra et al., 2019). This privilege is evident in the traditional method of regulating women's ethics, manners, and moral behavior (Abdullah, 1966; Hakimy, 1978; Ibrahim, 2009; Maharadja, 1922; Stivens, 1998). Women determine whether a people is humiliated or glorified (Navis, 1984).

Many Minangkabau young women today oppose traditional norms. This problem arises as a result of a shift in cultural values and thought patterns, resulting in an increase in the moral degradation of adolescents and the emergence of negative behavior. Adolescent moral degradation is characterized by changes in attitudes, behavior, actions, and interactions. The purpose of this study is to discover the psychological state of Minangkabau adolescent girls in terms of moral reasoning. The purpose of this article is to determine the level of moral reasoning of Minangkabau young women in education, taking into account their age, gender, education, and place of residence. The findings of this study will be used to make preliminary decisions about the moral reasoning of Minangkabau female adolescents. As a result of these findings, it is possible to predict what actions will be taken against the moral reasoning of Minangkabau women in the future.

Method

This quantitative research uses a comparison approach. Comparisons were seen based on the respondent's age, education and place of residence. Sampling in this study used accidental sampling. Respondents in this study were women who lived in the Minangkabau area, both in villages and cities. The study included 190 young Minangkabau women between the ages of 15 and 26, with education levels ranging from high school to university. The goal of this study was to determine the level of moral reasoning among Minangkabau women based on age, education, and place of residence. The age range was divided into three groups: 15-18, 19-22, and 23-26. Meanwhile, education is divided into two categories: those in high school and equivalent, and those in college. The places to live are divided into two categories: villages and cities.

Data was obtained from the moral reasoning scale instrument developed by the researcher himself. This moral reasoning scale contains ten items on Minangkabau women's moral dilemmas. Where the answers to the story questions refer to the level of moral reasoning proposed by Gilligan (1977a, 1982a), which can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. **Concern-Oriented Moral Development Levels**

No	Level	Tier Name
1	Level 1	Orientation of Individual Survival (focusing on what is best for him)
2	Transition 1	From selfishness to responsibility
3	Level 2	Goodness as Self Sacrifice (focusing the consequences of actions on people's needs other)
4	Transition 2	From goodness to truth
5	Transition 3	Morality of Nonviolence (focusing on orders/decisions about what is dangerous or not harm others, including oneself).

The validity test of the instrument was carried out using exploratory factor analysis with the help of SPSS version 25. Based on the validity test results, ten valid moral dilemma items were obtained from the 12 items created, with the lowest index for each item being 0.739a and a reliability of 0.889.

The research instrument was distributed via Google Forms with the help of WhatsApp social media. The researcher obtained informed consent before the respondent filled in the questionnaire in the form of a statement that the respondent was willing to provide actual data in filling out the questionnaire. In tabulating the data, the researcher also maintained the confidentiality of the respondents by assigning an initial code to each respondent. The data was analyzed using two-way ANOVA, but prerequisite tests, such as normality, homogeneity and linearity tests, were previously carried out. The researchers want to see how age, education level, and place of residence affect the moral reasoning of female adolescents.

Results

According to the study's findings, the level of moral reasoning of Minangkabau female adolescents was revealed, based on Kohlberg's level of moral reasoning.

Table 1 shows the average level of moral reasoning among Minangkabau women based on age, education, and place of residence

TPM	Age Group			Education		Residence	
	15-18	19-22	23-26	Senior	College	Village	City
6	7.5%	6.5%	8.9%	6.8%	7%	6.9%	7%
5	17.6%	16%	13.3%	21.2%	17%	12.7%	20%
4	24.8%	26.3%	24.4%	25.2%	25.7%	26.2%	33.4%
3	23.6%	24.1%	35.6%	26.8%	23.7%	24.9%	15.7%
2	22.7%	21.7%	13.3%	16.4%	21.3%	24.3%	19.2%
1	3.9%	5.4%	4.4%	3.6%	46.9%	5%	4.7%
N	67	114	9	50	140	93	97

Note: The table was developed by the researchers themselves.

TPM : Level of Moral Reasoning

According to the data above, the average reasoning level of women aged 15-18 and 19-22 years is at stage four,

which is authority and social order maintaining orientation. Women between the ages of 23 and 26 are in the third stage, which is the interpersonal accord and conformity orientation stage. The average female moral reasoning at the high school education level is at stage 3, which is interpersonal accord and conformity orientation. Meanwhile, at the higher education level, women's moral reasoning is at stage four, which is an orientation toward authority and social order. The level of reasoning of both women who live in villages or villages and women who live in cities is in the fourth stage, namely the interpersonal accord and conformity orientation stage.

A F-test with two-way ANOVA will then be performed to determine the effect or interaction of each factor. As a result, the following outcomes are obtained:

Table 2 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Moral Reasoning					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	126.896 ^a	7	18.128	2.561	.015
Intercept	18421.693	1	18421.693	2602.057	.000
Age	45.473	2	22.737	3.212	.043
School	38.269	1	38.269	5.405	.021
Origin	5.956	1	5.956	.841	.360
Age * School	.000	0	.	.	.
Age * Origin	44.162	2	22.081	3.119	.047
School * Origin	15.108	1	15.108	2.134	.146
Age * School * Origin	.000	0	.	.	.
Error	1288.499	182	7.080		
Total	58905.000	190			
Corrected Total	1415.395	189			

a. R Squared = .090 (Adjusted R Squared = .055)

Based on the above findings, a significance value of $0.043 < 0.05$ is obtained in the age category, implying that there are differences in the level of moral reasoning of Minangkabau women based on age. Then, with a significance value of $0.021 < 0.05$, it is stated that there are differences in the level of moral reasoning of Minangkabau women based on their level of education. Then a significance value of $0.360 > 0.05$ is obtained, indicating that there is no difference in the level of moral reasoning among Minangkabau women based on their place of residence. With a significance value of $0.047 < 0.05$, it can be concluded that there is an interaction between age and place of residence in determining Minangkabau women's level of moral reasoning. The significance value is then $0.146 > 0.05$, indicating that there is no interaction between education and place of residence in determining the level of moral reasoning in women.

According to the findings of interviews with several Minangkabau women, their level of reasoning was somewhere between levels 1 and 2, namely the lever from self-fishing to responsibility. This stage marks the transition from selfishness to responsibility. This is revealed by the reasons they use to make decisions about moral quandaries presented. The decisions they make are solely motivated by the need to account for their actions. This demonstrates that their reasoning is only at the level of selfishness to responsibility.

Discussion

The study's findings revealed that the age level influences the level of moral reasoning. People's attitudes toward emerging behaviors are influenced by their age. According to the findings of a study conducted by Chiasson et al., (2017) age-related changes provide distinct moral reasoning depending on the level of disability. These findings also show that moral reasoning improves linearly from childhood to late adolescence.

A person's moral reasoning is also influenced by their level of education. The findings of this study are also supported by the findings of Doyle and O'Flaherty (2013) , who found that overall education has a significant impact on moral reasoning. According to the findings of this study, an undergraduate education program improves moral reasoning. According to the findings of this study, the undergraduate program of education improves moral reasoning more than the postgraduate program. This means that at a higher level of education, one's moral reasoning can develop quickly.

Women's moral development at the first level focuses on initial concern about self-care to ensure survival, followed by a transitional stage. The transition from stage 1 to stage 2 represents a period of transition from selfishness to responsibility. During this transitional period, the words selfishness and responsibility appear for the first time. This stage discusses an understanding of one's own or others' relationships, as expressed by the concept of responsibility. Moral kindness is associated with concern for others at the second level. However, at this point, an imbalance can be created, giving birth to a second transition. At the most basic level, it focuses on relational dynamics and eliminates the tension between egoism and responsibility through a new understanding of one's own and others' interrelationships. Caring becomes a self-selected moral criterion. This principle is psychological in terms of relationships and responsiveness, but it is universal in condemning any attitude that oppresses and harms others (Gilligan, 1977b, 1982b).

The second stage in the progression from goodness to truth. Again, selfish attitudes and responsibilities emerge in the realm of attention and care at this stage. This stage reconsiders the concept of accountability. In this situation, his first request is honesty in the implementation of responsibility. To be held accountable, one must first admit what has been done, so that the evaluation criteria shift from goodness to truth. The self becomes the arbiter of judgment in the third stage. The action to be taken will be determined by the self. At this point, the individual will be able to assert moral equality with both himself and others (Gilligan, 1971).

Many factors influence one's reasoning development, including:

a. Culture

Culture has its own set of values and norms that influence and shape one's mindset, feelings, and actions in daily life (Soemardjan, 1988). A person's behavior is heavily influenced by his culture. Several studies have found that culture influences a person's level of moral reasoning (Cowell et al., 2017; Moore et al., 2020; Rhim et al., 2020; Woods and Jagers, 2003). This suggests that a person's moral reasoning is heavily influenced by his cultural upbringing. When viewing the same behavior, people from different cultural backgrounds will have different ethics and behaviors.

b. Sexual orientation

Gilligan, Kohlberg's assistant, was harshly critical of his theory. Gilligan stated that there is a gender bias in Kohlberg's moral theory because 20 years of research has focused on male subjects, so there will be a bias if Kohlberg's theory of moral development is applied to women. Several research findings indicate that gender influences moral development (Bussey and Maughan, 1982; Capraro and Sippel, 2017; Kennedy et al., 2017; Wertz, 1994).

c. Parenting

Moral values will be instilled in children beginning in the home. This suggests that the parenting style used by parents with their children has an impact on the development of their moral reasoning. Several studies have found a link between parenting style and children's moral reasoning ability (Walker and Hennig, 1999). According to research Ishoy (2017) parenting style has an impact on the development of adolescent moral reasoning. According to research Davis and Carlo (2018) parenting styles with social rewards are also positively related to adolescent moral reasoning.

d. Religious

Religion is a factor that influences one's behavior. Individuals with a high level of religiosity will be able to control their negative behavior. According to several studies, a person's intention to have morals is determined by his religious values. According to Muhammad and Saad (2016) , attitudes and moral reasoning have a positive and significant influence on a person's intention to pay zakat (a form of religious value). Several research findings that there is a positive relationship between religiosity and moral development support this (Mostafa et al., 2017).

Conclusion

Moral reasoning is the first step in deciding on a course of action. Moral reasoning will compel someone to take either good or bad actions. Care, responsibility, and relationships are central to women's moral reasoning. Based on the findings of this study, it is possible to conclude that there are differences in the moral reasoning of Minangkabau women based on their age and level of education. Meanwhile, there is no discernible difference in moral reasoning regarding the issue of residence. The reasoning level of Minangkabau women is in the middle, somewhere between levels 1 and 2. This suggests that when Minangkabau women consider or reason about a behavior, they are transitioning from selfishness to responsibility. The findings of this study can be used to guide future research into interventions or efforts to improve moral reasoning in Minangkabau women. Especially with women's positions in Minangkabau becoming a foundation and a strong foundation for increasing women's moral reasoning in Minangkabau. Incorporating cultural values into Minangkabau women's moral reasoning is thought to improve moral reasoning and good moral decisions. Because Minangkabau is rich in values that elevate the status of women.

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