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## Parental Controlling Affects Negative Emotion and Self-Discipline on At-risk Adolescents

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### Abstract

Parental controlling is a way to educate adolescents to behave and to generate self-discipline but at the same time this might induce negative emotion in adolescents. This research aims to investigate the effects of parental controlling on negative emotion and self-discipline of at-risk adolescents. Quantitative research was carried out at the area of People Housing Project (PHP), Pantai Dalam, Kuala Lumpur. Eighty four adolescents between the ages of 13 to 18 were recruited. The correlation result of Pearson showed that parental controlling has significant relation with negative emotion and self-discipline of adolescents. Meanwhile, the t-test showed that the level of parental controlling has a significant difference with negative emotion and self-discipline among the adolescents. Meanwhile, MANOVA test result suggests that parental controlling might generate more negative emotion than build up self-discipline in at-risk adolescents. Thus, parental controlling might not seen as caring and family communication seems best in ensuring adolescents to behave and build up self-discipline.

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### 1. Introduction

Parental controlling is a set of rules to control children's behavior and it includes punishment. According to Hirschi (1969) and Mohd Dahlan (2010), parental controlling could prevent children involved in misconduct behaviours and criminal activities. In additions, according to Garrett (1986), conventional and laissez-faire parenting relate to children's personality like sensitive, shy, stubborn and being rebellious. It seems that strict, reasonable or loose

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controlling will lead to different effects on adolescents. Reasonable parental controlling involves compromise and negotiation where adolescents are given chances for open discussion with parents. This type of controlling might help adolescents in build up self-discipline (Mohd Yahya, 2011). Strict parental controlling restricts all behaviours of adolescents with strict rules might generate conflicts between parents and adolescents. Furthermore, adolescents might be stressed out and induce negative emotions (Hurlock, 1971). Kayz and Dunham (1997) found that the level of parental controlling is related significantly with children’s negative emotions. This shows that adolescents might feel unhappy because of their restricted movements by their parents. On the other hand, Nik Rusila (1998) reveals that laissez-fair parenting style might cause delinquency problems among children due to lack of self-discipline. Hence, this research was carried out in order to identify the influence of parental controlling on negative emotion and self-discipline among the adolescents who live in the at-risk area in Kuala Lumpur.

**2. Research Methods**

The research data was obtained based on the sampling method. Total respondents were 84 adolescents (46.4% males and 53.6% females) between 13 to 18 years old. Majority of respondents were Malay (92.9%), while Indian (7.1%). 85.7% of the respondents live with their parents, 11.9% live only with their mum, while 1.2% live with others besides their parents. Data were collected through survey forms and answered directly by the respondents. The period of data collecting was from February until December of year 2010.

- **Self-Discipline Construct.** There were six items for the self-discipline construct. For example, “I will tell the truth even though I will get punishment” and “I will miss class on raining day”. The higher the score is the more self-discipline respondents are. The trustworthy of this item is 0.697. Multiple choices were given in the scale of 1=Very Disagree to 5=Very Agree.
- **Parental Controlling Construct.** There were four items for the parental monitoring construct. For example, “My parents will scold if I came back late” and “My parents will punish me if I do mistake”. The higher the score is, the higher the level of parental controlling. The trustworthy of this item is 0.713. Multiple choices were given in the scale of 1=Very Disagree to 5=Very Agree.
- **Negative Emotion Construct.** There were five items for the negative emotion construct. For examples, “I feel depressed”, and “I feel like run away from home”. The higher the score is, the higher the rate of negative emotion. The trustworthy of this item is 0.685. Multiple choices were given in the scale of 1=Very Disagree to 5=Very Agree.

**3. Results and discussion**

Positive and significant relationship was found between parental controlling and adolescents’ negative emotion ( $r = .646, p \leq 0.05$ ) as shown in the Pearson’s correlation analysis result in Table 1. This shows that the stricter parental controlling the more negative emotions within the respondents.

**Table 1 Pearson Correlation Result between Parental Controlling Aspect and Negative Emotion of Adolescents**

	n	Correlation Value (r)	Significant Level
Pearson Correlation Analysis	84	.646**	0.00

In addition, based on the Table 2, t-test results showed that there was a significant difference in negative emotion of those who received lower level of parental controlling ( $M = 18.37, SP = 3.667$ ) and higher level of parental controlling ( $M = 20.84, SP = 1.625$ ),  $t(84) = -4.178, p \leq 0.05$ . This reveals that parents who are over-

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