

## **The Tendency of Aggressiveness in Adolescents in Sumedang**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Aggressiveness is one of the common problems that often occur in adolescents. The tendency of emotional fluctuations in adolescents is one factor that makes adolescents vulnerable to aggressiveness. One form of aggressiveness that is currently rife among adolescents is student brawl. Aggressive actions such as student brawl result in a negative impact on victims and adolescents who become perpetrators of the brawl. This study aimed to discover the tendency of aggressivity in adolescents at YPGU Sumedang Vocational School. The method used in this study is the descriptive quantitative method. The variables studied were adolescents' tendency to cover dimensions as physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. The number of samples in this study was 162 respondents using an accidental sampling technique. The instrument used was adopted from the aggression questionnaire developed by Buss and Perry, which consists of 29 closed statement items. Data analysis used interval value ranges based on the length of the interval per class of the minimum and maximum values. This study's results are seen from the percentage in the category of low, moderate, and high. The results showed as many as 149 respondents (92%) have a moderate tendency of aggressivity. Based on the study results, it can be concluded that almost all adolescents in this study have a moderate tendency of aggressivity. Similarly, on the dimensions of aggressiveness measured, the average tends towards the moderate category. As for the dimensions of this aggressiveness, physical aggression has the greatest tendency than any other dimension, so it is advisable to further improve prevention programs' aggressiveness at YPGU Sumedang Vocational School.

Keywords: adolescents, aggressivity, tendency.

## **Introduction**

Aggression is a common problem among adolescents. The number of conflict problems that occur and the changes that take place, especially in terms of immature emotionality, are factors that support adolescents who are vulnerable to aggressiveness (Santrock, 2011; Sarwono & Meinarno, 2014). The adolescent age group shows a higher level of aggressive behavior than adults (Hasyamani, 2016). According to Wahdan et al. (2013), one in five adolescents has a very high risk of aggressive behavior, and the rest have a high risk.

Aggression is defined as behavior that is intended to hurt or harm others. The existence of the intention to hurt plays an essential role in aggression. Even though actions to hurt others are not successful, it can be aggressive if there intends to hurt. Without the intention to hurt, this behavior cannot be categorized as aggression (Myers, 2008; Sears et al., 2009). A person's aggressiveness can cause dangerous impacts and disturb social order; therefore, it tends to be avoided by society and cannot be accepted because it violates social norms (Sarwono & Meinarno, 2014).

The aggressiveness in a person usually starts with a heightened feeling of anger caused by factors such as frustration, threats, attacks, and attribution bias (Baron et al., 2005). Other factors that are often cited as influencing aggressiveness include family factors, the environment in which they live, and peers' influence. An unfavorable surrounding community environment can harm adolescents (Hage et al., 2009). Aggressive adolescents tend to have conflict problems in the family and usually come from divorced families (Karrikafer-Jaffe et al., 2013; Mothlag et al., 2013). Based on Benson and Buehler's (2012) research, distortion peer conformity can also increase adolescents' aggression. The higher the peer conformity, the higher the aggressive behavior in adolescents (Dewi, 2015).

Aggressiveness can occur in both verbal and physical forms. Verbal aggressiveness is hurting others using harsh words such as berating, insulting, shouting, and others. Meanwhile, physical aggressiveness involves physical violence, such as hitting, kicking,

stabbing, and shooting (Warburton, 2015). Aggressiveness will cause hurt or harm to the object that is the target of the aggressiveness. This aggressiveness can cause physical harm such as injury, disability, or even an extreme level that can cause death. Apart from physically, aggressive actions can also cause emotional dangers such as psychological trauma and disrupt social relationships (Warburton, 2015; Tentama, 2012). Not only for victims, but this will also harm the perpetrators. People who behave aggressively tend to be disliked and avoided by their social environment.

One form of aggressiveness in adolescents that is rife, among others, is a mass fight or what is known as a brawl between students. Based on KPAI data in 2016, 164 students became perpetrators of violence and student brawl. Meanwhile, 130 students became victims of violence and student brawl. It was also recorded that as many as 89 children were faced with the law due to physical violence (fighting, beatings, assaulting) and 31 people due to psychological violence (threatening, intimidating).

Violence cases that occur to adolescents, such as brawls, often cause physical, psychological, and even casualties. This is a form of aggressiveness that is quite common in adolescents. Seeing the many cases of aggressiveness that occur in adolescents, this is important to note. The phenomenon of student brawl, which is the focus of this research, is a student brawl in the North Sumedang District, Sumedang Regency. This study aims to determine aggressiveness in adolescents in YPGU Sumedang Vocational School.

## **Methods**

The study design is descriptive quantitative with the sampling technique using an accidental sampling method. Data were collected in April 2017 with a sample size of 162 adolescent respondents in YPGU Sumedang Vocational School. The instrument used in this study was adopted from the Aggression Questionnaire developed by Buss and Perry (1992), which consists of four dimensions, namely physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. This

instrument consists of 29 closed statement items with a choice of answers using a Likert scale, namely very inappropriate, inappropriate, less appropriate, appropriate, and very appropriate. Before collecting research data, the researcher first takes care of an ethical permit to the Health Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Padjadjaran. After the ethical permit was issued, the researcher arranged a research permit for the Sumedang District Political Nation Unity and the YPGU Sumedang Vocational School to collect research data.

Data analysis was performed using descriptive statistics. Favorable items are given a score of 5 for very appropriate answer choices, 4 for appropriate answer choices,

3 for less appropriate answer choices, 2 for inappropriate answer choices, and 1 for very inappropriate answer choices. For the unfavorable statement items, they were given a score of 1 for the very appropriate answer choices, 2 for the appropriate answer choices, 3 for the less appropriate answer choices, 4 for the inappropriate answer choices, and 5 for the very inappropriate answer choices. The data obtained are grouped into three categories of aggressiveness: a total score of 29 - 67.7 for the low aggressiveness category, a total score of 67.8 - 106.4 for the moderate aggressiveness category, and a total score 106.5 - 145 for the high aggressiveness category.

## Results

**Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Adolescent at the YPGU Sumedang Vocational School (n = 162)**

Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
15-18 years	162	100
Gender		
Male	162	100
Family Structure		
Complete Family	157	97
Uncomplete Family	5	3
Family Income		
<Rp.1,500,000	99	61
Rp. 1,500,000-3,000,000	45	28
>Rp. 3,000,000	18	11

Based on table 1 regarding the characteristic description of respondents, it is known that there are 162 (100%) male respondents, all of whom are in the age range 15-18 years (100%) which are middle adolescents, generally have a complete family structure ( 97%), and more than half of the respondents have a family with an income below Rp. 1,500,000 (61%).

**Table 2 Frequency Distribution of Aggressive Tendency among Adolescents at YPGU Sumedang Vocational School (n = 162)**

Variable	Category					
	Low		Moderate		High	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>Tendency of Adolescent Aggressiveness</b>	7	4.3	149	92	6	3.7
<b>Physical Aggression</b>	24	14.7	131	81	7	4.3
<b>Verbal Aggression</b>	26	16	116	72	20	12
<b>Anger</b>	59	36.3	97	60	6	3.7
<b>Hostility</b>	7	4.3	119	73.5	36	22.2

Based on table 2, it can be seen that almost all respondents tend to aggressive, namely as much as 92%. Likewise, in the dimensions of physical aggression, almost all respondents are in the moderate category (81%). The remaining more than half of the respondents were in the moderate category for the dimensions of verbal aggression (72%), anger (60%), and hostility (73.5%).

## Discussion

Aggression is a behavior that is intended to hurt others, both physically and verbally (Myers, 2008). In general, a person's aggressiveness arises from the presence of unwelcome stimuli such as attacks, frustration, and hostility. These various stimuli will generate feelings of aggression, and when the aggression is so intense, a person forgets his surroundings, which triggers aggressive behavior or actions (Sears et al., 2009). In adolescents, the level of emotional maturity, which is still unstable, makes it easy to ignite emotions when facing a problem, so that this is one of the risk factors that encourage the tendency of aggressiveness in adolescents.

Based on the research results obtained, of the 162 students who became respondents in this study, 149 students had moderate aggressiveness (92%), 7 students in the low category (4.3%), and 6 students in the high category (3.7%). These results indicate almost all adolescent respondents tend aggressively. This finding is also supported by the findings on each dimension of aggressiveness, where the results tend to be in the moderate category. Both physically and verbally, almost all adolescent respondents in this study had moderate tendencies. However, on the average score of the statement items on each dimension, physical aggression obtained the

highest score of 4.3. That indicates a greater tendency towards physical aggression than the other dimensions.

Various factors, including the environment, influence the level of aggressiveness tendency of a person. An unfavorable living environment can influence adolescents' levels of aggressiveness (Hage et al., 2009). Family factors can also influence adolescent aggressiveness. The existence of conflict problems in the family, low parent-child ties, and low control of family behavior are related to adolescents' aggressiveness (Karrikafer-Jaffe et al., 2013). According to research by Wahdan et al. (2013), adolescents who have witnessed violence in their families are at risk of aggressiveness four times higher than adolescents who have not witnessed violence in their families. The incomplete family structure is also a factor at risk of increasing adolescents' aggressiveness (Mothlag, 2013).

Besides, the tendency of aggressiveness in adolescents can also be influenced by gender factors. Male adolescents show a higher risk of aggression than female adolescents (Wahdan et al., 2013). That is supported by the research of Wani et al. (2017) and Kumar et al. (2016), which shows that the level of aggressiveness, both physically and verbally, in males is higher than in the female. Based on the description of the characteristics of the respondents, all adolescents in this study

were male. That can be one of the factors that influence the tendency of aggressiveness in this study.

Seeing the phenomenon of a brawl as an essential phenomenon in this study, the researcher argues that the peer conformity factor plays an essential role in the tendency of aggressiveness in this study. Based on researchers' information through the school, several students admitted to being involved in the brawl due to their seniors' pressure. That shows that aggressive behavior is not due to the aggression instinct within themselves; however, because of the environment's influence, namely friends, especially in this case, the seniors encourage them to act aggressively. That shows a relationship between peer conformity with a tendency to aggressiveness in adolescents.

There is a relationship between peer conformity and aggressiveness in adolescents (Palinoan, 2015). Conformity occurs when a person imitates another person's attitude or behavior due to pressure from that person. During adolescence, peer pressure to follow the same behavior tends to be very strong, both negative and positive. Simultaneously, the level of adolescent resistance to pressure is not strong enough (Santrock, 2007). According to Sullivan in Santrock (2011), friendship is an essential part of adolescents' social needs. The fear of getting social rejection if they do not follow their friends' pressure will make adolescents accept their friends. Besides, the value of group cohesiveness is also one reason that supports the phenomenon of a brawl as something that is done in groups.

In a study conducted by Dewi (2014) at the same location, a poor friend environment is one factor that causes aggressive behavior in adolescents. Likewise, research conducted by Trisnawati et al. (2014) stated that peer influence is the most substantial factor among other factors that can influence adolescent aggressiveness. The higher the peer conformity, the higher the aggressive behavior in adolescents, and vice versa (Dewi, 2015). That is also supported by Benson and Buehler's (2012) research, which states that peer distortion contributes to increased aggression in both males and females. Based on this description, it can be

seen that the involvement of peer conformity is one of the factors that play an essential role in the tendency of adolescent aggressiveness in this study.

This study indicates that almost all of the tendencies of aggressiveness in adolescents are at moderate levels. This study's results are not in line with Kruti and Melonashi (2015) research, which shows that overall, adolescents have a high level of aggression. Likewise, in the research of Kumar et al. (2016), the level of aggressiveness in adolescents was found to be in a high category. That can be caused by the existence of sanctions that have been given to adolescent students who have been involved in violence, gradually giving a deterrent effect to them. Especially for grade 1 and 2 students who were respondents in this study, the experience of seniors who received these sanctions can give a sense of fear to commit violations and get similar sanctions. Although there are causal factors that trigger adolescents' aggressiveness in this study, the deterrent effect and sanctions' influence can be why adolescents' tendency for aggressiveness in this study does not tend to be high.

The results showed that more than half of the respondents had a moderate anger dimension level. The aggressiveness that occurs in adolescents is usually based on feelings of anger. However, those feelings of anger do not just arise into aggressive actions for no reason. Factors such as attacks, threats, and frustration cause feelings of anger to rise high enough to turn into aggressive behavior. Besides, anger cannot be observed directly but rather an internal feeling (Sears et al., 2009). A person can be angry but does not show his anger in the form of real actions.

In the anger dimension measurement results, the item statement "I get angry quickly but easily subsides quickly" gets the highest score. During adolescence, there tends to be an increase in angry emotions caused by developments in certain parts of the brain (Santrock, 2011). However, this does not necessarily mean that they immediately take it in the form of aggressive actions. Someone's instinct for aggression will rise if there is a strong urge from feelings of anger (Sears et al., 2009). This study shows that adolescents get angry quickly, but at the same



time, the anger subsides quickly. So that the feeling of anger does not develop and lasts until it drives it into aggression.

On the hostility dimension, adolescents in this study showed that more than half of them had moderate hostility. Negative perceptions cause the hostility that encourages aggressiveness. Negative perceptions will lead to negative attitudes and behaviors, as well. Because perception will influence attitudes and behavior towards the object, it perceives (Sears et al., 2009). Aggressiveness in adolescents can be motivated by hostility due to students' negative perceptions from other school groups. Judging from the brawl phenomenon that underlies this research only occurs between students from specific schools, namely students from the school, which is the location of this research and school "X." That shows the possibility of prejudice in each group of adolescent students who label each other as opponents or enemies. Moreover, the influence of upperclassmen who were previously involved in brawls can lead to a negative perception that students from school "X" are enemies so that an attitude of hostility arises in adolescents, which encourages aggressiveness.

The item statement, "sometimes I feel worried about something bad or not wearing will happen to me," scored the highest on the adversarial dimension's measurement result. This statement shows the existence of negative perceptions in adolescents of something that is threatening. Aggression instincts will emerge as a defense mechanism when perceived as threatening (Baron et al., 2005). Therefore, this concern can provoke the aggression instincts of adolescents to rise.

Aggressiveness to adolescents, both physically and verbally, will undoubtedly harm both the perpetrator and the victim. Violent acts such as brawls, beatings, and others that are examples of physical aggressiveness can cause physical harm to victims such as injuries, disabilities, or even death (Warburton, 2015). Not only physical harm, but it can also disrupt social relationships (Tentama, 2012). Besides, verbal and physical aggressiveness can cause psychological trauma for the victim and the victim's family. For the perpetrators themselves, the aggressive actions will

make others stay away from them, defame themselves and their families so that sanctions for imprisonment can occur. Also, this problem of aggressiveness will prevent adolescents from carrying out their developmental tasks. Failure to fulfill developmental tasks during adolescence will affect developmental tasks in the future (Agustiani, 2009). The level of the tendency for moderate aggressiveness, if left without precautions, can increase to high. Therefore, appropriate interventions are needed to both prevent and minimize the aggressiveness problem.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the results of research conducted on young students of the YPGU Sumedang Vocational High School, it can be concluded that almost all adolescent respondents have a moderate level of aggressiveness. Likewise, on average, the measured dimensions of aggressiveness tend to be at a moderate level of aggressiveness. As for the aggressiveness dimension, physical aggression has the most significant tendency compared to other dimensions. Educational institutions, especially those that are the research location, can work together with other schools in developing new activity programs for students to increase a sense of kinship. The school can cooperate with the police in holding outreach to instill discipline and a peace-loving mindset. This activity can be used as part of a series of new student admissions to prevent aggressiveness in new students. The school can also direct students who tend exceptionally high aggressiveness to extracurricular activities in a positive direction.

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