

THE PHENOMENON OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS WITH DADDY ISSUES PROBLEMS IN UNDERSTANDING ABOUT ROMANCE RELATIONSHIPS

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Abstract. Good health and well-being are important at every stage of one's life in adolescent health. Good health and well-being include not only physical health but also mental health. The mental health of adolescent girls is not solely determined by their physical health. One aspect of mental health that is of interest is the father complex, also known as "daddy issues," which can have an impact on how they view themselves and their interactions with the opposite sex. Studies have shown that daddy issues can affect the psychological well-being of young people, particularly girls. This study focuses on communication psychology and uses two theories - interpersonal relationship needs theory and love triangle theory - to examine the issue. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with six participants, and the results reveal that adolescent girls with daddy issues often normalize toxic behaviors in relationships, considering them romantic. Past attachment wounds can also cause trauma and fear of romantic relationships. Some girls seek affection from the opposite sex in an attempt to fill the paternal void, leading to dependency. These findings highlight the influence of daddy issues on the mental health and overall well-being of adolescent girls.

Keywords: Adolescent Girls, Communication Psychology, Daddy Issues, Good Health, Meaning of Romance, Well-Being.

1. INTRODUCTION

As social beings, interpersonal relationships are established since human birth. However, a person's ability to form and establish interpersonal relationships is different for each individual, especially women. Women's ability to form and establish interpersonal relationships is based on what is seen and experienced in the smallest social environment, namely Family. The formation of healthy relationships starts from personal experiences experienced and observed by both parents.

It is widely reported on social media that Indonesia is ranked third in the world as a country with a very high fatherless rate. Based on the latest data (2021) obtained from UNICEF Indonesia, around 20.9% of children are raised without fathers. Based on data obtained from databoks as of 2021, there are 30.83 million early childhood children. 2.67% or 826,875 of them do not live with their mothers and fathers. 7.04% or 2,170,702 of them only live with their mothers. Thus, 2,999,577 of the 30.83 million early childhoods were raised without a father (Jayani, 2021). One of the causes of the high fatherless rate is the high divorce rate.

Daddy Issues is not an official medical term or a recognised disorder in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) (Santos & Longhurst, 2022). However, the term is derived from the 'Father Complex' proposed by Sigmund Freud, an Austrian psychoanalyst. This condition concludes that children need adults, in this case parents, to be a life guide in forming a sense of security (Putri, 2021).

Rollo (2022) in Santos & Longhurst (2022) states that Daddy Issues can occur to anyone who experiences attachment wounds due to not having a harmonious relationship with their father. However, this term is mostly reserved for women. An insecure relationship style occurs when one party in the relationship gets close based on how they grew up. The journey of adulthood, which is travelled along with disappointment and hurt, will greatly affect the relationship. Every child, especially girls, has their level of Daddy Issues, whether it comes from poor parenting, divorced parents, or having parents who fight so often that they forget their role as father and mother (Santos & Longhurst, 2022). When entering adolescence, women will try to find a figure who can replace the father figure they have lost or even become afraid to start a romantic relationship.

The Archetypes and The Collective Unconscious (1968) in Hafi & Rahmawati (2022) states that there are 4 aspects of archetypes, namely (1) Father as a responsible leader, (2) a father and a wise man, (3) someone romantic and firm, and (4) a father who is brave and willing to sacrifice for children. The role of the father is very large and crucial for a child. These patterns are some of the considerations that women can use before entering into a romantic relationship with the opposite sex.

This presents a range of responses from women who experience daddy issues as they mature into attraction and relationships with the opposite sex. Lack of paternal affection includes ambivalent behaviour, inconsistency, and blatant avoidance of the daughter's environment. She begins to feel that the world is no longer kind to her, becoming a silent person, rejecting the passion of love emotion, and existence. In this state, the woman's position is to need help to get out of the unexpected disaster, not to accept it, but to reproduce the loss internally and in other relationships. Absence is an intermediate situation between presence and loss (Urribarri, 2017 in Schwart, 2020).

The phenomenon of Daddy Issues does not only occur in women who are physically separated, but also fathers who assume that emotions and attention are roles that are only given by mothers, thus making fathers neglect their roles. Women need a father figure to fulfill their emotional needs and support their cognitive and social development (Kracht & Powell, 2021). This condition often occurs in families, where fathers act as if their role can be fulfilled through the material needs provided to children, but fathers forget their role as "educators", namely introducing the outside world and how to overcome difficult situations in life side by side with other individuals.

Salsabila, Junaidin, and Hakim (2020) in Lidya Yuliana et al. (2023) suggest that the impact of the absence of the father's role in individual development includes feelings of anger, shame, loneliness, jealousy, deep grief and loss, low self-esteem and low self-control. These feelings are obtained because there is a space in the daughter that should be filled through the father's upbringing. The void is eventually filled by negative feelings, so girls who experience Daddy Issues are often discriminated against by the environment.

As social beings, women need other people in their lives with the aim of socializing or even fulfilling a need. Interpersonal relationship is the right term to describe these needs. Interpersonal relationships are relationships that occur between one individual and another. Individuals establish interpersonal relationships with other individuals because they have common goals, trust, openness and honesty, and relational ties (Anggakara, 2022).

Love life is a natural thing that happens to humans. Research conducted by Gala and Kapadia (2013) in Psikologi Unsyiah et al. (2020) states that romantic relationships experienced by early adults have an impact on the development of positive emotions in the form of increased happiness and increased quality of life whose influence can be felt even to the next stage of development. This is also stated by Lippman *et al* (2014) in Psikologi Unsyiah et al. (2020) also suggested that intimate and quality romantic relationships can improve mental health and individual happiness. Therefore, early adults

need to achieve good-quality romantic relationships.

Romantic relationships are an important source of emotional bonding and contribute to positive self-development and greater social integration. Success in establishing and maintaining a romantic relationship has an important impact on later life and contributes to mental and physical well-being (Gómez-López et al., 2019).

Objectively, romance is defined as a romantic relationship. However, for individuals with a background of experiencing daddy issues, of course, they have a different view. In a study conducted by Gómez-López et al. (2019) on analysing the relationship between romance and well-being based on several variables, namely relationship status, relationship quality, relationship history, and relationship experience. It was found that the quality of the relationship determines well-being. Even separation will have a positive impact if the relationship is negative.

In addition to playing a role in educating daughters from birth, the role of parents, especially fathers, is also seen in protecting and guiding daughters when they begin to establish romantic relationships with the opposite sex. The romantic relationship is not referred to as "dating" but "a romantic relationship". The romantic relationship is a term for dating activities or not (Harahap, 2023).

This study uses the theory of interpersonal relationship needs expressed by William Schutz with the Postulate which assumes that humans are social creatures and need other humans to survive. Women who from an early age have a disharmonious relationship with their father, over time will seek and find someone who can fulfil these needs. The fundamental interpersonal relationship needs theory, introduced by William Schutz in 1958, argues that people are motivated to satisfy three needs: inclusion, control, and affection. People initiate relationships to fulfil these needs. Inclusion is the need people feel to belong and be included. Control refers to people's desire to shape their interactions. Affection is the need to be liked and maintain the relationship. These motives can be used to explain people's communication behaviour (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009).

The second theory used is the Triangular Theory of Love proposed by Robert Sternbergh. There are 3 components of the stages of love, namely (1) Intimacy which includes feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bonding. (2) Passion which leads to romance, physical attraction, and sexual consummation. (3) Decision/ Commitment which includes the duration of the relationship, the decision to love another person, and the commitment to maintain the love (Steinberg, 1986). Based on the phenomenon of Daddy Issues, this theory will be able to provide a fairly comprehensive basis for interpreting the romance that is the basis of the closeness of a relationship.

Women entering adulthood tend to think about how to establish a romantic relationship with the opposite sex. At the same time, the background of a life journey that starts from a close and harmonious relationship with parents becomes the basis or basis for starting a new relationship, both in terms of thinking and behaviour. Thus, the meaning of romance for women with Daddy Issues background is different and can be researched using the phenomenological method along with two theoretical foundations, namely the theory of interpersonal relationship needs and the Triangular Theory of Love.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Daddy Issues*

In an article uploaded on the 'Very Well Mind' channel accessed on 25 August 2024, Daddy Issues does not refer to a medical mental situation. However, the phenomenon of Daddy Issues has become a popular phrase and is often used to describe disharmonious situations between fathers and children. The term is also often used as a slur for women who are in relationships with adult (older) men as 'Daddy' (Vinney, 2022). Regardless of the definition, Daddy Issues is a phenomenon that can influence the style of romantic relationships for women.

Other terms often used to describe Daddy Issues are fatherless, father absence, or father loss, which refers to the physical and psychological absence of a father figure. East, Jackson, and O'Brien (2006) in Lidya Yuliana et al. (2023) suggest that fatherless or daddy issues are the absence of the father's role because he does not live in the same house due to chaos, instability, and damage to parental relationships that have an impact on children.

The absence of a father figure causes children to seek that figure in older men. This situation has become phenomenal as many women experience and end up trapped in unhealthy relationships. In the book *Self Improvement* by Gray (1992), lasting relationships are created through an understanding of each other's conditions and accepting these differences. This tendency is difficult for women who experience Daddy Issues, resulting in different meanings of romance between women who experience Daddy Issues and those who do not.

2.2 The Meaning of Romance Relationships

Reporting from Merdeka.com (2022) which states that romance is part of everything that smells romantic or romance. Language Development and Guidance Agency (2016) in the KBBI (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia) states that romance is a novel or heroic story with an imaginary or historical setting. So, romance is an imagination that is expected to happen according to women's wishes, even though the circumstances are very unlikely to happen (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, 2016)

In Collins Dictionary accessed on 27 March 2024, romance referring to Countable Nouns is a romantic relationship between two individuals who love each other but are not married. In the translation of Uncountable Noun, romance is the actions and feelings of a person in love, which are caring and loving (Collins Dictionary, 2005)

In a study conducted by Gómez-López et al. (2019), the most memorable romantic relationships are during adolescence and adulthood, where relationships achieve well-being that is beneficial in improving relationship quality, achieving shared goals, and developing mutual potential. However, this well-being can be achieved when one has attained certain cognitive, emotional, and behavioural skills. In this case, the factors that can positively influence the well-being dimension of romantic relationships are relationship quality, need fulfilment, achievement of personal and relational goals, romantic attachment, and individual skill development.

2.3 Perspective of Communication Psychology

Communication psychology is a part of social psychology that discusses the position of communication in human behaviour (Alfaruqy & Psi, 2020). De Vito (2018) in Alfaruqy & Psi (2020) states that there are several elements of communication psychology, namely message types, intrapersonal dynamics, interpersonal communication dynamics, group communication dynamics, and public communication dynamics.

The perspective of communication psychology will focus on interpersonal communication established by adolescent girls who experience daddy issues. In this study, the perspective of communication psychology will be analysed based on interpersonal perception. Interpersonal perception is interpreted based on three components, namely selection, interpretation, and perception (Yanti, 2021).

In establishing interpersonal relationships, communicants and communicators carry out face-to-face interactions and produce direct responses back. The experiences experienced by adolescent girls who have a background of daddy issues will have an impact on the interaction process and the views or perceptions of adolescent girls in interpreting romance (Yanti, 2021).

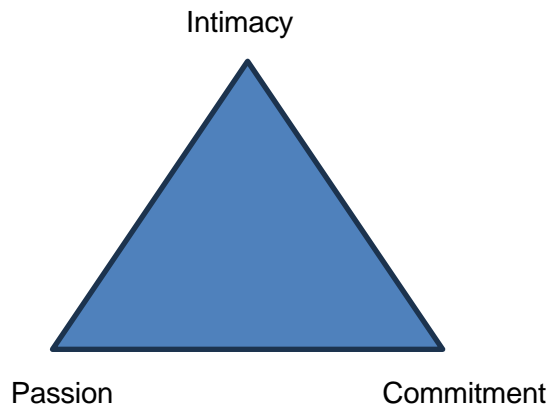
2.4 Interpersonal Relationship Needs Theory

This theory was first introduced by William Schutz in 1958. This theory argues that individuals are motivated to fulfil three needs, namely inclusion, control, and affection. Individuals initiate a relationship to fulfil these three needs. Inclusion is the need felt by individuals to be included and part of something. Control is the individual's desire to shape interactions. Affection is the need to be liked and maintain the relationship. These motives are often used to explain individual communication behaviour (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009).

This theory emphasises that interpersonal relationships are a human need that cannot be separated from life. Nowadays, women are in romantic relationships with the opposite sex and this is a necessity. Communication with a partner is one of the foundations in starting a relationship that causes attachment between men and women.

2.5 *Triangular Theory of Love*

The Triangular Theory of Love deals with the nature of love in different types of relationships. In this theory, love can be understood in terms of three components that can be seen with the vertices of a triangle. These three components are intimacy (top vertex), passion (left-hand vertex), and commitment (right-hand vertex).



The intimacy component refers to feelings of closeness, connection, and bonding in a romantic relationship. At this stage, the relationship reaches a phase of loving warmth. In the passion component, it refers to physical attraction, sexual refinement, and phenomena associated with romantic relationships. In the decision/commitment component, it refers to the decision on the duration of the relationship. In this stage, cognition takes a role in deciding the existence and potential of a long-term relationship to achieve a loving romantic relationship (Steinberg, 1986).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

In research, philosophical footing became the direction of research that will present the basic meaning, nature, purpose, and methods of research. Research data were obtained through a qualitative approach, interpretive paradigm, and phenomenological research type. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994: 99) in Rahardjo (2018) paradigm is a basic set of beliefs that guide action. Paradigms deal with first principles or ultimates'. The paradigm is the basic belief that will guide the research journey that deals with the first and foremost. Thus, research is a perspective that contains several certain assumptions, theories, models, and solutions.

One form of paradigm was interpretive, which was an antithesis of the positivist paradigm. The interpretive paradigm views social reality as something holistic, not separate from one another, complex, dynamic, and full of meaning, and the relationship between symptoms is reciprocal, not causal. Humans were creators of the world, gave meaning to

the world, not limited by laws outside themselves, and creators of a series of meanings (Rahardjo, 2018:3)

Creswell (2008) in Hadisaputra (2021) defined qualitative research as follows: Qualitative research was a type of educational research in which the researcher relied on the views of participants; asked broad, general questions; collected data consisting largely of words or text from participants; described and analysed these words for themes; and conducted the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner. Thus, qualitative research is a type of research conducted by asking questions to participants or informants to obtain information. The data will be processed through analytical studies, namely data collection, analysing and describing participants' words, and conducting the inquiry in a subjective and biased manner.

Phenomenological research seeks to reveal the meaning of concepts or experiences that are based on full awareness and occur in several individuals. There are no restrictions in interpreting the phenomenon studied because the research runs naturally. According to Raco (2010) in Hadisaputra (2021), phenomenology meant letting the symptoms that are realised reveal themselves because something will appear as it is (things as they appear).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Informants

To achieve the accuracy and validity of the research data, researchers took steps to determine informants using the interview guide method. This method is useful for finding informants who match the criteria set by the researcher. Interviews were conducted by asking questions that were following the research problem. Then, informants were determined who would become research subjects. The initial informants selected are individuals who pave the way for researchers to find suitable informants and will stop when the data needed by researchers is sufficient. The informants selected and able to provide research data total 5 informants.

4.2 Analysis based on Interpersonal Relationship Needs Theory

Interpersonal relationships are a necessity for women who experience daddy issues. Fulfilment of interpersonal relationship needs is support for them in going through difficult phases due to disharmonious relationships with father figures. In this theory, women will go through several stages (schemes) in forming or establishing relationships. The first stage is inclusive needs, where individuals do something or contribute to being able to establish relationships with others. In this study, women will give something to fulfil these needs. Of the five (5) informants, 3 of them stated that they needed other people outside the family. In this stage, each individual makes an effort in the form of a contribution before establishing a relationship. The following are the stages of inclusive needs:

- The ideally satisfied type. In this type, individuals can position themselves well in relationships with others while experiencing daddy issues. All five informants fall into this type, as the need for a figure outside the family is one of the primary needs. Informants 1 and 3 stated that the person needed is the opposite sex who can fulfil interpersonal needs due to not getting and feeling the role of a father. Informant 4 stated that in this type, the need is obtained from friends and not the opposite sex.
- Undersocial type. This type explains that individuals tend to withdraw due to daddy issues experienced. In this study, women who tend to withdraw from the crowd can be described through the experience of informant 2. The informant stated that outside the family, they do not need other people, especially a partner. This is because the informant feels that these needs are obtained from a mother figure.
- Over-social type. In this type, individuals experience two possibilities in interpersonal relationships: satisfying and unsatisfying. This is a result of the missing role of the father, causing the individual to always want to be understood by the social environment as well as the partner. Informant 5 is categorised under this type.

Informant 5 stated that friends are a very important need that can be used as a support system behind the daddy issues experienced. However, besides that, the partner becomes unsatisfactory for informant 5, because the expectations placed on the partner are very high and the partner is considered unable to fulfil them.

The second stage is the need for control. In this case, individuals tend to want to be dominant and the centre of control. The expectation given by individuals is that with their dominance, they will be able to fulfil the needs of others. So, when that need is fulfilled the inner pain experienced due to daddy issues can be treated slowly. The impact of daddy issues that make individuals a dominant figure in a relationship was experienced by informants 1 and 4. The experience in a romantic relationship coupled with daddy issues made informant 1 a dominant figure in the relationship. Informant 4 explained that the role of father that he never got since childhood made him grow up to be a dominant figure in many aspects. Informants 1 and 4 fall into the authoritarian control category, which is the type that dominates others.

The third stage is the need for affection. This need involves emotions and feelings. In this stage, individuals long for a figure who can provide affection, which in this case is the opposite sex. There are several types in this stage, namely:

- Ideal fulfils needs. Based on the results of the interviews, all informants did not state that the emotional relationships with the opposite sex that they experienced were ideal and met their hopes and expectations.
- Underpersonal. This type is the type that avoids romance. Informant 4 stated that daddy issues affect the way he views romantic relationships. This results in a blurred view of attraction, liking and love. Losing the role of a father makes informant 4 afraid of romantic relationships.
- Overpersonal type. This type describes individuals who are too closely related. Informants 1 and 3 are categorised under this type when it comes to romantic relationships. Both informants stated that they needed a partner more than any other interpersonal relationship. Informant 1 stated that the absence of his father's role made him seek a close relationship with his partner. Informant 3 stated that the comfort and security of a father figure had not been felt for a long time and was craved by a partner.
- Pathological type, which is the type that is difficult to relate to. In terms of romance, informants 2 and 5 stated that the need for a partner exists, but it is difficult to do. This is due to the prioritisation scale that puts couples or romantic relationships on the back burner.

4.3 Analysis Based on the Triangular Theory of Love

In this study, triangular love is used as an analytical tool for women who experience daddy issues in interpreting romance, whether they have or have not been in a romantic relationship. This theory uses 3 nodes as stages in a romantic relationship, namely:

- Intimacy. In this stage, women establish relationships based on closeness and intimacy factors. Affection is categorised in the early stages. Like arises due to a sense of attraction from someone who in this study is a man. This attraction is usually born from women's expectations that seem to be fulfilled by men. In this stage, all five informants have experienced liking and being attracted to the opposite sex.
- Passion. At this stage, individuals enter into a higher stage than liking, which is love. Love is born as a refinement of the previous stages of physical attraction, sexual refinement, and establishing a romantic relationship. 4 out of 5 informants stated that they had been in a romantic relationship with the opposite sex. Informant 1 stated that in the current relationship, love is the foundation of the relationship.
- Informant 2 stated that the feeling of love in a romantic relationship started in 2018 in high school. Informant 5 stated that the feeling of love was felt during high school. Unlike the other 4 informants, informant 4 stated that daddy issues have an impact on the formation of the meaning of romance. Informant 4 could not differentiate between love

and liking, which resulted in a greater fear of being in a relationship.

- Commitment. The commitment stage is the highest of the three stages in this theory. Individuals will make decisions at this stage. Choosing to be in a relationship and committing in the long term is a big decision that individuals make with various internal considerations. Based on the information from the five (5) informants, none of them stated that they had entered the commitment stage.

4.4 Analysis based on Communication Psychology Perspective

- Selection. In this stage, informants enter the phase of choosing other individuals to be part of their lives. All five informants stated that in selecting romance partners, the considerations made are derived from external factors, such as religion, behaviour patterns, maturity, and thinking. Informants 1 and 3 stated that the expectation of a romance partner is the most fundamental stage in determining the direction of the relationship. Informants 2 and 5 stated that the selection does not only choose a romance partner based on what is seen, so the consideration in choosing a romance partner is based on the perfect man who has different characteristics from the father. Informant 4 stated that the limitations of the opposite sex in a romantic relationship are faith and maturity.
- Interpretation. Interpretation is the component that determines who can become a romance partner. Teenage girls who experience daddy issues will go through this component after selecting various individuals. In this component, informants conduct intrapersonal communication based on memory. Past experiences become the basis of consideration. Informants 1, 3 and 5 have entered the phase of determining a romance partner as evidenced by the presence of a boyfriend in the relationship. The three informants interpreted the meaning of romance through a romantic relationship. Meanwhile, informants 2 and 4 stated that the expected meaning of romance could not be interpreted into a romantic relationship due to the bare minimum (minimum standard) being too high. This is a result of the father's role that was not obtained during the growing up period until adolescence, so the expected romance is difficult to find.
- Perception. In this component, interpretation becomes a reaction. The informant's reaction is the final stage in forming the perception of interpersonal relationships. Romantic relationships are part of interpersonal relationships. The perception born from the selection and interpretation components of the informants is the fear of deciding to be in a relationship. Informants 1, 3 and 5 are in a romantic relationship with the opposite sex but do not decide to have a long-lasting relationship. Informants 2 and 4 are not in a romantic relationship because they are afraid of choosing the wrong partner. Based on this reality, the five informants who experienced daddy issues gave the same reaction, namely deciding not to commit.

4.5 Discussions

Based on the data obtained through in-depth interviews, interpretations, and analyses, the five informants experienced daddy issues, which is a state of disharmony between fathers and daughters due to fathers who are physically present, but unable to fulfil their role psychologically. The father's absence is experienced due to parental divorce, the father is busy working, father harbours emotions since childhood, and abusive father. The emptiness of the father's role provides a space for adolescent girls. This becomes a reality because the experience is experienced consciously and gives its meaning and one of them has an impact on the formation of the meaning of romance.

Based on the analysis conducted using the theory of interpersonal relationship needs, the five informants need other people outside the family to be able to provide a sense of security and comfort. However, the background of daddy issues still has an impact on the process of establishing relationships with the opposite sex. Adolescent girls seek an environment that can provide an understanding of their existence. Adolescent girls become hungry for validation but are unable to convey their feelings to other individuals. After finding

their environment, adolescent girls will enter the control stage, which is wanting to be in control. Informants stated that, after being accepted in an environment or by other individuals, they want to be dominant. In this phase, adolescent girls often end up in toxic relationships. However, due to their inability to see the negative side of a relationship, they remain in the relationship. These toxic actions are normalised and considered part of love.

After finding individuals who are felt to fulfil interpersonal needs, informants will carry out a selection process. The selection process is based on external and internal factors. In choosing the right person, expectations of a romantic partner become higher and higher. In this phase, informants choose individuals who fulfil their criteria. After finding the individual, informants interpret the meaning of romance in the individual, and whether it fulfils the criteria. These considerations will be born into reactions.

The reaction is understood through the triangular theory of love. The first stage is intimacy, which is a sense of liking. The liking comes from the attachment to each other and the feeling of closeness. After that, the next phase is passion. This phase includes physical attraction, which is a romantic relationship. The third stage is commitment, which is deciding to be in a relationship for a long time. All five informants were in a romantic relationship up to the passion stage and did not think of committing to the opposite sex or a romantic partner.

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of daddy issues occurs due to the absence of the father's role which causes trauma, trust issues, and emotional and physical pain. The father's role in educating, nurturing, and accompanying children is not carried out. Factors that cause fathers to forget or ignore their role are trauma experienced so that they are afraid to educate children, temperament disorders, and internal problems of the father himself. When the role is neglected by the father, the child will look for the father's role in other people. Therefore, this condition causes many women to look for a figure who can fulfil these emotional needs. Adolescent girls who experience daddy issues tend to have difficulty in establishing interpersonal relationships due to the many considerations gained through bitter experiences with fathers. This condition has an impact on the formation of the meaning of romance and causes adolescent girls who experience daddy issues to be afraid to establish long-term relationships. In addition, the behaviour that is formed is individualistic. In romantic relationships, adolescent girls give themselves less space to be open, fear the opposite sex, and even choose not to get married so as not to get the same romantic partner as their biological father.

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