

## Contribution of Parental Attention and Peer Association toward Adolescent Students' Character

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### Abstract

Teenagers are the age of identity and character formation. This study aims to analyze the contribution of parental attention and peer association toward students' character. A descriptive study with a quantitative approach, the study involved a population of teenage (eighth grade) students at SMP (Junior High School) Al-Azhar Syifa Budi Parahyangan in the academic year 2018/2019. A total of 48 students were selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaire and analyzed with correlation and regression tests. The results showed significant contribution of parental attention and peer association to the students' character. The implications of this research are addressed to parents, teachers, and school as the parties responsible for the character building of teenage students.

**Keywords:** Parental attention; peer association; students' character

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### INTRODUCTION

Generally, junior high school students are around 13-16 years old, which, according to Hurlock (1980), are classified as the period of adolescence. The beginning of adolescence is usually called "teens", which is sometimes called "not fun teens" because of the rebellious nature of teenagers and their struggle in their character and identity formation. According to Haqani (2004), adolescence is the transition period from childhood to adult age. In this transitional period, children grow very fast, either physically or psychologically.

A teenager, as a growing young person, keeps interacting socially with peers and the environment where s/he lives. Through the process of adaptation, teenagers are tied to their peer groups. The role of the peer groups in adolescence is more dominant than that in the childhood. Adolescent peer groups often oppose the values and norms prevailing in society (Vembriarto, 1993).

In order to minimize the negative effect of peer association on the character of teenagers, it is necessary to have shared responsibility in education to help develop their character and identity. The first social institution responsible is the family. A family constitutes the smallest social unit in society, and it is the first and foremost cultural environment in implanting norms and developing a variety of habits, behaviors and values of religion for individuals, family and community (Tafsir et al., 2004). The process of education is done by parents since the child is born

until adolescence, and up to adulthood until s/he is ready to accept God's responsibility (*taklif*).

The most important responsibilities family education is accountable for are: (1) responsibility for the implementation of children's faith education; (2) responsibility to supervise children's moral development; (3) responsibility to develop children's intellectuality; (4) responsibility to nurture children's psychology; (5) responsibility to oversee children's social development; and (6) responsibility to introduce sex (Bakry, 2005).

The second social institution responsible for providing education to children is the school. Schools have developed due to the rapid development and advancement of the community, which has led to widespread differentiation and specialization. In such circumstances, the family can no longer provide education to children in accordance with the development and demands of the community (Mahmud & Priatna, 2005).

Schools have a significant role in the development of children into mature and responsible human beings. On the other hand, schools that are supposed to be a solution to providing accessible and specialized education to children in some ways may create moral crisis in children and teenagers. This crisis occurs ultimately because children's and teenagers' very complex backgrounds are not well accommodated by schools. In addition, education in Indonesia is more intellectualistic and verbalistic (Bakry, 2005). Therefore, faith and piety is absolutely