



## THE ABILITY OF SELF-CONTROL IN INFLUENCING THE EMERGENCE OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR IN ADOLESCENTS

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Adolescence is a transitional period between childhood and adulthood, characterized by social and psychological changes, making teenagers vulnerable to aggressive behavior. Aggressive behavior in adolescence has become a serious issue because it can have negative impacts, such as being labeled a troublemaker or being shunned by peers. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between self-control and aggressive behavior in adolescents. **Methods:** This study used a correlational design with a cross-sectional method. The population consisted of 194 adolescents, from which a sample of 129 participants was selected using the simple random sampling technique. Self-control was measured using a questionnaire consisting of 17 items, including 9 favorable and 8 unfavorable items, with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.825. Aggressive behavior was measured using 32 items, including 30 favorable and 2 unfavorable items, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.806. After data tabulation, analysis was performed using Spearman's rho test with SPSS. **Results:** There was a significant negative correlation between self-control and aggressive behavior in adolescents ( $r_s = -0.559, p < 0.001$ ). **Conclusions:** These results indicate that adolescents with higher self-control tend to exhibit lower levels of aggressive behavior. Efforts to reduce aggression can be made by enhancing self-control through the development of emotional maturity in adolescents.

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### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence, which usually lasts from the ages of 10 to 19, is a transitional period between childhood and maturity, during which individuals experience changes in their social, physical, hormonal, and psychological development, making them vulnerable to aggressive behavior during this period (Putri, 2020). Aggressive behavior in adolescence has become a serious issue and can manifest through feelings of anger or disappointment towards people or objects (Subqi, 2019). Aggressive behavior in adolescents can be classified as verbal or nonverbal aggression. Nonverbal aggressive behavior usually includes actions such as hitting, fighting, and kicking, and can even escalate into brawls, while verbal aggressive behavior involves acts such as cursing, mocking, and insulting remarks that can psychologically harm others (Akin, 2015).

Based on data from the World Health Organization (WHO, 2018), more than 16% of students in the United States experience aggressive behavior from other students. Meanwhile, data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) show that incidents of adolescent aggression in 2020 reached 240 cases. Brawls, harassment, sexual crimes on social media, cyberbullying, and verbal and nonverbal violence are examples of aggressive behavior exhibited by adolescents (KPAI, 2020).

Several factors can cause adolescents to become aggressive, such as personality and situational factors. Among these, personality factors play a crucial role in provoking aggressive behavior, as personality is influenced by variables such as self-control. Self-control is the ability to regulate one's behavior and emotions, both from internal and external influences (Ambarukma & Saputro, 2022). The impacts of aggressive behavior can be internal or external. Internal impacts may include feelings of guilt towards the family, decreased interest in studying, and negative societal perceptions that the adolescent is naughty. External impacts may include being shunned by friends and becoming a model for aggressive behavior in others (Karim, 2019). The long-term impact is that adolescents may tend to become perpetrators of violence and, without realizing it, develop the notion that violent actions can be directed toward those who are weaker than themselves (Susilowati & Yati, 2022).

Aggressive behavior and self-control can be described as two opposing poles, meaning that higher self-control leads to lower aggressive behavior, and vice versa (Rahmawati, 2022). Efforts to address the increasing number of violent incidents among adolescents should involve professional staff such as nurses in the prevention,



identification, and response to adolescent violence (Zahrawaani, 2020). Therefore, enhancing self-control skills is necessary to manage aggressive behavior as early as possible (Rahmawati, 2022). The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between self-control and aggressive behavior in adolescents.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research employed a correlational analytic design with a cross-sectional approach targeting adolescents. It utilized a simple random sampling technique on 129 participants from a population of 194 adolescents in Bulutengger Village. Data were collected using two closed-ended questionnaires distributed

via Google Forms. The self-control questionnaire was adapted from the research of Stephanie (2023). It had a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.825 and consisted of 17 questions, including 9 favorable and 8 unfavorable items. The aggressive behavior questionnaire was adapted from the research of Annisa (2023). It had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.806 and consisted of 32 questions, including 30 favorable and 2 unfavorable items. After tabulation, the data were analyzed using Spearman's rho test in SPSS. This research was approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Muhammadiyah Lamongan (Letter No. 077/EC/KEPK-S1/04/2024).

## RESULTS

**Table 1.** Characteristics respondent based on age, gender, address, caregiver, and organization followed Bulutengger Village, Sekaran District, Lamongan Regency, 2024.

| Age                     | Frequency (F) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 16 Years Old            | 23            | 18             |
| 17 Years Old            | 34            | 26             |
| 18 Years Old            | 35            | 27             |
| 19 Years Old            | 37            | 29             |
| Gender                  | Frequency (F) | Percentage (%) |
| Male                    | 70            | 54             |
| Female                  | 59            | 46             |
| Address                 | Frequency (F) | Percentage (%) |
| Bulu Urban Village      | 45            | 35             |
| Tengger Urban Village   | 47            | 36             |
| Gampon Urban Village    | 37            | 29             |
| Caregiver               | Frequency (F) | Percentage (%) |
| Parents                 | 104           | 80             |
| Grandfather/Grandmother | 7             | 6              |
| Parents' Siblings       | 18            | 14             |
| Organization Followed   | Frequency (F) | Percentage (%) |
| Youth Organization      | 38            | 29             |
| Student Council         | 17            | 13             |
| Pencak Silat            | 13            | 10             |
| Scout                   | 27            | 21             |
| Red Cross               | 14            | 11             |
| Young Mosque Activist   | 20            | 16             |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>129</b>    | <b>100.0</b>   |

Table 1 shows that almost one-third of the teenagers were 19 years old (29%), while a smaller portion were 16 years old (18%). The majority of the respondents were male (54%), and female respondents accounted for 46%. Almost half of the respondents came from Tengger Urban Village (36%), followed by Gampon Urban Village (29%). Nearly all teenagers were raised by their parents (80%), while a small portion were raised by their grandparents (6%). Approximately one-third of the teenagers participated in the youth organization (29%), and a smaller proportion participated in the pencak silat organization (10%).

**Table 2.** Relationship between self-control and aggressive behavior in adolescents at Bulutengger Village, Sekaran District, Lamongan Regency, 2024.

| Self-Control | Aggressive Behavior |    |        |    |      |    | Total |     |
|--------------|---------------------|----|--------|----|------|----|-------|-----|
|              | Low                 |    | Medium |    | High |    |       |     |
|              | F                   | %  | F      | %  | F    | %  | F     | %   |
| Low          | 3                   | 10 | 11     | 37 | 16   | 53 | 30    | 100 |
| Medium       | 10                  | 14 | 49     | 69 | 12   | 17 | 71    | 100 |
| High         | 11                  | 40 | 16     | 57 | 1    | 3  | 28    | 100 |
| Total        | 24                  | 19 | 876    | 59 | 29   | 22 | 129   | 100 |

Table 2 shows that the highest number of teenagers had moderate self-control with moderate aggressive behavior, 49 teenagers (69%), while only 1 teenager (3%) had high self-control with high aggressive behavior.

**Table 3.** Results of the Spearman correlation test on the relationship between self-control and aggressive behavior among adolescents at Bulutengger Village, Sekaran District, Lamongan Regency, 2024.

| Self-Control | Aggressive Behavior |        |
|--------------|---------------------|--------|
|              | R                   | -0.559 |
|              | P                   | 0.00   |
|              | N                   | 129    |

Table 3 shows that the Spearman's rho test produced a p-value of 0.000 and a correlation strength ( $r$ ) = -0.559. These findings indicate a moderate negative relationship between aggressive behavior and self-control. This means that as self-control increases, aggressive behavior decreases, and vice versa.

## DISCUSSION

### Self-Control in Adolescents in Bulutengger Village, Sekaran District, Lamongan Regency.

As indicated by Table 2, most of the 129 teenagers had moderate self-control and moderate aggressive behavior, totaling 49 teenagers (69%), while only 1 teenager (3%) had high self-control and high aggressive behavior. This suggests that adolescents with better self-regulation are able to control their impulses, emotions, and desires to manage their behavior appropriately.

Self-control is the ability to manage one's impulses from both internal and external sources to achieve desired outcomes and avoid undesirable consequences (Marsela, 2019). Several internal and external factors affect self-control. Among the internal factors, age is significant, as shown in Table 1, where almost half of the respondents were 19 years old. This finding demonstrates that as individuals grow older, their ability to control themselves improves. This is supported by Nasution (2023), who stated that older adolescents tend to have higher self-control, explaining that as they age, their emotional regulation also improves.

Another factor influencing self-control is the family environment, which plays a crucial role. As seen in Table 1, almost all teenagers lived with their parents, suggesting that parental influence is important in shaping self-control. Consistent parental discipline from an early age helps children internalize behavioral guidelines, forming the basis for effective self-control. This aligns with Khoir (2019), who found that adolescents living with their parents generally exhibit higher self-control.

Based on these findings, the researcher concludes that adolescents can minimize aggressive behavior by improving self-control. Developing strong self-control allows adolescents to regulate both positive and

negative behaviors, helping them be better accepted within their communities.

### Aggressive Behavior In Adolescents in Bulutengger Village, Sekaran District, Lamongan Regency.

Based on Table 2, of the 129 respondents, most adolescents exhibited moderate aggressive behavior (76 teenagers or 59%), while a smaller portion showed low aggressive behavior (24 teenagers or 19%). Therefore, it can be concluded that adolescents with aggressive tendencies may express negative emotions through fighting or acts of violence, either verbally or physically.

Aggressive behavior is an individual's desire to express negative feelings through verbal or physical actions that intentionally harm others (Meydiningrum, 2020). Situational and personality traits both influence aggressive conduct. Personality factors—particularly self-control—play a key role, as shown in Table 2, where most teenagers had moderate self-control. This indicates that greater self-control is associated with lower aggression. Puji Rahayu (2018) supports this finding, stating that adolescents with poor emotional regulation tend to exhibit more aggressive behavior.

Situational factors also influence aggression, particularly gender, as shown in Table 1, where most respondents were male. Males are more likely to express aggression through physical actions such as hitting or fighting, while females tend to display verbal aggression such as sarcasm or ridicule. This aligns with Geandra (2020), who explained that males and females differ in how they express aggression.

Based on these findings, the researcher concludes that adolescents' inability to regulate themselves is a major cause of aggressive behavior. Personality and situational factors both contribute to aggression, with

personality—especially self-control—playing a crucial role. Adolescents who develop positive behavior are more capable of self-regulation, empathy, and social adjustment.

### The Connection Between Teenagers' Aggressive Behavior and Self-Control in Adolescents.

As shown in Table 3, both variables were analyzed using the Spearman's rho test in SPSS 25, yielding a p-value of 0.000, confirming that H1 was accepted. This indicates a significant negative relationship between self-control and aggressive behavior among adolescents aged 16–19 years in Bulutengger Village, Sekaran District, Lamongan Regency.

Adolescence is a developmental period vulnerable to aggression. Aggressive behavior in adolescents can manifest as anger or violent acts resulting from frustration or failure to achieve goals (Subqi, 2019). Sulasmi (2023) also found a link between self-control and aggression, showing that higher self-control reduces aggressive tendencies. Similarly, Atina (2022) and Putra (2024) reported that self-control significantly influences the emergence of aggressive behavior—individuals with strong self-control are less likely to act aggressively.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that one of the main causes of adolescent aggression is a lack of self-control. Low self-control contributes to aggressive verbal and physical behaviors, both at home and in school. The results confirm that self-control and aggression are negatively correlated—as self-control increases, aggressive behavior decreases.

### CONCLUSION

The analysis shows a significant relationship between self-control and aggressive behavior among adolescents aged 16–19 years in Bulutengger Village, Sekaran District, Lamongan Regency. Both situational and personality factors influence aggression, but this study highlights personality—particularly self-control—as a key determinant. Self-control, defined as the ability to regulate internal and external impulses, is essential for preventing aggression. These findings are expected to help adolescents and caregivers understand that improving self-control can reduce aggressive behavior.

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### AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

RH conceptualized the study, conducted data collection and analysis; SM prepared the manuscript; AR and MS supervised the research and provided critical revisions.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise.

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