

Ambivalent Attachment Between Siblings of Drug Users: A Phenomenological Study

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Abstract

Drug use within sibling relationships creates a paradoxical dynamic of closeness and conflict. This phenomenological study involved three participants who used drugs alongside their siblings, analyzed with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Findings reveal ambivalent attachment: moments of togetherness through practices such as papak (pooling resources to use drugs) coexist with tension, disputes, and isolation. The study highlights how drug use shapes contradictory sibling bonds, generating both shared happiness and profound distress in their lived experiences.

Background

- Drug use = global problem & extraordinary crime in Indonesia.
- Prevalence of drug users (2021): ±4.8 million people.
- Drug use impacts physical, mental, social health, and family relations.
- Siblings are usually a support system → but when both are users, the role becomes paradoxical.

Significance

- Limited research in Indonesia on drug users with sibling users.
- Findings expected to contribute knowledge about sibling roles in drug use dynamics.

Purpose

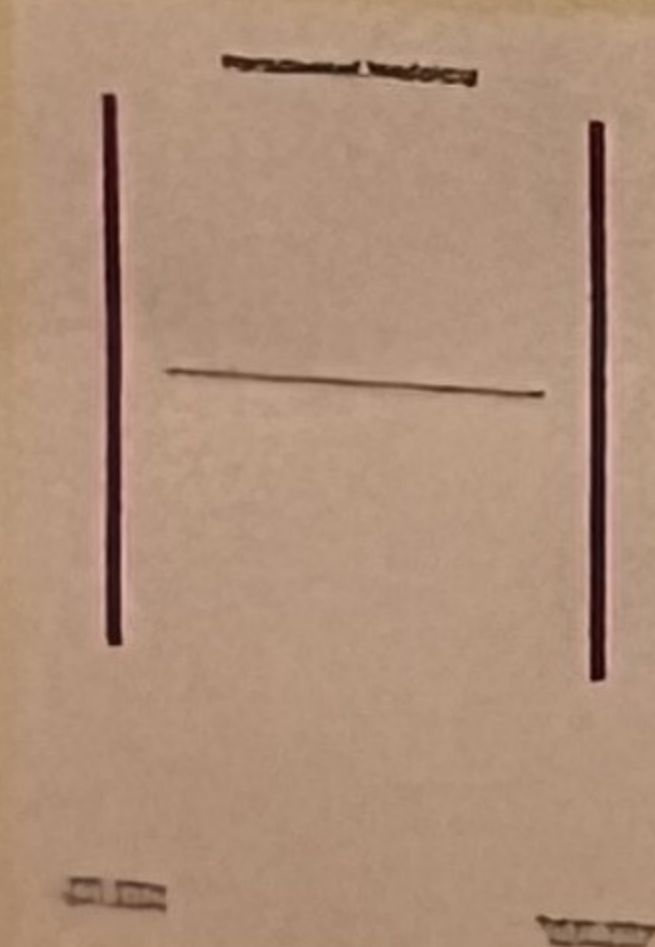
To explore the meaning of life for drug users who have siblings who are also users.

Method

- Design: Qualitative, phenomenological approach.
- Analysis: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).
- Participants: 3 drug users with sibling users.
- Technique: In-depth semi-structured interviews, purposive sampling.

Findings (Main Themes)

- 1. Sibling Estrangement / Alienation**
 - Limited interaction between siblings.
 - Feelings of estrangement, separation, and conflict.
- 2. Permissive Parenting & Non-compliance**
 - Parents provide minimal rules & control.
 - Children continue drug use despite parental advice.
- 3. Paradoxical Modeling**
 - Older siblings warn younger ones not to use, yet become role models.
 - Contradiction between advice and behavior.
- 4. Permissive Parenting & Non-compliance**
 - Parents provide minimal rules & control.
 - Children continue drug use despite parental advice.
- 5. Negative Social Support**
 - "Papak" (jointly collecting money to buy drugs) seen as support.
 - Even parents/relatives sometimes provide negative support.
- 6. Dualism of Drug Use**
 - Emotional closeness when using together (secure attachment).
 - Conflict, isolation, and distance also occur (insecure attachment).



Drug use creates both closeness (secure) and conflict (insecure)

Discussion

- Sibling relationships among users = complex and ambivalent.
- Positive experiences (closeness, shared burden) coexist with negative ones (conflict, isolation, financial strain).
- Drugs become both a connector and divider.
- Dynamics shaped by parenting, family support, and social stigma.

Conclusion

- Sibling relations among drug users = ambivalent.
- Happy and sad events may occur simultaneously.
- Life meaning: bound to drugs, as if "mortgaging their lives" to continue using.
- This study adds new contribution to Indonesian literature on sibling attachment & drug use.

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10
YEARS