



Meaning of life: An analysis of adolescents' perspectives broken home living with grandparents

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Abstract

The meaning of life among adolescents from broken-home families has received limited attention, especially those living with their grandparents, which presents unique challenges and opportunities for personal growth. This study explores the meaning of life among adolescents from broken-home families living with their grandparents. Through a qualitative approach with descriptive methods, the research investigates the experiences of adolescents in finding meaning in their lives. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and observations in OKU Timur and Bandar Lampung. The study involved early and late adolescents aged 12-21 years who live with their grandparents due to parental divorce or absence. The research identified several factors influencing the meaning of life, including personal understanding, positive actions, relationship building, tri-value experiences, and religiosity. The findings reveal that adolescents develop various strategies to find meaning such as (1) building resilience, (2) adapting to change, (3) a sense of responsibility, (4) seeking social support, (5) strengthening spirituality, and (6) independence. They view life as a learning process, a struggle for independence, and an opportunity to make their grandparents happy. Despite facing challenges, they strive to maintain a positive attitude and focus on what they can control. Religiosity and religious beliefs are their primary source of strength. This study highlights the importance of emotional and spiritual support in helping adolescents overcome life's difficulties and build a positive, meaningful life.

Keywords: Meaning of Life, Broken Home, Adolescents, Intergenerational Parenting, Developmental Psychology

Abstrak

Makna hidup di kalangan remaja dari keluarga broken-home masih sedikit mendapat perhatian, terutama mereka yang tinggal bersama kakek-nenek, yang menghadirkan tantangan dan peluang unik untuk pertumbuhan pribadi. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi makna hidup remaja dari keluarga *broken home* yang tinggal bersama kakek atau nenek. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan metode deskriptif, penelitian ini menginvestigasi pengalaman remaja dalam menemukan makna dalam hidup mereka. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi di OKU Timur dan Bandar Lampung. Penelitian ini melibatkan remaja awal dan akhir berusia 12-21 tahun yang tinggal bersama kakek atau nenek akibat perceraian atau ketiadaan orang tua. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi beberapa faktor yang mempengaruhi makna hidup, termasuk pemahaman pribadi, tindakan positif, pembinaan hubungan, pengalaman tri-nilai, dan religiositas. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa remaja mengembangkan berbagai strategi untuk menemukan makna, seperti (1) membangun ketahanan diri, (2) beradaptasi dengan perubahan, (3) mengambil tanggung jawab, (4) mencari dukungan sosial, (5) memperkuat spiritualitas, dan (5) kemandirian. Mereka memandang hidup sebagai proses pembelajaran, perjuangan untuk mandiri, dan kesempatan untuk membahagiakan kakek atau nenek. Meskipun menghadapi tantangan, mereka berusaha untuk tetap bersikap positif dan fokus pada hal-hal yang dapat mereka kendalikan. Religiositas dan keyakinan agama menjadi sumber kekuatan utama mereka. Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya dukungan emosional dan spiritual dalam membantu remaja mengatasi kesulitan hidup dan membangun makna hidup yang positif.

Kata Kunci: Makna Hidup, *Broken Home*, Remaja, Pengasuhan Integenerasi, Psikologi Perkembangan



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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is one of the stages of development in every individual, where individuals experience significant changes in various aspects, including physical, emotional, cognitive, and social (Lerner & Almerigi, 2019). During this period, adolescents enter a critical phase in identity formation, where individuals begin to question life goals and self-values (Erikson, 1968). Adolescents from broken homes face unique challenges in identity formation, especially when cared for by grandparents as substitute caregivers. In some cases, older family members often take over the role of parenting (Salafuddin et al., 2020). Pasha et al., (2024) in their research, grandparents act as substitutes for parents in providing the necessary love and guidance. This intergenerational care also has dynamics that can affect adolescents' psychological development.

On the other hand, emotional support from grandparents can help adolescents find meaning in their lives, even in less-than-ideal situations (Ramos et al., 2021). A study of Hiqqal & Hiqqal, (2023) also found a lack of ideality, whose conclusion explained that grandparents can be involved in caregiving but cannot take full responsibility. The role of parents is still necessary to ensure optimal child development. The care of adolescents by grandparents can certainly have good and bad effects on the attitudes and personality of adolescents in the future (Fridayanti, 2021; Afdal et al., 2022). One of the positive impacts of parenting by grandmothers is the tendency to become more independent and disciplined and a sense of responsibility in children, such as the ability to divide time between playing, studying and completing homework (Pasha et al., 2024). The care grandmothers provide their grandchildren

varies and is influenced by financial background (Pasha, 2024). On the other hand, the negative impact of a grandmother's care can arise due to excessive affection towards their grandchildren, making children act arbitrarily and difficult to direct (Kouwagam & Lunanta, 2021).

Globally, care by grandparents in non-intact family situations is increasing, especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America (Chan et al., 2023). Research from Dolbin-Macnab & Yancura, (2018) also shows that the role of grandparents is triggered by various factors such as migration, divorce, and economic challenges. The study highlighted that while intergenerational caregiving can cement traditional values, challenges such as generation gaps and physical limitations of caregivers still affect the quality of support provided to adolescents. Caregiving by grandparents, while providing a sense of security and continuity of family values, also presents challenges. There is a generational gap that creates communication and understanding between individuals, which is not always effective. In addition, the physical and psychological conditions of the elderly add to the complexity of carrying out the role of the primary caregiver (Ramos et al., 2021).

Adolescents from broken home families tend to face greater psychological challenges compared to peers from intact families (Humaira et al., 2024). They often experience a higher risk of anxiety, depression, stress, and deviant behaviour (Yulita et al., 2019). In Hong Kong, research by Lo & Lindsay, (2022) explains that the care of grandchildren by grandparents in Hong Kong brings ambivalent dynamics in intergenerational relationships. While grandparental caregiving is considered an important and often enjoyable source of support, this research highlights the

tensions and conflicts in practice. The absence of a parental figure as a primary source of support impacts adolescents' ability to cope with the challenges of daily life, thereby affecting their search for identity and meaning in life (Annisa et al., 2024).

In forming the meaning of life, Viktor Frankl (1985) asserts that the search for meaning is the main motivation in human life. Pranata & Hidayah (2024) stated that the meaning of life in individuals who experience broken homes is significant to survival and development. The research from Aturrohman (2019) adds that the meaning of life is also related to happiness and the ability to cope with life's challenges. Both perspectives highlight the importance of the meaning of life in providing direction and purpose to life, as well as in fulfilling human psychological needs for belonging, esteem, and well-being. Steger et al. (2015) showed that adolescents who can find the meaning of life have higher psychological resilience. Bastaman (2007) identified several important aspects in shaping the meaning of life, including (1) personal understanding, (2) positive action, (3) familiarity relationships, (4) tri-value experiences, and (5) worship. Thus, living as a teenager in an intact family not only causes psychological pressure, but also becomes a land of reflection to find the meaning of life.

Previous research has extensively discussed the impact of broken homes on adolescent' psychology. For example, Budiman (2022) showed that broken home conditions affect adolescents' meaning of life, which is often characterised by psychological distress and trauma. Research by Afdal et al. (2021) found that adolescents who can find the meaning of life tend to be more resilient in facing challenges. Meanwhile, research by Zola et al. (2023), presented that the meaning of life of

students from broken-home families is very high, with a percentage reaching 45.2 per cent. Although there have been many studies that discuss the meaning of life of adolescents and the impact of broken home families, there are still few studies that specifically highlight the experiences of adolescents who are cared for by grandparents. This intergenerational caregiving has its dynamics and potential. Influence the formation of the meaning of life. This study aims to fill a gap in the literature by exploring how adolescents from broken-home families living with grandparents find meaning in their lives. It will enrich the understanding of the dynamics of intergenerational parenting in the context of intact families and its implications for adolescent psychological development, particularly in the formation of meaning in life.

METHODS

Research Approach and Design

This study applied a qualitative approach with descriptive methods to deeply understand naturally occurring phenomena (Jailani & Saksitha, 2024). This approach was chosen to explore the experiences of adolescents who come from broken home families and live with grandparents.

Participants and Sampling Techniques

The participants in this study were three adolescent girls aged 15, 18, and 20, all of whom were living with their grandparents due to parental divorce. These adolescents came from varying educational backgrounds, including MTS, MA, and college, and had different prior experiences with parental care before ultimately living with their grandparents. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, based on specific criteria: they were teenagers between the ages of 15 and

20, coming from broken-home families, and living with their grandparents.

The research was conducted in two locations: one village in the Eastern OKU region and Bandar Lampung City. These areas were chosen due to their prevalence of family disintegration and the availability of grandparent care structures. The research spanned seven months, from August 2024 to March 2025, covering all stages of the study, including planning, data collection, data analysis, and the preparation of the final research report.

Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and observations. Each participant was interviewed in two separate sessions with a duration of 45-200 minutes. 60 minutes per session. Interviews were conducted by asking questions based on an interview guide, and subsequent questions were developed based on the experiences shared by participants during the interview. Direct observation was conducted in the participants' neighbourhoods to understand the context of their lives. Each interview was recorded after obtaining consent from the participants. To ensure data validity, triangulation was used by comparing the results of interviews and observations (Sudaryono, 2017).

Data Analysis

Data were analysed thematically following Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework, with the help of the NVivo12 application for the coding process. The stages of analysis included: (1) data familiarization, (2) preliminary coding, (3) search theme, (4) theme review, (5) theme definition and naming, and (6) report writing. NVivo12 allows researchers to code and analyze data systematically. In the context of this study, NVivo12 helped identify themes and patterns from interview

and observation data (Priyatni et al., 2020).

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to several ethical considerations to ensure the protection of participants. First, written informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they understood the nature and purpose of the study. To maintain confidentiality, personal information was kept secure by using pseudonyms, thereby safeguarding the participants' identities. Additionally, participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time, without facing any consequences. Finally, all data collected during the study was stored in a safe and secure manner to further protect participants' privacy.

RESULTS

In these findings, the researcher describes the general profile of the research subject. The subject's identity is kept confidential to avoid misuse and ensure an ethical form of research.

Table 1. General profile of research participants'

Initials	LA	SN	UP
Age	15	18	20
Gender	Female	Female	Female
Status	Student	Working	Student
Length of Broken Home	5 Years	8 Years	9 Years
Living Together	Grandmother and grandfather on father's side	Grandmother on mother's side	side Grandfather on mother's side

Data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations, demonstrating several main themes relating to the meaning of life of adolescents in the context of broken home families left behind by divorce; this study reveals how

adolescents who live with grandparents make meaning of their lives after experiencing a broken home. This study examines five factors that influence adolescents' meaning of life: personal understanding, acting positively, relationship familiarity, tri-value experience, and worship. The following is a summary of the overall dynamics of the subjects:

1. Subject LA

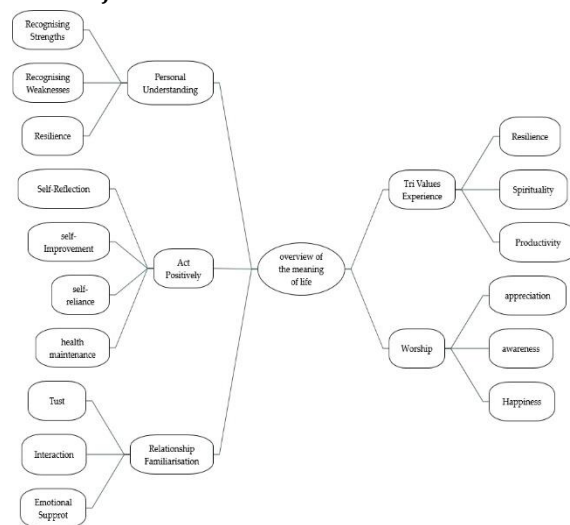


Figure 1.

An overview of the meaning of life of subject LA

a. Personal Understanding

LA clearly understands her position in the family and pays attention to the most minor things, namely, herself. *"I am the last of three children. I have two older siblings"* (LA.P1.20).

LA is aware of her position as the last child in the family. She understands that he is also in school and is aware of his responsibilities as a student.

"At school, it's a as a student to do homework" (LA.P2.200-201).

The realisation of a difficult life shaped her deep spiritual understanding.

"Yes, I think God chose me for this, to mould me into a strong person" (LA.P2.143-145).

b. Act Positively

LA showed positivity and independence in daily activities to adapt to her situation.

"Usually it's getting ready for school, right? Then getting ready for clothes, sometimes these parents prepare their own breakfast, so it's like small daily activities" (LA.P2.22-26).

LA also applies positive principles in interacting with others: *"The important thing is that you don't have to say words that hurt them Sometimes words can hurt more than our hands"* (LA.P2.159-162).

c. Relationship Familiarisation

In relationships, LA's most trusted person is her mother. LA builds a strong relationship with her mother as a place to share. Although LA rarely meets her mother, LA still communicates very well with her mother. *mum... "* (LA.P2.105). *"Yes, it's because mum was never cepu"* (LA.P2.115).

In addition to being close to her mother, LA was also able to build a social support system in the cottage environment.

"But after that it was like yes, because there are also many friends at the boarding school, I don't feel alone" (LA.P1.130-132).

LA, who goes to school in the hut, has many friends and acquaintances there, but in friendship, LA shows maturity by understanding boundaries.

"Yes, friends sometimes believe it, sometimes don't believe it, so the story to him is only when the essence is done" (LA.P2.142-144).

d. Tri Values Experience

In her experience, LA demonstrated the value of appreciation through his ability to interpret a supportive environment.

"Alhamdulillah, I am still surrounded by good people and I'm in a hut environment too, so it's more, what is it, it's like a little calm even though it's really chaotic" (LA.P1.137- 138).

Then, an attitude value is formed, which is reflected in the response to family problems. Accepting and not being a burden on the mind about things that disturb LA's mind forms resilience. *"It was so chaotic that my school and my lessons were disrupted. Well, but it passed mba"* (LA.P2.141-143).

LA also felt that the worship experience helped her rise above her problems. *"Because without worship it is like a glass without water, worn out but there is no water to drink. we pour this worship we fill this so that the glass is not empty without water"* (LA.P2.126-127).

e. Worship

LA deeply understands the meaning of worship in life; subject LA lives the meaning behind worship until subject LA has her philosophy.

"Because without worship it is like a glass without water worn out but no water to drink" (LA.P2.126-127).

This understanding is supported by the positive experiences she has had from worshipping.

we read al-qur'an after reading al-qur'an it feels like more fresh" (LA.P2.251-255).

The neighbourhood where she lives also supports improving the quality of his worship.

example I don't pray maghrib and instead play mobile phones, my grandmother screams. So I am more obedient, more disciplined" (LA.P2.53-54).

2. Subject SN

a. Personal Understanding

Subject SN showed a deep understanding of his position in the family and how life experiences shaped her. She could recognize difficult situations in her family early on and make them the basis for understanding herself. The subject realized the disharmonious family conditions since childhood, such as parental divorce and

conflicts at home. This made her feel that home was not a comfortable place.

"When I was in junior high school, I already felt, this house is getting bad... So I prefer to isolate myself, prefer to isolate myself from my family by going to the cottage." (SN.P1.26-33).

Subject understands that her life is full of struggles, including when she does not get support from his family for essential things such as the glasses needed for learning.

glasses... I could only buy glasses after got a job, without asking my parents for money." (SN.P1.41-47).

Subject SN also realized the absence of appreciation from his parents for every achievement, even when she managed to get a high ranking at school.

"I never got appreciation. Even when I got a rank, my younger brother who got the first rank had a very different way of talking to his parents." (SN.P1.98-105).

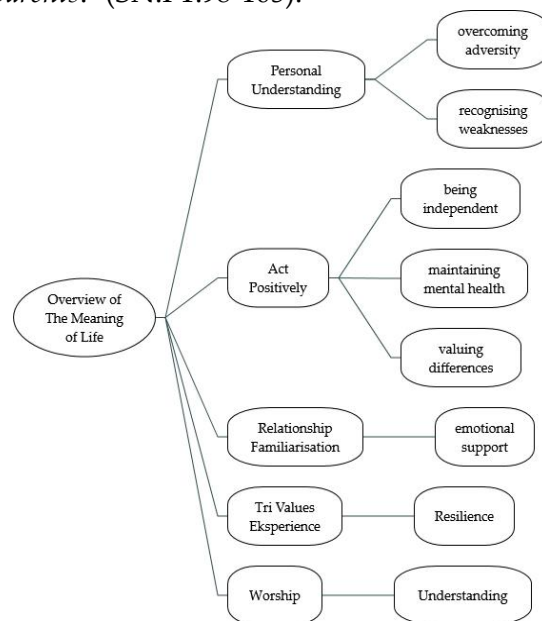


Figure 2.

An overview of the meaning of life of subject SN

b. Act Positively

Subject SN has mental resilience and a positive attitude despite significant major challenges in the family and environment.

He chose adaptive ways to deal with conflicts and build a better life. The subject shows courage to make positive decisions for himself, such as choosing to live in a boarding school to earn a living in inner peace.

because, in a boarding school, I don't really think about home problems." (SN.P2.31-35).

SN also demonstrated patience and emotional resilience in the face of unfair treatment.

their male grandchildren, but when it comes to me, they like to vent their emotions. But I remain patient." (SN.P1.124-132).

Despite feeling underappreciated by her family, she still maintains a good relationship with them and does not use this situation as an excuse to act negatively. *"I still go home to my grandmother's house in Karang every Saturday and Sunday, although sometimes I feel uncomfortable."* (SN.P2.51-54).

c. Relationship Familiarisation

Subject SN shows the ability to maintain social relationships with family and friends despite having emotional limitations in building closeness. The relationship with family is described as quite formal although subject SN is less familiar with her family, but still maintains communication.

"Communication with my family is only as necessary. Sometimes even small talk is rare." (SN.P1.107).

SN feels more comfortable talking to her friends because they respond better *"In fact, I'm more open to other people. Because sometimes other people feel like family and family feels like other people."* (SN.P2.168-169).

Subject SN also does not carelessly tell about her problems or family, SN will open up to friends who already know him well to share stories. *"I only told a few people, who already knew me and my family."* (SN.P2.180-173).

The intimacy of the relationship built by subject SN shows social flexibility. She understands who worth sharing her stories with, while still maintaining communication with her family, albeit within certain limits.

d. Tri Values Experience

Tri values, which include independence, responsibility, and spirituality, are seen in the life of the subject SN. SN's subject's independence is obtained from SN learning to manage life since she was in boarding school; SN took the initiative in managing finances.

"If you want anything, save it first, collect the money. So I started to be economical when I was at the boarding school." (SN.P2.19-20).

In addition to independence, SN has an understanding of responsibility. SN understands the importance of being responsible for the decisions that have been made *"Responsibility is when we have made a decision, yes we do what we can as much as we can."* (SN.P2.184-187).

SN felt a sense of spiritual calmness while at the boarding school, which helped to reduce the burden of thoughts about home problems. *though I know the problems at home, I don't think about it as much."* (SN.P2.35-36).

e. Worship

Worship is an important part of SN subject's life, both as a form of inner peace and an effort to get closer to Allah. Subjects feel that worship provides peace after carrying out their obligations. *"After praying, I poured out everything that was on my mind. It feels really relieved."* (SN.P2.15).

SN thinks worship is one of the important parts of her life, but SN also still seems inconsistent in carrying out the worship that SN believes in.

"About religion, sometimes I still make mistakes. I break my prayers" (SN.P2.240- 241).

Although SN knows that she is doing something wrong in her religious beliefs, she realises that consistency in worship has a big impact on her life and future.

our future is also from our worship." (SN.P2.280-281).

3. Subject UP

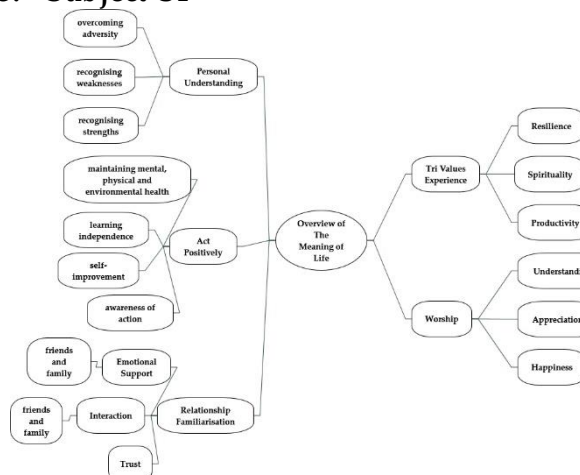


Figure 3.

An overview of the meaning of life of subject UP

a. Personal Understanding

Subject UP showed a deep understanding of herself from difficult life experiences. She could reflect on his family's condition and its impact on her life journey. The subject realized the beginning of the family conflict in elementary school when he found out that her father had remarried without his mother's knowledge, which caused his family to split.

"I know my family is not okay because my father cheated on me and I have a new family." (UP.P1.40-43).

After the divorce, she lived with her grandfather as her mother went to work as a migrant worker. However, after her mother returned, she had to deal with the loss of her mother due to illness.

"A year and a half after my mother's return, she was gone." (UP.P1.54- 55).

Subject UP also understands the importance of independence, especially when resisting unimportant desires.

"It's like seeing a friend have a new toy, because it's not that important to me, so I just keep quiet." (UP.P1.81-85).

b. Act Positively

Subject UP showed a positive attitude in facing various challenges, such as maintaining a balance between emotional needs and responsibilities towards the family. Despite growing up in an incomplete family, she still maintains a good relationship with her grandfather, who plays a very important role in her life.

"Grandpa sacrificed a lot for me, so I took turns taking care of him." (UP.P2.104-109).

The subject remained optimistic despite experiencing financial difficulties before receiving the scholarship. She took the initiative to work in a clothes shop and sell cosmetics to relieve her grandfather in paying for her life.

"I had joined a business. I made an effort. I made my own money." (UP.P2.34-36).

c. Relationship Familiarisation

Subject UP was able to maintain a harmonious relationship with his family, especially her grandfather and other relatives, even though she had difficult experiences in her family relationships. Grandpa became a central figure in her life, replacing the role of absent parents.

"My grandfather thinks of me as his youngest child. Even though I'm a grandchild, my grandfather always thinks of me as his own child." (UP.P2.111- 113).

The subject is also aware of the importance of giving back to the family that has taken care of him, such as taking care of his grandfather when he is old

"Grandpa is not working now. So I take turns taking care of my grandfather." (UP.P2.76).

It is concluded from the explanation above that the relationship built by Subject UP with his family reflects respect and responsibility, showing his emotional maturity in maintaining a harmonious relationship.

d. Tri Values Experience

Subject UP has the value of independence, responsibility, and strong spirituality, which are reflected in her daily actions. In terms of autonomy, UP has learnt to be less dependent on others, including in fulfilling her own needs.

"I started being independent in high school, joining a skincare business, got income my own income." (UP.P2.32-35).

Behind her independence, there is an understanding of responsibility that subject UP is carrying out, namely, subject UP carries out with full responsibility for the scholarship that subject UP received.

"I have to be responsible for how to maintain the scholarship until I graduate." (UP.P2.541-543).

As for spirituality, subject UP showed deep spiritual reflection, such as maintaining worship despite temptation.

"When I pray, life is more organised. But if I miss my prayers, it feels like chaos." (UP.P2.725-728).

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that Subject P's tri values help him to stay focused on holistic self-development, both in the aspects of independence, responsibility, and spirituality.

e. Worship

Worship is the main pillar in the life of subject UP, which serves as the main guide when facing life's challenges. Worship provides inner peace and makes her life more organised.

"If we don't worship, it feels . But if we worship, life is calmer and cooler." (UP.P2.725-728).

Behind the consistent worship of subject UP, subject UP tries to maintain the spirit of worship by reflecting on the many sins and continuing to improve themselves.

"I reflect on my sins, watch studies, and keep a good circle of friends." (UP.P2.830-834).

The bar chart (Figure 4.) compares of the influence of the five main factors (self understanding, positive action, relationship familiarity, tri-value experience, and worship) in the lives of the three subjects. This visualisation helps to see how each factor has a different level of influence on each subject.

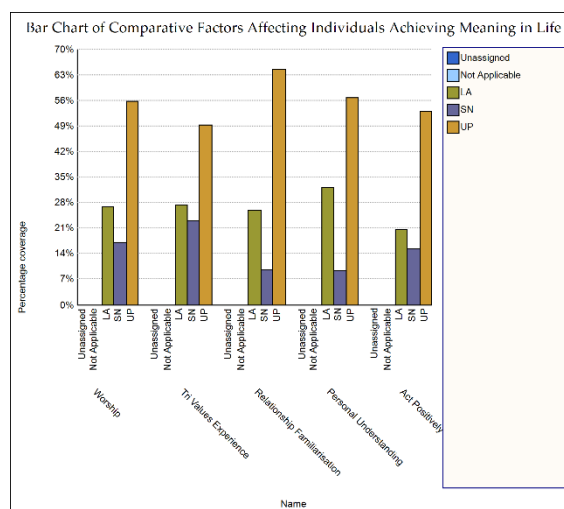


Figure 4.

Comparative factors that influence individuals to achieve meaning in life

DISCUSSION

This study aims to uncover the meaning of the life of adolescents in the context of broken-home families who live with grandparents. The main findings of this study show that adolescents who experience broken homes develop diverse strategies in making meaning of their lives, which are influenced by five main factors: personal understanding, acting positively, relationship familiarity, tri-value experience, and worship.

a. Personal Understanding

The research findings show that the subjects have personal understandings that become the basis for adolescents to make meaning of their lives in complex family situations. Based on the results of the interviews, the individual knowledge of broken-home adolescents who live with grandparents shows significant variations in the meaning of their lives. Subjects can view their roles and life experiences as part of a positive self-formation process. This is in line with the findings of Irani & Laksana (2018), who revealed that adolescents who are cared for by grandmothers tend to have a self-concept that is influenced by their perceptions of their life experiences. There is awareness in accepting the reality of life, seeing difficult experiences as part of self-growth, and recognizing their weaknesses and strengths to find solutions in facing difficulties. Research by Hiqqal (2023) emphasizes that good self-acceptance in broken-home adolescents can help them think positively and develop their potential, thus avoiding deviant behavior.

On the other hand, there was one subject who experienced a lack of confidence due to comparison and lack of appreciation from the family. Research by Wulandari & Fauziah (2019) that adolescents from broken-home families often face challenges in developing psychological well-being, which can affect their self-concept and self-acceptance. According to Erikson's developmental theory, adolescents are at a stage of identity formation where they actively seek an understanding of themselves (Erikson, 1968). In the context of broken home families, this process can be more complex due to changing family dynamics.

The results of this study show that the personal understanding of broken-home adolescents who live with grandparents

varies. However, awareness of the value of life, recognition of weaknesses, and efforts to overcome difficulties play an important role in forming their meaning of life. The three subjects could find their understanding because of their backgrounds. They are motivated by their status of having lived in a boarding school. The cottage environment has harmonious relationships within the extended family of the boarding school, especially in the dormitory environment, which significantly impacts mental development. Harmonious, understanding, and affectionate interactions positively shape personality (Kurniawan et al., 2019).

b. Act Positively

In this study, adolescents demonstrated various adaptive strategies that reflected their ability to deal positively with their life experiences. Some were seen to be able to self-reflect, accept the past as part of destiny, learn independence and commit to improving themselves. This attitude indicates emotional maturation and self-awareness that develops along with life experiences. This finding aligns with research showing that parenting from grandparents can shape self-concept and encourage the independence of adolescents from broken home families (Paiman, 2024). In addition, some subjects can see difficult experiences as a process of identity building and show the ability to manage emotions and accept their situation realistically. This supports the view that emotional regulation and self-acceptance are important aspects of the adaptation process of adolescents from broken homes (Nurafifah, 2023; Pohan, 2024a).

The international study by Capous et al., (2020) states, Grandparents often use traditional values and cultural narratives that emphasize overcoming adversity, which fosters positive action and

psychological resilience in adolescents from disrupted families. Correspondingly, a longitudinal study by Tan et al. (2024) in Malaysia found that adolescents living with grandparents after parental separation showed higher levels of positive behavioral adaptation when grandparents actively encouraged autonomy and personal responsibility. These two studies confirm that the role of grandparents in encouraging positive action is a phenomenon found across different cultural contexts.

However, this study also found challenges in the adaptation process experienced by one adolescent subject. The subject tended to compare himself with others, which disrupted emotional stability and formed negative perceptions of himself. In addition, there is trauma in establishing interpersonal relationships, especially with the opposite sex, which has an impact on the stability of friendships and trust in others. This finding is in line with research by Zafira & Ariana (2024) which shows that adolescents from broken home families often face obstacles in building subjective well-being, ultimately affecting interpersonal relationships and forming a healthy self-concept.

Despite the difficulties faced by one of the subjects, there is subjective well-being in that subject. The existence of this subjective well-being is motivated by the subject's residence in urban areas. In line with Islamia et al. (2019), the level of subjective well-being is known to be higher in families living in urban areas. However, the environment is also synonymous with high levels of psychological stress. This phenomenon is influenced by several factors, including the value system believed in the family and the ease of access to various resources available in urban areas.

c. Relationship Familiarisation

Adolescents in this study demonstrated the ability to build and

maintain social relationships, although with varying degrees of closeness. These social relationships provide emotional support and help adolescents make meaning in life. Relationship closeness refers to the closeness and quality of social interactions that individuals have with others, especially with family and friends. This finding aligns with the attachment theory developed by John Bowlby (1969) which emphasises the importance of secure and close relationships for healthy emotional development. Research by Herman et al. (2024) showed that good communication in social relationships can improve the quality of interactions and provide the emotional support needed to face life's challenges. A comparative study by Chang & Peterson (2023) in several Asian and European countries showed that parenting patterns by grandparents have diverse influences on adolescent social development, depending on the cultural context and existing social support systems.

On the other hand, this research found that one subject has a less intimate relationship with her paternal family. Despite this, the subject could still adjust socially by choosing the correct figure to share stories with. This shows her social flexibility in building meaningful relationships, in line with the findings of Ramadhani & Yusuf (2020) who emphasized the importance of adaptive social networks in maintaining balanced interpersonal relationships. In an international study from Yaw Adofo & Etsey, (2021) they also found that social adaptability is a key skill for adolescents from broken families, which allows them still to build meaningful social connections despite changes in family structure.

d. Tri-Value Experience

The results show a tri-value experience that includes empathy,

discipline, and responsibility. In terms of empathy, they can understand the feelings of others and adjust their attitudes towards their social environment. This aligns with research highlighting social flexibility's importance in building effective interpersonal relationships (Nurrachmah, 2024). In terms of discipline, the subjects showed compliance with family rules. This finding is supported by studies that reveal that a strong family structure contributes to forming adolescent discipline patterns (Anggraini, 2024). As for responsibility, most subjects showed an independent attitude in facing life's challenges, both in education and work.

Frankl (1985) in his logotherapy theory, emphasized the importance of experiential, creative, and attitudinal values in constructing the meaning of life. International research by Even, (2022) found that adolescents who live with grandparents after a family split develop unique values that reflect the combination of two generations, often enriching their perspective on life and social relationships (Pohan, et al., 2025).

However, this study also found a negative experience in one of the subjects. The subject had difficulty building emotional engagement with the family and tended to avoid specific responsibilities due to unpleasant emotional experiences in the past. This is in line with the findings of Karimah (2021), who explained that a disharmonious family can cause obstacles in social interaction and form distrust patterns that impact adolescents' involvement in interpersonal relationships. Thus, the tri-value aspects experienced by broken-home adolescents contribute to forming their meaning of life. However, they are still influenced by various psychosocial dynamics derived from personal experiences and the surrounding environment.

Worship is an important part of the meaning of life of broken-home adolescents in this discovery. Research from Puteri (2024) explains that worship can improve mental and emotional health, and provide a sense of calm and hope. Research by Fitriana (2020) showed that individuals who engage in consistent worship practices tend to have better psychological well-being. In this study, worship provides inner peace, strengthens spirituality, and helps adolescents face life's challenges. Worship that shapes spirituality in Islamia's research (2023), shows a tendency that increased spirituality in adolescents is followed by increased meaningfulness in life (Pohan, 2024; . This is due to the strong relationship between spirituality and the meaningfulness of life, where the individual's relationship with God becomes the central element in shaping the understanding and meaning of the life lived (Pohan et al., 2025; Sriwahyuningsih & Barseli, 2023).

Dollahite et al., (2018) shows that religious and spiritual practices provide an interpretive framework that helps adolescents from troubled families understand and accept their life situations. This spiritual dimension is often a buffer against stress and facilitates accepting and processing difficult experiences. A cross-cultural study by Aggarwal et al. (2023) revealed that although forms of religious practice may vary across societies, the positive role of spiritual engagement in building emotional resilience in adolescents is consistent across countries.

However, in one of the subjects in this study, the researcher found that worship did not impact his inner calm or self-awareness. This is caused by various possibilities, such as a lack of understanding or appreciation of the practice of worship or other external factors that influence the psychological condition of the subject.

Nasution et al. (2024) emphasizes that active engagement and deep understanding of worship practices are important in improving adolescents' psychological well-being (Czyżowska & Gurba, 2022).

While worship generally contributes positively to broken-home adolescents' appreciation, inner peace, and self-awareness, its effectiveness can be influenced by the level of understanding and individual engagement in practice. The description of the meaning of life-based on the aspects of personal understanding, positive action, relationship intimacy, tri-value experience, and worship is as follows;

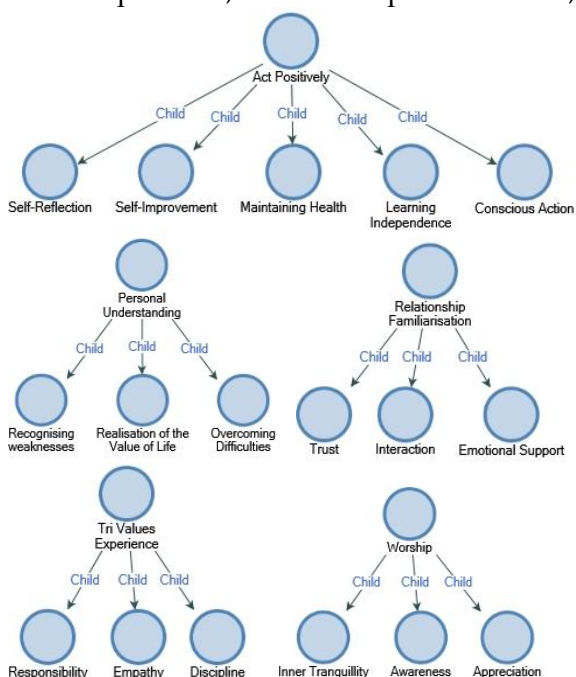


Figure 4.

Interpretation of factors describing the meaning of life

The findings of this study have important implications for understanding the meaning of life of adolescents from broken homes. This study shows that adolescents who experience broken homes can adapt and build meaning in life through various positive strategies. As for the limitations of this research study, it has several limitations. First, this study only involved three research subjects, so the

findings of this study may not be generalizable to a larger population. Second, this study used subjects of the same gender. For future research interested in examining the meaning of life of broken-home adolescents, it can consider analyzing other factors that may affect the meaning of life of adolescents in the context of broken-home families, such as gender and other factors.

CONCLUSION

This study found that broken-home adolescents living with grandparents have different descriptions of the meaning of life. However, the meaning of life can be achieved by (1) building resilience, (2) adapting to change, (3) a sense of responsibility, (4) seeking social support, (5) strengthening spirituality, and (6) independence. These findings support the hypothesis that adolescents who live with grandparents develop a more coherent sense of meaning in life despite the challenges posed by their family circumstances. They view life as a learning process, a struggle for independence, and a motivation for the future. to better themselves in the future. Despite facing challenges, they try to stay positive and focus on things they can control. Overall, this study shows that adolescents from broken-home families living with grandparents can build meaning through these six positive strategies. Although this study has limitations in the number of subjects, the results provide valuable insights into the dynamics of adolescent life in the context of an intact family.

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DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The Authors Declare No Conflict of Interest in This Paper.

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