Factors Influencing Aggression Among Adolescents in Indonesia: A Literature Review

Pande Ryan Praba Wangsa1*), David Hizkia Tobing2

Published online: 15 May 2024

Abstract: Adolescent aggression has long been a major concern in the fields of educational psychology and sociology, especially in Indonesia where social and cultural dynamics play a role in shaping adolescent behavior. This study is a systematic literature review, examining 30 publications from the years 2014 to 2023 to understand the factors influencing aggression among Indonesian adolescents. This method involved collecting data from various sources accessed through Google Scholar using relevant keywords associated with adolescent aggression. The purpose of this review is to specifically ascertain the effects of internal factors such as emotional maturity, emotional intelligence, and self-control, as well as external factors including peer conformity, parental communication styles, parenting styles, and the intensity of online gaming on aggressive behavior in adolescents. The findings from this analysis are expected to provide deeper insights into effective ways to intervene and prevent aggressive behaviors among adolescents in Indonesia, thereby making a significant contribution to parenting practices, education, and social and mental health policy for adolescents.

Keywords: Aggression, Adolescents, Internal Factors, External Factors, peer, parent, game

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood, which is often fraught with potential crises. This transitional phase is marked by intense personality formation. During adolescence, individuals undergo numerous changes and face various challenges in their lives. Described as a period of “storm and stress,” adolescence involves high emotional tension due to physical and glandular changes (Hurlock, 2012). Monks (2004) notes that adolescents are often unable to master their physical and psychological functions fully. This lack of mastery over physical functions can have psychological impacts, particularly related to emotional turmoil and mental stress, making adolescents prone to deviating from social norms and standards. Hurlock (2012) further states that hormonal changes during puberty can increase emotional instability, potentially triggering aggressive behaviors. The anxiety associated with these changes may also exacerbate conditions, leading to aggression as a coping mechanism.

1*) corresponding author

Pande Ryan Praba Wangsa

Email: panderyan2311@student.unud.ac.id
In Indonesia, social and cultural contexts play a significant role in shaping aggressive behavior among adolescents. The country's cultural diversity often leads to intergroup conflicts that can influence young people. Additionally, societal norms, including expectations regarding adolescent behavior, can increase pressures that trigger aggression. Research by Yunalia and Etika (2020) indicates that the stress of conforming to stringent social and cultural expectations often leads to aggressive behaviors among adolescents.

Baron (2005) defines aggression as behavior intended to harm another living being. He clarifies that aggression can be physical or mental and is observable through clear forms such as hitting, kicking, and verbal abuse (insults and derogatory remarks). Mundy, cited by Sentana and Kumala (2017), suggests that aggression can arise from confronting unpleasant situations or conditions in one's environment, often fueled by anger, which links behavioral and cognitive components in aggression.

Vygotsky’s Social Development Theory highlights the role of social interaction in behavior formation. In the Indonesian context, interactions between adolescents and their social and cultural environments influence the establishment of behavioral norms, including aggression (Vygotsky, 1978). Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) is also relevant, describing how micro, meso, and macro systems interact in adolescents' lives. For example, interactions within the family, school, and peer groups (microsystem) influence adolescent aggression, while public policies and economic conditions (macrosystem) provide a broader context for these experiences.

In the Indonesian social, cultural, and familial context, the interplay between internal and external factors plays a crucial role in shaping aggressive behavior in adolescents. According to Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (1979), individual behavior is influenced not only by internal factors such as emotional maturity and intelligence but also by the microsystem environment, such as family and school, and the macrosystem, including social norms and culture. In Indonesia, cultural norms that value obedience and respect for authority interact with parenting styles and peer influences, creating a specific dynamic that affects adolescent aggression (Geertz, 1961).

Aggression in adolescents has long been a primary concern in psychology, education, and sociology. According to Muhamad (2023), data from the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection (Kemen-PPPA) indicate that from January 1 to September 27, 2023, there were 19,593 recorded cases of violence across Indonesia.

Emotional maturity plays a critical role in managing impulses and responding to social pressures. Gross (1998) in his theory of emotion regulation suggests that adolescents with higher emotional maturity are better at regulating their emotional reactions, which can reduce aggressive behavior. Mayer and Salovey (1997) note that emotional intelligence, which includes the abilities to identify, use, understand, and manage emotions, helps individuals handle interpersonal conflicts without resorting to aggression. Research shows that adolescents with higher emotional intelligence are less likely to exhibit aggressive behaviors as they are better equipped to process and respond to emotions constructively (Brackett et al., 2011).

Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) Self-Control Theory posits that individuals with low self-control are more likely to engage in aggressive behaviors due to a lack of ability to delay gratification and assess long-term consequences of their actions. According to Bandura’s Social Learning Theory (1977), adolescents often imitate behaviors they observe in their environment, including from peers. If aggressive behavior is reinforced within a peer group, the likelihood of adolescents displaying similar behavior increases. Authoritarian or permissive parenting styles can also influence aggressive behavior in adolescents. Baumrind (1991) found that inconsistent parenting and a lack of supervision are major predictors of problematic behavior, including aggression.

This research contributes significantly to the existing literature by identifying and integrating factors influencing adolescent aggression in Indonesia, a context with unique social and cultural characteristics. These findings are crucial for the development of educational policies and counseling practices in Indonesia. According to Spear (2013), evidence-based approaches in educational policy can significantly enhance the effectiveness of educational interventions and student welfare. Therefore, this research supports policymakers in designing more effective programs to prevent and address aggressive behavior among adolescents, particularly by integrating social and emotional skills education in schools (Durlak et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the results of this review have relevance not limited to the Indonesian context but also provide insights to the global community, particularly developing countries that may face similar challenges in addressing adolescent aggression. According to Lansford et al. (2010), understanding how social, economic, and cultural factors in developing countries affect aggressive behavior can help formulate more universal and adaptive intervention strategies. This study enriches the global literature by offering perspectives from a developing country, often underrepresented in research on adolescent aggression. Based on this discussion, this literature review aims to identify the factors influencing aggression among adolescents in Indonesia.

**METHODS**

The method of systematic literature review was chosen because it allows for a comprehensive and systematic examination of existing literature, which is crucial in identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing all relevant studies pertaining to adolescent aggression in Indonesia. According to Booth, Sutton, and Papaioannou (2016), a systematic literature review is a methodological approach that enables researchers to formulate reliable and comprehensive conclusions from existing research. This method aids in identifying gaps in the research and guides future policy and clinical practices. By employing this method, we ensure that the literature review is conducted in an unbiased and structured manner, using clear inclusion and exclusion criteria to select relevant and valid studies.

The systematic literature review method supports the theoretical framework discussed in the introduction by providing an adequate framework to explore and integrate findings from various studies examining internal factors such as emotional maturity, emotional intelligence, and self-control, as well as external factors like peer influence and parenting styles in the context of adolescent aggressive behavior. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), used as one of the theoretical bases, underscores the importance of understanding the interactions among various environmental systems that influence individual development. Systematic literature review enables the extraction of data and findings from
multiple sources to understand how these factors operate and interact within the social and cultural context of Indonesia, aligning well with this theoretical approach.

The literature search method for this systematic review involved utilizing a wide range of databases to ensure comprehensive coverage of literature. Besides Google Scholar, other databases such as PsycINFO, Scopus, and Web of Science were accessed to ensure the breadth and depth of research relevant to the topic of adolescent aggression in Indonesia. Keywords used in the search included “aggression,” “adolescent,” “Indonesia,” “parenting styles,” “peer influence,” and “emotional intelligence.” Combinations such as “adolescent aggression Indonesia” and “emotional maturity and youth aggressive behavior” were used to target the most relevant studies (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016).

Inclusion criteria applied included articles in Indonesian published between 2014 and 2023 that explicitly address adolescent aggression. Selecting research articles conducted in Indonesia aimed to obtain an in-depth local perspective on the issue of adolescent aggression. While this may affect the generalizability of findings, it is crucial for analyzing the cultural context specifically. Articles that are meta-analyses or empirical studies were also included to obtain more robust evidence. Exclusion criteria included articles that are theses, dissertations, or scoping reviews, as well as studies published before 2014 or not involving adolescents in Indonesia (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016).

Articles meeting the inclusion criteria were further processed through assessment by multiple reviewers to ensure objectivity and reliability of selection. Each article was evaluated based on topic relevance, methodological quality, and contribution to the understanding of adolescent aggression. Disagreements among reviewers were resolved through consensus discussions to reach agreement on the articles included in the review. This ensures that the selection process is not only systematic but also transparent and accountable (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016). From these criteria, 10 articles were found for inclusion in this literature review, which are discussed in the results and discussion section.

Data from different articles were analyzed and synthesized using a meta-synthesis approach. This meta-synthesis involves qualitative interpretation of identified study findings with the aim of integrating these results into a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing adolescent aggression in Indonesia. In this process, common themes and emerging patterns were identified and combined to construct a cohesive narrative that illustrates how various interacting factors influence aggressive behavior. This method allows for an enhanced theoretical and practical understanding of adolescent aggression, offering deeper insights into the complexity of this phenomenon and potential implications for interventions (Paterson, Thorne, Canam, & Jillings, 2001).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the review findings, it is important to conduct quality assessments and risk of bias evaluations for the reviewed studies. In this review, we applied the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) Checklist to assess the quality of each included study (CASP, 2018). This checklist aids in evaluating the validity of the study, the significance of the results, and the local applicability of the findings. This assessment is crucial to ensure that conclusions drawn are based on robust and trustworthy evidence. To reduce the risk of bias, we also included studies that report their methodology clearly and completely, ensuring that studies with less rigorous methodologies are not included in the final synthesis (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009).

Despite the effectiveness of the systematic literature review as a method for synthesizing existing research, there are several limitations in this approach that could affect the interpretation of results. Firstly, this review is limited to articles published in Indonesian, which may not cover all relevant studies published in other languages. This limitation could affect the generalizability of the conclusions (Higgins & Green, 2011). Secondly, publication bias, where studies with statistically significant results are more likely to be published, could also affect the outcomes of this review.

**RESULTS**

The studies reviewed indicate that adolescent aggression in Indonesia is influenced by a complex interplay of internal and external factors. Significant internal factors include emotional maturity, emotional intelligence, and self-control. Emotional maturity, for example, plays a crucial role in helping adolescents manage their emotional responses to provocation or stress, which, if poorly regulated, can lead to aggressive reactions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). On the other hand, emotional intelligence, which encompasses the ability to understand and manage one's own and others' emotions, has been shown to aid adolescents in responding to social situations in a more adaptive and less aggressive manner (Brackett et al., 2011).

Meanwhile, self-control is closely linked to an adolescent's ability to resist the urge to act aggressively and to choose more effective coping strategies. Reviewed studies indicate that adolescents with low levels of self-control are more frequently involved in aggressive behaviors, as they tend to have difficulty restraining impulses and assessing the long-term consequences of their actions (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

External factors influencing aggression include peer conformity and parenting styles. Peer influence, particularly in a negative context, can reinforce norms that support aggressive behavior. Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) suggests that adolescents often imitate behaviors they observe in their peer groups, especially if those behaviors appear to be valued or reinforced within the group. Additionally, unsupportive or authoritarian parenting styles are associated with higher levels of aggression in adolescents, where children who receive less emotional support from parents are more likely to develop aggressive responses as a defense mechanism (Baumrind, 1991).

The interaction between these internal and external factors creates a complex environment in which adolescent aggression can develop. Understanding these interactions is crucial not only for effective intervention but also for the development of policies focused on the prevention of adolescent aggression in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. Below are the 10 articles used in this literature review:
Table 1. List of Articles Used in the Literature Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author/Year</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hubungan antara Kematangan Emosi dengan Agresivitas pada Remaja</td>
<td>Yadinda Annaisivirty, Meita Santi Budiani, S.Psi., M.Psi / 2017</td>
<td>This study employed a quantitative research method. Data were collected using two types of scales: an emotional maturity scale and an aggression scale. Once collected, the data were analyzed using the Product Moment correlation test.</td>
<td>The population for this study was students from SMA Negeri 1 Pacet. The sampling technique utilized was stratified random sampling, resulting in a sample of 269 adolescent students. The sample members were divided into three groups: 94 students in grade X, 89 students in grade XI, and 86 students in grade XII. Based on the analysis, a relationship between the two variables was identified. Higher emotional maturity is associated with lower aggression, and conversely, lower emotional maturity is associated with higher aggression.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agresivitas dan Kontrol Diri pada Remaja di Banda Aceh</td>
<td>Mohammad Arif Sentana, Intan Dewi Kumala / 2017</td>
<td>This research utilized quantitative methods with correlation techniques. Data were collected using adapted psychological scales, namely: the Aggression Questionnaire and the Self-Control Scale.</td>
<td>The sample size determined for this study was 270 respondents. The criteria for the sample included: a) adolescents aged 15-19 years, b) residing in Banda Aceh.</td>
<td>The findings indicate a negative relationship between aggressiveness and self-control. This negative correlation suggests that higher self-control in adolescents is associated with lower levels of aggressiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubungan Kematangan Emosi dengan Konformitas Terhadap Agresivitas Remaja di SMAN 3 Denpasar</td>
<td>Tarate Timur Raviyoga, Adjanti Marheni / 2019</td>
<td>This study employed quantitative research methods, with data collection using an aggression scale. The data analysis techniques used in this study were multiple regression analysis and partial correlation.</td>
<td>The population for this research comprised all students at Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 3 Denpasar. The subjects were representative students from grades X, XI, and XII who had been previously randomly selected, with characteristics including active male and female students at SMAN 3 Denpasar, aged 15 to 18 years.</td>
<td>The results show a positive relationship between peer conformity and adolescent aggression. The higher the individual’s desire to be accepted by their social group, the higher their level of conformity. This study also found that emotional maturity contributes to the level of aggression; the lower the emotional maturity of adolescents, the higher their level of aggression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubungan antara Kecerdasan Emosi dengan Perilaku Agresif Remaja dan Implikasinya dalam Bimbingan dan Konseling</td>
<td>Ulya Illahi, Neviyarni S, Azrul Said, Zadrian Ardi / 2018</td>
<td>This study utilized a quantitative method with a descriptive and correlational approach. Instruments used included the Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Adolescent Aggressive Behavior Scale. Collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment techniques.</td>
<td>The study population consisted of students from grades X, XI, and XII at SMAN 1 Tanah Datar, totaling 300 individuals, with a sample of 178 students selected via Stratified Random Sampling.</td>
<td>The research results revealed a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and aggressive behavior among adolescents at SMAN 1 Tanah Datar. Higher emotional intelligence was associated with lower levels of aggressive behavior, and conversely, lower emotional intelligence was associated with higher levels of aggression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kecenderungan Agresivitas Remaja ditinjau dari Jenis Kelamin pada Siswa SMP di Semarang</td>
<td>Mochamad Rizky Hutomo, Jati Ariati / 2016</td>
<td>This research employed quantitative methods. The data analysis technique used was the independent two-sample t-test.</td>
<td>The population in this study comprised students from grades VII &amp; VIII at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang, totaling 229 students, including 119 males and 110 females.</td>
<td>The study found no significant gender-based differences in aggression levels among students at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubungan Pola Asuh Orangtua dengan Perilaku</td>
<td>Ingrid Worauw, Jimmy Posangi, Yolanda / 2016</td>
<td>This research is a quantitative study using a cross-sectional method. The data analysis technique</td>
<td>The study population consisted of 94 adolescents at SMA N 1 Kakas. Sampling was conducted using total sampling.</td>
<td>The findings concluded that there is a relationship between parental upbringing patterns and aggressive behavior among adolescents at SMA N 1 Kakas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on Table 1, seven factors influencing adolescent aggression in Indonesia were identified. These factors are divided into internal and external categories, as explained below:

**Internal Factors**

- Emotional Intelligence and Aggression: Ilahi et al. (2018) found a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and aggressive behavior. Higher emotional intelligence in adolescents correlates with lower levels of aggressive behavior, and vice versa. This finding aligns with Swadnyana & Tobing (2019), which indicated that higher emotional intelligence in adolescents is associated with lower aggression tendencies.

- Self-Control: Sentana & Kumala (2017) demonstrated a negative relationship between aggression and self-control. This relationship indicates that higher self-control in adolescents is associated with lower levels of aggression.
External Factors

External factors refer to elements originating outside an individual, including Peer Conformity, Parental Communication, Parenting Styles, and Online Gaming Intensity.

Peer Conformity. Research by Raviyoga & Marheni (2019) found a positive relationship between peer conformity and adolescent aggression. Higher desires to be accepted by social groups correlate with higher levels of conformity. This finding is consistent with research by Wilujeng and Budiani (2012), which observed that adolescent aggressive behavior is influenced by conformity to peers, as adolescents fear rejection by their groups. Adolescents who fail to adapt to their environment tend to exhibit frustration and anger, which is often expressed through aggressive behavior.

Parental Communication. Research by Pratidina & Marheni (2019) indicates that higher effective communication between parents and adolescents leads to lower aggression, and conversely, lower effective communication is linked to higher aggression. Kelly & Atrizka (2020) also found that higher interpersonal communication from parents correlates with lower adolescent aggression, emphasizing the crucial role of parental communication in guiding early interventions to prevent aggressive behaviors in adolescents.

Parenting Styles. Research by Warouw et al., (2019) shows that higher authoritarian parenting correlates with higher adolescent aggression, and vice versa. This finding is supported by Einstein and Indrawati (2016), who noted a significant positive relationship between authoritarian parenting and aggression among middle-aged adolescents at SMK Hidayah Semarang. Harsh attitudes from parents often lead children to mimic such behaviors, resulting in aggressive tendencies.

Online Gaming Intensity. Research by Putra & Rusli (2021) indicates that higher intensity in online gaming among adolescents correlates with increased tendencies towards aggressive behavior. This finding highlights that online gaming intensity can influence aggressive behavior tendencies, further supported by Permana and Tobing (2019), which found that adolescents desiring to spend more time playing with peers might indulge more intensely in online gaming, exposing them to violent content within these games, which can trigger aggressive behaviors.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The literature review conducted has several limitations that must be acknowledged and could affect the interpretation of results. First, the limitation in the choice of publication languages (restricted to English and Indonesian) may exclude studies conducted in other languages that could provide additional perspectives, potentially introducing selection bias and limiting the generalizability of findings (Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe, & Young, 2018). Second, this review prioritized quantitative over qualitative studies, which may limit a deep understanding of the subjective experiences and social contexts influencing adolescent aggressive behavior.

Based on the limitations and findings of this review, several key recommendations for future research have been identified to deepen understanding of adolescent aggression. First, future research should involve multilingual studies that consider literature in various languages to ensure a more inclusive and global understanding. Second, to delve deeper into the factors influencing adolescent aggression, a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies is recommended, providing richer insights (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Third, longitudinal studies are highly recommended to understand the causality between identified factors, allowing for tracking changes in adolescent aggressive behavior and influencing factors.
over time (Schochet, 2008). Lastly, focusing on developing and evaluating targeted interventions to reduce aggression in adolescents is crucial, including testing the effectiveness of these interventions in different contexts. This activity will not only strengthen the evidence base but also enhance the efficacy of existing intervention strategies.

**Practical Implications of the Study**

The findings from this review provide valuable insights that can be leveraged by educators, psychologists, and policymakers to develop more effective strategies for addressing adolescent aggression in Indonesia. Given the significant role of emotional maturity and emotional intelligence in reducing aggressive behavior, educational programs in schools should include strong components of emotional education. Approaches like Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs, proven effective in enhancing students’ emotional and social skills, should be expanded (Durlak et al., 2011).

Parenting style plays a crucial role in fostering or curbing aggression in adolescents. Parent training programs that emphasize supportive parenting techniques and effective communication can assist parents in guiding adolescents in a more positive manner (Sanders, 2012). Given the mixed findings regarding the influence of online gaming, it is vital for educators and policymakers to create evidence-based policies concerning healthy media use. These policies could involve reasonable playtime limits and education about media impacts on behavior (Anderson & Bushman, 2001). Developing intervention programs that target risk factors in both school and community environments can help reduce aggression among adolescents. These programs could involve activities that enhance adolescents’ engagement in positive social activities and reduce isolation (Smith et al., 2016).

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study demonstrates that adolescent aggression in Indonesia is influenced by a combination of interacting internal and external factors. Internal factors such as emotional maturity, emotional intelligence, and self-control play roles in how adolescents manage their emotional responses to stress, which can reduce tendencies toward aggressive behavior. Externally, conformity with peers, parental communication styles, and online gaming intensity also shape aggressive behavior in adolescents. These findings support and extend Vygotsky’s (1978) theory of social development and Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) theory of self-control, highlighting the complexity of interactions among factors influencing adolescent aggression. These findings provide a comprehensive explanation of how internal and external factors together influence adolescent aggressive behavior, reinforcing the importance of a holistic approach in education and public policy to address aggression among adolescents. For educational practitioners and psychologists, implementing social and emotional development programs in schools can help adolescents develop emotional intelligence and effective conflict management skills. For policymakers, it is crucial to design policies that support positive parenting and regulate the use of potentially aggression-inducing media.

Given the limitations of this study, future research needs to involve more diverse methodological approaches, including longitudinal studies to further understand causality and experiments to test the effectiveness of specific interventions. Further research is also needed to examine how social values and cultural norms in Indonesia influence parenting patterns and adolescent behavior, thereby enriching the understanding of aggression in different cultural contexts.

**REFERENCES**


This page has been intentionally left blank