

Differences in the Level of Aggressive Behavior Based on the Gender of Junior High School Students

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Abstract

Adolescence is a development phase vulnerable to aggressive tendencies, which may be influenced by multiple factors, including gender. This study aims to analyze disparities in aggressive behavior levels between male and female junior high school students. The population comprised 193 grade VII students at UPTD SMPN 11 Kupang City during the 2025/2026 academic period. Employing simple random sampling based on Arikunto's guidelines (25% proportion), a sample of 48 students was selected. Data were gathered through a validated and reliable aggressive behavior questionnaire, then analyzed using an independent sample t-test. The empirical findings reveal no significant gender-based disparity in aggressive behavior among the seventh-grade students. Consequently, aggressive tendencies in early adolescence at this institution manifest at equivalent levels regardless of gender factors.

Keywords: *Aggressive Behavior, Gender, Junior High School Students.*

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A. INTRODUCTION

The developmental shift bridging childhood and adulthood is defined as adolescence. As classified by Desmita (2017), this developmental continuum comprises three consecutive stages: early adolescence (ages 12–15), middle adolescence (ages 15–18), and late adolescence (ages 18–21). Within this phase, individuals actively strive to establish autonomy, consolidate personal identity, and foster peer group affiliations (Pratiwi et al., 2024). Pratiwi et al. (2024) further highlight that teenagers frequently attempt to assert their social standing through unconventional behaviors or actions that deviate from prevailing social standards.

Driven by an intense need for social inclusion, adolescents become highly susceptible to peer influences, both positive and negative. In navigating their social environment, youth often adapt their conduct to gain group approval, occasionally resorting to behaviors that contradict their personal preferences or values. Because emotional and bodily functions have not fully matured, teenagers may experience emotional turbulence and psychological strain, leaving them prone to violating established social norms (Agustina & Karneli, 2019). Consequently, early adolescence is frequently marked by critical periods involving negative behavioral adjustments.

Aggressive actions represent a common manifestation of negative conduct during adolescence. As described by Baron and Byrne (cited in Subqi, 2019), aggression denotes any intentional action aimed at inflicting harm or pain upon another individual who seeks to avoid such treatment. Such conduct encompasses physical, verbal, or property-damaging acts. Physical aggression manifests through

striking, kicking, or physical injury; verbal aggression includes insults, ridicule, and derogatory remarks; whereas property destruction involves damaging belongings such as bicycles or personal items.

Sekar (2021) identified two primary categories of factors triggering adolescent aggression: internal determinants (e.g., emotional distress, cognitive frustration, and psychological instability) and external determinants (e.g., family dynamics, peer pressure, school climate, and environmental influences). Inner unrest often serves as a key internal catalyst for aggressive drives. In this context, gender roles play an important part due to distinct societal expectations, functions, and responsibilities assigned to males and females (Saputra & Widagdo, 2020).

Preliminary field observations of grade VII students at UPTD SMPN 11 Kupang City revealed various forms of aggressive manifestations during classroom and non-classroom interactions. Observed physical acts included pushing, pulling, kicking, biting, and hitting. Verbal aggression appeared as taunting, coarse language, negative labeling, and shouting. Furthermore, relational or non-physical aggression emerged through gossip dissemination during recess or unsupervised class hours. Interviews conducted with guidance counselors and classroom teachers at UPTD SMPN 11 Kupang City initially suggested gender variations in aggressive expression. Male students predominantly displayed physical aggression (e.g., shoving, striking, kicking), whereas female students exhibited higher verbal and relational aggression (e.g., severe taunting, shouting, and spreading malicious rumors).

Gender differences in aggressive tendencies have also been documented in earlier literature. Suherman et al. (2020) noted that female students lean toward verbal hostility (swearing, screaming, harsh speech), whereas male students lean toward physical acts (fighting, kicking furniture, vandalizing school property). Similarly, Kawabata et al. (2024) observed distinct aggressiveness patterns across genders; males frequently exhibit dominant behaviors in response to provocative triggers, whereas females prioritize relational aggression, such as social exclusion or rumor spreading, reflecting their heightened focus on interpersonal relationships (Pratiwi et al., 2018).

Prompted by these empirical background insights, this investigation evaluated the structural differences in aggressive behavior levels between male and female seventh-grade students at UPTD SMP Negeri 11 Kupang City.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Aggressive Behavior

Myers (cited in Saleh, 2020) defines aggression as physical or verbal conduct intended to inflict injury upon a target. Complementing this perspective, Krahé (2005) frames aggressive behavior as intentional actions designed to cause physical or psychological trauma to others. Similarly, Sarwono and Meinarno in Azaria (2020) describe aggression as deliberate harm executed by an individual or entity against another party.

Synthesizing these scholarly perspectives, aggressive behavior can be conceptualized as any intentional physical or verbal act executed to cause harm,

injury, or distress to a target individual. Beyond physical force, aggression manifests through verbal expressions, attitudes, and indirect actions that yield adverse consequences for others.

2. Gender

According to Azisah et al. (2018), gender constitutes a socio-culturally constructed differentiation between men and women that defines normative roles, behaviors, and attributes assigned to each sex. Tupamahu in Nurhasanah & Zuriatin (2023) emphasizes that gender represents a cultural framework delineating societal roles, mentalities, and emotional profiles. Handayani (2020) reinforces this view, noting that gender differences are continuously shaped by social and cultural paradigms.

In summary, gender refers to the comprehensive social and cultural framework that distinguishes male and female roles, behavioral patterns, and personality traits, extending beyond purely biological characteristics.

C. METHOD

This study employed a comparative quantitative design focused on the aggressive behavior variable. The target population comprised 193 grade VII students enrolled at UPTD SMPN 11 Kupang City for the 2025/2026 academic year. A sample of 48 respondents (representing 25% of the total population, following Arikunto's sampling guidelines) was selected using simple random sampling. Data were gathered using a four-point Likert scale questionnaire measuring aggressive behavior. Prior to formal data collection, instrument validity and reliability were evaluated. The reliability analysis yielded a high internal consistency coefficient ($\alpha = 0.895$). Hypothesis testing was conducted via independent sample t-tests using SPSS version 22 to evaluate gender differences in aggressive behavior scores.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To determine whether mean aggressive behavior levels differed significantly across gender groups, an independent sample t-test was executed. Initial descriptive statistical outputs are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Results of Descriptive Analysis of Aggressive Behavior Based on Gender

Group Statistics					
Variable	Gender	N	Red	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Perilaku_Agresif	Male	24	85.92	14.467	2.953
	Women	24	87.29	18.030	3.680

As detailed in Table 1, the sample included 24 male students and 24 female students. The mean aggressive behavior score for males was 85.92 (SD = 14.47), whereas females recorded a mean of 87.29 (SD = 18.03). While descriptive metrics indicated a slight numerical difference, inferential testing was required to determine statistical significance.

Table 2 Independent Samples Test Results

Independent Samples Test									
	Levene's Test for		t-test for Equality of Means						
Equality of Variances	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	3.95	0.053	-0.29	46	0.772	-1.375	4.719	-10.87	8.123
Equal variances not assumed			-0.29	43.94	0.772	-1.375	4.71	-10.89	8.135

Inferential analysis in Table 2 yielded a 2-tailed significance value of 0.772. Based on standard decision criteria ($p > 0.05$ accepting the null hypothesis H_0), the results confirm that there is no statistically significant difference in aggressive behavior levels between male and female seventh-grade students at UPTD SMPN 11 Kupang City ($t = -0.29$, $p = 0.772$).

aggressiveness in males. The convergence in total scores occurs because the assessment instrument measured overall aggressive tendencies rather than isolating specific behavioral sub-types. In the school environment, both adolescent boys and girls experience heightened emotional reactivity; however, their modes of expression differ. Males display higher rates of physical actions (pushing, kicking, property damage), whereas females express aggression verbally and relationally (mocking, yelling, spreading rumors). When these distinct dimensions are aggregated into a composite score, total aggression levels prove balanced.

These findings align with developmental psychology framework. Seventh-grade students fall within early adolescence (ages 12–15; Desmita, 2017), a period marked by emotional volatility and interpersonal adjustment challenges (Amaliyyah, 2021). According to Berkowitz (2003), aggression serves as a vehicle for expressing negative affect in response to environmental stressors. At UPTD SMPN 11 Kupang City, shared institutional disciplinary policies and uniform classroom environments subject both gender groups to comparable social expectations, yielding similar overall aggression levels.

This outcome is supported by Saputra et al. (2018) and Pratama and Lestari (2020), who likewise reported no significant gender differences in overall adolescent aggressiveness. Standardized school regulations prohibiting violence apply equally to all students, effectively stabilizing overall aggression metrics across gender lines.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on empirical analysis and theoretical interpretation, this study concludes that there is no significant difference in aggressive behavior levels between male and female seventh-grade students at UPTD SMP Negeri 11 Kupang City for the 2025/2026 academic period. Aggressive behavior among early adolescents in this institution operates at equivalent levels across genders. Strict, non-discriminatory enforcement

of school discipline plays a vital role in suppressing aggressive behaviors to a balanced level across male and female students.

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