

# The profile of adolescent' moral intelligence and practical solution to its improvement efforts

*H Prasetiawan*

Universitas Ahmad Dahlan  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia

*M Barida*

Universitas Ahmad Dahlan  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia

**Abstract.** High moral quality is needed by adolescent to be success in their personal and educational life. Those who have high moral quality can be considered as morally intelligent Individuals. This study aimed to collect information about adolescents' moral intelligent by using moral intelligence Instrument that consists of seven aspects namely empathy, self-control, conscience, respect, kindness, tolerance and fairness, furthermore, alternative solution is given to improve their moral intelligence. Subject of this study was selected through simple random sampling. Based on the result of the survey, it was found that students in a State Junior high school in Yogyakarta have 69% moral intelligence percentage. In other words, they have medium moral Intelligence. Adolescents' moral quality develops through continuous process in their life. One of many methods which can be done to improve moral intelligence is guidance and counseling service, in specific, group counseling with self- management technique.

**Keywords:** Adolescent, Moral Intelligence, Improvement

## I. INTRODUCTION

Moral becomes the primary issue in human life. Its problems exist since the human exist. Even Muhammad SAW was sent to improve human morality, as it is quoted from his words: "I have only been sent to perfect good moral character. Philosophers such as Socrates, Aristotle, Ibnu Ruysd, Al Gazhali, up to Imanuel Kant realize the importance of moral factor in human life [19]. In psychological study, Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg focused their study on discussing children's until adults' moral development. Those studies indicated that one of primary base of a nations' welfare and advancement substance is moral.

Someone' morality can be seen from their behavior. Data from Koran Rakyat Merdeka [1] about the result of National Child Protection Commission' survey explains that in 2007 97% of 4500 adolescents in several big cities in Indonesia had watched porn movies, 93% of them had kissed their boyfriend or girlfriend. While 62,7% adolescents in Junior High School level already have sex and 21,2% Senior High School level students have ever done abortion. According to Taher (2007), this condition does not naturally happen, yet it is caused by their environments which have been contaminated by products with outside values. That fact becomes a sign that this nation is experiencing severe moral decadence, and if it is ignored, the existence of this nation and religion will collapse.

Borba [3] states that many attempts and methods have been done in order to develop positive moral characters in children (Akhlakul Karimah), starting from social approaches, conflict resolution ability, stress management, self-confidence told by the teachers, Howard Gardner's idea about multiple Intelligence, and even Daniel Goleman's idea about Emotional intelligence, yet moral crisis still continues. Therefore, one of effective solutions is by directing children and adolescent' ability to steadily understand about what is right and wrong. This ability can be called as Moral Intelligence

Term 'moral' is adopted from Latin "mos" (plural: mores) which means habit. Yusuf [29] added that moral, asides from habit, also means a rule, values, or procedures in life. Studies about moral that have been widely known are Freud, Piaget, Kohlberg, Gilligan and Turiel [4].

Bull [10] suggested that moral is all morality consisting of relationships between persons; that its three concerns are therefore, self, others and the relationship between them; and the heart of morality is therefore respect for persons. Furthermore, Lennick & Kiel [15] defined Moral intelligence as the mental capacity to determine how universal human principles should be applied to our values, goals, and action.

Borba [21] defined moral intelligence as the capacity to distinguish right from wrong and to act according to a moral certainty in order to provide correct and honorable behavior. This type of intelligence shows the human mental capacity to determine how universal human principles, values and goals related to the actions. Also, moral Intelligence represents one's ability to set standards of excellence and passion beyond his interests and even in the midst of such topics as the effectiveness of individual reactions.

Clarken [5] stated that moral intelligence refers to the ability to apply ethical principles to personal goals, values and actions. Moral Intelligence is considered as Individual' ability in understanding what is right out of wrong, having strong ethic beliefs, and acting or behaving for the right and honorable things [22]. Adolescents with high moral intelligence always do good things for themselves, or even other people.

Based on theoretical description about moral intelligence, it can be said that moral intelligence is individual's moral ability

which involves emotional and intellectual factor to think, behave, and act based on the society's values which can be applied in life's purposes and actions.

According to Borba [3], there are seven virtues which become the main essence as foundation to act and behave ethically. To describe adolescent's moral intelligence in this study, these virtues become the foundation: 1) Empathy, ability to feel and understand other people's worries; 2) Conscience, ability to know and apply how to act correctly; 3) Self-control, ability to control mind and act in order to resist negative inside or outside encouragement so they are able to act correctly; 4) Respect, ability to appreciate other individual and act nicely and politely; 5) Kindness, ability to show concern to other individual's well-being and feeling; 6) Tolerance, ability to respect other individual's right and dignity, although they have different faith and behavior; and 7) Fairness, ability to be open minded and acts honestly and correctly.

Yusuf [29] revealed that morality concept from childhood until adolescence is dominantly influenced by environment factor, especially family environment, society environment, and school environment. Process of moral concept understanding (right-wrong, good-bad) on children and adolescents is totally different. Children's understanding about moral tends to be *heteronomy* since they understand that adult's rules is a law; this concept belongs to Piaget, which then developed by Kohlberg at its pre-conventional level. While for the adolescents, the concept of moral develops to conventional level and post-conventional level. This adolescents' moral character is important and able to develop through moral character development guidance program so that it is able to shape adolescents' personality.

This article discusses the result of adolescent's moral intelligence survey at Junior High School level students in Yogyakarta. This article also gives alternative solution in improving moral intelligence practically through group counseling service with self-management technique.

## II. METHOD

This study used quantitative approach with descriptive survey method [17]. The subjects of this study were chosen through random sampling technique in a State Junior High School of Yogyakarta [14]. The collected data was information about moral intelligence level. It was in form of numerical data.

The used instrument to collect the data of this study was moral intelligence scale consisting of seven aspects namely empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance, and fairness. The scale was consisted of eighty-eight reliable and valid items. Empathy aspect consists of twenty-two items [9], Conscience aspect consists of eight items [16], Self-control aspect consists of ten items [26], Respect aspect consists of eleven items [12], Kindness aspect consists of thirteen items [6], Tolerance aspect consists of twenty-two items [27], and fairness aspect consists of two items [2].

The Instrument used 4 level Likert scales, namely very suitable, suitable, unsuitable, and very unsuitable. For favorable

items, the score for very suitable answer equals 4, suitable answer equals 3, unsuitable equals 2, and very unsuitable equals 1. While for unfavorable items, score 1 is given for very suitable answer, 2 for suitable, 3 for unsuitable, and 4 for very unsuitable. Afterwards, the data were analyzed by using descriptive statistical analysis technique which observed from percentage of total score. Percentage of 76%–100% is categorized as high, 56%–75% is categorized as medium, while if the percentage is less than 56%, it is categorized as low.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Empathy Aspect Analysis

The average percentage of students' empathy is 68% and it is categorized as Medium.

### 3.2 Self-Control Aspect Analysis

The average percentage of students' self-control is 66% and it is categorized as Medium.

### 3.3 Conscience Aspect Analysis

The average percentage of students' conscience is 72% and it is categorized as Medium.

### 3.4 Respect Aspect Analysis

The average percentage of students' respect is 71% and it is categorized as Medium.

### 3.5 Kindness Aspect Analysis

The average percentage of students' empathy is 68% and it is categorized as Medium.

### 3.6 Tolerance Aspect Analysis

The average percentage of students' tolerance is 69% and it is categorized as Medium.

### 3.7 Fairness Aspect Analysis

The average percentage of students' fairness is 68% and it is categorized as Medium.

### 3.8 Adolescents' Moral Intelligence level Analysis

The average percentage of students' moral intelligence is 66% and it is categorized as Medium.

Human has different moral reflection and its development and change occur gradually [23]. Adolescents with medium moral intelligence level need assistance when facing their problems since moral intelligence will directly affect them as citizen [24]. Guidance and Counseling services are needed in order to do curative attempt related to personal and social adolescents' problem. There is a guidance and counseling service which is able to be done in solving problem together namely Group Counseling.

One of many abilities that counselors must have is ability to do counseling in group activity. Being seen from the angle of intertwined relationship between counselee and counselors, according to Natawidjaja [20] group counseling is a guidance technique which is done in form of group. Group guidance and

counseling utilizes group atmosphere as treatment and remedial medium or to develop counselee individually. Jacobs & Harvill [13] stated that group counseling is better because members need the input from others, plus they learn more from listening than talking. In many instances with teenagers, group counseling is better than individual counseling because teenagers often will talk more readily to other teenagers than with adults. For those stuck in the grief process, groups have been found to be very valuable.

Corey [8] defined group counseling has preventive as well as remedial aims. Generally, the counseling group has a specific focus, which may be educational, career, social, or personal. Counseling groups are often problem oriented, and the members largely determine their content and aims. Group members typically do not require extensive personality reconstruction, and their concerns generally related to the developmental tasks of the life span. Group counseling tends to be growth oriented in that the emphasis is on discovering internal resources of strength.

Based on some experts' definition about group counseling above, it can be concluded that a service which is done by counselor to a group of individuals who experiencing some problems in order to solve them that their potential will not be hampered.

Gibson & Mitchell [11] proposed the term of group counseling refers to routine adjustment or experience development in group scope. Group counseling is aimed to assist counselee overcome their problems through daily self-adjustment and self-development.

Group counseling has sequence of process or procedure. Corey [7] defined group process as development steps of a group and characteristic of each step. The followings are process of group counseling: 1) Beginning Stage, 2) Transition Stage, 3) Working Stage, and 4) Termination Stage. One of many techniques which are able to be applied in group counseling is self management.

Group counseling service is one many guidance and counseling services in school. Group counseling is an attempt given to the students in order to solve their personal and social problems together so that they can develop dynamic social relation in their group environment. Self-management technique can be used in group counseling.

Self-management can be defined as individuals' ability to manage themselves. Nursalim [21] stated that self-management is a process where counselee directs their own behavior through one or more strategies. Counselee should actively moves the internal and external variable in order to get the desired changes.

Furthermore, Woolfolk [28] conveyed that self-management is managing our own behavior and being responsible for our own action. In the behavioral theory, behavioral principles are used to change the behavior.

Based on some definitions above, it can be concluded that self-management is a behavior change strategy which in the process, counselee (adolescent) direct their behavioral change through a technique or therapeutic technique combination.

Self management technique belongs to cognitive behavioral modification and cognitive behaviorism therapy. Woolfolk [28] said that the root of self management is operant conditioning theory with social cognitive technique. Generally, self-management means a technique which makes students include in basic steps in behavior change program. Basic assumption of cognitive behavioral counseling is related to the process of group counseling which can change someone's cognition. It takes important role in self-management process and behavioral change which is controlled by internal and external interactions that possibly affect them outside counseling session.

Nursalim [28] explained that self-management consists of self-monitoring, stimulus control and positive reinforcement (self-reward) Practically, self-management has some excellences such as improving individual' understanding about environment and decreasing their addiction to the counselors or others, practical, inexpensive, and easily answered. So, in this case, self-management technique can improve students or adolescents' moral intelligence.

According to Nursalim [21], there are three strategies of self management namely Self Monitoring, Stimulus Control and Self Reward. Self-monitoring is a process where counselee observes and notes something about themselves and their interactions with environment' situation. Stimulus control is an arrangement or planning of environment's determined conditions which becomes the reason of why a behavior is done. Stimulus control emphasized the environment rearrangement or modification as particular reason of a certain reaction. Self-reward is used to strengthen or improve the desired response (Nursalim 2013: 157-158). The function of self-reward is to accelerate the appearance of targeted behavior. Through combination of self-monitoring, stimulus control, and self-reward, it is expected that adolescents can improve positive moral intelligence.

Self-management technique is a strategy of behavioral changing and development that emphasizes the importance of self-responsibility and effort in order to change and develop adolescents' behavior. The process of this behavioral change is mostly done by the counselee themselves, not directed by other people (counselor). So, in this study, it can be said that group counseling model with self-management technique can be applied to improve adolescents' moral intelligence.

Group counseling with self-management technique focuses on behavioral change and integrates changes which occur between its sessions. In order to improve moral intelligence, identification is needed to find out the level of moral intelligence. Moreover, treatment cannot be done just once since evaluation is needed in order to see how far this counseling model can improve adolescents' moral intelligence. Evaluation is performed by the counselor together with the

counselee to see whether the counseling target is achieved or not.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study resulted in the finding that mnemonic music and picture cards are effective in improving students' English vocabulary mastery. This proves that the process mechanism of multimodality, chunking effect and repetition give good impact to the working process of memory in managing new information in the form of English vocabulary.

The result of intelligence tests did not have a strong correlation in this study. The intelligence test variable is a control variable that controls all subjects in this study. The theme of vocabulary in this study is 4. The theme is the theme of body parts, school activities, parts of the house, and family members.

Of the four themes, there is one theme that is beyond the context of the understanding of children aged 10 years.

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