

## Research Article

# Analysis of the Psychological Impact of the Conductor "Konjak" on Adolescent in Kupang City

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**Abstract.**

This research is motivated by the phenomenon of underage conductor workers aged 12–15 years. Early adolescents still require the development of various aspects in preparation for entering adulthood. Early adolescents are not ready to enter the world of work. This study aims to analyze the psychological impact of early adolescent conductor workers physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially in the Oeufu sub-district, Oebobo sub-district, and Kupang city. The research method used is descriptive-qualitative. The research subjects were 10 young conductors aged 12–15 years. Data collection techniques include non-participatory observation and semi-structured interviews. The data obtained was then analyzed through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The results showed that working in early adolescence had a negative impact on the subjects' development in mental, physical, cognitive, and social aspects. Subjects are prone to experiencing conflict at work because they are emotionally unstable and do not have the skills to socialize with customers of various ages. Subjects are also prone to verbal and non-verbal aggressive treatment from older co-workers (drivers). Subjects are often depressed because the wages received are erratic. Subjects do not eat regularly and do not have time to exercise because they have to work from morning to night, even though they are in a growth period that can be maximized through exercise and consuming nutritious food on time. Busy work also causes subjects to drop out of school, so they lose the opportunity to practice their cognitive potential through education according to the stages of their intellectual change. Socially, subjects are easily influenced by the bad habits of smoking and consuming alcohol due to association with more mature co-drivers.

**Keywords:** conductor, Konjak, adolescent, psychological impact

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are an age group that is vulnerable to change and pressure, both physically and psychologically. In adolescence, they are experiencing a transition from childhood to adulthood, which is marked by physical, cognitive, social and emotional changes, identity development, and increased responsibility. The period of adolescence starts from the age of 12 to 21 years. The stages of adolescence consist of pre-adolescents

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aged 10-12 years, early adolescents aged 12-15 years, mid-adolescents aged 15-18 years and late adolescents 18-21 years [1]

Nature and nurture are important elements that play a role in the growth and development of mature adolescents so that they are ready to become part of an adult group. Nature is related to genetics or the inheritance of traits from parents to children and nurture is an environmental factor. Adolescents need nutritious food, exercise, quality sleep, formation of a good lifestyle by the family and community, as well as appropriate education to enter adulthood. If this is not fulfilled properly, it will have a negative impact in the future.

Rapid physical changes take place during early adolescence. The most obvious change during this period is the presence of signs of sexual maturity and increase in body height and weight [2] The growth of the limbs is faster than the body for a while, adolescents have unbalanced body proportions. The arms and legs are longer in comparison to the body. Often deviations from the typical female or male body shape cause quite deep inner rage because at this time adolescents pay great attention to their appearance. If adolescents are able to accept their physical existence, it will have a positive effect on their self-assessment, if not, problems related to self-assessment and social attitudes will arise [3].

Shaw and Costanzo stated that adolescents experience rapid development in the intellectual aspect. Intellectual development allows adolescents not only to be able to integrate themselves in adult society but is also the most prominent characteristic of all developmental periods [4]. According to Piaget, age 12 and over is the formal operational period. The characteristic of this development is abstract thinking. Adolescent understanding is no longer limited to actual experiences. Teenagers are already able to think manipulatively, hypothesize, solve problems through trial-error and test solutions [5].

The aspect of human emotion is an important aspect related to mental health and social relations between humans in life. In adolescence usually have great energy, blazing emotions while self-control is not perfect. Teenagers often experience feelings of insecurity, insecurity, and loneliness. Walgito [6] a period of emotional life that is very prominent is adolescence. Many adolescent behaviors are difficult to understand with good sense, for example speeding without thinking about the risks. Teenagers still need to learn to control their emotions so they don't have a negative impact on themselves and others.

The social development of adolescents is characterized by the expansion of the social environment of adolescents. Social development according to Yusuf is the attainment of maturity in social relations. Teenagers are synonymous with the ability to build relationships with peers other than their families. Teenagers have a high need to be accepted by friends or those closest to them. In order to be accepted, adolescents often conform, namely doing things demanded by their social group even though they are contrary to their own values. If the social environment is good, it will have a positive impact on adolescents and vice versa if the social environment is bad, it will have a negative impact on adolescent social development [7].

According to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 Article 69 of 2003 concerning Manpower, a child may not work more than 3 hours, because if more than 3 hours it is feared it can indirectly hinder the growth and development of the child both physically, mentally and socially (Putra Pratama Saputra 2018). The description of the conditions faced by children in the world of work is certainly very concerning. Not only for the future of the child himself or his family, it can even become an obstacle in preparing the nation's next generation.

The child is a gift from God that should be cared for, educated as a resource, children are a priceless treasure, every parent is entrusted with caring for them properly and is obliged to supervise children by providing fulfillment of the child's own needs which these needs are their rights. rights that must be received by the child himself, so that optimal growth and development is achieved. Of course, a child must receive protection from all forms of violence against children, so that children's rights can be fulfilled properly [8].

One way to achieve this is to ensure that those rights are fulfilled in terms of education and child protection. It is hoped that these efforts will fulfill all the needs of children and their rights [9]. Children as the successor of the nation must be protected and guaranteed by the state. Children must receive the rights as they should. Article 1 number 1 of Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection states that minors are children who have not reached the age of 18 years, so that minors are children who have not reached the age of 16 according to Article 45 of the Criminal Code. In this case, the child is still entitled to the rights as a child, such as getting a decent living, getting the attention and guidance of parents, and getting an education. Children and adolescents should study at various educational institutions to master various knowledge and skills in preparation for entering work in adulthood. On the other hand, with adequate education

and knowledge, it will be easier for them to get good jobs, job protection, and proper wages.

The problem of underage workers is still very significant in Indonesia, one of which is in the Province of East Nusa Tenggara showing that at the current age, adolescents are not always in a conducive environment for growth and development. Family economic limitations are one of the factors driving youth to choose and even be forced to work. The following is data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) regarding the percentage of children/adolescents (10-17 years) working in NTT in the last 5 years as follows:

TABLE 1: Presentase Anak Usia 10 – 17 Tahun yang Bekerja di Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur.

Tahun 2018	Tahun 2019	Tahun 2020	Tahun 2021	Tahun 2022
4,42	3,42	5,67	4,49	5,12

Adolecent who work as conductors or in Kupang language “konjak” for city transportation in Kupang are an interesting phenomenon to study. In the city of Kupang, city transportation known as “bemo” is one of the popular means of public transportation used by local people. The conductor is responsible for collecting payments from passengers and maintaining order in the vehicle. These jobs provide opportunities for youth to earn extra income and learn social skills and independence. However, this job as a city transport conductor not only has an economic impact but also a certain psychological impact on teenagers. Adolescents who work as conductors face various challenges and pressures that can affect the psychological development of adolescents. However, little research has been conducted to explore the psychological impact that early adolescents experience in this occupation. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the psychological impact of early adolescents working as city transport conductors in Kupang.

## 2. METHODS

The research method used is descriptive qualitative. Adolescent research subjects aged 12-15 years, male gender and had worked as a conductor for 6 months to 2 years. The research location is in Kupang City, more precisely the City Transportation conductor for the Oebufu – Kupang PP Route (line 6). This research lasted approximately 6 (six) months in 2022. Research data was collected through non-participatory observation and semi-structured interviews. The collected data is reduced. In this first stage the

data is selected and grouped. Then the data is analyzed. At this stage the data is presented systematically in sub-themes. Stage 3 drawing conclusions (Sugiyono, 2016).

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Deprivation of children's rights is a social phenomenon that results in losses to children in society because of their powerlessness in obtaining their rights as they should. Exploited children are forced to work where this time should be used to study at school, but for some reason, this time is actually used to work to earn a living or make money. Usually, children who are exploited will do work on the streets such as begging, busking, conducting and selling newspapers and so on, where in the case of child labor there are masters, bosses and even families who are superiors [10]. The number of this phenomenon is very unfortunate, children who are under age have been given the burden to work for a living every day from early morning until late at night.

The low family economy is the dominant factor that causes children to be involved in earning a living. Children are often a very important source of income. In fact, in many ways, child labor is seen as a survival mechanism to eliminate unfulfilled poverty pressures from the work of parents. [11]. The involvement of children in economic activities is also due to the encouragement to help ease the burden on parents, work to gain respect from the community, as well as the desire to enjoy the results of work, are the motivational factors for children to join work.

#### 3.1. Fixed And Non-Fixed/Shooting Conductors

The conductor still has the following characteristics: a) Work for the owner of city transportation, not the driver; b) Working hours are set by the transport owner, c) Working Monday-Sunday at 06.00-18.00 and some even work until 20.00 WITA; d) Receive daily and monthly income. The daily income varies, determined by the city transportation driver after issuing the deposit amount according to the demands of the bemo owner, gas money and food money. City transport drivers determine the amount that the conductor receives. They admitted that they did not know the exact amount of daily money that the driver received.

Non-permanent conductors (shoot) are marked with the following: a) Work for city transportation drivers who are not transport owners. They claimed to have never met the bemo owner; b) Every day you can work for different drivers and city transportation

depending on the driver's personal request; c) Free to set their own working hours; d) Wages received are based on the number of rets worked. Ret is 1 full rotation on the specified track. The more ret done the more income received; e) Salary is received after the conductor completes the agreed retreat; f) It is easy to be stopped by city transport drivers if they make mistakes; h) Flexible work system so they are not too tired from work; i) Lunch break between 12.00-15.00 WITA.

### 3.2. Conductor Duties

Conductors or konjac (in Kupang language) are dominated by children and youth workers. The conductor's duties include: 1) Screaming all the way looking for passengers; 2) Seduce passengers; 3) Lifting and lowering goods; 4) Arranging seats; 5) Receiving and returning money; 6) Passengers crossing; 7) Stop the vehicle so that passengers can cross the road and take city transportation.

To be able to do his job, the conductor always sits or stands near the door of the bemo, eyes always look to the left or right of the road while shouting offering city transportation services to people along the way. The conductors often jump and run when city transportation is running while on duty, which of course endangers their safety. Long working hours and minimal rest time and sometimes they can't even take a break because there are many passengers at certain hours causing the conductors to experience fatigue.

### 3.3. Fixed and Unfixed/Shooting Conductor Salary

The fixed conductor salary is set by city transport owners ranging from Rp. 300.000 – 500.000,- besides that they get daily income from the driver. The amount of daily income is uncertain depending on the amount of residual income received and the driver's policy. Calculation of daily money is done after the driver separates the money for food, money to buy gas and deposits to the owner of the vehicle. The amount of daily money received is around Rp. 20,000-40,000.

Shooting conductors earn a daily salary. Salary based on the number of passengers they managed to get in 1 ret/round. The more passengers they get, the more their salary will increase. Shooting conductors like to work when passengers are busy, including in the morning (school and office hours), during the day (school and work hours (afternoon-evening)). The conductor's salary range is not fixed, it is Rp. 20,000-40,000. To get the

number of rets that are many times, the “Konjak” conductor has been very good at maintaining good relations with drivers and trying to expand the relationship with many drivers.

### 3.4. Reasons Teens Work as “Konjac” Conductors

External Factors. Low family economic conditions cause teenagers to work. The conductors’ parents generally work as farmers or fishermen. Families with a large number of children create difficulties for parents in fulfilling the rights of adolescents, both clothing, food, housing, including education costs. Especially at the age of teenagers, they want to have mobile phones, clothes and others. Adolescents in general are starting to realize the importance of appearance in association with fellow adolescents, especially those of the opposite sex. When parents are unable to provide for their children’s needs, they are encouraged to look for work. They realize that their experience and elementary school diploma do not allow them to get the job they want. They become conductors because the job does not require a high level of education even though the job risk is high, the salary is uncertain and the working hours are long.

Internal factors. Apart from external factors, these teenagers have a desire to work from themselves. Adolescence is a period of continuing education to junior high or high school level. For teenagers who have learning difficulties, low motivation and low achievement result in teenagers being lazy to go to school, quit and look for work. Based on field data, teenagers who become “Konjac” conductors have time to stay at school (morning/afternoon) while working, but they admit that after work they experience fatigue so that when they are at school they have difficulty concentrating and studying well. Another internal reason is the desire of teenagers to become city transport drivers. They admit that the driver’s salary is higher, around IDR 1,500,000-2,500,000 per month. For them the driver has a higher position and prestige. The driver is someone who is valued by the conductors and their “bosses” while at work. The driver arranges for the conductor to work. Another advantage they get is that when they become conductors they can ask the driver to teach them how to drive the shuttles. Drivers or chauffeurs are usually more willing to teach the conductors they work with.

### 3.5. Risks or Dangers in Carrying Out Duties

In carrying out the duties of a conductor, there are mild to severe hazards that must be faced. The reality shows that the danger they receive is not proportional to the income they earn, namely low learning outcomes, dropping out of school, experiencing gastric problems, accidents and going to jail. The main principle in working as a driver and transport conductor is to chase as many passengers as possible. In a day they admit that there are peak hours for passengers, including 06.00-07.30 WITA, 09.00 WITA, while at night 19.00-20.00 WITA.

The demands of work cause teenagers to drop out of school. The conductors admit that they suffer from gastric pain because the rush to work in the morning causes them not to have breakfast, especially for the conductors who live alone. They can only eat around 13.00-15.00 WITA. For firing conductors when they are very hungry and can't stand it anymore they are forced to ask to stop working during busy working hours. Another risk faced by the conductor is the danger of an accident. Working all day on the road, running here and there looking for passengers, jumping, hanging on city transportation means the conductors have to be careful not to get hit by other vehicles. They admit that during peak hours drivers often drive at high speed to chase passengers so that if they are not careful they can fall and be hit by another vehicle (Farial Nurhayati 2018).

### 3.6. Psychological Impacts of Early Adolescent "Konjak" Workers

#### 3.6.1. Physical Aspect

Teenagers in general have not been trained to live independently. As early adolescents they are just leaving childhood. They have difficulty managing their diet. Every morning, they almost never have breakfast and only eat around 12.00-15.00 WITA. They are not used to shopping and getting up early to cook. Teenagers still need parental or guardian guidance and training so they can live independently. Living alone and independently in adolescence without preparation can have a negative impact. Often eating late has an impact on the health of their stomach.

Health is related to healthy food patterns and lifestyle. The conductor had difficulty managing sleep patterns. On average they sleep over the hours of 22.00-03.00 WITA. Insufficient and regular sleep patterns can cause decreased concentration, decreased



immunity, uncontrolled emotional reactions, and general decline in health. Long working hours cause them not to have time to exercise even though they know that sports are good for health and make the body fresh. Before becoming “Konjak” conductors, they admitted that they had a habit of exercising such as running, futsal and football.

The above conditions can hinder the physical growth of adolescents. One of the factors that affect the physical growth of adolescents is external factors that are outside the child [4]. Included in external factors are: children’s health in the sense that healthy children grow better than sick children, regular and nutritious eating makes children grow rapidly and environmental stimulation, namely children who receive training from the environment grow faster than those who do not. In adolescence the body can still grow taller if you get the right exercise. Good physical growth certainly also affects the self-confidence of adolescents. At this time the attention of adolescents on self-appearance is very large. Muller further stated that adolescents are very concerned about their bodies and develop self-image [2]. If good physical growth has a positive impact on adolescent self-assessment, if not then problems arise related to self-assessment and social attitudes.

Adolescence is actually a critical period for developing behaviors that are relevant to health. Teenagers are expected to learn and apply healthy eating patterns and healthy lifestyles such as balanced nutritious food, eating on time, regular sleeping patterns and sports activities. Many physical problems in early adulthood (18-40 years, middle (40-60 years) and late 60-death caused by unhealthy diet and lifestyle.

### 3.6.2. Cognitive Aspect

Most young conductors do not continue their education because all of their time is spent working. They recognize the important role of education in obtaining a diploma and finding a better job but due to busyness, lack of funds or low motivation to study, they drop out of school. From these thoughts it can be concluded that they understand education only to obtain a diploma. The important role of education is for cognitive development as one of the important aspects of human development that deserves the attention of parents and teachers. By not going to school, teenagers do not get information, knowledge as a tool for thinking, they lose the opportunity to train themselves in thinking.

Bava and Lenroot, et al concluded that physically the adolescent brain development underwent significant structural changes. This is evidenced by the thickening of the

corpus collosum, namely the optical fiber that connects the left and right hemispheres of the brain, resulting in an increase in the ability of adolescents to process information [2]. Chaplin described the intellect as a thought process, a power of reasoning, judgment, and thinking. Shaw and Costanzo further argue that intellectual development is the most important characteristic of the developmental period and allows adolescents to integrate themselves in adult society [4].

Brain development that occurs in adolescence causes them to be able to process information and develop optimally influenced by 2 factors, namely heredity and environment. Heredity or innate factors indicate that since in the womb, each has characteristics that determine its intellectual performance. This potential will not develop optimally if the environment does not provide sufficient stimulus. Environmental factors in question are family and school. Family intervention in action provides experiences for children in various fields of life so that children have information and knowledge as a basis for processing information. Meanwhile, schools are formal institutions that are responsible for improving the development of children's thinking through the learning process (information, knowledge, problem-solving exercises, analysis, etc.).

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#### **3.6.4. Emotional Aspect**

Teenagers are not yet emotionally mature. They are not yet able to express emotions appropriately. Adolescence is synonymous with unstable and volatile emotions. In working the conductor must deal with the character of the driver and passengers. Conflicts often occur because of several things, namely: a) Not getting passengers or not being observant of seeing passengers on the road. The driver will express anger through dirty or harsh words to the conductor; b) Passengers pay not according to the freight rates. The conductor expresses his anger through dirty and harsh words; c) Fighting over passengers between fellow conductors can lead to conflict.

According to Goleman, emotion refers to typical feelings and thoughts, a biological and psychological state and a series of tendencies to act [4]. Teenagers generally have enormous energy that is blazing while self-control is not perfect. Early adolescents still need guidance, direction and training in controlling emotions from educators (parents and teachers) so that they have emotional intelligence. If not, it will be difficult for teenagers to build social relationships with other people in the family, school and community environment. The inability to control emotions can lead to conflict that is detrimental. At work, conflict cannot be avoided, but people who are able to manage their emotions well can express anger in the right way and at the right time. The inability to express emotions appropriately can lead to bigger problems and prolonged conflicts.

### 3.6.5. Social Aspect

Early adolescent conductors spend most of their time with co-workers, both drivers and fellow “Konjac” conductors, not with family or peers like teenagers in general. The life habits of more mature drivers have a negative impact on early adolescent conductors, including how to speak in harsh, impolite and dirty words. In addition, they also participate in consuming alcohol, smoking, gambling, sleeping late at night because after work they still sit until late at night. The firing crew admit that they need to expand their association with many drivers in order to get the widest possible job opportunities.

Dirty words are commonplace for them and even a social language that familiarizes social relations between them. They also follow smoking habits (conformity) so that they are seen as adults and accepted in their social groups. Besides that, in their opinion, smoking can drive away sleepiness while working. another habit that is done is to consume liquor such as “sopi” or “moke” after working late into the night. While conversing they used to drink and practice gambling, for example playing marbles or cards with money bets.

Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence is a period of development of all aspects or functions to enter adulthood. Teenagers have not been able to function all aspects of their development both physically and psychologically. They still need education, guidance, especially parents and teachers or other adults who are able to direct teenagers. Compared to children, early adolescents conform more to the standards of their peers. In psycho-social development, parents play an important role in supervising adolescents’ choices of social settings, activities and peers [2].

In the case of a young worker conductor, parental supervision was reduced or even absent because they worked all day or because they lived separately from their parents and chose to migrate to Kupang City. The impact is that they are easily influenced by negative associations.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

Working in early adolescence has a negative impact on the development of adolescents both physically, cognitively, emotionally and socially, including: 1) Physically adolescents are susceptible to various short and long term illnesses due to unhealthy and irregular eating patterns, smoking, consuming alcohol, eating patterns unhealthy living such as

sleeping late and not exercising; 2) Cognitively not well developed because the youth workers drop out of school; 3) Emotionally, adolescents lose time socializing with peers, disrupted relationships with their social groups, decreased enthusiasm for learning and dysfunction in the implementation of the role as adolescents. They also adapt verbal aggressive behavior in the form of dirty words to express negative emotions such as anger in the work environment [12]; and 4) Socially, adolescents imitate and conform with social groups at work such as: gambling, dirty words, smoking, consuming alcohol, sleeping late.

Based on the results of research related to the negative impact of children and adolescents working as conductors. So it is very necessary to fulfill the needs of early adolescents to go through a period of growth and development. Some of the needs of the conductor, among others, as follows:

The need for protection and supervision from the government. Early youth workers urgently need protection and supervision of the work they do. This is expected to increase awareness, understanding, and concern from all levels of society and the government.

Meeting the needs of food, clothing, and boards. In working, early adolescents require a lot of energy, so they must receive energy intake from healthy and nutritious food. Teenagers also need proper clothing and shelter for shelter while working. The need for food, clothing and shelter is the full responsibility of the parents.

Education. Early youth are no longer in school even though they really need education.

Giving understanding and attention. Early adolescent workers are ordinary people who really need love, attention, guidance and protection from their parents, especially for those who often experience acts of violence in the work environment.

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