



THE DYNAMICS OF INDEPENDENCE FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF THEIR FATHER AMONG HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS AT IAIN PONTIANAK

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Abstract

Father has a significant role in the family. The loss of the father caused a deep sadness for his son. This sadness can affect one's independence dynamics, especially in achievements. This study explored the development of independence and its impact on academic achievement in high-achieving students who had lost their fathers. Through qualitative case study research, two high-achieving students from IAIN Pontianak were investigated using in-depth interviews and observations. The data is analyzed by Milles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The findings revealed diverse experiences in the formation and development of independence. One participant established independence post-bereavement, which subsequently contributed to improved academic performance. Conversely, the other participant possessed pre-existing independence, which facilitated their adjustment and achievement following their father's death. Overall, the study underscores the crucial role of independence in shaping the academic trajectories of bereaved students. It highlights how independence, encompassing emotional, economic, intellectual, and social dimensions, not only enhances academic success but also equips students to navigate the challenges and emotional turmoil associated with parental loss.

Keywords: *Dynamics, Independence, Death, Father, Student Achievement.*

Abstrak

Ayah memiliki peran yang signifikan dalam keluarga. Kehilangan ayah menimbulkan kesedihan yang mendalam untuk anaknya. Kesedihan tersebut dapat

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mempengaruhi dinamika kemandirian yang dimiliki, khususnya terkait dengan prestasi. Studi ini mengeksplorasi perkembangan kemandirian dan dampaknya terhadap prestasi akademik pada mahasiswa berprestasi yang kehilangan ayah mereka. Melalui penelitian studi kasus kualitatif, dua mahasiswa berprestasi dari IAIN Pontianak diteliti menggunakan wawancara mendalam dan observasi. Data dianalisa dengan Milles dan Huberman yang mencakup reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Temuan-temuan menunjukkan pengalaman yang beragam dalam pembentukan dan pengembangan kemandirian. Salah satu peserta membangun kemandirian setelah kehilangan ayahnya, yang kemudian berkontribusi pada peningkatan prestasi akademik. Sebaliknya, peserta lainnya sudah memiliki kemandirian sebelum kehilangan ayahnya, yang memfasilitasi penyesuaian dan pencapaian mereka setelah kehilangan orang tua mereka. Secara keseluruhan, studi ini menggarisbawahi peran penting kemandirian dalam membentuk lintasan akademik mahasiswa yang kehilangan orang tua. Studi ini menyoroti bagaimana kemandirian, yang mencakup dimensi emosional, ekonomi, intelektual, dan sosial, tidak hanya meningkatkan keberhasilan akademik tetapi juga membekali mahasiswa untuk mengatasi tantangan dan gejolak emosional yang terkait dengan kehilangan orang tua.

Kata kunci: *Dinamika, Kemandirian, Kematian, Ayah, Mahasiswa Berprestasi.*

INTRODUCTION

Fathers have a significant role in family relationships, namely as leaders, protectors, companions, and educators of children at home. This is as stated by Istiyati et al. (2020), fathers need to take on the role of babysitters, child directors to be independent, and protection providers. In addition, the father is also an example for children in many ways. Fathers also play a role as role models in worship and behavior that affect the formation of character and personality in Mulyana & Kustanti, (2020). Thus, the father becomes an important figure in the life of the child.

However, the death of family members, including the death of the father, is an unavoidable situation. The existence of death in this family member, as proposed by Harjuna & Rinaldi (2022), generates adverse situations that generate stress and negatively affect the individual. The statement can provide an

explanation that the death of the father has a great impact on the people he leaves behind, especially on the child.

The death of the father can produce a diverse response in each child, because the father is often considered an idol, protector, and leader. The death of the father often brings prolonged grief and sadness, but can form resilience and independence in (Suryadi, 2018). Thus, it is understood that significant changes can occur after the loss of the father, especially in the process of developing independence.

In the context of Student Life, the challenge of independence becomes more prominent, especially after the loss of a father. Rusli & Widyastuti (2023) stated that the feeling of sadness felt by late adolescents after the death of parents has a significant influence on growth and development, which includes physical, mental, social relationships, and



even academic and social interactions. Students in their late teens are also vulnerable to change and pressure, and losing a father can be a tough test on their way to academic success. Therefore, this research conducted a case study on two high-achieving students at IAIN Pontianak, both academic and non-academic. Although both have a brilliant track record of achievement, the experience of losing a father can form different strands of independence.

Based on the results of interviews with subjects during pre-research, there are different patterns in the two subjects. The difference lies in the experiences before and after the death of the father, in which there are subjects from childhood who have an affinity with their father, and there are those who are exactly the opposite. In addition, there is also an explanation of the psychological response felt after her father died. The statement implicates easily or not the individual in achieving the stage of independence in herself, especially in forming achievements.

Independence itself has several aspects that can indicate the form of independence in a person. Aspects of independence, according to Havighurst, as cited by Lisani et al. (2020), namely independence in emotional, economic, intellectual, and social. The emotional aspect is related to the process of regulation in individuals in controlling their emotions and calmness, for example, how individuals after losing their father, develop coping strategies. Then the economic aspect itself is closely related to the way individuals who have

independence in managing finances independently and do not continue to depend on others, for example, after losing their father, the individual can manage their budget. The intellectual aspect itself is related to the individual's thought process, especially in academia, for example, motivating oneself to complete academic tasks without direct guidance. Finally, the social aspect relates to how the individual independently interacts with those around her. For example, after the loss of the father, the individual takes the initiative to establish new relationships or seeks support from relevant groups. These aspects provide a comprehensive picture of how independence can manifest in a person's life after the death of a parent.

Concerning the death of the elderly, there is research in previous journal articles that discuss the condition after the death of the elderly by several researchers. Rusli & Widyastuti (2023) discuss describing resilience in late adolescents who have lost their parents. Although both discuss the psychological situation after the loss of parents, the difference between Rusli and Widyastuti's research and the research in this paper lies in the focus of their research. Rusli and Widyastuti discussed resilience to the death of parents, while the research in this paper will focus on aspects of independence, more specifically, the father.

Susanto & Surjaningrum (2023) discuss the meaning of adolescent grief over the death of parents. Just like the previous research review, the difference with the research in this paper lies in the



focus of the research under review. Susanto and Surjaningrum examined how the meaning of grief related to the death of parents, while the study discussed how the dynamics of post-loss parents, which focused on the father.

Then there is a study conducted by Farisah & Ningrum (2023) regarding the dynamics of grief of IAIN Pontianak Islamic Psychology students after the death of their father or mother. Although there are similarities in the research of Farisah and Ningrum with the research in this paper, the difference lies in the main study. Farisah and Ningrum discuss the dynamics of grief after the death of two parents, namely the father or mother, while in this research in this paper will be studied about the dynamics of independence after the death of the father only.

Based on the explanation above, it appears that the previous studies are general and have not thoroughly explored the discussion related to independence, which includes aspects in it, especially in high-achieving students. This research presents a novelty by using a case study approach involving high-achieving students at IAIN Pontianak to examine their independence concerning the death of their father. This study has the focus of study to understanding the specifics of the formation of patterns of independence in high-achieving students whose father has died. In addition, the focus of this study is to determine the contribution of independence in shaping the achievements obtained after the loss father. By focusing on both subjects, this study aims to make a more specific and

profound contribution to the understanding of the dynamics of independence, involving emotional, economic, intellectual, and social aspects.

The untimely loss of a parent, particularly a father, can have a profound and lasting impact on an individual's development, especially during formative years. While previous research has explored the grief and adjustment processes of bereaved individuals, there is a notable gap in understanding the specific dynamics of independence among high-achieving college students who have experienced paternal loss. This unique population, characterized by ambition, resilience, and a strong drive for success, may still face significant challenges in navigating the complexities of grief and loss. By focusing on this specific group, this study aims to illuminate the nuanced ways in which bereavement can shape their experiences of independence and its subsequent influence on their academic and personal trajectories.

The selection of IAIN Pontianak as the study site offers several distinct advantages. As a prominent Islamic institution of higher learning, IAIN Pontianak provides a rich cultural and religious context that can significantly shape students' understanding of loss, grief, and resilience. The Islamic perspective on loss and grief, often emphasizing patience, acceptance, and reliance on divine will, can influence how students cope with bereavement and develop their independence. Furthermore, the institution's emphasis on academic excellence aligns with the



study's focus on high-achieving students. By selecting participants from this institution, the research can explore how the specific academic demands and expectations of a religious higher education setting may interact with the challenges of bereavement and the development of independence. Additionally, the institution's strong emphasis on religious values and community may provide additional support and resources for students who have experienced loss.

The study employed a qualitative research design, utilizing in-depth interviews and observations to gather rich and detailed data. Participants will be selected based on specific criteria, including academic achievement, the experience of paternal loss, and willingness to participate in the study. Data analysis will involve thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes related to the development of independence, coping strategies, and the impact of bereavement on academic and personal life.

By examining the experiences of high-achieving students at IAIN Pontianak who have lost their fathers, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between bereavement, independence, and academic success. The findings of this research may have significant implications for counseling and support services for bereaved students, as well as informing future research on the psychological impact of parental loss.

Based on the explanation above, this study has benefits, which can explain more deeply related to the dynamics of the independence of high-achieving students after the death of the father. In addition, this study seeks to open new insights related to efforts to understand, support, and guide high-achieving students after the loss of their father. The results of this study can be a source of reference for students, educational institutions, and other parties in the discussion of the dynamics of independence in students after the death of their father.

PARADIGM, APPROACHES, THEORY, AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The paradigm in qualitative psychological research serves as a framework or lens that researchers use to observe and understand psychological phenomena. This paradigm aligns with the views of Safarudin et al. (2023), who state that within a societal system, there are bonds that create order. This order occurs naturally, and the task of a social researcher is to seek and identify these patterns of order. In other words, this paradigm functions like "glasses" specifically designed to view psychological phenomena from a deeper and different perspective.

Qualitative research essentially emphasizes a richer and more in-depth understanding of specific conditions. In this context, for example, a researcher studying psychological independence in high-achieving students who have lost their fathers would delve further into their emotional experiences, perspectives, and



how they cope with the changes in their lives. This approach allows the researcher to understand the psychological dynamics from a more holistic angle, including both internal and external factors that influence the individual.

The case study approach in qualitative research is a highly useful method when a researcher aims to deeply understand a particular issue or situation. Case studies provide a way to select information-rich cases—cases that can offer extensive insights into the phenomenon being studied. According to Assyakurrohim et al. (2023), this approach is often used to study complex issues through several real-life examples. The case study approach also helps researchers explore situations in their real-life context and understand events within the daily lives of individuals.

In the context of research on the psychological condition of high-achieving students who have lost their fathers, the case study approach is highly relevant. Each individual who experiences such a loss responds and copes with grief in unique ways. Through this approach, researchers can deeply explore the personal experiences of these individuals, including how their emotions, thoughts, and cognitive processes evolve after the loss of a parent. The use of case studies allows researchers to explore the uniqueness of each individual's response and identify potential patterns related to the psychological independence experienced by these high-achieving students.

In this research, the case study approach can provide a deep

understanding of how the loss of a father affects the independence of students. By understanding their personal experiences, the researchers can formulate richer and more varied findings about the factors that influence the psychological independence of high-achieving students, as well as how they navigate the life challenges that come with losing a parent. This case study can open new insights into the complex psychological dynamics behind academic success and the emotional independence that develops following a significant loss.

METHOD

This research is qualitative research with the Case Study Method. The subjects in this study were high-achieving students at IAIN Pontianak, whose father had died in the last 3-6 years, ranging in age from 20-23 years, and willing to be respondents. High-achieving students are selected based on the consideration that they have high academic demands, so the influence of losing a father figure can be more crucial to the dynamics of their lives. Based on these criteria, the number of respondents in this study amounted to two high-achieving students in IAIN Pontianak, whose father has died.

The process of collecting data is done through observation and in-depth interviews, while the question aspects are intended to answer the formulation of the problem. Aspects of independence in this study were derived from Havighurst (Lisani et al., 2020) in the form of aspects in the emotional, economic, intellectual, and social. These aspects were studied by formulating a list of questions asked in

interviews to respondents related to the dynamics of the independence of high-achieving students after the death of the father.

Data analysis in this study refers to the concept of Milles and Huberman. According to Sugiyono (2019) this analysis involves the process of data reduction, data presentation, and making conclusions based on the data that has been processed. Related to this study, data analysis is done by reducing the results of interviews with verbatim according to the results recorded on the research topic. Then the data is presented in the form of a table for the coding process of the statements expressed by the speakers. Then the data is presented in the research discussion by presenting the dynamics related to the topic taken. Furthermore, the data that has been presented concludes the presentation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

1. First Subject (DK)

a. Overview of independence pattern

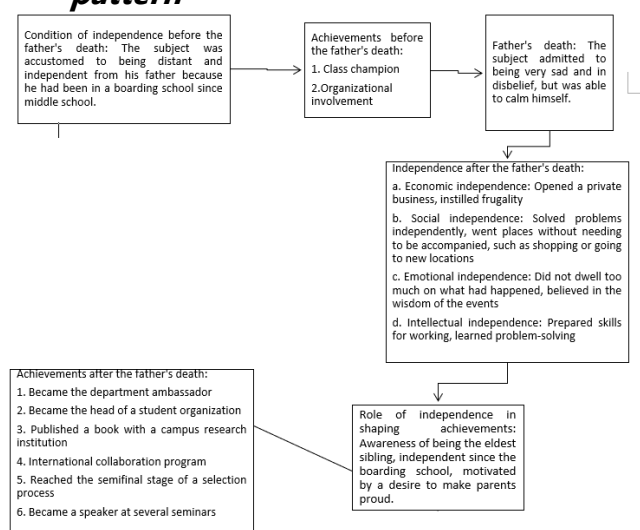


Figure 1. Independence diagram for subject 1

That is a diagram which presents a picture of the pattern of independence in the first subject, who was a high-achieving student, both before and after the death of her father.

Based on the diagram, it can be seen that the subject is a daughter who had a close relationship with her father. However, this closeness of the subject with her father only lasted until the sixth grade of elementary school. Because when entering the junior high school level, school subjects and live in boarding schools. Subject statements regarding this narrative are,

*"D**** was close to her father. Then from middle school, she was already in a pesantren, moving from one pesantren to another, getting used to being away from her parents. There, I was taught to be independent."* (DK, F, pre-research interview).

The purpose of the statement is to provide a positive impact on the subject, where the subject is required to learn independently and become a more mature person. Related to the explanation, before her father died, the subject was considered a high-achieving person. The following is the result of the subject interview,

*"Before my father passed away, D**** went to the English village to study English there. I didn't achieve any significant accomplishments. Based on*



my own experience in the pesantren, maybe I became a class champion, but never the first place. Besides that, before my father passed away, I was also active in organizations, like the student association throughout West Kalimantan." (DK, F, L 446-452).

Based on the quote, it is known that the subject's achievements before her father died, where the subject's achievements were limited only to the school environment and/or Islamic boarding school, such as becoming a class champion. In addition, the subject tends to excel in non-academic activities, namely by serving in several organizations, such as the Santri Association throughout West Kalimantan.

Concerning this explanation, after her father's death, the subject's initial response was sadness. However, she tried to remain patient and calm by reflecting on the lessons behind her father's passing. The following is the subject's statement,

"Yes, it's sad for sure. But if you look closely, the sadness is only visible on the outside, but on the inside, it's just normal because we, um, we (pauses). Also, from a religious perspective, we shouldn't be too immersed in sadness, and everyone will experience death eventually." (DK, F, L 17-23).

The statement revealed that the death of her father made the subject feel sad, but she understood

in religion that death will happen to everyone one day. After the death of her father, the subject showed independence in various aspects. In the economic aspect, the subject's independence is shown by the following interview results,

"Because I teach private lessons. So, I also earn my own income to help the family's economy." (DK, F, L 205-207).

"[...] The important thing is to instill in oneself not to be wasteful. So, when thinking about buying anything, don't be wasteful." (DK, F, L 223-225).

The statement shows that the subject earns her own income by opening a private tutoring business and instills a thrifty attitude in buying daily necessities.

Furthermore, in the social aspect, the subject's independence is shown by the following statement,

"[...] I'm not the type of person who solves problems by sharing. But I believe there are things we can handle on our own. There are things that we can't solve, but if we keep thinking about them, it won't bring back the person we hoped for, right? So, I reassure myself." (DK, F, L 73-80).

"[...] Because I am the type of person who does not rely on others. So, others don't need to know our problems, and others don't need to know. And I was taught this as well. Because I have been equipped with the knowledge that we should show people that we are okay. So we don't



need others to know our sadness or difficulties. Therefore, it's never the case that if there's a problem, I need to tell others or handle things by sharing with people, I'm not the type of person like that." (DK, F, L 120-130).

"Even, I don't need to be accompanied to a new place." (DK, F, L 385).

"I don't need to be accompanied when buying necessities." (DK, F, L 391).

*"[...] For events like seminars or Maulid, it's okay to be alone. Sometimes **** asks others first, 'Do you want to join? Do you want to join?' If they don't want to join, it's fine to be alone."* (DK, F, L 399-402).

"[...] For example, in situations where you can control yourself, you handle it on your own first. Handle it yourself first, and if you can't, then ask for help." (DK, F, L 415-418).

Based on various interview quotes, the subject can solve the problems he faces independently without relying on others. In addition, the subject is also comfortable following activities alone, such as attending seminars and maulid. Also, the subject can go without being accompanied if she wants to visit a new place and buy the items she needs.

Furthermore, related to the emotional aspect, the subject's independence is proven by the following

"Often, I wake up from dreams in a state of crying a lot." (DK, F, L 65-66).

"For disappointment, there is none at all because we are taught that everything has its wisdom." (DK, F, L 105-107).

"[...] But now if I feel lazy, I think about how my parents are struggling to find work there. So, I become more aware of myself, that's how it is." (DK, F, L 305-307).

Based on the interview excerpt, even though trapped in a sad state, the subject calms her emotions by thinking positively about the wisdom of every event that occurs and realizing becoming a better person.

The independence of the subject in the intellectual aspect after the death of a parent is shown by the following interview results,

"Financially, it's about improving skills. Because when we work, we need skills, not just a position. It's useless to have a position but lack the necessary skills." (DK, F, L 261-265).

"Yes, improving skills, like what we enjoy, for example, English, means enhancing English skills, thus increasing our self-worth." (DK, F, L 269-271).

The quote shows that the subject has a plan to improve her abilities to face a future career, namely by improving her work abilities. According to the subject,



working in this day and age requires adequate abilities. In addition, subjects who like English also improve her abilities in the following fields.

b. The Contribution of Independence in Shaping The Achievements Obtained After Losing Her Father

Independence after the death of her father in DK played an important role in shaping her into a high-achieving student. Despite the difficult trials, the existence of this independence encouraged DK to be able to focus on education and achieve brilliance in her academic field. The following are the results of an interview regarding the contribution of independence in DK related to the achievements she has achieved.

"[...]Well, independence was formed from there. At the Ma'had, we were taught to be independent, like managing finances and activities independently." (DK, F, L 461-464).

"[...] Because of my parents' upbringing, I became brave, and they trusted me to do what I wanted to do." (DK, F, L 468-470).

*"**** was close to her father before the siblings were born, but after having two younger siblings, the parents' affection shifted to them. As the older siblings, we have to give in and be independent." (DK, F, L 471-474).*

*"The main reason why **** is now brave enough to participate in various things and reach this stage is because, since my father is no longer here, I need to have something to make him proud, to make my parents proud in the eyes of others." (DK, F, pre-research interview).*

Based on several quotes from the interview results, the independence that the subject had after losing her father had a significant contribution in shaping her into a high-achieving student.

First, this independence was formed from her experience at the Islamic boarding school, where she was taught to be independent in carrying out daily activities. In addition, the parenting pattern taught by her parents gave her courage and confidence in achieving her life goals, which made the subject determined to face challenges.

Furthermore, independence in the subject emerged because of the awareness of being more independent and giving in as an older sibling with two younger siblings. The independence in the subject was also formed thanks to intrinsic motivation to make her parents proud by achieving achievements after her father's death.

The achievements obtained by the subject after her father's death were very impressive, namely as a leader in a student organization on her campus, achieving the

highest achievement in the selection of representatives in her department, being involved in publishing works with campus research institutions, participating in international collaboration programs, reaching the semifinals in the provincial language ambassador competition, and participating as a speaker in various seminar events outside the campus environment.

2. Second Subject (QF)

a. Overview of independence pattern

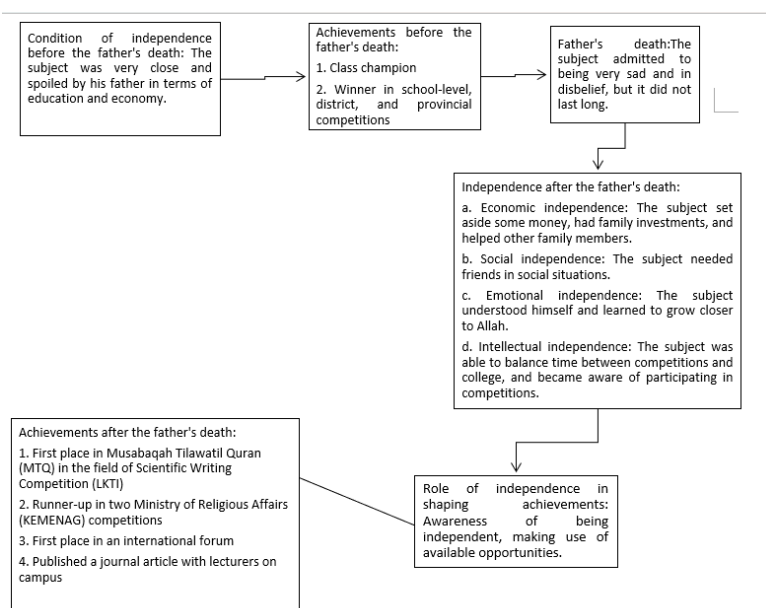


Figure 2. Independence diagram for subject 2

That is a diagram which presents a picture of the pattern of independence in the second subject, who was an excellent student, both before and after the death of her father.

Based on the diagram, the subject who is the youngest child and the only daughter in the family

has a close relationship with her father. The following is the subject's statement,

"I have been close to my father since I was a child. I was also very spoiled by him; he would buy me things and help me with my school assignments, especially since my father was an agriculture lecturer. Basically, my father helped me in my daily life." (QF, F, pre-research interview).

The meaning of the statement is that before her father's death, the subject was very dependent on her father in her daily life. The subject often received help in completing assignments, as well as buying things that he needed. Before her father's death, the subject often participated in various academic and non-academic competitions during her school years, which made her achieve several achievements. The following is the subject's statement,

"But, I was indeed active before my father passed away. Yes, I liked to participate in activities, I couldn't stay still, I liked meeting people, joining organizations, and I also participated in competitions." (QF, F, L 474-478).

"When I was little, hmm, when I was in kindergarten, I participated in a few competitions, but not many. Then, in elementary school, I also joined competitions, such as recitation competitions where I once



became a champion, short surah memorization contests, and when there were badminton competitions, I participated in the selection and became a finalist. Often, I was also chosen to participate in Olympiad selections, and it was usually like that. It was the same in middle school, I was active in both internal and external organizations. I also frequently competed in scout activities and often won competitions. And in high school, it was the same." (QF, F, L 479-489).

"I feel that my achievements back then were within the scope of school, district, or province. Whereas now, it's national." (QF, F, L 516-519).

Based on the quote above, before her father's death, the subject had achieved significant achievements, both in academics and non-academic areas. The subject was actively participating in organizations and winning some competitions. However, the victories achieved were only at school, district, and provincial levels, which did not reach the national scope, according to the target desired by the subject.

Related to the previous explanation, the death of the father resulted in an unexpected response in the subject. The results of the interview related to this were,

"So when my father passed away, I was at MAN IC Sambas. Honestly, I felt sad and shocked, I

couldn't believe that my father had died." (QF, F, pre-research interview)

"[...] Yes, I was sad, but not stressed. I remember my brother saying, 'Do you have Allah or not? We are Muslims, we have faith. We know that in our religion, everything returns to Allah. It's okay to be sad, but don't let it drag on.'" (QF, F, L 52-59).

"I was angry at first, wondering why my father was buried without waiting for me. After that, I wasn't angry anymore. I wasn't angry as if blaming fate, because I have faith." (QF, F, L 131-135).

The quote shows that the subject who was at MAN Insan Cendekia in Sambas at that time felt angry, sad, and did not believe the sudden death of her father. This happened especially since the funeral of her father was held before the subject returned home. However, her older brother advised the subject to remain strong and not get lost in sadness.

Furthermore, after her father's death, the subject had independence in various aspects. In the economic aspect, the subject's independence is shown by the following interview results,

"In dealing with financial problems, I try to be more frugal now." (QF, F, L 27-30).

"I am someone who hasn't yet learned to manage finances well. It's not as free as it used to be. I'm confused about how to do it.



Basically, daily shopping, and then setting aside money for things I want. That's how I manage it." (QF, F, L 223-229).

"Now it's different; now I set money aside. Set aside for this, set aside for example for charity, and set aside also for things I want." (QF, F, L 238-241).

"[...] It's like investing in land or houses. So, I often ask my mom, 'What if I do this, how about that?' Basically, I ask my mom a lot. I also learn from my parents how to do it. And the investment isn't from my earnings, but from my parents. You know, if parents pass away, there will be inheritance." (QF, F, L 251-257).

The meaning behind some of the statements above is that the subject's independence is demonstrated by setting aside money to become a person who can manage finances frugally and beneficially. Although the subject admits to not yet being fully proficient in managing finances, she is trying to learn from her mother about investing and managing the family's assets.

Besides the economic aspect, there is also a social aspect to independence. Here are the results of the subject interview related to that aspect.

"As usual, when there's a fiery problem, I need a sane friend. When I'm not sane, feeling fiery, I need a friend to calm me down." (QF, F, L 199-203).

"But I'm the kind of person who is easily influenced, swayed easily. So, I need strength from others." (QF, F, L 381-383).

"Because I don't like being alone. I like asking for friends' opinions." (QF, F, L 419-420).

"I need to be accompanied when going somewhere. I can't go alone." (QF, F, L 424).

Some of the interview excerpts show that in terms of independence in the social aspect, the subject tends to be less independent and relies on others in certain situations. The subject also stated that she did not like to do things alone and preferred to be accompanied by others.

Related to this explanation, the subject's independence is also found in the emotional aspect. The following is an excerpt from the subject's interview,

"[...] Yes, I was sad, but not stressed. I remember my brother saying, 'Do you have Allah or not? We are Muslims, we have faith. We know that according to our religion, everything returns to Allah. It's okay to be sad, but don't let it drag on.'" (QF, F, L 52-59).

"When managing emotions, if I remember my father, I pray." (QF, F, L 100-101).

"[...] But if I can't hold it in and feel embarrassed, I usually just leave or change the situation. If I can't manage to hold it in or change the



situation, then I let it out and cry right there." (QF, F, L 124-128).

The various interview excerpts show that in the independence of the emotional aspect, the subject has understood herself and increased the spiritual side by getting closer to Allah SWT. Despite feeling sad after her father's death, the subject tried to manage her emotions wisely, which was by praying to calm herself. Furthermore, regarding independence after her father's death, the intellectual aspect is shown by the following interview results,

"[...] During my free time, I read and prepare for competitions. During class hours, I attend classes. When it's time to work on assignments, I do my assignments." (QF, F, L 342-344).

"Then, most of the competitions were during my 5th semester. So, I was quite overwhelmed, but thankfully I managed to get through it. As long as you want to, it's manageable. If you don't want to, it will be difficult." (QF, F, L 350-352).

"[...] But it seems like there were indeed more competitions during college. I was braver, yes, I was braver." (QF, F, L 493-495).

"Like, oh, I really delved into scientific writing. That was during college. So, there was a chance now." (QF, F, L 520-523).

Based on the presentation of the interview excerpts presented, then related to independence in the intellectual aspect, the subject is able to divide time between participating in competitions and studying in class. In addition, the subject is also aware of developing her abilities in scientific writing. This makes the subject more effective in becoming an intellectually independent person.

b. The Contribution of Independence in Shaping The Achievements Obtained After Losing Her Father

After her father's death, independence played a significant role in shaping QF's achievements in life. The existence of this independence became the foundation for QF to be able to focus on education, after facing difficult trials in life. The results of the interview regarding this matter are,

"[...] I stay active because one of my parents is no longer around, and it helps fill the emptiness." (QF, F, L 509-511).

"Being aware, I realize how important it is to be independent. I feel like, back then, my achievements were at the school, district, or provincial level, but now they're at the national level. It's an opportunity and a blessing,



especially during college." (QF, female, lines 516-520).

The interview excerpt provides insight into how independence can shape the subject's achievements after her father's death. Her activeness in achieving achievements was driven by boredom after her father's death, which fostered an interest in learning the subject. In addition, the subject realized the importance of being an independent person by not wasting the opportunities and sustenance available, namely achieving achievements at a higher level, nationally and internationally. The achievements obtained by the subject after her father's death were very impressive. The subject succeeded in winning first place at the national level in the Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran competition in the scientific writing competition category. In addition, the subject also became the second runner-up in a competition organized by the Ministry of Religion, first place in an international forum, and participated in research and publication of journal articles with lecturers who teach at her campus.

Discussion

Independence is a very important concept in personal development, not only in a psychological context but also

in other aspects of daily life. The concept of independence is one of the main focuses of the theory of psychosocial development proposed by Erik Erikson. In his theory of autonomy vs. doubt, Erikson stated that this stage occurs at preschool age. At this stage, individuals learn to control themselves, which can bring feelings of self and behave independently. Those who succeed at this stage become individuals who have self-confidence and a sense of security (Hadi & Suhasto, 2024). Thus, individuals who experience positive development in the concept of independence tend to have the ability to face challenges and have strong beliefs in themselves

Based on this theory, when contextualized in the subject of this study, each subject has their own uniqueness regarding their independence. The first subject, DK, experienced the formation of mature independence since before her father's death. This began when her two younger brothers were born. The attention and affection that were previously focused on DK, were gradually transferred to her two younger brothers.

Based on the results of the interview, there is a picture that DK, who is known to be an older sibling who was born as a middle child and has two younger siblings, is required to give in and become more independent in living her life. This is in accordance with the birth order theory that in a sibling relationship, middle children have difficulty in getting attention from their parents, making them more independent (Law, 2024). Thus, the situation faced by



DK is one of the factors in the formation of her independence.

Another factor that shapes DK's independence is her experience living in an Islamic boarding school. Based on interview results, it shows that while at the boarding school, she was taught to become a mature and independent individual. As stated by Kurniawati & Kherusaleh (2023), those who live in Islamic boarding schools develop independence by being responsible for themselves because students are tested by being far from their families. In addition to being nurtured in religious knowledge, students at the boarding school are accustomed to not relying on financial support from parents or guardians. They are taught to carry out activities independently, such as washing clothes, cooking, budgeting, and even striving to support themselves.

Regarding this explanation, when viewed as a whole, DK's independence has been well-formed. This independence is due to two factors. First, her life as an older sister was born as a middle child with two younger siblings, which has made her a more mature and independent person. Second, her experience living in an Islamic boarding school, where she was taught to be responsible for her activities without relying on her parents. Therefore, after her father's death, DK tended to be accustomed to being an independent individual.

The independence that DK developed after the death of her father encompasses several aspects, according to Havigust, as cited by Lisani et al. (2020)

including emotional, economic, intellectual, and social aspects. Based on the data analysis, in the emotional aspect, DK was able to calm her emotions by thinking positively about the wisdom in every event and striving to become a better person. Economically, DK earned her income by offering private lessons and instilled a frugal attitude in purchasing daily necessities. Intellectually, DK planned to improve her skills to face her future career by enhancing her work abilities. Socially, DK was able to solve her problems independently without relying on others, felt comfortable participating in activities alone, such as seminars and Maulid, and could go out without needing company.

On the other hand, in the context of the second subject, QF, the formation of independence only became apparent after the death of her father. Since childhood, QF had a close relationship and was always dependent on her father in various aspects of life. Based on interviews, QF, who was the youngest child and the only daughter, received more protective and intensive treatment from her father in daily life. This is in line with Sawitri & Fatmasari (2020), who stated that the closeness between fathers and daughters tends to be marked by affection, which can create dependence in daily activities. Thus, the attachment between QF and her father made her a person who tended to be less independent.

However, after the death of her father, QF was able to build her independence. According to the interviews, after losing her father, QF felt



motivated to be productive and more independent in living her life. The independence that eventually formed in QF was the result of going through processes and challenges in understanding herself. This self-understanding and independence could increase her confidence in tackling problems, especially when accompanied by a positive attitude toward herself (Sasmita et al., 2020). With the independence formed after her father's death, QF gained confidence in fulfilling various aspects of her life.

After her father's death, revisiting the aspects of independence according to Havigust's theory, data analysis showed that QF achieved emotional fulfillment through increased self-awareness and spiritual elements. Economically, QF understood the importance of saving money for beneficial purposes and continued family investments. Intellectually, QF could balance her time between participating in competitions and studying, and she aimed to develop her skills in scientific writing. Unfortunately, in the social aspect, QF seemed less independent, as she still needed others to face situations in her life.

Furthermore, both DK and QF experienced transformative experiences in their lives. Losing their fathers was not easy, and it involved many processes that eventually shaped them into strong and independent individuals. The formation of independence is not only focused on physical abilities but also on social and emotional factors. This includes initiatives, problem-solving abilities, and

carrying out daily tasks without assistance from others (Sari & Rasyidah, 2020). When examining one of these aspects, namely problem-solving ability, both DK and QF had different approaches based on their backgrounds and thought processes.

First, DK, who had been independent and mature since childhood and was a boarding school student, managed difficult situations, especially after her father's death, with wisdom. According to interviews, after her father's death, her family's economy required more support. Initially, this problem was challenging for DK and her family. DK's independence prompted her to seek additional income by offering private lessons. The earnings from these lessons were managed by DK to fund her needs as a college student. This aligns with Novitasari & Ayuningtyas (2021), who stated that it is crucial for working students to manage their earnings. Therefore, DK's independence enabled her to find ways to address her family's economic situation.

In addition to economic challenges, DK's independence also provided a foundation for coping with the emotional changes that occurred after her father's death. Despite being accustomed to living far from her father, there was personal affection as a daughter. According to interviews, DK admitted to missing her father several times and even crying in her dreams about him. However, her independence allowed her to remain strong and find the wisdom that Allah provided in her trials. This is reinforced by Hamandia (2022),



who stated that behind every trial, there is wisdom, including purifying the soul from sin, granting blessings in the afterlife, testing patience, increasing faith, and destroying arrogance. Therefore, DK became not only an independent and resilient individual but also closer to Allah.

Similarly, the second subject, QF, also faced emotional difficulties. According to interviews, QF admitted to feeling sad about her father's death. Nevertheless, her independence helped her find solutions to calm herself, such as praying to Allah SWT. Praying is an obligation for believers in any situation, whether happy, sad, facing trials, struggling, or receiving blessings from Allah SWT (Jannati & Hamandia, 2022). By praying, QF believed that everything would improve, including providing peace for her father in the afterlife and strengthening QF and her family's condition.

Moreover, as the youngest and only daughter, QF received more intensive and special treatment from her father since childhood. As a result, QF was accustomed to relying on her father for her daily needs. This created a challenging situation for QF after her father's death, as she had to learn to fulfill her needs independently. The independence that formed after her father's death encouraged QF to save money for beneficial purposes and even learn about investments, including family land investments.

Relating to the above explanations, it is known that independence after the death of a father can lead to remarkable

achievements. This is evident from the life journeys of the two subjects, which ultimately led them to achieve success. Despite facing severe life trials, both subjects could use the situation as motivation to succeed. This contrasts with general expectations, where individuals who experience the death of a parent may feel pressured, impacting their motivation to study. Budiarto & Setiowati (2023) stated that those who experience parental death often feel different from their peers due to a lack of learning motivation. Thus, the two subjects demonstrated that severe trials are not a barrier to becoming individuals who lose the motivation to excel.

With the above paragraph, according to interviews, before her father's death, DK was not very academically high-achieving, only achieving class-level awards. However, during her time at the boarding school, DK held various organizational positions, both internal and external. In addition to expanding her network, participating in organizations taught DK discipline and independence. Organizations teach individuals several things, such as teamwork, time management, and problem-solving skills (Fauzi & Pahlevi 2020). Based on this explanation, DK's achievements and experiences in organizations became valuable assets in forming her independence, ultimately helping her achieve remarkable success after her father's death.

After her father's death, DK actualized herself by participating in various competitions, significantly more than before. DK succeeded in both



academic and non-academic fields at the international level. According to interviews, DK's achievements resulted from her independence and strong motivation to make her parents proud. According to Mona & Yunita (2021), the improvement in academic performance achieved by students can be attributed to several factors, including external motivation to learn. DK's ability to positively manage this motivation encouraged her to enhance her achievements.

Based on the above explanations, there was a noticeable difference in DK's achievements before and after her father's death. This difference was evident in her participation in academic and non-academic achievements. Before her father's death, DK was not very academically successful and focused more on organizational activities. However, after her father's death, DK underwent a significant transformation by participating in various competitions and organizations, both within and outside her campus. Therefore, the improvement in her achievements resulted from the independence she developed after her father's death.

The next subject, QF, before her father's death, was an individual who enjoyed participating in various competitions and organizations at school. This led QF to not only achieve class-level awards but also win competitions up to the provincial level. QF's achievements were also thanks to her father's support. According to interviews, QF mentioned that her father often helped her with her studies. The influence of the social

environment, including the role of parents in educating their children, can contribute to their academic success (Mona & Yunita 2021). Therefore, QF's achievements were not only the result of her hard work but were also supported by her father's assistance.

Furthermore, after her father's death, QF did not become a person who lost hope in achieving success. Instead, her achievements reached national and international levels. This was due to the independence QF developed after her father's death. According to interviews, QF stated that her independence began with a desire to learn and not waste opportunities. Vastya et al. (2021) stated that the desire to learn is a factor in improving individual academic performance after losing a parent. With the independence QF developed, she maintained her enthusiasm and motivation to succeed despite losing her father.

According to the explanations presented, there was a noticeable difference in QF's achievements before and after her father's death. Before his death, QF achieved school and provincial-level awards. However, after her father's death, QF achieved higher levels of success, reaching national and international levels. This improvement was driven by QF's desire to learn, motivating her to be independent in her achievements.

In relation to the explanations presented, this study was limited to two subjects, QF and DK. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other individuals regarding the dynamics of



their achievements after their father's death. This depends on factors such as family environment, personal experiences, and responses to the event.

The strength of this study lies in its ability to present the dynamics of independence in shaping achievements after the father's death, including how independence was formed in the subjects, the function of independence in difficult situations, and the role of independence in forming achievements.

CONCLUSION

The death of a father can elicit different responses in individuals, particularly regarding the independence they develop. This independence is crucial in shaping achievements. In this study, DK and QF exhibited different dynamics of independence related to their achievements after losing their fathers. For QF, independence only formed after her father's death, leading to higher achievements compared to before.

In contrast, DK had already developed independence before her father's death, and this independence further enhanced her achievements afterward. This independence also enabled both QF and DK to overcome difficult situations in their respective experiences. Therefore, the implications of this study can serve as a valuable reference for individuals who undergo similar experiences.

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