

Parents of adolescents bring their unique gender perspective to their roles as adults.

Alya Nasution

Master of Arts, Anthropology

Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

Abstract

The perception of gender and its impact on parenting within a family can vary among individuals, leading to various familial issues. This study aimed to evaluate parental gender perceptions and identify influencing factors. It focused on how grandparents raise their sons and daughters in the same household. Employing a descriptive qualitative research approach, participants included families with adolescent children, comprising both boys and girls. The study revealed that families in TretesTown lacked a comprehensive understanding of gender and sex distinctions, as they assigned roles and responsibilities based on biological sex. Parents used the approach of involving their children in their hobbies to teach and guide them.

Keywords : socialization, cultural norms, upbringing, distinctions, sex, biology, masculinity, femininity, gender inequalities, societal perspectives

Introduction

Conversations surrounding gender issues have become increasingly compelling, extending beyond individual concerns to global scales. Consequently, gender has become a prominent topic in news and discussions, as its complexity transcends singular aspects. Misconceptions about gender and sexuality often lead to assigning distinct societal roles to men and women, resulting in imbalances and the perception of certain parties as unreasonable and powerless.

The environment in which individuals grow up plays a pivotal role in shaping their mindset, making parents heavily reliant on their understanding of gender to fulfil their caregiving responsibilities. However, parents often blur the lines between gender and sex, despite these concepts having fundamentally distinct meanings. Gender refers to a social construct established by individuals and ingrained in society, while sex pertains to the biological differences between males and females. Parents must comprehend these variations, as they greatly influence their children's treatment and provision of benefits, regardless of their sex. This understanding is reflected in how grandparents treat and impart values to adolescent boys and girls regarding their roles and responsibilities within their families and communities.

According to Fakhri (2008), gender encompasses innate characteristics of men and women shaped by social and cultural norms. It involves the divide between men and women regarding duties, privileges, obligations, and behaviours established by the standards prevailing in different communities, subject to temporal and situational variations. Puspitawati (2009) adds that these norms can evolve and adapt to new circumstances, influencing duties and actions.

In general, sex distinguishes men and females based on their basic human anatomy. In contrast, gender concentrates on parts of one's identity that are community, societal, or other, not determined by biology. The study of sex primarily emphasizes the development of physical characteristics and chemical makeup within individuals' bodies, while gender studies focus on the development of masculinity and femininity.

When people discuss gender, they are not referring to the genetic traits typically associated with sex but to how society perceives and understands gender. The existence of gender inequalities stems from the fact that different societal perspectives can become socially accepted norms. However, societal views evolve in response to new information and experiences, leading to a shift in the understanding of gender.

The normative framework of society evolves, with the understanding of gender being passed down from one generation to the next. In everyday life, gender operates independently of other variables, eventually perceived as an inherent and unchangeable characteristic. Consequently, gender disparities are accepted as inherent in men and women without undergoing scrutiny. These societal perspectives contribute to a flawed understanding of the true meanings of sex and gender, often conflating the two terms.

In addition to the challenges mentioned above, parents in Tretes Village, Pacet District, Mojokerto, have limited knowledge about gender, influenced by cultural factors. This lack of comprehension among parents can significantly affect how they raise their adolescent sons and daughters. The purpose of this piece is to evaluate the concept of gender among families and to explain the different styles of parenthood that are offered to adolescent boys and girls.

Method

This theoretical essay utilizes personal narratives as a foundation to illuminate the diverse perspectives on gender roles in parenting among different types of parents. Its primary objective is to educate preteen and teenage boys and girls about the challenges and obligations their parents encountered during their formative years. The essay delves into parents' understanding of delegating responsibilities to adolescent boys and girls, the strategies employed by mothers to instill gender roles in young males and females, and the communication techniques used by families to impart information about the responsibilities of adolescent boys and girls to younger members of the household. The data collection process involved engaging in conversations, conducting assessments, and conducting an extensive review of relevant literature, which was subsequently analyzed through methods such as information reduction, visualization, and inference generation.

The Findings of the Experiment and Some Discussion

The preceding explanation provided by IR highlights how parental socialization of adolescent sons and daughters is influenced by their own teenage experiences, leading to the assignment of specific responsibilities based on gender. This socialization process relies on parents' observations and emotions, which are then passed down through generations.

Due to the influence of lived experiences and traditional beliefs, parents lacked a scientific understanding of the distinctions between sexuality and gender. The knowledge of gender varied considerably based on upbringing and cultural background. The views of the parents were the basis for the assignment of duties to their adolescent sons and daughters.

Teenagers had limited comprehension of the gendered nature of specific tasks, and their parents bridged this knowledge gap through instruction. Parents who lacked a clear understanding of gender distinctions socialized their teenage boys and girls into different roles within the household. Consequently, in Tretes Villages, families traditionally assigned distinct labour roles to adolescent males and females.

Parents had limited awareness of the differences between gender and sex. The allocation of separate responsibilities to teenage boys and girls was solely based on gender. Prevailing gender norms dictated that boys should engage in outdoor chores while girls focused on domestic work.

Teenage boys and girls benefited from parental socialization in these activities. According to the naturalistic theory, women are born with inherent physical characteristics, bodily functions, and social responsibilities, and parents socialize their adolescent sons and daughters as they transition into

adulthood. Conversely, males are perceived as possessing greater physical strength, being assigned public roles, enduring hardships, and protecting women (Muthali'in, 2001).

Parents conveyed these differences in responsibilities to their children, enabling them to learn the distinctions between male and female roles through socialization. The cultivation theory explains that gender disparities arise from sociocultural development, relegating women to the secondary home, workplace, and public roles (Tim BKKBN. 2004).

Traditionally, parents treated adolescent boys and girls equally by involving them in various household chores, aiming to instil an early understanding of the gendered division of labour. Diverse parenting methods were employed to instil societal expectations, ethical principles, and behavioural standards in children for their future roles (Mussen et al., 1994).

Distinct parental behaviours and perspectives are imposed on teenage boys and girls due to the unique roles they are expected to fulfil. Parenting styles often involve strict rules and the utilization of threats to establish parental authority (Baumrind, 1991).

Furthermore, parents adopt different approaches to raising adolescent boys and girls. Adolescent girls face more restrictions and pressures to conform to gender norms, while teenage boys are granted greater freedom but cautioned against behaving in manners associated with girls. These inequalities between men and women are argued to be socially constructed rather than innate (Suryadi & Idris, 2004).

Conclusion

A significant proportion of parents in Tretes Town demonstrated a limited comprehension of gender, as evidenced by their reinforcement of gendered divisions in both the workplace and the socialization of their teenage sons and daughters. Due to their personal experiences, fathers in Tretes Village traditionally assigned specific responsibilities to their adolescent boys and girls, indicating a lack of understanding concerning gender. Parents' distribution of tasks to teenage males and females varied based on their knowledge of how to divide the workload effectively. Thus, parents designated outdoor and physically demanding chores for adolescent boys, while indoor tasks were assigned to girls.

In Tretes Village, parents socialized their adolescent boys and girls by emphasizing their respective interests and responsibilities to foster an awareness of the distinctions between tasks performed by men and women. Parents in Tretes Village engaged their teenage boys and girls in household chores to impart knowledge about the unique roles associated with males and females. Parents held different expectations regarding their son's and daughters' behaviour and level of independence at this stage. Consequently, parents discouraged their children from exhibiting behaviours typically associated with the opposite gender. Furthermore, parents prevented teenage girls from participating in nocturnal activities alongside their male counterparts.

References

- Baumrind, D. (1991). The influence of parenting style on adolescent substance use. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 11(1), 56-95.
- Fakhri, M. (2008). Analisis gender dan transformasi sosial. Yogyakarta: INSIST Press.
- Mussen, P. H., Conger, J. J., & Huston, A. C. (1994). Perkembangan dan kepribadian anak. Jakarta: Arcon Noor.
- Muthali'in, A. (2001). Bias gender dalam pendidikan. Surakarta: Universitas Muhammadiyah Press.
- Puspitawati, H. (2009). Teori Gender dan Aplikasinya Dalam Kehidupan Keluarga. Bogor: Institut Pertanian Bogor Press.
- Riskinavi. (2016). Gender dan feminisme. Retrieved from <http://riskinavi.blogspot.com/2016/05/gender-dan-feminisme.html>
- Suryadi, A., & Idris, E. (2004). Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Bidang Pendidikan. Jakarta: PT Genesindo.

- Tim BKKBN. (2004). Bunga Rampai Panduan dan Bahan Pembelajaran Pelatihan Pengarusutamaan Gender dalam Pembangunan Nasional. Jakarta: KPP dan PA, BKKBN, UNFPA.
- Ummah, A. F. (2011). Sikap otoriter orangtua dan pengaruhnya terhadap motivasi belajar siswa MTS Al Hidayah Jatiasih Kota Bekasi. Skripsi, UIN Sysarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta.