



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**PEER PRESSURE, PARENTAL BONDING, SELF-EFFICACY,
SENSATION SEEKING AND RISK-TAKING ATTITUDE AMONG
ADOLESCENTS**

NUR NADIA BINTI HANAPI

FEM 2020 10



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By

NUR NADIA BINTI HANAPI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

August 2019

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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August 2019

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Risk-taking attitude among adolescents in Malaysia have become riskier and more dangerous that lead to the continuity of social problems among adolescents. Past studies proved the relationship between peer pressure, parental bonding, self-efficacy and sensation seeking with adolescent's risk-taking attitude, however, there are limited studies in identifying the strongest predictors of risk-taking attitude among adolescent. The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between peer pressure, parental bonding (maternal and paternal), self-efficacy, sensation seeking and risk-taking attitude among adolescents in Selangor.

A total of 462 students between the age of 13 to 18 years old were recruited in the study. The respondents were selected through a simple sampling technique. 18 government high schools in 9 selected districts in Selangor were randomly chosen. A self-administered questionnaire was used for the data collection. The questionnaires include The Attitude Towards Risk Questionnaire (ATTRQ), General Self-efficacy Scale (GSE), Parental Bonding Inventory (PBI), and Impulsive Sensation Seeking Inventory (ImpSS). The instrument used in the study was proven to be reliable for the Malaysia population. Data analysis including descriptive, bivariate and multivariate statistic was used.

The Pearson's correlation analyses indicated that age, peer pressure, sensation seeking, parental bonding was significantly related to the adolescent's risk-taking attitude. The result of t-test showed a significant difference in the risk-taking attitude between the male and female students. The multiple regression analyses revealed that sensation seeking was the strongest predictors of adolescent's risk-taking attitude followed by peer pressure and paternal bonding.

The findings of the study emphasized on the important contribution of both environmental (peer pressure and paternal bonding) and cognitive factor (sensation

seeking) in predicting risk-taking attitude among adolescent. Intervention and programs to promote healthy cognitive development as well as bringing awareness on the importance of the father's role in adolescent development should be considered.

keyword: adolescent, peer pressure, parental bonding, self-efficacy, sensation seeking, risk-taking attitude



Abstrak tesis yang dipersembahkan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan Ijazah Master Sains

PENGARUH RAKAN SEBAYA, KEAKRABAN IBU BAPA, EFIKASI KENDIRI, PENCARIAN SENSASI, SIKAP PENGAMBILAN RISIKO DALAM KALANGAN REMAJA

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Sikap pengambilan risiko dalam kalangan remaja di Malaysia semakin membimbangkan dan berbahaya yang boleh membawa kepada penularan masalah sosial dalam kalangan remaja. Kajian terdahulu membuktikan bahawa wujudnya hubungan antara pengaruh rakan sebaya, keakraban ibu bapa, efikasi sendiri dan pencarian sensasi dengan sikap pengambilan risiko remaja, namun begitu terdapat kajian yang terhad dalam mengenal pasti faktor penyebab sikap pengambilan risiko dalam kalangan remaja. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan antara pengaruh rakan sebaya, hubungan ibu bapa (maternal dan paternal), efikasi sendiri, skala pencarian sensasi dan sikap pengambilan risiko dalam kalangan remaja di Selangor.

Seramai 462 orang pelajar yang berusia dalam lingkungan 13-18 tahun telah terlibat dalam kajian ini. Responden dipilih melalui teknik persampelan mudah. Sebanyak 18 buah sekolah menengah kerajaan di 9 buah daerah terpilih dalam Selangor telah dipilih secara rawak. Soal selidik yang dikendalikan sendiri telah digunakan untuk mendapatkan data kajian. Soalan kaji selidik mencakupi Soal Selidik Tentang Sikap Terhadap Risiko (ATTRQ), Skala Efikasi Kendiri Umum (GSE), Inventori Keakraban Ibu bapa (PBI) dan Inventori Pencarian Sensasi Impulsif (ImpSS). Alat yang digunakan dalam kajian ini telah terbukti boleh dipercayai untuk populasi di Malaysia. Analisis data merangkumi statistik deskriptif, bivariat dan multivariat telah digunakan.

Analisis Kolerasi Pearson menunjukkan bahawa umur, pengaruh rakan sebaya, pencarian sensasi, keakraban ibu bapa jelas berkait dengan sikap pengambilan risiko dalam kalangan remaja. Keputusan ujian-t menunjukkan perbezaan ketara dalam sikap pengambilan risiko antara pelajar lelaki dan pelajar perempuan. Analisis regresi berbilang menunjukkan bahawa pencarian sensasi merupakan punca utama tentang sikap

pengambilan risiko dalam kalangan remaja diikuti dengan pengaruh rakan sebaya dan keakraban paternal.

Dapatan kajian menekankan akan kepentingan sumbangan kedua-dua persekitaran (pengaruh rakan sebaya dan keakraban paternal) dan faktor kognitif (pencarian sensasi) untuk meramal sikap pengambilan risiko dalam kalangan remaja. Intervensi dan program untuk menggalakkan pertumbuhan kognitif yang sihat serta memberi kesedaran tentang kepentingan peranan bapa dalam tumbesaran remaja perlu dipertimbangkan.

Kata kunci: remaja, pengaruh rakan sebaya, keakraban ibu bapa, efikasi sendiri, pencarian sensasi, sikap pengambilan risiko



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah, praise to Allah SWT for giving me the strength and patience to complete such a meaningful journey. First and foremost, my highest gratitude goes out to my main supervisor Associate Professor Dr. Mariani Mansor for her support, guidance and knowledge throughout my journey. Thank you for trusting me and never give up on me until the end of my study. Also thank you to my earlier co-supervisor Dr. Siti Binti Nor and my current co-supervisor Dr. Mohd Najmi Bin Daud for their knowledge, encouragement and advices given to me.

Most importantly I dedicated my thesis to my parents, my deepest appreciation goes out to my beloved parents Hanapi Bin Mat (Father) and Maria Mohd Yusof (Mother) for their support, encouragement and prayers in helping me going through the difficult and challenging journey in pursuing my dreams. Also thank you to my siblings Nur Liyana Hanapi, Nur Nabila Hanapi and Mohd Shairazi Akmal for the encouragement and patience throughout this study. Last but not least thank you to my supportive friends Mohd Haslan Mohd Jusoh, Nur Fadzlillah Amira and the others who filled up my journey with positive vibes, humor and understanding.

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATTRQ	Attitude towards risk questionnaire
GSE	General Self-Efficacy
ImpSS	Impulsive Sensation Seeking
PBI	Parental Bonding Instrument
SPSS	Statistical Program for Social Science
SO	Specific objectives
Ho	Null Hypothesis

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with the presentation of background of the study on adolescent's risk-taking attitude followed by problem statement, objectives and hypotheses of the research. The theoretical background and the conceptual framework of the current study, definition of the main variables and discussion on the significance of the study are also presented. This chapter ends with the limitation of the study and summary.

1.1 Background of the Study

Adolescents undergo a change of phase from childhood to adulthood and in this transition phase, they face an overwhelming challenge. One of the challenges is finding their identity to feel fit in society. In finding their identity, they would experiment with various possible adult roles that they think could fit them uniquely. Experimenting with various roles however could lead them to activities that could be dangerous or risky to them. Adolescents might be able to quit once they are involved in dangerous activities however, there are those who are unable to quit (Bandura, 2006). Whether it is because of their inability to quit or because of their own choice to not quit, either way adolescents could expose themselves to riskier situations which might lead to the emergence of various more behavioral problems.

The emergence of various behavioral problems shows that the current adolescent behavioral trend is getting riskier and more dangerous. There was a report that went viral on adolescents climbing on a 10-foot landmark scale illegally without any safety harness (The Strait Times, January 1, 2017). A few months later, news broke out on adolescents setting a Tahfiz school on fire while the students were asleep that led to death (The Strait Times, September 16, 2017). Their action on setting the school on fire was due to the fight over a futsal court. For adolescents to respond to such situation without considering the consequences of their actions might reflect on the adolescent's current trend of risk-taking attitude.

The current disturbing trend of adolescents risk-taking attitude raises questions on their actual risk-taking capabilities towards various situations and experience. According to Lee, Tseng and Jan (2015), the risk-taking attitude is defined as an individual's positive or negative evaluation of their controlled behavior towards a perceived uncertain outcome. This means adolescents with the risk-taking attitude would view a certain dangerous situation as beneficial for them without considering the consequences that come after. Although the risk-taking attitude is mostly viewed in a negative perspective, the risk-taking is important for building up adolescent confidence in trying out new experiences. Nevertheless, the risk-taking attitude can be viewed based on how the adolescent approaches it. The risk-taking attitude is further compounded by the strength of the attitude itself (Eaton & Visser, 2008).

The risk-taking attitude among adolescents is not a new issue but it had long been studied in the Western Countries. In the year 2015, the prevalence of the risk-taking attitude in Brazil showed that 58.5% adolescents between the ages of 14 to 19 years old exposed to at least two or more risk-taking behaviors (Brito, Hardman & Barros, 2015). Whereas in Malaysia particularly, the prevalence of the risk-taking attitude reported on adolescents living in the urban and rural areas is 81.7% and 83.7%, respectively (Mohd Nawi, Abdul Hamid, Azhar Shah, Ahamd, Noor Aizuddin & Hod, 2015). The high percentage reported among adolescents in Malaysia indicating that the risk-taking attitude among adolescents in Malaysia is in trend.

The risk-taking attitudes among adolescents had been seen associating with sensation seeking by a number of past studies. Zuckerman (1994) defines sensation seeking as the need for varied, novel and complex sensations and experiences and the willingness to take physical and social risks for the sake of such experience. This definition denotes that the pleasure they gained from the experience can lead to addiction. The excitement and the sensation will likely lead to adolescent's risk-taking attitude (Agilonu, Bastug, Mutlu & Pala, 2017).

Parents are the most immediate person in adolescent's life that played the role of a primary educator. However, during adolescence, they start to crave for privacy and separate life from their parents and hostile to their parents. This could create distress and frustration for parents due to the lack of control. Therefore, it is important for the adolescents to have a strong bonding with their parents. The adolescents can feel the care from their parents when they have a close bonding between parents and adolescents as well as providing them with the source of support (Muhammad, Tohid, Omar, Mohd Amin & Shamsuddin, 2017). In addition, the researcher indicated that parenting bonding styles consist of two dimensions which are parental care and parental control. The characteristics of parental care are affection, warmth, empathy, and closeness where the characteristics of parental control are excessive psychological control and intrusive over their child (Lucia & Franca, 2017). The two-dimension makes up the parental bonding style adopted by the parents.

As adolescents start attending schools, parents who are immediate person in their earlier life are being overshadowed by the adolescent's peers. The peers become more important to the adolescents during the adolescence period. They start to pull themselves away from their family and more towards their peers to seek support and guidance. The lack of cognitive and emotional maturity, information, as well as resources for them to protect themselves from their peers (Kingori, 2014), could easily make them feel pressured. This leads to the pressure to conform to peer group demand to avoid stress-related decision-making and exclusion from the peer group (Rupp, 2017). Therefore, the fear of being excluded could cause the adolescents to involve in risk-taking attitude as a way for them to stay as a part of the group and stay within it (Novakova & Vavrova, 2015).

Another factor contributing to the adolescent risk-taking attitude is self-efficacy. The self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability can have an effect on the outcome of the situation through their actions (Bandura, 1977). Several studies revealed self-efficacy related to risk-taking attitude (van Campen & Ramero, 2012). Smorti (2014)

suggested adolescent involvement in risk-taking attitude was due to adolescents underestimating their capabilities of having the tendency to involve in risk-taking attitude.

Based on the issue discussed above, this study explored the relationship between peer pressure, parental bonding, self-efficacy, sensation seeking, and the risk-taking attitude among adolescents in Selangor, Malaysia.

1.2 Problem Statement

Risk-taking attitude among adolescents leads to various social problems which had existed long before and it is still continuing. A total of 296 cases in the year 2014 was reported followed by 823 cases in the year 2015 and in the year 2016, a total of 764 cases was reported involving youth offenders between the age of 10 to 21 years old in Selangor which is among the highest reported cases among all other states (Malaysian Department of Social Welfare, 2014; 2015, 2016). The offences include property-related crimes, people-related crimes, Minor offence Act, drug, gamble, weapon or fire arm, traffic, escape from an approved school and many more. This continuity of social problems arises concerns reflecting on the adolescent's current behavior. In order to reduce such behavior from occurring, their risk-taking attitude needed to be tackled as this type of behavior is the manifestation of their uncontrolled risk-taking attitude.

Adolescence is at the age where one is easily exposed to various risky situations as a part of the developmental process. An adolescent develops an interest towards risk-taking situation as their age increases (Čerešník, 2015; Reniers, Murphy, Lin, Bartolomé & Wood, 2016). Brito, Hardman, and Barros (2015) identified that older adolescents between the ages of 17 to 19 years old are simultaneously exposed to three or more health risk activities as compared to the younger adolescents. However, a news article on the study done by the Ministry of Health also reported that 50.4 % of the children that being studied admitted of having sex for the first time before the age of 14 years old (Bernama, 2015). This means that addiction to drugs and having premarital sex currently occur among younger adolescents that might be as early as 13 years old. Hence, this study fills in the gap by looking at risk-taking attitude across the adolescent age.

Both male and female adolescents respond differently towards risky situations. According to Mohd Nawi Azmawati, Abdul Hadi Siti Hazariah, Azhar Shah Shamsul, Ahmad Norfazilah, Noor Aizuddin Azimatun and Hod Rozita, (2015) male adolescents particularly reported to be riskier as compared to female adolescents. The male exhibited more masculine or tough characteristics which were more prone towards risky activities or situations. On the other hand, Oluwatoyin & Modupe (2014), found that both genders have equal chance of engaging in risk taking attitude. Societies with modern thinking that upheld gender equality need to study risk-taking attitudes between genders especially in Malaysia which is rich with cultural values.

Parents shaped adolescent beliefs, values and attitudes and having a good bonding with adolescents is the first essential step. Past studies also proved that a good parental bonding can decrease adolescent's risk-taking attitude (Phuong, Huong, Tien, Khanh chi & Dunne, 2013; Anwar, Fatima & Malik, 2016). Grounded in the challenges with issue concerning family functioning (e.g., family breakdown or dysfunction), the adverse effect on an adolescent's well-being is anticipated. Azmawati et al. (2015), suggested the development process undergone by Malaysia currently have affected families in various ways. The most evident effect is the large extended family becoming a nuclear family unit. This leads to restriction of time spend with adolescent and without monitoring activities, possibly leading to risky dangerous activities. Mohd Nawi et al. (2015) showed the absence of a balanced healthy family and favorable environment will lead to negative influence toward adolescent behavior which then lead to risk behaviors. Thus, parental bonding could be one of factors in relation to adolescent risk-taking attitude.

Adolescence is at the age where one starts to prioritize peers more than parents to be a part of the peer circle. The pressure from peers makes adolescent more likely to engage in risk-taking attitude (Cherie & Berhane, 2012; Dumas et al., 2012; Nik Farid et al., 2014; Reynolds et al., 2014; de Boer & Harakeh, 2017). This added to the fact that being with friends who are socially acceptable is much important as to be able to remain in that particular peer group. Their desire to remain as a member of the group is predominant and outweighs the potential risk (Novakova & Vavrova, 2015). In addition to peer pressure becoming the major reason among all others for adolescents to engage in the misuse of drugs (National Anti-Drugs Agency, 2016) makes it more of a reason to study peer pressure on the adolescent risk-taking attitude.

Despite adolescent surrounding have an influence on their risk-taking attitude, the possibility of adolescent risk-taking attitude to be influenced by cognitive aspects should not be undermined especially self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1994), adolescents with high beliefs in their capabilities will approach certain tasks or situations as a challenge for them to master rather than threats for them to avoid. However, adolescents under developed self-efficacy could affect their abilities in perceiving risky situations considering how their surrounding shaped them. Smorti (2014) identified that the reason for adolescents to involve in risk-taking attitude was due to adolescents underestimating their perception of their own capabilities to have the tendency towards risk-taking attitude. Therefore, self-efficacy could be one of the factors that influences adolescent's risk-taking attitude.

Each individual is full of desires and interest and sensation seeking probably the cognitive factor that leads to risk-taking attitude. An adolescent with a higher level of sensation seeking tend to involve in risk-taking (Breivik, Svela, & McDonald, 2017; Melkman, 2015; Zhang, Zhang, & Shang, 2016; Agilonu et al., 2017). Adolescents addicted to the sensation they experienced from risky activities for the first time can lead adolescents to seek more of the sensation. This is due to sensation seekers having less fear and attracted to dangerous environment and situations (Breivik et al., 2017). Thus,

this shows the personal aspect particularly sensation seeking, would potentially lead to risk-taking attitude.

Tackling adolescent risk-taking attitude at an early stage might be one of the steps that could be taken to reduce social problems involving adolescents. Past studies had looked into sample population who were already at risk. Therefore, this present study fills in the gap in terms of methodology part, specifically on sample population by focusing on normal population sample which had equally possible chance of having a risk-taking attitude. Most of the literatures on adolescent's risk-taking attitude had been conducted among adolescents in Western countries. Hence, the lack of local literatures indicated the need to study risk-taking attitude among Malaysian adolescents. Past studies also viewed more on individual variables, limited studies examined the strongest predictors among both environmental and personal predictors on risk-taking attitude in Malaysia. Thus, this study aimed to investigate various predictors that could contribute to risk-taking attitude among adolescents in Malaysia.

Based on the problem statement discussed above, research questions are proposed as follows:

1. What is the level of peer pressure, parental bonding (maternal and paternal), self-efficacy, sensation seeking, and risk-taking attitude among adolescents?
2. Is there any relationship between adolescent age and risk-taking attitude among adolescents?
3. Are there any relationships between peer pressure, parental bonding (maternal and paternal), self-efficacy and sensation seeking and adolescent risk-taking attitude?
4. Are there any differences in an adolescent risk-taking attitude with regards to gender?
5. What are the unique predictors of risk-taking attitude among adolescents?

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between peer pressure, parental bonding (maternal and paternal), self-efficacy and sensation seeking and adolescent risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

The specific objectives of this study include:

1. To describe demographic factor (gender, age, family structure, number of siblings, family income) and the level of peer pressure, parental bonding (maternal and paternal), self-efficacy, sensation seeking and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.
2. To determine the relationship between adolescent age and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

3. To examine the relationship between peer pressure, parental bonding (maternal and paternal), self-efficacy, sensation seeking and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.
4. To compare the differences in adolescents' risk-taking attitude with respect to gender.
5. To determine the unique predictors of risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

Based on the objective discussed, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Objective 2: To determine the relationship between adolescent age and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between adolescent age and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

Objective 3: To examine the relationship between peer pressure, parental bonding (maternal and paternal), self-efficacy, sensation seeking and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

H₀3: There is no significant relationship between maternal bonding and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

H₀4: There is no significant relationship between paternal bonding and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

H₀5: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

H₀6: There is no significant relationship between sensation seeking and risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

Objective 4: To compare the differences in adolescents' risk-taking attitude with respect to gender.

H₀7: There is no significant difference in risk-taking attitude between male and female adolescents.

Objective 5: To determine the unique predictors of risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

H₀8: The regression coefficient for all the variables are not equal to zero when regresses against risk-taking attitude among adolescents.

1.5 Theoretical Background

This study focuses on the relationship between peer pressure, parental bonding (maternal and paternal), self-efficacy, sensation seeking and risk-taking attitude among adolescents. This study used one theory to explain the relationships between the main variables in the research. Bandura's Social Cognitive theory (1986) was used to explain the theoretical framework of the study.

The theory introduced by Albert Bandura which is a social cognitive theory (1986) is an improved theory from his formally social learning theory. Bandura believes that all human possesses sophisticated cognitive capabilities that underlie the observational learning and it plays an important role in learning, behavior and development (Sigelman & Rider, 2012). The important feature of social cognitive theory looks at self-reflection where the individual making sense of their own experiences, explore their own cognition and self-beliefs, engaging in self-evaluation alter their thinking and behavior suitably (Jarvela, 2011).

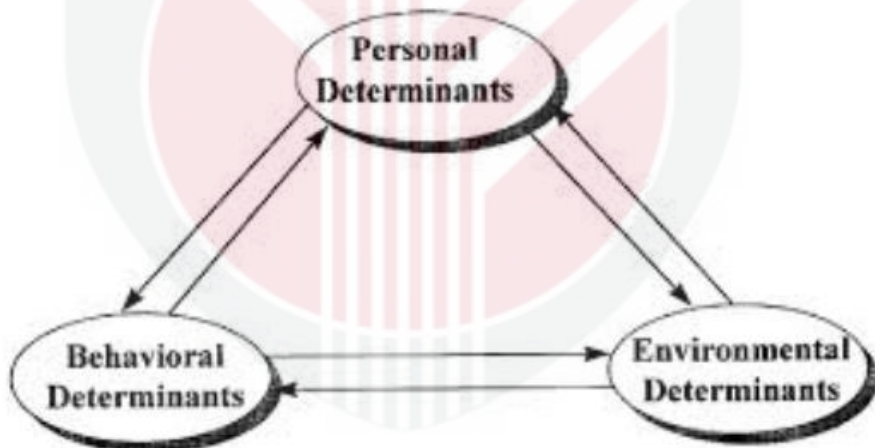


Figure 1.1: Triadic Reciprocal Determinism (Bandura, 1977)

Bandura (1989) proposed the model of the environment-person-behavior system (Figure 1.1). This model consists of three components which are biological and psychological characteristic of a person (*P*), the person's behavior (*B*) and also the environment (*E*). The environmental influences (peer pressure, parental bonding), cognition (self-efficacy) and other personal factor (sensation seeking), and behavior (risk-taking attitude) operates as the interacting determinant that influences each other bidirectional.

Adolescents shaped the beliefs on their ability towards certain behavior by the influence of the environmental factors such as peer pressure and parental bonding. Bandura (1986) stated that “expectations, beliefs, emotional bent and cognitive competencies were developed and modified by the social influence that conveys information and activates emotional reaction through modeling, instruction and social persuasion”. This means that, the influence of environmental factor can have an effect on their cognitive through the modification of cognitive factor such adolescent’s self-efficacy and sensation seeking. These beliefs provide the fundamentals of individual motivation, well-being and personal accomplishment which mean that unless the individuals believe in their action can produce the desired outcome, less incentive will be shown by an individual to act or continuing to confront with life difficulties (Jarvela, 2011). These adolescents will be motivated to engage in risk-taking behaviors when there are no boundaries being made and their behaviors were approved by their social peers.

Based on this theory, adolescent’s engagement towards certain behaviors happens due to their cognitive abilities. Adolescence is at the age where their desires and interest overshadow their rational and logical thinking. Bandura (1999) focused on analyzing an individual personality through the interaction between environment, behavior and individual psychological process. The personality can be explained by the basic cognitive and effective process that was developed in the social setting and activated by the elements of the social environment (Caprara et. al, 2000). When individuals perceived sensation seeking as rewarding, they tend to be more motivated in seeking more of the sensation for them to be able to attain the same reward.

The self-efficacy or individual perception of their own capabilities to learn is fundamental in individual motivation, well-being and personal accomplishment. Bandura (1997) hypothesized that an individual engages in their desired behaviors due to the perception of capable of doing so and increases in the self-efficacy. Van Campen and Romero (2012) explained the more adolescents believe that they can produce their desired result through their action, the more likely they will adopt, initiate and maintain health promoting rather than health-compromising behavior. This indicated that adolescents achieving the outcome that they desired based on the risk-taking attitude that they adopt could encourage them to have a healthier approach of risk-taking attitude. However, there are the possibilities where adolescents overestimated their capabilities in being involved in unhealthy approach on risk-taking that later leads them more vulnerable towards dangerous outcomes (Smorti, 2014). Thinking that they would not be attracted towards risky or dangerous situations after their first attempt of experiencing it might expose them more towards such situations. Overestimating the perceived capabilities, they had on not engaging in them might backfire when they achieved a desired goal from an unhealthy approach of risk-taking.

Other than cognitive factors, environmental factors are also found to have an effect on adolescent formation of risky attitude. Adolescent have a better development outcome when they have a stronger belief in managing their parental relation in relation with peer and family matter (Bandura, p. 8, 2005). As parents seem to be the most immediate

persons in adolescent life, they are the role model for adolescents as well as source of support and information for adolescents. The connectedness to the parent is expected of having to facilitate the adolescent socialization to the parental values and guidance (Sidze & Defo, 2013). However, when adolescents perceive having a poor bonding with their parent, adolescents find friends instead of their parents for disclosure.

Besides parents, peers also played a major role in adolescents' lives. Imitating risky behaviors which adolescents believe can make them feel fit in their peer group or comply with the social norm can lead to the tendency of adolescent to engage in risk-taking behaviors. According to Bandura (1989) individual will react socially different depending on their social role or status. This means the social role and status adolescents exhibited can affect their social environment even before they say or act. Thus, leading to the possibilities of adolescents selecting friends with similar behaviors as themselves. They also tend to get influenced by their peers through gestures (e.g.: offering cigarette) or overt encouragement and order from their peers (e.g.: forcing others to race during illegal racing) to involve in risky behaviors when they are in the presence of their peers.

In summary, this study utilized social cognitive theory to develop the conceptual framework in understanding adolescent's risk-taking attitude. Specifically, this study examines the relationship between peer pressure, parental bonding (grouped as environmental factors), self-efficacy and sensation seeking (grouped as the personal factors) with risk-taking attitude among adolescents (behavioral factor).

1.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study was developed and constructed based on elements discussed by Bandura Social cognitive theory and research questions addressed. According to the Figure 1.2, this study consists of five main variables which are peer pressure, parental bonding, self-efficacy, sensation seeking and risk-taking attitude among adolescents. The independent variables were grouped into environmental (peer pressure, maternal bonding and paternal bonding) and cognitive factor (self-efficacy and sensation seeking). The risk-taking attitude is categorized as a dependent variable.

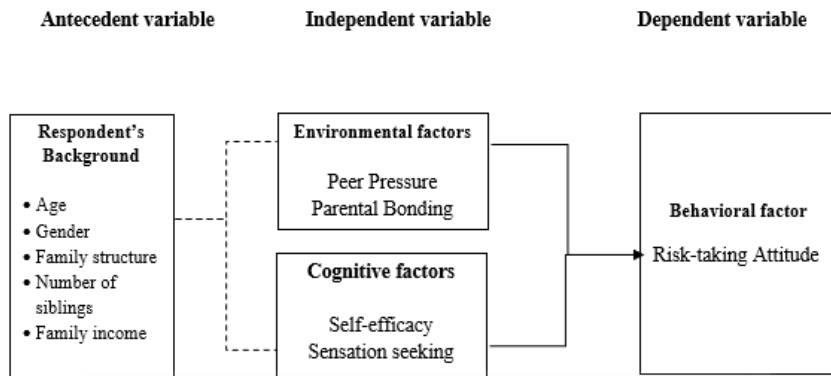


Figure 1.2: Conceptual Framework

The social cognitive theory focuses on the bidirectional interaction between environmental, cognitive factor and behavioral. The theory emphasizes the learning from observing peer pressure and parental bonding is an ongoing process of interaction and adolescents' risk-taking attitude is controlled and motivated by their cognitive process. Two variables of the environmental factors include the peer pressure and parental bonding. A cognitive factor which is self-efficacy and sensation seeking included in the study was tested on risk-taking attitudes among adolescents (behavioral factor). Figure 1.2 explains the conceptual framework of the current study that aims to determine the relationship between peer pressure, parental bonding, self-efficacy, sensation seeking (independent variables) and risk-taking attitude among adolescents (dependent variable).

1.7 Definition of Terms

The operational and conceptual definitions of the key terms used in the present study are presented in the following sub-sections as reported in the literature. The detailed discussion about each of the terms could be obtained from the cited references.

1.7.1 Adolescent

Conceptual definition: Transitional phase of growth and development between childhood to adulthood (Jaworska & Macqueen, 2015).

Operational definition: In this study adolescents are operationalized as secondary school children between the age of 13 to 17 years old.

1.7.2 Risk-Taking Attitude

Conceptual definition: According to Lee, Tseng and Jan (2015) risk-taking attitude can be defined as an individual's positive or negative evaluation of controlled behavior with a perceived uncertain outcome.

Operational definition: Risk-taking attitude refers to respondent's risk-taking attitude measured by the 20 items of Attitude Towards Risk Questionnaire (Franken et al. 1992). High scores obtained from answering the questionnaire indicated the existence of risk-taking attitude.

1.7.3 Peer Pressure

Conceptual definition: Santor et al. (2000) defined "peer pressure as the subjective experience of feeling pressured, urged, or dared by others (peer) to do certain things".

Operational definition: Operationally peer pressure refers to respondent's level of peer pressure measured by 7 items of The Peer Pressure, Popularity, and Conformity Scale – Peer pressure domain (Santor et al, 2000). High scores indicated high peer pressure.

1.7.4 Parental Bonding

Conceptual definition: Parental bonding is defined as "the emotional and physical attachment occurring between a parent or parent figure and offspring" (Sasikala & Relton, 2017).

Operational definition: Parental bonding referred to the respondent's perception of their maternal and paternal bonding using the Parental Bonding Inventory (Parker, Tupling & Brown, 1979). High scores indicated the parental bonding between a parent and their child are good.

1.7.5 Self-efficacy

Conceptual definition: Self-efficacy defined as the individual's belief in their ability to affect the outcome of a situation by their actions (Bandura, 1977).

Operational definition: Self-efficacy referred to the respondent's level of self-efficacy measured by 10 items of the General Self-efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). High scores indicate respondents having a high self-efficacy.

1.7.6 Sensation Seeking

Conceptual definition: Sensation seeking can be defined as the “seeking of varied, novel, complex and intense sensation and experiences, and the willingness to take the physical, social, legal and financial risk for the sake of such experience” (Zuckerman, 1994).

Operational definition: Operationally sensation seeking referred to respondent’s score on the 18 items Impulsive sensation seeking scale measured by Zuckerman (1994). The high scores obtained indicating the existence of sensation seeking among adolescents.

1.8 Significance of the Study

This present study conducted to determine the relationship between peer pressure, parental bond, self-efficacy, and sensation seeking with risk-taking attitude among adolescents. The significance of this study can be viewed through the useful information offered for parents, educators, counselors and psychologists. The contribution will also benefit to the body of knowledge, future researchers and also policy makers in this area.

There are limited studies in Malaysia investigating the relationship between both environmental (peer pressure and parental bonding) and personal factor (self-efficacy and sensation seeking) on risk-taking attitude among adolescents. The present study could fill in the knowledge gap in understanding the adolescent’s risk-taking attitude. The findings can also provide enrichment to the knowledge in child development field especially among adolescents.

The study aimed to investigate the possible factors such as peer pressure, parental bonding, self-efficacy and sensation seeking contribute to adolescent’s risk-taking attitude. The findings of the study will be useful to the school counselors in developing program or intervention promoting healthy risk-taking attitude, peer relationship and increase their self-efficacy. The study also hoped to provide understanding to the importance of paternal and maternal bonding with the adolescent in shaping adolescents attitude. They could also promote effective bonding and instill essential values to adolescents in order for them to not be easily pressured by their peers.

The result of the present study could help equip adolescent with strong protective factor which could help refrain themselves from adopting dangerous risk-taking attitude despite being exposed to various forms of ambiguous outcome situations. This provides psychologists with the information for developing a suitable approach in educating not only the parents but also adolescents themselves as to the strongest factors that could protect them from engaging in dangerous risk-taking attitude.

The findings of the study are also significant to the policy makers and related agencies working with adolescent for proper planning, implementation of programs or services to help adolescent. Finally, current findings can serve as a reference for future researches in relation to the well-being of the adolescents as well as their risk-taking attitude.

1.9 Limitation of the Study

There are a few limitations encountered beyond the researcher's control while conducting the research. For instance, the current study faced the possibility of respondents not filling in the questionnaire honestly. This might be due to fear or mistrust in answering the questions. Although the respondents were told on the confidentiality and their identity being kept anonymous, there might still be respondents who filled in the questionnaire with dishonestly. Other limitation includes the findings of the study could not be generalized beyond the population. This is due to the fact that the population of the study consists of adolescents studying in secondary school in Selangor. Therefore, the result could not be generalized to the population of adolescents in Malaysia.

1.10 Chapter Summary

As adolescence is at a stage for experimenting with various situations, involving in dangerous activities seems to be the biggest concerns. This is because of the unknown consequences are not taken into consideration. As the concerns arisen, determining the factors that could contribute to the adolescent risk-taking attitude become the main focus in order to overcome the arisen concerns. Analyzing through past literatures focusing on factors contributing to the adolescent risk-taking attitude leads to the discussion of the statement of the problem, objectives, research hypothesis, significance and the limitation of the study.

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PUBLICATION

1. Hanapi, N. N., Daud, M. N. & Mansor, M, (2019) Gender differences in risk-taking attitudes among adolescents. *Malaysian Journal of Social science and Humanities* (MJSSH), 4(4), 71-75. Retrieved from <https://msocialsciences.com/index.php/mjssh/article/view/236>





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