Jurnal Keluarga Berencana
P-ISSN: 2527-3132 E-ISSN: 2503-3379
Vol. 11 No. 1, 2026
https://ejurnal.kemendukbangga.go.id/
Kementerian Kependudukan dan Pembangunan Keluarga/BKKBN

DELVE INTO THE WORLD OF TEENAGERS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF PARENTS' CHALLENGING EXPERIENCES IN THE DIGITAL ERA

[1]Rihab Said, [2]Sirril Wafa, [3]Suhaina Yaakub
[1]Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Sadra, Jakarta, Indonesia, [2]RSUD dr. Loekmono Hadi, Kudus, Indonesia, [3]Pusat PERMATA@Pintar Negara, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia
Corresponding Email: sirilwafa1997@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
In the digital era, one in three Indonesian teenagers is reported to experience mental health issues, highlighting the need to address parenting challenges during adolescence. This study explored parents' subjective experiences in parenting teenagers. This study used a qualitative phenomenological approach was employed. Four parents (two fathers and two mothers) of two male and two female teenagers participated. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews and analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), focusing on perceived adolescent changes, parental experiences, and meaning-making. The results showed that parents reported notable behavioral changes in teenagers, including mood swings, heightened sensitivity, increased self-expression, self-isolation, peer prioritization, excessive gadget use, emerging gender-related interests, and concern with physical appearance. Emotional struggles in managing gadget use were common. Parents described various context-sensitive strategies, such as bedtime conversations, hypno-suggestion, avoiding verbal conflict, and family discussions during meals. Collaboration and communication between spouses were viewed as essential. Parenting adolescents also provided parents with personal insights and strengthened values. Parenting teenagers requires individualized strategies, effective spousal collaboration, and an understanding of behavioral changes shaped by biological, environmental, and technological factors. Meaning-making through parenting experiences enhances parental resilience and supports effective parenting in the digital era.

Keywords: digital native; parents; phenomenology; teenagers' transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of digital technology reflects a key feature of modern society: Society 4.0. It is not surprising that teenagers in today's life are the most digitally-connected ever, raising concerns among educators, mental health professionals, and parents about potential developmental risks and amplified mental health inequalities from constant device use and social media. Even though offline vulnerabilities shape online risks similarly (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). The Indonesia National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS) reveals that one in three Indonesian teenagers faces mental health issues, and one in twenty Indonesian teenagers has further experienced a mental disorder in the past twelve months. Excessive digital interactions among teenagers may increase risks of cyberbullying, body image problems, depression, anxiety, fear-of-missing-out (FOMO), self-harm, suicidal tendencies, substance use, sex issues, and decrease life satisfaction and resilience (Alfaridzi et al., 2024). Other risks, such as physical health, eating and sleep issues, selfie disorder, and various socio-emotional issues (Singh et al., 2021). In terms of academics, social media has caused significant distractions, leading to procrastination and lower academic achievement (Anjum et al., 2024).

Derived from Greece, the word adolescence means either growth or maturity. The terminology "teenager" and "adolescent" are often used interchangeably. As described by (Bell, 2016) adolescence is a period of 'storm and stress', while it is crucial for health development. For most parents, the teenage years are like a roller coaster filled with new challenges (Mishra, 2021).

Email Corresponding:
sirilwafa1997@gmail.com
Article History
Received: 06-11-2025 Accepted: 30-06-2026
© 2026 The Author(s). This is an open-access article under Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

These related to the several transformations in adolescents, including (1) hormonal or puberty aspects (sexual activity, sleeping habit and mood), (2) cognitive aspects (logical, abstract and complex thinking), (3) social aspects (understanding about others, relationships, social rules and structures), (4) psychological aspects (identity, sexuality, achievement, intimacy and autonomy) (Bell, 2016). Moreover, there are environmental aspects, including family, friends, religion, school, media, community, global events, and culture (Youth, 2025). Teenagers' behavior has always been associated with hormonal rage. However, neuroscience findings indicate that the brain continues to develop and change during adolescence. The prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for decision-making, empathy, awareness of consequences, emotional regulation, and morality, is not fully mature until around age 20. Whereas the limbic region is highly active, driving teenagers to impulsivity and risk-taking behaviors (Baltazar, 2019).

While parents' stress is related to teenagers' behaviors, researchers indicated that authoritative parenting is linked to positive functioning outcomes among youth. However, parental burnout is associated with hostile parenting (Guo et al., 2024), and "Storm and Stress" beliefs regarding adolescence, which are mediated by a parental overprotection style (Zimmermann et al., 2022). Parenting patterns and a hostile home atmosphere are associated with teenagers' developmental problems (Panahi et al., 2023). A study from Valerie et al., (2025), found that teenagers experiencing authoritarian parenting had a higher risk of peer problems for girls and abnormal behavior for boys. Another study found that conflicts between parents and teenagers stemmed from internet use (both for leisure and educational purposes). These conflicts were more frequent with mothers, a trend possibly driven by teenagers' strong relationships with peers (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2023). Raising teenagers is and has always been a challenging task for most parents, as they face the rapid changes in teenagers' development and the world. These changes often leave parents experiencing confusion, worry, and emotional turmoil. Therefore, this study aimed to know and understand parents' subjective experiences of parenting teenagers.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore parents' subjective experiences of raising adolescents. This approach emphasizes how individuals make meaning of their lived experiences (Smith et al., 2009). The selection of research participants for the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was based on purposive sampling (Smith et al., 2009). Purposive sampling was conducted following an initial survey or preliminary field interviews to ensure that selected participants met the established research criteria. The study involved four participants who met the following criteria:

1. Parents of children in early adolescence (aged 10–14 years);
2. Participants residing in Jakarta and belonging to middle educational and socioeconomic backgrounds; and
3. a minimum marital duration of 10 years.

Data were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews with the four participants. Prior to data collection, the researcher developed an interview schedule based on key topics relevant to the research objectives. The interview questions were open-ended and non-directive. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The research process was conducted from July 23, 2025, to November 24, 2025, encompassing instrument development, data collection, and completion of the study. The duration of each interview ranged from 30 minutes to one hour per participant.

Data analysis was conducted using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), following the stages outlined by Smith et al., (2009).

1. Repeated reading of the transcripts;
2. Initial noting, in which the researcher examined meanings within the transcripts through (a) descriptive comments, (b) linguistic comments, and (c) conceptual comments;
3. Development of emergent themes;
4. Identification of connections among themes;

5. Moving to the next case;
6. Identifying patterns across cases;
7. Describing superordinate (master) themes.

The credibility of the findings and efforts to minimize potential research bias were ensured through follow-up interviews with participants to deepen the data, as well as through member checking with each participant's spouse to achieve data consistency and confirmation. Participant confidentiality was maintained through the use of anonymous codes, and all participants provided written informed consent prior to the commencement of the study.

The quality of this study was guided by the principles proposed by Smith et al., (2009) which include:

1. sensitivity to context, demonstrated through the selection and use of references relevant to the field of psychology, particularly within the context of adolescent parenting.
2. commitment and rigor, where commitment was reflected in the researcher's attentiveness to participants' experiences and meanings, and rigor was demonstrated through appropriate participant selection, the quality of the interview process, and the depth and completeness of data analysis.
3. transparency and coherence, evidenced by a systematic description of all stages of the research process, including preparation, data collection, and data analysis, as well as clear alignment between the research questions, methodology, and analytical approach.
4. impact and significance, whereby the study is expected to contribute theoretically to the field of psychology and to provide practical benefits for the researcher, participants, and readers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The background information of the four participants recruited for this study is available in Table 1.

Table 1: The baseline characteristics of participants.

Participant	Age (in years)	Gender	Job	Age of Marriage (in years)	Age of teenagers (in years)	Gender of teenagers
P-1	46	Male	Entrepreneur	21	14	Female
P-2	44	Male	Entrepreneur	13	12	Male
P-3	43	Female	Housewife	17	13	Male
P-4	48	Female	Housewife	14	13	Female

Source: Researcher's Data, 2025.

The analysis of the interview transcript data found three main and ten superordinate themes. The summary of themes can be seen in Table 2:

Table 2: Induced and superordinate themes.

Num.	Induced Themes	Superordinate themes
1.	**Behavioral Transformations in Teenagers'**	1. Emotion: Emotional fluctuation and sensitivity 2. Cognition: Expressing opinions and learning new things
2.	**Parental Experiences with Teenagers**	1. Social: Isolating oneself and playing with friends through devices or "*mabar*", 2. Independency: Developing responsibilities 3. New activities or interests Boys: online games Girls: K-pop styles and skincare products 4. Physical appearance

		Boys: haircut style. Girls: makeup, outfits, and hair color. 5. Major challenges: Dealing with excessive gadget use for *mabar*, sensitivity, and rebellion. 6. Strategies applied Picking a proper time for discussion and monitoring gadgets Collaboration with partners Dividing roles, taking turns, and giving feedback to wives.
3.	**Parental meaning-making**	1. Deriving insights: Emotional management, parental awareness, improvement, and adjustment

Source: Researcher's Data, 2025.

Theme 1: Transformation in Teenagers' Behaviors

All participants recognized significant changes in teenagers' behavior and attitude during teenage years as described below:

Emotional Aspect. Since entering adolescence, the teenagers of four participants often showed mood swings and sensitivity. Teenager 1 struggled with tantrums when her demands were not fulfilled or when she received instructions from her parents. Teenager 2 got easily annoyed when he felt bored, tired, or misunderstood. Conversely, he became happy when he accepted appreciation. Teenagers 3 became easily sensitive and directly complained about the family's attitude. Teenager 4, when she was in a bad mood, refused to talk or isolate herself in the room.

Cognitive Aspect. The four teenagers became more exploratory and open to expressing opinions with their parents about various issues, including future careers, and even changed their minds easily. Both teenagers 1 and 2 often protested their parents' attitude. However, the teenagers differed in specific abilities; Teenager 1 felt lack confidence in academic performance, Teenager 3 felt lack of confidence regarding his body image, yet he became wiser in solving problems, Teenager 4 were often dependent on her parents for decision-making, Teenager 2 became independent in solving problems and was willing to ask his parents for their opinions when he got stuck.

Social Aspect. The teenagers of four participants often isolated themselves in their rooms and prioritized their friends over their families by chatting or playing games, commonly known as *mabar*. However, they seemed not to have developed an interest in the opposite sex. In terms of social interaction, Teenager 1 and Teenager 2 were inherently friendly. Teenager 3 was calm and helpful, while Teenager 4 was introverted, making it difficult for her to talk to new people, such as guests or other family members.

Independency. The four participants highlighted that the main obstacle to disciplining teenagers was their excessive use of gadgets, whether for schoolwork or for playing with friends. However, Teenagers 2, 3, and 4 were willing to follow the household rules, such as praying, tidying up, taking a bath, and doing schoolwork. On the other hand, teenagers still need repeated reminders from their parents. In contrast, Teenager 1 often refused to follow the rules.

New Interests or Activities. All teenagers continuously explored new interests based on their gender. The two female teenagers (Teenager 1 and Teenager 4) actively explored skincare products and online shopping. Both of them idolized Korean artists and music. Among male teenagers, Teenager 2 had a growing interest in online games, technology, life hacks, and pop and retro music, while Teenager 3 was interested in soccer and online games.

Physical Appearance. The teenagers of the four participants became more concerned about their physical appearance. In daily life, teenage girls often wear soft makeup, change their hair color, and spend more time choosing outfits. Meanwhile, male teenagers tended to follow hairstyle trends, such as the buzz-cut. Additionally, Teenager 3 became concerned about his diet, and Teenager 2 developed a greater interest in collecting baggy pants.

Theme 2: Parental Experiences with Teenagers

Major Challenges. Four participants identified specific challenging aspects of their teenagers that contributed to their emotional struggles. All participants experienced difficulty in controlling their teenagers' excessive use of gadgets, especially for *mabar*. Additionally, participant 1 struggled with his teenager's tantrums when receiving instructions and when being demanded. As a result, Participant 1 often felt distressed and guilty for losing his temper. Participants 2 and 3 were overwhelmed by their teenagers' gaming habits and mood swings. Participant 3 emphasized that online games were the most destructive to time management. Participant 4 constantly felt agitated about her teenager's excessive bond to her girls' group, and a tendency toward stubbornness.

Strategies Applied. Four participants shared a similar strategy by choosing the right moment to discuss with their teenagers. Participant 1 adopted the habit of using deep talk before bedtime, allowing his teenager to easily receive advice, though she often repeated the same actions the next day. In a tense situation, Participant 3 preferred to give her teenager space to calm down before engaging in a deep discussion. This approach aimed at prevent verbal conflict and emotional loss of control for both children and parents. Participant 4 used the dining table as an opportunity to open up communication, allowing parents to ask questions, offer advice in a relaxed manner, and discuss with other parents. In addition to providing space and appreciation, Participant 2 employed a unique approach: hypno-suggestion at bedtime. Moreover, participant 2 once sought professional help, considering it an effective strategy because children are more likely to accept output from outsiders. As a mother, monitoring device use is a must. Participant 1 actively monitored her teenager's internet activity, including the games she played and the people she interacted with. Similar to participant 4, who routinely checked the contents of her teenager's devices, she asked permission to read messages and deleted some inappropriate applications.

Collaboration with Partners. All participants engaged in regular discussions and cooperation with their partners. Participants 1 and 2 preferred role-sharing: the mothers focused on the children's physical needs and discipline at home, while the father supported their mental and spiritual well-being. Both participants, 1 and 2, often provided feedback on the mothers' attitudes toward their teenagers; Participant 1 suggested assertiveness, while Participant 2 emphasized the importance of apologizing. Meanwhile, Participants 3 and 4 preferred participant-partner substitution: when one was absent, the other supervised the teenager.

Meaning-making. Parents gained unique insights into raising teenagers through their personal experiences and values. Participant 1 stated that parenting is a remarkable journey filled with feelings of failure, awareness of being a good role model, practicing patience, and improving parenting skills. Participant 2 consistently reminded himself that children are God's representatives on earth (a trust from God); therefore, parents must learn parenting skills and balance between pursuing careers and raising children. Participant 3 reflected on failure as part of growth, noting that high expectations can lead to negative behaviors in children, parents' stress, and conflict. Participant 3 also emphasized proper communication and adjustment to children's development. Participant 4 affirmed that raising children teaches parents how to manage their emotions and adapt to the current era, which requires a different approach than in the past.

DISCUSSION

This study recruited parents of teenagers in early adolescence (two male and two female). The finding of this study was in concordance with theory in psychology about the main characteristics of this age, including emerging identity shaped, moodiness, improved abilities to use speech to express oneself, the importance of close friendships, occasional rudeness with parents, searching for new people to love in addition to parents, tendency to return to childish behaviors, peer group influence on personal interests and clothing styles, increasing career

interests, breaking rules and capacity for abstract thought (Affairs, 2018). Moreover, this study addressed the unique behavioral issues of each teenager, which further challenged their parents.

The four participants recognized significant transformations with their teenagers in various domains. In the context of cognition, the four teenagers increased their critical thinking and learning. They were more open with their parents about expressing their own opinions and discussing topics they discovered, often from social media. As stated by Bell (2016), it is a sign of increased abstract thinking in daily situations when teenagers can maintain conversations and engage in debates. This study also showed that female teenagers felt insecure in handling problems, particularly in Teenager 1's academic performance and Teenager 4's decision-making. It might be related to gender in internalizing problems, such as stress, anxiety, and depression. A study by Zakalfikri et al., (2025), revealed that female teenagers (24%) experienced internalizing problems more often than their male counterparts (13%).

As their reasoning ability increased, the four teenagers in this study became more interested in exploring their career choices, even though they quickly changed their minds. Teenagers begin to develop an identity status to take their role in social life. Identity formation is an active process through thinking and trying out different identities. King, (2014) Emphasized the difference between identity exploration (the process of learning about career options and personal values) and commitment (the decision to choose a path to actualize one's identity). Based on neuroscience studies of teenagers ' brains, the prefrontal cortex (the area for planning, decision-making, and impulse control) does not fully mature until mid-20s or late adolescence. On the contrary, the adolescent brain becomes a powerful learning machine, forming new synapses (connections between nerve cells) to transmit impulses. This made teenagers highly adaptable in absorbing and regulating new information, skills, and concepts (Affairs, 2018).

The four teenagers experienced high sensitivity and moodiness. Hormonal change and increased cortisol levels contribute to increased sensitivity to negative feelings. Furthermore, brain activity reaches its peak in the central region of emotion (amygdala) during early adolescence. For example, hitting the gas pedal while the brake is being repaired occurs when strong emotional drives overpower cognitive control (Soenens et al., 2019). Besides biological factors, the home environment shapes every aspect of teenagers' emotional maturity (Mondal & Sutradhar, 2015). Environmental factors, including academic, parental, and peer pressures, affect emotional stress among teenagers (Mishra, 2021). The teenager 1's tantrum behavior may have been influenced by home or school, warranting further investigation. The insecure feeling of teenager 3 regarding his body image resulted from peers' evaluation. Supported by current neuroscience studies by Chen et al., (2024), identified that criticism impacts teenagers' brains, as an indicator of mood vulnerability, while excessive criticism can lead to mental disorders. Using dynamic causal modeling (DCM), the study found that the neural network between brain regions involved in processing criticism and praise in adolescents, particularly criticism, significantly prevents effective connectivity from the precuneus (preCUN) to the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC). As shown by Teenager 2, he turned happy after receiving praise.

In social interactions, the four teenagers increasingly tended to isolate themselves in their rooms and to prioritize their friends over their family. Some theories formulated these behaviors as a process of developing towards autonomy. Although teenagers nowadays rely on digital interactions to participate in social life. Beyers et al. (2024) stated differentiated the two types of autonomy in adolescence: autonomy-as-independence (making decisions without relying on others) and autonomy-as-volition (feeling psychological freedom and authenticity). In general, teenagers develop independence between the ages of 13 and 17, yet not necessarily volition. Therefore, parental support is always crucial for nurturing both types of autonomy; enhancing volition leads to greater independence and prevents teenagers from engaging in unhealthy psychosocial development or problematic outcomes (Soenens et al., 2019). The case of participant 4, concerning her teenager's difficulty interacting with strangers and adults, was related to habituation. As adolescence is a period of learning, including the social domain, the role of family communication, involvement, and emotional bonds is essential in shaping personality, values, and norms (Nurhidayati et al., 2023). This study also revealed that the four teenagers had not fully committed to their house rules, and their parents should give them constant reminders. A finding

by Mergler & Shield, (2016), identified three factors that influence personal responsibility among adolescents: individual accountability, behavioral-emotional control, and cognitive control. Therefore, establishing personal responsibility during this age was crucial through parents' supervision, and more effective when combined with the "authoritative style" of parenting to promote healthy development (Bravender, 2015).

Meanwhile, the four teenagers showed developing new interests and concerns about their appearance. Teenagers' behavior is highly influenced by trends on social media and among their peers. This study found distinct interests between genders; two females actively explored K-pop fashion and skincare products, whereas two males focused on online games. However, exploring new experiences and habits is also part of shaping identity and gaining a sense of belonging; without it, loneliness and low self-esteem may result. Teenagers often imitate the styles of figures they follow on social media, but parental guidance (particularly mothers') remains important (Mazaya, 2024). Moreover, teenagers are increasingly preoccupied with appearance to communicate their identity and attract others. Changing the way one thinks, speaks, dresses, and behaves to fit in with peers (Affairs, 2018). In this study, teenagers enhance their attractiveness through various methods: females rely on makeup, hair highlights, and clothing, whereas males focus on their hairstyle and clothing. However, teenagers' sense of identity increased with greater peer acceptance (Vransisca, 2022).

This study also indicated that intense screening time was the most distracting to teenagers' discipline, time management, and socializing. A supported finding by Ifroh & Permana, (2022) that there was a strong correlation between smartphone addiction, permissive parenting style, and negative impacts, such as daily life disturbance, negative anticipation, withdrawal, cyberspace relationships, addiction, and intolerance. However, according to Zhang & Li, (2022), teenage rebellion should not be associated with troubled adolescents. Instead, families, schools, and society should support teenagers by understanding the causes and addressing their needs. Rebellion arises from interactions among physiological, home, school, and social factors. Physiological factors include underdeveloped impulse control and stress-induced adrenaline surge. Home factors include negative parenting styles and economic status (wealthier teens may be self-centered, while teens with poorer backgrounds may struggle with self-worth). School factors include a lack of teacher support and ineffective or stigmatized use of counselling services. Moreover, the social factor highlights the increase in internet exposure.

Each parent in this study shared how they applied specific strategies to handle their teenager's challenging behaviors. Including: (1) picking a proper time for deep talk or discussion. According to Miguel (2025), deep talk is a meaningful way to provide openness, genuine feelings, and emotional connection, unlike small talk, which delivers communication merely on the surface of connection. Deep talk is effective in supporting the young generation's mental health by providing a safe space for youth to express their emotions, decreasing anxiety, and building mutual understanding (Afrianti, 2025). However, a heart-to-heart conversation can only be effective if it is appropriately conducted and at the right time. As reported in this study, Participant 4 chose mealtimes, Participant 1 preferred before bedtime, and Participant 3 waited for their teenager to settle down. Although the results were not fully achieved, yet parents should maintain their methods to enhance teenagers' sense of belonging (Aerila et al., 2022). Moreover, establishing open and supportive family communication patterns is not only beneficial for emotional bonding but also essential for discussing sensitive topics, such as reproductive and sexual health (Arini & Syiroj, 2024). (2) Using hypno-parenting, as performed by Participant 2, is a method of educating children by delivering positive suggestions to the subconscious mind about good personality and behaviors (Metri et al., 2023). (3) Involving professional mental health was also implemented by Participant 2 (Fatmawati et al., 2024). (4) Monitoring gadget activities, as emphasized by Participants 1 and 4, the importance of being involved in teenagers' activities, and routinely monitoring their device applications or the people they interact with. Furthermore, Participant 4 demonstrated a method for asking teenagers for permission to delete inappropriate content from their devices. According to Masfufah & Salsabila (2024), digital parenting has become a part of parenting in the digital era. Therefore, there is a need to develop a specific program to train parents for active involvement and digital proficiency. (5) Discussing with other

parents, as a strategy implemented by participant 4, to gain other parents' perspectives on teenagers' issues (Saeteurn et al., 2022). According to Mishra, (2021), parents should understand their adolescents, create a positive environment, and collaborate with them to navigate the roller coaster ride, achieving positive results for both the teenager and society.

To support teenagers' well-being and development, cooperation between co-parents is crucial. A study by Phares et al. (2008) reported that mothers and fathers (to a lesser extent) were more satisfied with household chore sharing when fathers took on more responsibility for their children's activities, and this was inversely associated with interparental conflict. However, high-quality parental coparenting significantly predicts the children's ability in emotional regulation and prosocial behavior (Pan et al., 2025). As reported in this study, Participant 1 regularly encouraged his wife to take assertive action in handling their teenager, and Participant 2 consistently reminded his wife to apologize after scolding their teenager. Participant 3 shared a vision and had an equal role with the partner, while Participant 4 seemed to take a more active role in directing the teenager.

This study invited participants to reflect on the meaning of parenting teenagers Mungall (2020) defined meaning-making in general as the process of assigning meaning to one's experiences. It may involve cognitive processes, such as reappraisal or thoughtful reflection, and emotional processes, such as habituation to stressful stimuli. Meaning-making can be achieved through the activation of spiritual beliefs and experiences (Park, 2022). The four parents agreed that parenting a teenager is a learning process that requires patience, emotional regulation, and parental improvement. Other awarenesses highlighted differently by each parent, such as: (1) parent as a role model, (2) importance of developing parenting skills and balancing between work and children, (3) parents' expectations control, (3) need to apply a new approach that is relevant to the current era.

However, the researcher identified several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the small number of participants (only 4 participants) limited the breadth of perspectives captured and restricted the transferability of the findings rather than their analytical value. While the in-depth qualitative approach allowed for rich, contextual insights, the experiences described may not reflect the full range of parenting experiences with teenagers, particularly across different family structures or cultural subgroups. Second, the study relied exclusively on parents' self-reported accounts, which may have been influenced by personal interpretations, recall bias, or social desirability. Teenagers' perspectives were not included, limiting the ability to triangulate parental perceptions with teenagers lived experiences and behavioral interpretations. Third, participants were predominantly drawn from urban settings, which may have shaped their exposure to digital technologies, parenting resources, and social norms. As a result, the findings may not fully represent parenting experiences in rural or semi-urban contexts, where access to digital tools, community support, and cultural expectations may differ or be limited. Fourth, although gender emerged as an important factor in shaping teenager behavior, the study did not systematically examine gender dynamics within parenting practices or parent–teenager interactions. This limits a deeper understanding of how gendered expectations and roles influence parental responses and teenagers' behavioral development. Finally, the study captured parenting experiences at a single point in time. Given that adolescence is a dynamic developmental period, the findings do not account for changes in parenting strategies or teenager behavior over time, particularly in response to evolving digital environments in which they live.

CONCLUSION

The transformations observed in the teenagers of the four participants were consistent with both psychological theories and neuroscience findings regarding the influence of brain developing functions on teenagers' behaviors. This can be elaborated into four aspects.

First, in terms of policy implications, the findings suggest that parenting policies should better reflect the realities of raising teenagers in a digital world. Support programs should include practical guidance on understanding teenage development, managing digital use, and maintaining healthy communication. Policies should also recognize the unequal caregiving burden often placed on mothers and encourage shared parenting responsibilities. Parenting initiatives will be more effective when culturally grounded and responsive to Indonesian teenagers' digital experiences. Second, regarding practical implications, parents benefit from approaching teenagers as individuals with unique needs and capacities. Strategies shared by parents in this study such as choosing the right moment to talk, reducing emotional conflict, and creating spaces for open conversation can be readily applied at home. Professionals working with families can use these insights to help parents become more confident, patient, and reflective rather than reactive. Strong cooperation between parents also emerged as key support in navigating challenges. Third, concerning opportunities for future research, this study opens pathways to explore families' everyday experiences more deeply. Future research could include more diverse backgrounds, follow families over time, and incorporate teenagers' voices to understand how parental strategies are received. Greater attention to fathers' experiences would also enrich discussions on shared parenting in the digital era. Lastly, regarding contribution to knowledge, this study offers a human-centered understanding of parenting teenagers by highlighting how parents make sense of change, struggle, and growth. By focusing on meaning-making, it demonstrates that parenting is not only about managing behavior but also about learning, adapting, and becoming more resilient alongside teenagers as they grow into adulthood.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to support parents in navigating teenage development effectively. First, parents are encouraged to engage with evidence-based parenting knowledge that is informed by psychological and neuroscientific understandings of teenage development. Such knowledge can help parents interpret teenagers' behavior more accurately and respond in developmentally appropriate ways. Second, parents are advised to situate teenagers' behaviors within a broader contextual framework that includes individual characteristics, environmental influences, gender, and digital exposure. Recognizing these intersecting factors may enable parents to adapt their parenting styles and strategies more flexibly and responsively. Third, parents may support teenagers' holistic development by encouraging participation in non-academic, recreational, and outdoor activities. These activities can promote socio-emotional skills, autonomy, resilience, and identity exploration beyond academic achievement. Fourth, the findings highlight the importance of parental well-being in effective parenting. Parents are therefore encouraged to develop stress management and emotional regulation skills to enhance their capacity to respond calmly and constructively to teenagers' challenges. Fifth, cultivating a positive family environment is facilitated by supportive spousal relationships and shared parenting responsibilities. Equitable collaboration between caregivers can reduce parenting strain and model healthy relational dynamics for teenagers. Finally, parents are encouraged to practice open communication and active listening with their teenagers, attending to emotional, social, psychological, and spiritual needs. Maintaining an ongoing balance between teenagers expressed needs and parental provision can foster mutual understanding, trust, and respect, thereby creating a supportive environment which ultimately promotes teenagers' overall healthy development and well-being. Seventh, in line with the policy recommendations outlined in the policy recommendations on adolescent resilience and reproductive health as a side-by-side quick win program of *Kemendukbangga/BKKBN* (Surbakti et al., 2025), parents and stakeholders are encouraged to actively engage in adolescent reproductive health education. The policy highlights family resilience as a key factor in protecting adolescent well-being. Parents should initiate age-appropriate discussions at home about reproductive health, healthy relationships, and responsible decision-making, while stakeholders should support and strengthen family-centered programs, thereby complementing government-led initiatives with a more holistic approach to adolescent welfare.

REFERENCES

Aerila, J.-A., Kinossalo, M., Siipola, M., Laaksonen, P., Lamminen, A., & Valkonen, T. (2022). Deep talk: A dialogic instruction method for enhancing the sense of belonging. *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, *3*(6), 89–96. https://doi.org/10.24018/ejedu.2022.3.6.490

Affairs, O. of P. (2018). *Adolescent Development Explained.* In *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*. Washington, D.C: U.S. Government Printing Office. https://opa.hhs.gov/adolescent-health/adolescent-development-explained

Afrianti, M. (2025). The importance of deep talk in developing mental health and emotional openness among Gen Z. *Maliki Interdisciplinary Journal, 3*(6), 1439–1445. https://urj.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/mij/article/view/15277

Alfaridzi, G. R., Putri, E. M., & Sulistiasih. (2024). Social media effects on adolescent mental health amidst digital transformation: A comprehensive study of psychological and related risks. *Observasi: Jurnal Publikasi Ilmu Psikologi*, *2*(3), 202–222. https://doi.org/10.61132/observasi.v2i3.491

Anjum, R., Hafeez, M., & Sa'diah, K. (2024). *The impact of social media use on adolescent well-being and academic performance.* In *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Innovations in Social Sciences Education and Engineering (ICoISSEE-4)* (pp. 1–8)*. Bandung, Indonesia.* https://conference.loupiasconference.org/index.php/ICoISSEE-4/article/download/526

Arini, A. S. D., & Syiroj, A. T. R. (2024). Exploring family communication patterns in adolescents and their association with reproductive and sexual health: A systematic review. *Jurnal Keluarga Berencana*, 9–24. https://doi.org/10.37306/hm649b74

Baltazar, A. M. (2019). *Parenting adolescents in today's world. In W. Oliver & E. Oliver (Eds.), Making Disciples* (pp. 51–59). Review and Herald. https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs/1406

Bell, B. T. (2016). *Understanding adolescents.* In *L. Little, D. Fitton, B. T. Bell, & N. Toth (Eds.). Perspectives on HCI research with teenagers* (pp. 11–27)*. Springer.*, *26*(3), 206–217. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-33450-9

Beyers, W., Soenens, B., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2024). Autonomy in adolescence: a conceptual, developmental and cross-cultural perspective. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, *22*(2), 121–141. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2024.2330734

Bravender, T. (2015). Adolescents and the importance of parental supervision. *Pediatrics*, *136*(4), 761–762. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2015-2658

Chen, Q., Bonduelle, S. L. B., Wu, G. R., Vanderhasselt, M. A., De Raedt, R., & Baeken, C. (2024). Unraveling how the adolescent brain deals with criticism using dynamic causal modeling. *NeuroImage*, *286*, 120510. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2024.120510

Fatmawati, S., Lestari, W. M., & Salsabila, S. F. (2024). The role of family counseling in overcoming juvenile delinquency. *Realita: Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling, 9*(1), 2248–2255. https://doi.org/10.33394/realita.v9i1.10265

Guo, X., Hao, C., Wang, W., & Li, Y. (2024). Parental burnout, negative parenting style, and adolescents' development. *Behavioral Sciences*, *14*(3), 161. https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14030161

Ifroh, R. H., & Permana, L. (2022). Do parents use the internet and social media to child health-seeking information? *Jurnal Kesehatan Komunitas*, *8*(2), 171–180. https://doi.org/10.25311/keskom.vol8.iss2.1209

King, L. A. (2014). *The science of psychology: An appreciative view* (4 ed.). McGraw-Hill Education. https://archive.org/details/scienceofpsychol0000king_k5z0

Masfufah, U., & Salsabila, N. N. (2024). *Understanding digital parenting: Supporting factors and challenges for parents*. *Flourishing Journal*, 4(8), 339–346. https://doi.org/10.17977/um070v4i82024p339-346

Mazaya, F. (2024). *Adolescence personality and social media: Growth and challenge*. Paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Tradition and Religious Studies (IC-TIARS), Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, Indonesia. https://sikap.unida.gontor.ac.id/simkatmawa-mandiri/download?file=surat_tugas_path&id=366

Mergler, A., & Shield, P. (2016). Development of personal responsibility scale for adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*, *51*, 50–57. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2016.05.011

Metri, G. G., Dahlia, D., Nugrohon, J. A. E., & Japaries, W. (2023). *Implementation of hypnoparenting in early childhood parenting*. *Journal on Education*, 6(1), 3889–3896. https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v6i1.3498

Miguel, N. (2025). Deep talk definition: Understanding the art of meaningful conversations. *BytePlus*. https://www.byteplus.com/en/topic/496793?title=deep-talk-definition-understanding-the-art-of-meaningful-conversations

Mishra, P. (2021). Challenging role of parents for stress management of adolescents. *IAMURE International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, *10*(12 (5)):43-49. https://ijmer.in.doi./2021/10.12.87

Mondal, S., & Sutradhar, A. (2015). Effect of home environment on different dimensions of emotional maturity of adolescents. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *2*(4). https://doi.org/10.25215/0204.022

Mungall, L. R. (2020). *Meaning making and resilience in parents of children with complex care needs* [Bachelor's thesis, Mount Allison University]. Mount Allison University Repository. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Luke-Mungall/publication/349483805_Meaning-making_and_resilience_in_parents_of_children_with_complex_care_needs/links/632a47b0873eca0c00a0bda3/Meaning-making-and-resilience-in-parents-of-children-with-complex-care-need

Nguyen, T. H. H., & Nguyen, T. N. T. (2023). Parent-adolescent conflict: an exploration from the perspective of Vietnamese adolescents. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *14:*1243494. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1243494

Nurhidayati, I., Amin, L. H., & Hidayah, N. (2023). *The role of family education in the formation of adolescent personality*. In *Proceeding ISETH (International Summit on Science, Technology, and Humanity)*, 2852–2856. https://doi.org/10.23917/iseth.5440

Odgers, C. L., & Jensen, M. R. (2020). Adolescent development and growing divides in the digital age. *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience*, *22*(2), 143–149. https://doi.org/10.31887/DCNS.2020.22.2/codgers

Pan, B., Wang, Y., Zhang, J., Wang, J., Xiao, B., & Li, Y. (2025). Parental co-parenting quality, children's emotion regulation abilities, and prosocial behavior. *BMC Psychology*, *13*(1, 635. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-02947-y

Panahi, L. N., Modarres, M., & Areshtanab, H. N. (2023). Problems between parents and adolescents' relationships: a qualitative study. *Journal of Psychiatric Nursing*, *14*(2), 94–102. https://doi.org/10.14744/phd.2022.38159

Park, C. L. (2022). Meaning making following trauma. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, 844891. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.844891

Phares, V., Fields, S., & Kamboukos, D. (2008). Fathers' and mothers' involvement with their adolescents. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *18*(1), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-008-9200-7

Saeteurn, E. R., Wu, Q., Vasiliou, N., Mabingani, D., & Krysik, J. (2022). Peer parent programs in child welfare: A systematic review. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, *129*, 105682. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2022.105682

Singh, N. K., Kumar, V., Ahirwar, N. K., & Rathore, L. N. (2021). Impact of digital age on children and adolescents: A psychosocial perspective. *Paripex Indian Journal of Research*, *October*, 41–44. https://doi.org/10.36106/paripex/4306040

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. London: SAGE.

Soenens, B., Vansteenkiste, M., & Beyers, W. (2019). Parenting adolescents. In J. K. Madathil & S. T. Wang (Eds.), *Handbook of Parenting: Third Edition*, 111–167. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429440847-4

Surbakti, I. M., Yuniarini, & Adi, F. (2025). Recommendations for adolescent reproductive health and resilience policies as a side-by-side quick-win program Kemendukbangga/BKKBN. *Jurnal Keluarga Berencana*, *10*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.37306/f9spnq92

Valerie, V., Wijaya, E., Setiawan, A., Astiarani, Y., & Surya, J. E. P. (2025). Association between parental stress and adolescent behavior mediated by parenting style in public junior and senior high school students in North Jakarta. *Paediatrica Indonesiana*, *65*(1), 61–70. https://doi.org/10.14238/pi65.1.2025.61-70

Vransisca, V. (2022). The Relationship between peer social support and self-identity in adolescents at the SMAK Penabur Harapan Indah. *European Journal of Psychological Research*, *9*(3), 1–7. http://www.idpublications.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Full-Paper-THE-RELATIONSHIP-BETWEEN-PEER-SOCIAL-SUPPORT-AND-SELF-IDENTITY-IN-ADOLESCENTS-AT-THE-SMAK.pdf

Youth, A. F. (2025). *Advancing Positive Youth Development and Adolescent Well-Being*. Act For Youth. https://actforyouth.org/

Zakalfikri, A., Widyasari, D. C., Karmiyati, D., & Syakarofath, N. A. (2025). Problem-solving skills and internalizing problems in adolescents. *Gadjah Mada Journal of Psychology (GamaJoP)*, *11*(1), 30-36. https://doi.org/10.22146/gamajop.84321

Zhang, Z., & Li, C. (2022). Adolescent rebellion: Causes and guiding strategies. *Science Insights*, *40*(4), 485–487. https://doi.org/10.15354/si.22.re050

Zimmermann, G., Antonietti, J.-P., Mageau, G., Mouton, B., & Van Petegem, S. (2022). Parents' storm and stress beliefs about adolescence: Relations with Parental overprotection and parental burnout. *Swiss Psychology Open*, *2*(1). https://doi.org/10.5334/spo.31