



Me and My Parents: A Qualitative Study of the Role of Birth Order Child in Family

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Abstract

Birth order is one of the most extensive human experiences and is considered to determine how smart, good, responsible, sociable, emotionally stable, and open to new experiences. Therefore, parents assume the birth orderly child is always reliable and can open the way to help his younger siblings later which makes his role very necessary in the family. This study aims to analyze how the role of the birth orderly child in the family is to find the initial process of the birth orderly child to reach his role in the family. Using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) data analysis technique, this study involved 5 study participants with criteria for children in the first birth order. The results show that with the duties and responsibilities that were carried out early on, the recognition of roles and goals in achieving the well-being of the family made the birth orderly child able to proceed and make himself a role in the scope of the family.

Keywords: birth orderly child, family, birth order, role in the family.

1. Introduction

A family is a unit consisting of two or more people who are united by marriage, blood, adoption, or consensual union. In general, consulting with one household, interacting and communicating with each other and therefore the family is considered as an integrated and functional community unit. Within the family itself, it is important to know the role that can be development, behavior, and welfare of individuals within the scope. UNESCO states that the family is a kinship unit and even when its members do not share ordinary households, the unit can exist as a social reality (Sooryamoorthy, 2012; Sonawat, 2001; UNESCO, 1992; Sharma, 2013).

The family is also the first and smallest social unit for a child. Before they get acquainted with the world around them, a child will get acquainted with the family situation first. (Taubah, 2015). The family is the closest environment to each individual, especially for a child. The knowledge, understanding, and interaction that they get first to come from the family environment, especially mothers, a mother in educating children has their examples, namely, a mother must have a role model that can be exemplified in her life and form norms of values and creeds (Gade, 2012). While both the environment can affect a child's development is the school environment, and the third is the community environment.

Haan (2010) shows that parents spend their financial resources for children's education. Children are the future of the family and the hidden treasure for both parents. When they are born, they are welcomed into the family and when they grow up they learn different things

from their parents. Children are the most beautiful gifts that God entrusts to both parents. Almost every parent wants to be blessed with a baby in his family. A child naturally wants to get affection from his parents and every parent always tries as hard as possible for his favorite child to have a bright future. Surely all parents want their favorite children to always be the best in their lives.

Responsibility is natural, which means that responsibility has become part of human life that every human being, and certainly each person will assume responsibility of their own (Rochmah, 2016). A child's role doesn't just end at school. Apart from the role of children to learn in school, it is necessary to train to be responsible by giving them roles at home. Children are important contributors to a family. Parents are the only ones who can train their children to understand their responsibilities in life. Responsibility is human awareness of behavior or actions both intentional and unintentional. Responsibility also means acting as an expression of awareness of the obligations that are manifested in daily behavior.

Some studies have proved that the birth orderly has many advantages including the birth orderly child to have more achievements and better achievement in the school. The birth orderly child is also believed to be more likely to occupy the office at the workplace (Black, 2017; Lehmann, Nuevo-Chiquero & Vidal-Fernandez, 2013). When having the birth orderly child, the parents are too anxious about everything. So, they tend to give a lot of prohibition on children because they worry about safety and prosperity. In the second child onwards, the parents will be more relaxed in applying the rules. They know what rules are effective and ineffective, and their impact on children. Based on the experience they had had parents no longer worried about everything because they had already been a parent before. Often, the birth orderly child cannot be free to live his life, because it is fulfilled by parental expectations. When parents are not home, the oldest or birth orderly child turns the role into "the head of the family" for a while. Immediately the birth orderly child is considered and must assume responsibilities such as adults who can overcome all problems, should be able to maintain the state of the House in the rules that have been defined by parents. Keeping siblings, cleaning houses, and other household activities are often part of the responsibility of the birth orderly child.

The birth orderly children have benefited by a non-cognitive dimension that captures emotional stability, persistence, social openness, a willingness to assume responsibility as well as the ability to take initiative, based on this very strong conclusion by incorporating the family's fixed effect (Black, 2017). The birth orderly child is always filled with parental expectations of the beautiful thing, therefore, unknowingly emphasizing that the birth orderly child should always be perfect. Because the perfection of the birth orderly child is proven success of parenthood. The birth orderly child becomes the object of a variety of parenting methods that parents learn, when his brother is born, the parents no longer struggle to apply this. And let the younger brother do as his origin is still within a reasonable limit. The birth orderly child is sometimes a hero for his brother. Although parents taught the birth orderly child to always defend his sister, they sometimes did so without being asked. Schwär and Mahony (2014) explains that there is no clear and definite relationship between social skills and birth sequences.

Hotz and Pantano (2011) explained that firstborn children tend to have higher IQ than children born afterward. But Bleske-Rechek et al. (2014) expose that there is no effect of birth sequence on academic and personality achievements. As Lehmann, Nuevo-Chiquero and Vidal-Fernandez (2014) explains the existence of a negative relationship between birth sequence and educational achievement is a major change in parenting style, especially by respecting the ability of parents to encourage early cognitive development. The significant variation by the elderly during pregnancy and in the first few years of the child's life, as well as the absence of differences in the quality of emotional support, consistent with the interpretation chosen by parents to relax what they consider to be an unimportant maintenance practice for their children who are born in the next order. The parenting attitude will change after having a first child. In other words, the

second child and so on tend to be raised in a slightly different way than his brother. Different treatments from mothers also lead to different child behaviors.

Compared to the birth orderly child, children of higher birth order face lower cognitive stimulation/resources, and emotional support from their parents (Lehmann et al., 2013). This is what makes the first child more attentive and sensitive to the needs of others because he is accustomed to paying attention to the needs of younger siblings since childhood. No one can deny that the burden placed on the first child is indeed heavy. The first child is believed to be able to open a way to help his younger siblings later and the burden is unavoidable to be undertaken without ever complaining. Realizing that the family's future is in the hands of the first child, there is no time to complain. For the sake of being a protector and a solid wall for the brothers, the first child is required to never give up. Based on these things, this paper aims to analyze the description of the first child's experience of parents' expectations and the role of the first child in the family to find its role in the family.

2. Methods

2.1 Research design

The method used in this research is a qualitative approach with the phenomenological method. Qualitative research intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action holistically and by way of description in the form of words and language, in a special natural context by utilizing various natural sources (Moleong, 2018).

The main concept in phenomenology is meaning. Meaning is an important content that arises from the experience of human consciousness. To identify the essential qualities of the awareness experience done in-depth and diligence (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). The research method used to examine the condition of natural objects (as opposed to experimental), where the researcher is the key instrument. The data collection technique is done by triangulation (combined), the data analysis is inductive, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization (Sugiyono, 2014).

2.2 Participants

Participants in this study with reference between network or snowball. Snowball is used to help researchers find who has information that is important for research. Research participants amounted to 5 people with criteria: (1) Participants are children with the first order of birth with a subject age range of more than 23 years domiciled in Malang, East Java; (2) Participants stay separate with parents at least 3 years; with a name that is spelled out:

Table 1.

No	Name	Age	Gender	Long stay separate from parents
1	Lala	25 years old	Female	5 years
2	Dina	24 years old	Female	6 years
3	Ikhlas	26 years old	Male	4 years
4	Rina	25 years old	Female	7 years
5	Fadli	24 years old	Male	3 years

2.3 Data collection methods

Data collection methods used in this study were in-depth semi-structured interviews. In this study, researchers first make a framework of the subject matter that will be submitted to participants in the interview schedule. Interview questions addressed to participants are open-ended and do not lead directly to research questions.

2.4 Data analysis

This study uses Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2011) data analysis techniques. Science deals with a detailed examination of personal life experiences, the meaning of the experience to participants, and how participants understand the experience. IPA data analysis techniques are considered appropriate because the IPA tries to examine how an individual interprets important experiences in his life in a natural setting (Smith, 2011; Smith et al., 2009).

The process of data analysis in the scientific approach places the researcher as an active research instrument to understand the world of subject experience through a process of interpretation. Science involves two interpretation processes (double hermeneutics), in which researchers try to understand participants who try to understand what is happening to them (Smith, 2011; Smith et al., 2009). Data analysis using natural science techniques is passed by reading transcripts repeatedly, this stage requires the process of repeatedly reading transcripts that have been obtained; initial noting, the researcher checks the meaning of the words contained and the language used in the exploratory stage. exploratory comments or notes. What is meant by exploratory comments is descriptive comments; linguistic comments; and conceptual comments; then develop emerging themes (developing emergent themes); look for the same relationship between themes; Look for similar patterns between cases, and the last describes the parent theme.

3. Results

After analyzing the data, three themes emerge that explain how the process of a first child reaches his role in the family, how important the role of the first child in the family and the desire to achieve the first child in the family.

3.1 Learning to be responsible

Starting with being forced to finally get used to and produce results

A first child was considered its role in the family when she started at the age of adolescence, where age that they were given little by little responsibility for the tasks at home, such as watching the clock to learn his brother, to and from school together with his younger brother, to explain the lesson to his brother. Of these things when they do not perform or perform the duties and responsibilities properly, it will have consequences such as being scolded or in pieces of pocket money, but they feel it does not matter because it is their fault. As explained by the participants:

“... when I was in junior high school... around the age of 13, I was asked with my parents to go home together with my sister ... it couldn't I get angry ...” (Lala)

As a child, when given responsibility by parents at first feel forced to be given tasks that they think they should not do. But they will still carry out even in a state of compulsion because they feel it is not permissible for a child to resist what is ordered by parents. Over time they understand that these things help them in being responsible not only to their younger siblings but to individuals and others, as participants explained:

“... it's sucks ... forced to teach my brother when he was doing homework, but I can't refuse the requests of parents ... but now just so relaxed anyway ... I've already been given the task of my parents, now when I stay away from parents, I've understood what it means if we have to take responsibility for what we do, it's not only for ourselves anyway, to other people too.” (Ikhlas)

Prioritizing tasks serve as a form of responsibility and moral burden for a first child, it is no doubt that the first child is often difficult to reject what has been asked by parents. However, for parents sometimes this makes the means to be more able to be responsible, not only in matters involving self-interest but also in the interests of the surrounding.

3.2 My response has meaning

Feel appreciated and recognized

Everyone in the family must have an important role in the family is no exception to the first child, the first child is considered more capable and mature in making decisions. This was stated when both parents are discussed in decisions that involve the family, indirectly, the first child will always be asked to comment about the issues discussed or just a listener for the JV their parents talking about her day. As the narrative of some participants felt more involved in deciding for the family:

“... I was invited to discuss ... ever about the problem of buying something ... I was the first to be asked for my response ... also if there was a problem with my sister at school ... sometimes my parents asked me ...” (Dina)

Inclusion of children in family issues first child feels he has an important role in the family. With its involvement in the realm of family and his opinions made considerations for parents.

Disappointment that grew to distrust

Not all birth orderly children feel it, others explained that he was not too involved even at all. From this emerged was a sense of disappointment, feeling his presence felt when an individual cannot express what he had in mind:

“... no, my opinion is rarely listened to by my parents too, conversely my parents ask my brother more often, I don't know, I don't know why, sadly not too involved and considered in the family, I'm the oldest ... now if I want to do something I have to think hard ... sometimes I doubt ... until I become insecure ...” (Fadli)

When someone does not feel involved in a role, making the individual less confident in taking steps in his life due to doubts that arise when he does not feel given the task or responsibility by his parents.

Become a substitute for parents

As the first child would be a place that is considered the second-highest after the parents for younger siblings. This is because when the younger siblings experience difficulties or problems, they usually first ask for advice and assistance from the brother:

“... my sister often tells me, sometimes tells about lectures, friendship ... they enjoy telling me ... and they are afraid to tell their parents. maybe because my age with my sister is not far so they feel comfortable with me” (Lala)

Children with birth order first tend to try to please their parents, sometimes they act as a surrogate for their sisters by giving advice or just listen to the laments his brother because the age range that is not too much that made his younger feel comfortable to tell he complained openly to their older sibling.

3.3 *Become a successful and proud figure*

A child must have good hopes and desires of the family as the family is always in a state of good sufficiency regarding clothing, housing, and food. Younger siblings can complete education with good results:

“[...] I have a desire to have a job that generates sufficient salary, in the sense enough to help parents add to the cost of everyday life, who try do not want to live good, affluent, younger siblings of school until college, my parents have the good educational background, why their children cannot like his parents.” (Rina)

Not only in formal education but in non-formal education such as talents and interests channeled. For himself, the first child hopes that he can be a reflection for his younger sibling to be a better person than himself, supported also by parents who have a fairly good educational background will always provide support for their children, especially in terms of education. Success and pride of both parents is not always the foundation of a child with the birth of a first child, but the child in the first birth sequence sometimes becomes a benchmark for the success of his younger siblings, this is what raises so much hope from his brother for his younger sibling.

4. Discussion

This paper will discuss the process of a first child reach his role in the family, the importance of the first child in the family, as well as attaining a first child in the family.

Birth order is one of the most extensive human experiences, which is universally considered to determine how intelligent, kind, responsible, sociable, emotionally stable, and open to new experiences (Sulloway, 2018), therefore parents consider the first child always reliable. At first, a first child feels considered his role in the family when he begins in his teens, where at that age they are given little by little responsibility for tasks at home, such as monitoring the learning hours of the younger sibling, going and going to school together with younger siblings, to explain the lesson to the sister From these things when they do not do or carry out their duties and responsibilities properly, they will get consequences such as being scolded or cut into pocket money, but they feel it is not a problem because it is indeed their fault. Children born in the first order are generally identified by parents as adults, conscientious, and responsible. Because of this identity parents tend to give the first children greater autonomy (Passey, 2012).

The independence of the first child in playing a role makes them look more mature and responsible (Passey, 2012). As a child, when given responsibility by parents at first feel compelled to be given tasks that they think they should not do, in adolescence children tend to bring up an attitude of resistance, closer to peers, this is because adolescence is a period full of “storms and mental stress”, a period in which there is a great physical, intellectual and emotional change in a person which causes sadness and indecision to the person concerned, and causes conflict with his environment (Hoffnung et al., 2016). But they will still carry out even in a state of compulsion because they feel it is not permissible for a child to resist what is ordered by parents. Over time they understand that these things help them in being responsible not only to their younger siblings but to individuals and others. By prioritizing tasks that serve as a form of responsibility and moral burden for a first child, it is no doubt that the first child is often difficult to reject what has been asked by parents. However, for parents sometimes this makes the means to be more able to be responsible, not only in matters involving self-interest but also in the interests of the surrounding.

Everyone in the family must have an important role in the family is no exception the first child, the first child is considered more capable and mature in making decisions it is stated when both parents discuss in decisions that involve the family, indirectly, the first child will always be asked to comment about issues discussed or just a listener for the JV their parents talking about

her day. This is where a first child to feel he had an important role in the family. Almost every parent has direct experience in which they see children older act and behave differently from children who are younger, who are born again (Rohrer, Egloff & Schmukle, 2015) because it was the parents were more likely to ask for consideration of first child.

Not all of the first children feel this, others explain that they are not too involved or even not involved at all. For some people the birth order is an idea that may never be completely lost which means that almost everyone has a direct experience where they see older children, acting and behaving differently from younger children. The birth order itself has little or no substantive relationship with the development of personality traits and has very little relationship with the development of intelligence (Damian & Roberts, 2015). This sometimes makes parents considerations in involving their children in decision making in the family. As a result, there is a sense of disappointment, feeling his presence is not felt when an individual cannot express what is in his mind. Making the individual less so as not to be confident in taking steps in his life due to doubts that arise when he does not feel given the task or responsibility by his parents.

As the first child, of course, is considered the second-highest place after parents for younger siblings. This is because when the younger siblings experience difficulties or problems, they usually first ask for advice and assistance from the brother. The first child tends to give advice or just listen to the complaints of the younger sibling because the age gap is not too far away, this makes the younger brother feel comfortable to tell his complaints to his brother, the brothers here are understood as peers (Schwefer, 2018). Besides, the first child tends to try to please their parents by acting as surrogate parents for their siblings, this is a behavior that they do with full awareness (Rohrer et al., 2015).

The effect of birth order can be seen in the family, but it may not affect the behavior and relationships between siblings. Birth order may primarily or exclusively affect those parts of the personality system that are inaccessible or that are covered up (Marini & Kurtz, 2011). As a child, of course, have good hopes and desires that are positively related to self-esteem, and positive expectations (Bailis & Chipperfield, 2018; Bruininks, 2012), for his family like the family is always in a state of adequate good regarding clothing, shelter, and food. Younger siblings can complete education with good results. Not only in formal education but in non-formal education such as talents and interests channeled. For himself, the first child hopes that he can be a reflection for his younger sibling to be a better person than himself, supported also by parents who have a fairly good educational background will always provide support for their children, especially in terms of education.

5. Conclusion

The process of a first child achieving his role in a family in which there is the beginning of the first child by being forced to carry out his duties as a responsibility and finally accustomed to fruition in his current life. With the recognition of roles, the first child tends to feel valued, recognized his existence, and will feel disappointed so that it becomes self-confidence due to lack of involvement in decision making in the family but sometimes they act as a substitute for parents. As well as the desire to achieve the first child in the family, as a child certainly has good hopes and desires that are positively related to self-esteem, and better expectations of his family life.

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