

Original Article

Relational Aggression vs. Well-Being: Uncovering the Impact of Relational Harm Among Adolescents

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Abstract. The purpose of this study was to investigate relational aggression if any, the detrimental consequences of relational aggression for eighth-grade students' psychological well-being at one of the junior high schools in Jakarta. The present research utilized a quantitative correlational research design involving 150 students, randomly selected. Data were collected through questionnaires with reliability coefficients of Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.807$ for the Relational Aggression scale and $\alpha = 0.862$ for the Psychological Well-Being scale and analyzed using simple regression with IBM SPSS version 20. The research report showed a significance value of .000 ($p < .005$); with a t value of -10.054 indicating relational aggression had a significant negative impact on the students' psychological well-being. The negative t -value indicates an inverse correlation between relational aggression the students' psychological well-being; the higher the relational aggression the less psychological well-being students exhibited on the measure. The R Square value of 0.406 indicates that relational aggression accounted for 40.6% in the variance for psychological well-being. While the remaining variance of 59.4% would be indicating variables not previously assessed in this study. The model provides a suitable account to predict psychological well-being. Relational aggression must be taken into consideration if we expect to promote positive mental health for students.

Keywords: Relational Aggression, Psychological Well-Being, Adolescents

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Introduction

Education is an ethical activity that focuses on expanding the potentiality of individuals for the benefit of individuals and society as a whole. Education is a process that stretches throughout the lifetime, from the womb to old age, and is like a lighthouse guiding individuals to find the right path, purpose, and life meaning (Nasution, 2008). The right to education is a right guaranteed by the state to every citizen in Indonesia, as stated in Article 31 paragraph (1) 1945 Constitution (Sujatmoko, 2016). Although education is a right under the constitution, various psychosocial issues, such as relational aggression among students, must be addressed in order to support education that is effective and inclusive in the education praxis (Soekoto et al., 2020).

Relational aggression aims to destroy individuals' social relationships, reputation, or sense of belonging to a group (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). And arguably can be more serious than physical aggression. Furthermore, relational aggression can take direct and indirect forms (Voulgaridou & Kokkinos, 2023). Examples of direct relational aggression can be viewed as

ignoring someone's presence, threatening to break a friendship and sharing stories from someone's personal life; indirect relational aggression means encouraging others to ostracize them socially or spreading rumors to destroy someone's image (Leka & Muttaqin, 2023).

Relational aggression, a specific form of bullying that targets an individual's social relationships and status (Syahputra, 2024; Syahputra, Neviyarni, et al., 2024), remains a critical issue in Indonesia. The PISA data indicates Indonesia is number 5 in bullying around the world. The rate of bullying in Indonesia is reported to be 41.1%. In addition, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) has tracked total cases of violence against children from 2011 to 2019, identifying a total of 37,381 cases of violence against children, including 2,473 cases of bullying in educational institutions or on social media. Alarming, 87.6% of the violence against children cases occurred in a school context, with male adolescents aged 12-14 years as the primary victim, which indicates the seriousness of these trends and need for active measures.

Furthermore, the nature of aggressive behaviors among peers is not an issue unique to Indonesia. A UNICEF survey (2016) Using a sample of over 100,000 adolescents in 18 countries, report that bullying is often predicated on physical characteristics, gender identity, or ethnic group. Consequently, the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) declared bullying as a global mental health concern in 2018 (Pambudhi et al., 2021). The additional PISA data depicts the variety of aggressive behaviors incidents happening in Indonesia: 15% reported intimidation, 19% syllabus exclusion, 22% verbal insults, 14% threats, 18% physical attacks, and the highest at 20% were gossip. The first statement of United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Diduk, added that the Indonesian Teachers Union Federation (FSGI) had issued a report of 16 cases of bullying between 2023, with junior high schools account for 25% of those cases (Aprilianto & Fatikh, 2024).

Bullying has negative effects on both targets and perpetrators (Hertinjung, 2011), Targets of bullying may experience low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, school avoidance, sleep problems, and social withdrawal (Sampson, cited in Problem-Oriented Guide for Police Series No.12). Research by Crick and Grotpeter (1995, as cited in Baroroh, 2018) found relational aggression to have a significant relationship with internalized problems including depression, loneliness, and social isolation. More recent reports have also found relational aggression to be related to social anxiety, loss of meaning in life, and behavioral problems (Baroroh, 2018). also found relational aggression to relate to decreased psychological well-being including reduced self-confidence (Jelita et al., 2021).

Psychological well-being, as understood by (D.Ryff, 1989), encompasses six dimensions: self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, autonomy, and positive relationships. It is important to consider the dimensions of psychological well-being, particularly during adolescence which is characterized by identity searching and increased emotional reactivity (Maier et al., 2004). The important dimensions of psychological well-being are relevant during adolescence as this period is comprised of identity searching, and increased emotional reactivity. When exposed to relational aggression, adolescents can damage the dimensions of psychological well-being, preventing the adolescent from maturing emotionally and forming a social identity (Sartika & Bajirani, 2024). A protective factor of importance involves social support that can enhance psychological well-being, whereas neglecting the aggressive factor can take away from an individual's psychological well-being (Tasnim & Satwika, 2021).

Aggressive behavior in adolescents is caused by more than one reason. From a psychological perspective, students displaying aggressive behavior tend to have limited emotional maturity in conjunction with limited social skills. They do not interpret social cues correctly and thus might think violence is a good and effective way to solve problems (Umaroh, 2017). Further, there are many factors that cause aggressive behavior in children including stressful life events, lack of social skills, inability to effectively manage strong emotions, an unstable family environment, exposure to violence, and models of aggression in their environment (Ubaidillah & Azhari, 2024).

Relational aggression is an indirect form of peer aggression that tends to peak in late childhood and early adolescence, and that has been associated with a range of outcomes that may be negative to the individual (either the aggressor or the victim). Research has demonstrated that children or adolescents who have engaged in relational aggression themselves, or who have been a victim of relational aggression are at heightened risk to experience internalizing issues like depression and anxiety, and also social problems (Crick & Grotpeter 1995; Lent, 2020). Longitudinal studies have indicated that relational aggression even in early childhood has the potential to predict emotional maladjustment and behavioral problems later on, including delinquent behavior (Spieker et al., 2012; Voulgaridou & Kokkinos, 2023).

For illustration purposes, the author cites existing research findings to identify deficiencies in previous studies. In a study by (Susanto & Fitriyatinur, 2024), "The Relation between Bullied and Psychological Well-Being of Victimization Bullying at Universitas Nasional Karangturi Semarang" it was determined that there is a negative correlation between bullying and psychological well-being. The authors cited using Spearman rank correlation analysis to determine their findings. The study demonstrated a correlation coefficient of -0.75 ($p < 0.05$), which indicates that for university students involved in bullying status, it can be inferred that with increasing the level of bullying there are subsequent reductions in student well-being. A similar study by (Manalu, 2022), "The Relation between School well-being and Aggressiveness of Gentleness in Learners in SMK Negeri 2 Pekanbaru" the authors illustrated the correlation coefficient of -0.382 which reminded me of the significance of using the word well-being representing - Student Aggressiveness & Learners Well-being - positively or negatively correlated. Thus suggesting that higher level of School well-being corresponds with low level of student aggressiveness.

Previous studies have identified a significant relationship between the low levels of school connectedness and lower levels of psychological well-being among, as well as higher levels of aggressive behaviours employed by, students. This indicates that a student's negative school context and harm via means of interpersonal aggression will have a material impact on the emotional and psychological well-being of adolescents. Most of today's studies in Indonesia focus only on physical or verbal aggression in students, while to date there is little research on relational aggression, a more covert form of aggression that represents a strong negative impact on students' peer relationships. I became interested in conducting this research after I realized that relational aggression is often dismissed by teachers and school personnel whom students regularly encounter, and relational aggression has a serious impact on the mental health of students. At the junior high school level, especially in Jakarta, relational aggression might not be observed and can become increasingly latent, compound, and escalate which can have ongoing ramifications for an adolescent's well-being. Because of this, I want to specifically research the relationship between relational aggression and psychological well-being, and provide-based recommendations of potential evidence that will aid guidance and/or counselling-based offices within respective schools, as well as accelerating and ensuring improved targeted evidence for preventative and immediate measures.

Writing style

This research explores how relational aggression relates to students' psychological wellness, primarily in junior high school students who are ideally perched in an early adolescent developmental stage. The introduction describes the context in which students grapple with social exclusion, gossip and friendship manipulation - all covert yet damaging actions of relational aggression. Prior studies have shown that relational aggression can negatively affect students' mental health which includes making them feel insecure and decreasing their self-esteem, increasing social anxiety, and emotional distress. The study investigates how relational aggression influences psychological wellness - a construct that relates to self-acceptance, purpose in life and positive relationships. Additionally, it seeks to clarify how experiencing a

modicum of social aggression may detract from students' emotional well-being and developmental growth.

The literature highlights that relational aggression can greatly impact adolescents' psychological well-being by disassembling their social identity and emotional resilience (Crick et al., 2010). Research reveals that students experiencing higher levels of relational aggression exhibit more negative affects and decreased motivation at school. This study empirically examined the relationships of increased relational aggression and psychological well-being to generate new understanding about social environments and mental health during adolescence. Emphasis was placed on the importance of guidance and counseling to resolve concerns regarding relational aggression and the emotional support needs of students. Future research might also consider the broader domains that might relate to relational aggression in students' lives, such as peer support, family contexts, and school climate, and the methods to improve psychological well-being of students in educational contexts.

Method

The study employed a quantitative descriptive correlational design to examine the influence of relational aggression over psychological well-being of eighth-grade students at one of the junior high schools in Jakarta.. The sample consisted of 150 eighth-grade students with an approximate range of 13-14 years old, selected by simple random sampling by using random sampling based on the computerized list of students. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire with a Likert scale to measure relational aggression and psychological well-being. Data analysis was performed using simple linear regression with IBM SPSS version 20 to test the relation hypothesis of relational aggression over psychological well-being.

Participants

The population constitutes all the people or things that have some important traits in the study. In its simplest form, it is the total of all members of a defined group living in a defined location that researchers have selected with the intention of using them as the basis from which to draw conclusions in the research results (Pierandrei et al., 2016). The researcher took population from the students one of the junior high schools in Jakarta.. The population is all of Grade 8 students, one of the junior high schools in Jakarta. in the academic year of 2023/2024 equally 150 students. The gender distribution was equal, with 75 female and 75 male students. Other demographic data, such as socioeconomic status, were not collected in this study.

Sampling Procedures

In selecting participants, then by taking samples from the population. A sample is a subset of the population that you are studying in research when it's not possible to study the whole population. For a study to make inferences and to generalize results to the population from which it derives, the sample must be representative of the population. If the sample is not representative of the population, the conclusions of the study will be inaccurate (Sugiyono, 2020). The calculated results show that the sample in this study amounted to 150 students.

Instruments

Data were collected using two questionnaires; a relational aggression instrument with 24 items and a psychological well-being instrument with 48 items. Both questionnaires utilized a 4-point Likert scale with possible responses of: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly

disagree. Example items for the relational aggression questionnaire include “I tell others not to be friends with someone I dislike” and “I ignore someone on purpose to hurt their feelings.” Example items for the psychological well-being questionnaire include “I feel that my life has a sense of purpose” and “I am confident in my ability to handle daily problems.”

After testing for validity with SPSS 20, of the 24 items in the relational aggression questionnaire, three (3) items were deemed invalid and exempted from the analysis, leaving twenty-one (21) valid items. The reliability test indicated a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.807, indicating good internal consistency and reliability, since most social science researchers accept a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.70 or higher (Latan & Temalagi, 2013). For the psychological well-being instrument, 9 of the 48 items were invalid and deleted, and therefore, there were 39 valid items. The reliability test returned a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient estimate of 0.862, which falls within the area of high reliability (Sugiyono, 2020). These findings assured both instruments are considered reliable measures of relational aggression and psychological well-being relative to this study.

Procedures

Data collection for this study included administering questionnaires via a mobile device utilizing Google Forms. The independent variable for this study was relational aggression and the dependent variable was psychological well-being. The purpose of the study was to see if relational aggression had any effect on students’ psychological well-being. It was the role of the researchers to clearly and concisely tell students how to respond to the questionnaire, which contained a number of statements and corresponding answer responses of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. Students were to answer the statements according to their own behaviors and experiences.

In terms of research ethics, participants were informed of the purpose of the study before they participated. The ability of participants to provide informed consent was ensured by the voluntary agreement to participate made through the electronic consent option in the questionnaire platform. Participants were assured their responses would remain confidential and anonymous and that they could withdraw from participation at any time without consequence.

Data Analysis

The data analysis method for this study was descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to provide an organized, brief, and clear description of the variables that were studied so that meaningful conclusions could be made. The intention of this study was to describe the effect of relational aggression on psychological well-being. In addition, correlational measures were taken using simple regression, to measure the influence and connection of relational aggression (independent variable) and psychological well-being (dependent variable).

Results and Discussions

The results of this analysis include a description of the relational aggression and psychological well being variables, as well as an analysis of the effect of relational aggression on psychological well being which will be examined by linear regression hypothesis testing. However, prior to that, we can visually examine the distribution characteristics of data based on gender through the following scatter plot.

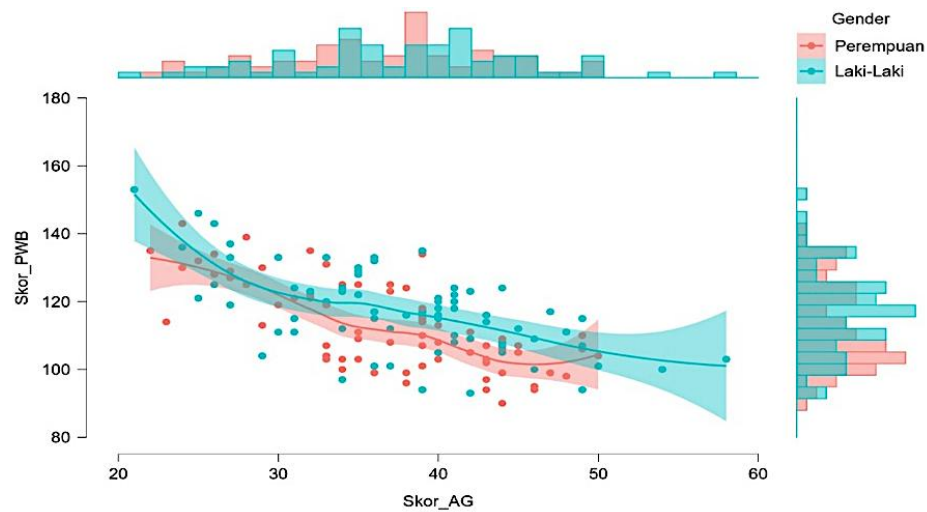


Figure 1. Distribution of data on Relational Aggression and Psychological Well-Being

The relationship of the relational aggression and psychological well-being variables is clearly seen in Figure 1 (with the relational aggression and psychological well-being variables and their characteristic shapes by gender). In it, you can see the general negative relationship between relational aggression and psychological well-being. As relational aggression increases, the students' psychological well-being tends to decrease. Not only do we see the association as negative, but we also see a pattern based on gender, in that male students (blue) had higher psychological well-being at the same level of relational aggression when compared to female students (red). This pattern may suggest that male students are less affected by relational aggression in terms of psychological well-being, or that female students experience relational aggression differently, leading to lower well-being at similar levels of aggression. While this provides a picture of how the two variables relate, where they are located, and how they interact with each other, we have not delved past this point yet.

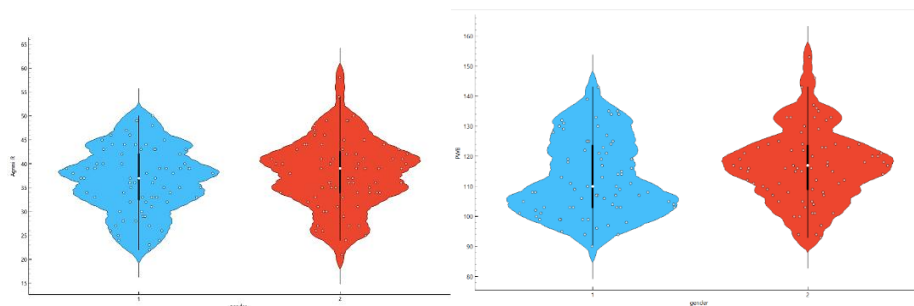


Figure 2. Violin plot the distribution of relational aggression (left) and psychological well-being (right) by gender.

The violin plot visualization indicated that male students exemplified lower levels of relational aggression and higher-valued psychological well-being whereas female students demonstrated higher relational aggression and a little lower level of psychological well-being. This supports the hypothesis that higher relational aggression will coincide with lower psychological well-being. That still requires statistical testing to support the statement of correlation. Interestingly, while females had higher levels of relational aggression than males in their respective groups, at no point did females have lower levels of psychological well-being

than males, to a statistically significant level. Thus, there may be a completely different mechanism in place for females students, such as coping mechanisms, social support systems, gender norms, and so on. Thus, more nuance may be useful in order to fully grasp a complete understanding. The next step to explore these findings on a deeper level is through descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, which will be explained thoroughly in the following sections.

Using the distribution of relational aggression questionnaire to 150 students, with 21 statement items, the lowest score was a 21 and the highest score was a 58, the mean score was 37.26. For the analysis, I used the IBM SPSS 20, so the results will also include a standard deviation of 7.086 and a variance of 50.221. I used this score to create the relational aggression variable categories, which is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Categorization of Relational Aggression Data

Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
≥ 86	Very High	0	0
70 – 85	High	0	0
54 – 69	Medium	2	1,33
38 – 53	Low	80	53,33
≤ 37	Very Low	68	45,33

Based on the standardization in Table 1, it was found that 0 students (0%) are in the very high category, 0 students (0%) in the high category, 2 students (1.33%) in the medium category, 80 students (53.33%) in the low category, and 68 students (45.33%) in the very low category. This means that the average level of Relational Aggression among students is in the low category. Meanwhile, based on the results of students' Psychological Well-Being obtained through an instrument with 42 statement items, the lowest score was 90, and the highest score was 153, with an average score of 115.04. This score was then used as the basis for categorizing the psychological well-being data, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Categorization of Psychological Well-Being Data

Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
≥ 158	Very High	0	0
128 – 157	High	18	12,0
99 – 127	Medium	122	81,33
70 – 98	Low	10	6,67
≤ 69	Very Low	0	0

Based on the standardization in Table 2, it was found that 0 students (0%) are in the very high category, 18 students (12.0%) are in the high category, 122 students (81.33%) are in the medium category, 10 students (6.67%) are in the low category, and 0 students (0%) are in the very low category. This means that the average level of Psychological Well-Being among the students is in the medium category.

Subsequently, using the validated instrument, a regression analysis was conducted to determine the influence of Relational Aggression on Psychological Well-Being among the students. Based on the regression analysis performed using SPSS software, the results are as follows:

Table 3. Coefficient of Determination Results (Modal Summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	0.637 ^a	0.406	0.402

Based on the analysis above in Table 3, the R value is 0.637 and indicates a strong relationship between relational aggression and psychological well-being. The R Square value is 0.406, meaning relational aggression has a 40.6% influence on psychological well-being, while

59.4% is influenced by other variables not looked at in this study. For further details of the regression analysis, please see Table 4 below:

Table 4. Regression Analysis Results (ANOVA)

Model		Mean of Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	9654.400	101.083	0.000 ^b
	Residual	95.509		

According to the results in Table 4 above, the F value obtained is 101.083 with a significance of 0.000. Because the significance value is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the hypothesis is accepted (H_0 is rejected), meaning that the variable of relational aggression has a significant effect on psychological well-being. Table 5 below is provide additional detail on the regression equation:

Table 5. Regression Equation Results (Coefficients)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients	
	B	Std. Error
(Constant)	157.363	4.284
Adversity Quotient	-1.136	0.113

In Table 5 above, the constant value (a) is 157.363, while the coefficient for relational aggression (b) is -1.136. This, the regression equation can be written as: $\hat{Y} = 157.363 - 1.136 X$. This regression equation indicates that for each one-point increase in Relational Aggression, Psychological Well-Being is decreased by 1.136. The negative regression coefficient indicates that relational aggression and psychological well-being are inversely related. This means that as the students' aggressive relational aggression increases, their psychological well-being tends to decrease.

The simple linear regression results indicate there is a negative and significant impact of relational aggression on psychological well-being, indicated by the regression coefficient of -1.136 and significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). If relational aggression is reduced, it appears likely student psychological well-being may improve. Based on the empirical data analysis, it was found that 0 students (0%) fall into the very high relational aggression category, 0 students (0%) in the high category, 2 students (1.33%) in the medium category, 80 students (53.33%) in the low category, and 68 students (45.33%) in the very low category. Meanwhile, psychological well-being scores show that 0 students (0%) are in the very high category, 18 students (12%) in the high category, 122 students (81.33%) in the medium category, 10 students (6.67%) in the low category, and 0 students (0%) in the very low category. This indicates that most students have low relational aggression and medium psychological well-being.

The following figure shows the distribution of 150 students based on scores on Relational Aggression (X-Axis) and Psychological Well-Being (Y-Axis). The blue circles (●) represent female students and the red crosses (×) represent male students. The scatterplot of the data demonstrates a negative correlation. Relational aggression and Psychological Well-Being scores are inversely correlated in that students with high levels of relational aggression tended to have lower Psychological Well-Being scores and vice versa. From a visual standpoint, both males and females appear to share a similar downward trend; however, female students also appear to be clustered more in the lower aggression–higher well-being quadrant, while male students appeared more random and seemed to be a bit higher in the aggression–lower well-being area. Given these patterns, it seems possible that males and females scored differently in the levels of aggression and well-being with male students tending to score higher in relational aggression and lower in well-being.

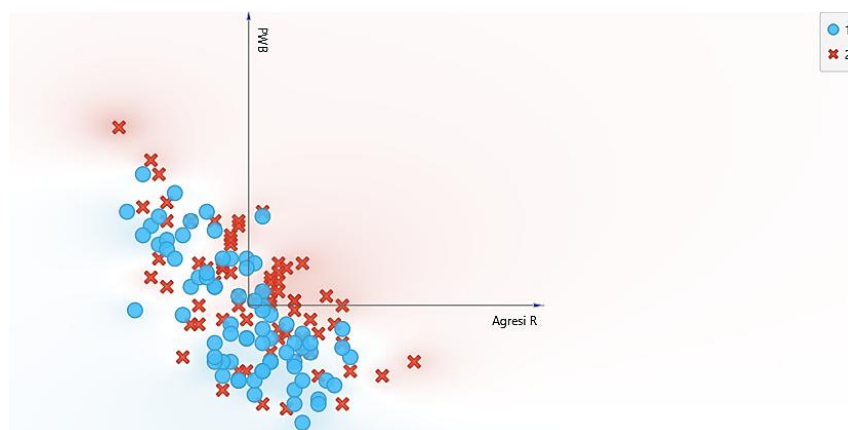


Figure 3. Scatter plot of students' Relational Aggression and Psychological Well-Being scores by gender

Repeating research results based on other research conducted by Zulia Tasnim & Yohana Wuri Satwika (2021) established a negative relationship between students' perception of aggression and their psychological well-being, including a significance of .000 and a negative correlation coefficient of $-.490$, meaning that the more the students' perceive aggression the lower their psychological well-being will be. Regression analysis indicated the perceived aggression variable only describes 24% of the variance in psychological well-being, shown by an R-squared value of $.240$, meaning that 76% of psychological well-being is not explained by students' perceived aggression.

Research result Susanto & Fitriyatinur (2024) It also suggests that the bullying variable has a statistically significant negative association to the psychological well-being variable about mean levels, that is, high bullying behavior risks damaging students' psychological well-being. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted indicating that there were negative relationships between bullying and psychological well-being.

According to the research's results, by Manalu (2022) obtained a correlation coefficient of -0.382 . This implies that the hypothesis is accepted, indicating the relationship between School Well-Being and students' aggressiveness at SMK Negeri 2 Pekanbaru. In other words, the higher the School Well-Being, the lower the students' aggressiveness. The following are also the results contained in research by Soekoto, et al. (2020) Also identified was gender and age differences in quality of friendships and relational aggression. High-quality friendship relationships usually lead to relational aggression towards friends or within friendship relationships not occurring. The social, cultural contexts, and socio-emotional development were also discussed as influences on interaction patterns within friendship relationships.

In addition, the study conducted by Nariswari & Muttaqin (2023), the findings demonstrate that adolescents tend to blame themselves excessively when they experience relational aggression from their peers, which leads to feelings of depression. This suggests that adolescents are likely to engage in blaming themselves after becoming a victim of relational aggression, followed by feelings of depression. Interestingly adolescents in Indonesia do not use self-compassion as a coping strategy when experiencing relational aggression from their peers.

Simple regression analysis by Pertiwi & Nrh (2018) indicates that there is a significant negative relationship between sibling rivalry and psychological well-being with $r = -0.522$ and a significance value of $p=0.000$ ($p<0.05$). This means the higher the sibling rivalry, the students' psychological well-being was lower and also the opposite, the lower the sibling rivalry, the higher the psychological well-being. Sibling rivalry contributed effectively to 27.3% of the

variance in psychological well-being, while 72.7% of the variance was affected by other factors not examined in the study.

The following are also the results contained in research by Triana et al. (2021), the study's findings demonstrate that most respondents can be categorized as having low psychological well-being, with 59 respondents (56%) categorized as low psychological well-being. The highest mean score of the dimensions of psychological well-being for the adolescent who bully in SMP PGRI 1 Jatinangor is the positive relationships dimension (22.10). The lowest mean score of the dimensions of psychological well-being is self-development dimension (12.10). The study concluded that adolescents' psychological well-being is influenced by the situation experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to low psychological well-being scores.

A study conducted by (Syahputra, et al., 2024) the link between social media addictions and relational aggression among the university students of Universitas Negeri Padang. The study utilized a correlational research design ($n = 526$, age = 19 to 30), and found a significant positive relationship between social media addiction and relational aggression, reporting a Pearson correlation coefficient of .682, indicating that as one variable score higher on the scale, so too does the other. This study suggests that social media is a digital behavior that is related to students' social behavior.

This is in line with the research conducted by Susanto & Fitriyatinur (2024), the result of the research indicated that the significance value in relation test concerning bullying was -0.75 (2-tailed) ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that the bullying variable had a significant negative relationship with psychological well-being. In this case, high bullying behaviors indicated risk of psychological well-being dropping for the students. In this situation, they rejected the null hypothesis (H_0), and accepted the alternative hypothesis, thus confirming a negative relationship between bullying and the psychological well-being of bullying victims at Universitas Nasional Karangturi Semarang.

Apart from that, the results contained in the research by Leka & Muttaqin (2023) our study using regression analysis and the simple mediation macro procedure (Sobel test) showed that frustration of basic psychological needs serves as a mediator in the relationship between parental psychological control and relational aggression in adolescents. We contended that adolescents perceiving excessive parental control will engage in relational aggression towards their peers to express their frustration toward unmet basic psychological needs in their parents.

Next there are the results of research by Sesarelia, et al. (2024) demonstrated that students' coping mechanisms were classified as high, furthermore, students' psychological well-being level was considered to be moderate. The results of the simple linear regression analysis, produced an R Square of 43.8% which was classified as moderate ($\text{sig} = 0.001$). The coping mechanisms had a very significant role in their influence on psychological well-being, which indicates that the level of students psychological well-being can be accounted for from the coping mechanisms they utilize, as coping mechanisms are identified as a moderately important predictor.

Based on the rationale and the research findings articulated above, it is clear that relational aggression exerts a strong negative influence on students' psychological well-being. Students either experiencing or engaging in relational aggression demonstrate the lowest level of psychological well-being, thus underscoring the damaging effects of social engagements on a student's mental and emotional state. This research provided the means to conduct the study in an appropriate scientific manner; however, there are limitations that should be noted for future research. First, the sample was taken from a single junior high school making generalizability limited. Second, in this study, we did not attempt to measure potentially mediating variables, such as social support, or coping strategies that may account for how relational aggression relates to psychological well-being.

Moreover, gender differences were identified, as female students had higher levels of relational aggression; however, they had similar levels of psychological well-being compared to male students. This indicates that also possibly due to coping processes, or social norms that

might interfere in the relationship between relational aggression and psychological well-being as suggested by the current study for females. Future studies could examine the cultural aspects or social pressures that may contribute to these gender differences. The implications of the results in this article serves as a reminder to teachers, parents, and students on the tremendous burden relational aggression imposes in schools. It is hoped that this study will assist in future prevention work (e.g., developing healthy peer relationships, emotional coping strategies) in an attempt to support students' psychological well-being.

Conclusions

The study's use of a random sampling method with a relatively large sample (150 students) is one of its strengths, as it increases the representativeness of the results of the population studied. The study used quantitative correlational design and statistical analysis (simple regression), which provide clear indicators of the relationship between relational aggression and psychological well-being. The study also focused on relational aggression, which is a less researched topic in Indonesia, and therefore offers new insights to the knowledge base and considerations for school-based intervention.

Nevertheless, there are some limitations to this study. To start, the study was conducted at one junior high school in Jakarta. This indicates all findings should be taken in context and generalizability to other schools and/or areas are questionable. Second, the study was cross-sectional and therefore could not determine causal relationships; only associations over time. Third, there relied on self-reported questionnaires bright with the possibility of bias in students' measurement of their own experiences and problematic experiences. Fourth, the model outlined did not account for other dimensions of psychological well-being (such as family, academic setting, academic stress, peer influences, etc.) that can explain part of the variance that remains unexplained.

Although the research has limitations, it does demonstrate that relational aggression explained 40.6% of the variance in students' psychological well-being, where higher levels of relational aggression were associated with lower psychological well-being. Overall, these results suggest that schools must integrate social-emotional learning into their curriculum, provide targeted interventions through counseling services, and create a future partnership between the school and families in regard to identifying and reducing relational aggression to promote the mental health of adolescents.

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