

The Relationship between Peer and Family Factors with The Tendency for Aggressive Behavior in Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by significant biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional changes. Both peer and family factors have been identified as influential in shaping adolescent aggression.

Objective: This study aims to examine the relationship between peer and family factors and the tendency of aggressive behavior among adolescents at SMP Negeri 1 Pulau Pangung in 2024.

Method: A quantitative correlational study with a cross-sectional design was conducted involving 265 students selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using validated questionnaires and analyzed with univariate and bivariate statistical methods, including the Pearson chi-square test.

Results: The findings revealed a significant relationship between peer factors and aggressive behavior tendencies, with students experiencing poor peer influences showing higher aggression levels. Similarly, family factors were significantly associated with aggressive tendencies, where adolescents from less supportive family environments exhibited increased aggression. Statistical analysis confirmed these associations with p-values below 0.05.

Conclusion: Peer and family environments play crucial roles in influencing aggressive behavior among adolescents. Interventions targeting positive peer interactions and supportive family dynamics are essential to mitigate aggressive tendencies. Future research should consider larger sample sizes and focus on developing effective strategies to reduce adolescent aggression.

Keywords: aggressive behavior, family support, peer support

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental period in the human lifespan during which individuals transition from childhood to adulthood. This phase is characterized by significant biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional changes (Khaira, 2022). According to the World

Health Organization (WHO, 2020), adolescents are defined as individuals aged 10 to 19 years who experience physical, emotional, and social transformations. During this period, adolescents are particularly vulnerable to mental health challenges due to factors such as poverty, abuse, and exposure to violent behavior.

Behavioral development is a prominent aspect of socio-emotional growth in adolescence. Typically, adolescent behavior evolves to align with social expectations, facilitating positive social interactions. However, negative behaviors may emerge due to various social influences. Such negative behaviors are not inherent to normal adolescent development; rather, adolescents who develop healthily tend to exhibit positive behavior. One common form of negative behavior in adolescence is aggression, which is defined as intentional actions aimed at causing physical or psychological harm to others (Khaira, 2022).

Physical changes during adolescence include the development of secondary sexual characteristics, accompanied by mental and emotional shifts. The instability in mental and emotional development during this phase increases the likelihood of behaviors that contradict social norms, such as aggression (Raviyoga & Marheni, 2019). Adolescents often exhibit emotional volatility, which can affect decision-making processes and manifest in adverse behavioral outcomes impacting social relationships, academic performance, and future planning. Research indicates significant differences in emotional regulation skills between male and female adolescents, with poor emotional regulation often linked to antisocial and aggressive behaviors (Alhadi et al., 2019, as cited in Purwadi, 2021).

Aggressive behavior is characterized by deliberate actions intended to harm others and may manifest as physical violence (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing) or verbal aggression (e.g., harsh language, insults) as well as destructive behaviors (Wulandari & Wahyudi, 2023). Such behavior has severe consequences, including difficulties in social interactions and disruptions to the learning process. If unaddressed, aggressive behavior can undermine the educational environment and negatively impact both perpetrators and victims. Perpetrators often experience social rejection and isolation (Khaira, 2022).

A preliminary survey conducted in November 2024 with the Guidance and Counseling teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Pulau Panggung revealed that the school enforces various regulations related to politeness, attendance, appearance, cleanliness, honesty, discipline, responsibility, and prohibitions on bringing gadgets to school. Despite these efforts, 129 students were reported to have engaged in aggressive behaviors within the last month. These behaviors ranged from verbal aggression (e.g., swearing, shouting, teasing) involving 62 students, to physical aggression (e.g., fighting) involving 66 students. Conflicts often arose from misunderstandings or teasing, escalating into physical altercations.

Interviews with Guidance and Counseling teachers highlighted environmental influences on student behavior, including peer interactions and parental absence. Many students do not live with their parents due to work commitments but reside with other relatives such as grandparents or aunts and uncles. Additionally, some students engage in school absenteeism and smoking, often encouraging peers to participate in these behaviors. Student interviews confirmed that peer influence significantly contributes to aggressive behaviors such as fighting, smoking, and truancy (SMP Negeri 1 Pulau Panggung, 2024).

Objective

This study aims to examine the relationship between peer and family factors and the tendency of aggressive behavior among adolescents at SMP Negeri 1 Pulau Panggung in 2024.

Method

This study used a quantitative, correlational design with a cross-sectional approach. The population included students of SMP Negeri 1 Pulau Panggung, Tanggamus, in 2024. A sample of 265 students was selected using simple random sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using univariate and bivariate methods. The questionnaire was validated and reliable.

Result

Table 1. Relationship Between Peer, Family Factors, and Aggressive Behavior in Adolescents

Factors	Tendency of Aggressive Behavior		
	High n (%)	Medium n (%)	Low n (%)
Peer			
Good	35 (38.9)	22 (24.4)	33 (36.7)
Not Good	80 (45.7)	19 (27.1)	76 (27.2)
Family			
Good	30 (31.9)	14 (14.9)	50 (53.2)
Not Good	85 (49.7)	27 (15.8)	59 (34.5)

From the table above, among 90 respondents with good peer factors, 35 respondents (38.9%) exhibited a high tendency toward aggressive behavior. In contrast, among 175 respondents with poor peer factors, 80 respondents (45.7%) demonstrated a high tendency toward aggressive behavior. The Pearson chi-square test showed a statistically significant association between peer factors and aggressive behavior tendency ($P = 0.015$, $P \leq 0.05$).

Regarding family factors, of the 94 respondents categorized as having good family factors, 50 respondents (53.2%) displayed a low tendency for aggressive behavior. Conversely, among 171 respondents with poor family factors, 85 respondents (49.7%) showed a high tendency for aggressive behavior. The Pearson chi-square test indicated a significant relationship between family factors and aggressive behavior tendency ($P = 0.008$, $P \leq 0.05$).

Discussion

This study aligns with the findings of Humaira Lulu Parantika (2021) which demonstrated that peer conformity significantly influences students' aggressive behavior, indicating that individuals who adhere more closely to group norms tend to exhibit more positive behaviors and avoid aggression. Similarly, Eka Pratiwi and Murdiana (2024), found a positive correlation between peer conformity and aggressive behavior. Their results suggested that students who are more influenced by their peers tend to display higher levels of aggression. In contrast, Setiani (2019) who reported that peer conformity negatively affects aggressive behavior, meaning that higher conformity corresponds to lower aggression. Conversely, low conformity is associated with higher aggressive tendencies.

However, Parastianti et al. (2020) provided contradictory evidence, finding no significant relationship between peer conformity and aggressive behavior. They defined conformity as

behavioral changes influenced by real or perceived social pressure. Despite adolescents feeling pressured to conform to group norms, this does not necessarily lead to aggression. Parastianti et al. emphasized the critical role of individual self-control as a more substantial factor influencing aggressive behavior. Adolescents' capacity for self-regulation can mitigate the effects of peer pressure on aggression.

Observations from this study corroborate the significant impact of peer interactions on adolescent behavior. Peers serve as crucial sources of emotional and social support; however, when group norms are negative, peers may encourage aggressive behavior. Research indicates that adolescents surrounded by well-behaved peers tend to adopt similar positive behaviors, whereas those associating with aggressive peers are more likely to engage in aggressive acts.

Despite the positive influence peers can have, the negative impact cannot be overlooked. Adolescents exposed to aggressive or unhealthy peer environments face higher risks of exhibiting similar behaviors. Consequently, creating supportive and positive social environments is essential. Collaboration between schools and parents is vital to educate students about choosing friends wisely and resisting peer pressure that promotes negative behaviors.

The relationship between peers and aggressive behavior is complex, as peer influence can be either positive or negative depending on the group's norms and values. Generally, adolescents with supportive peer networks display better behavioral outcomes and lower involvement in aggression.

Regarding family factors, this study's observations highlight the significant influence of authoritarian parenting on adolescent aggression. Authoritarian parenting, characterized by strict control, limited communication, and harsh discipline, often hinders healthy emotional development. Adolescents raised in such environments tend to experience heightened emotional stress, which may trigger aggressive responses to frustration and dissatisfaction. The pressure to meet high parental expectations, coupled with a lack of open communication, can cause adolescents to displace their anger onto others, resulting in verbal or physical aggression.

Based on the findings, students subjected to authoritarian parenting are more prone to conflicts with peers due to inadequate communication and poor conflict resolution skills, increasing the frequency of aggressive behaviors. Therefore, it is crucial for parents and educators to recognize the impact of parenting styles and foster supportive environments. Employing a democratic and communicative parenting approach can help adolescents express emotions healthily, thereby reducing aggressive tendencies and promoting empathy and social competence.

Yahya (2021) emphasized that adolescence is a critical developmental period marked by rapid physical and intellectual changes. As adolescents transition from childhood to adulthood, families play an essential role in supporting their psychological growth by fostering new attitudes, values, and interests. Families must balance granting independence with maintaining responsibility, facilitated through close relationships and open communication.

Effective communication between parents and adolescents prevents misunderstandings, hostility, and conflicts that often arise during this transitional stage. Parents who adjust roles and rules within the family enable adolescents to feel valued and heard, decreasing potential conflicts.

Nonetheless, this developmental stage poses challenges for parents who must relinquish some authority while guiding adolescents toward responsibility. Conflicts frequently emerge when adolescents seek autonomy, but parents attempt to maintain control. Open communication is vital to avoid suspicion and hostility, thereby preserving harmonious parent-adolescent relationships.

Analysis of respondent data revealed that many adolescents felt restricted in expressing opinions or asking questions in family decision-making. Several reported parental expectations accompanied by punitive consequences when unmet. This underscores the need for parents to better appreciate the importance of providing adolescents with opportunities for self-expression

and participation in decisions. Through such support, families can effectively aid adolescent development, fostering independence and responsibility.

Conclusion

The study found a significant relationship between peer factors and the tendency of aggressive behavior in adolescents at SMP Negeri 1 Pulau Panggung. Likewise, family factors were also significantly related to aggressive behavior tendencies among these adolescents. These results highlight the important roles that both peers and family play in influencing aggressive behavior. Future research is encouraged to include larger sample sizes and to focus on exploring effective interventions to reduce aggressive behavior in adolescents.

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