

Research Article

Self-control as the predictor of 5th grade students' aggression

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Abstract

Aggressive behavior describes any behavior or act aimed at harming a person or animal or damaging physical property. What are the factors that can lead to an aggressive behavior? It's likely that several different factors are involved, including someone's biology, environment, and psychological history related to self-control. Many studies have shown that there is a relationship between self-control and aggressive behavior. There are several objectives of this study, namely the first to determine the level of aggressive behavior, the second to determine the level of self-control and the third to determine the relationship between self-control and aggressive behavior. This study used a quantitative approach and the kind of correlational research. The participants were 5th-grade students of elementary school (N=32; 10-12 years). The instruments used are Self-Control and Behavior Aggression Scale. The data collected in this research was analyzed using simple linear regression analysis. The result of this study concludes: most the self-control of students is in a high category; most the behavior aggression of students is in a low category and self-control has a negative correlation with aggression and can predict behavior aggressive. The implication of this research is that teachers are expected to teach self-control skills in children by compiling a curriculum that shapes the child's personality.

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Introduction

The cases of students whose fingers had to be amputated and students who were kicked to death are an extreme and fatal picture of physical and psychological intimidating behavior by the student in school (kpai.go.id, 2020). Commission of Indonesian Child Protection (KPAI) reported that over a period of 9 years (2011 until 2019) there are 2.473 reports of violence against children at school and on social media. That shows there are many cases of aggressive behavior occurred in the school environment. A number of studies had also proven the role of aggression in negative child behavior (Özdemir, Vazsonyi, dan Çok, 2013).

According to Meriam webster's online English dictionary, "aggression" means a decisive action or procedure (such as an unprovoked attack), especially when it is intended to dominate or conquer. While the term aggressive behavior is usually defined as an act of hurting another person physically (e.g. hitting, slapping) or psychologically (while hurting other peoples' feelings done verbally, e.g cursing, sneering, shouting). As revealed by Berkowitz and Myers (in Siddiqiah, 2010). Aggressive behavior is defined as an act intended to injure or hurt another person, either physically or psychologically, which causes harm or injures others, or damages others. This opinion is supported by McCarthy and Elson (2018) that aggressiveness is defined as the behavior that aims to hurt people who do not want to be hurt, both physically and psychologically. Many researchers said the same thing that aggressive behavior is individual behavior that

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aims to injure or harm other individuals who do not want the behavior to be adopted (Ceyhun, 2020; Taylor dan Jose, 2014)

A slightly different theory put forward by Moore and Fine (in Koeswara, 1988) explained that aggressive behavior is violent behavior conducted physically or verbally against other individuals or against any objects. Krahe (2013) said that aggressive behavior is a form of behavior that is not socially acceptable, which may cause physical or psychological harm to others or damage objects. Based on that, aggression is not only done to humans but also to things.

Aggressive behavior can be done by anyone, whether an adult, a teenager, and even a child because aggressive behavior is a natural behavior found in the human subconscious. Even aggressive behavior is as important as we need to breathe. Flanagan & Flanagan (2018) explained that aggression is a need to live. The instinct of death becomes the drive to destroy and kill others which becomes the basic needs, i.e. the need to breathe and have sex that lies within the id. This opinion is different from the one expressed by Girard et al (2019) that children are not born aggressive, but they learn it. In spite of that, children, parents, and caregivers can also learn how to deal with aggression.

The factor which is predicted to influence aggressive behavior is self-control. Self-control is needed to resist the urge to commit aggression in any form. A number of studies have noticed that self-control affects aggressive behavior in children. (Medrum, Varhoeven Junger, Aken, & Deković, 2018; Özdemir, et al. 2013; Hope & Chapple, 2005). Low self-control affects aggression in children, which is also associated with parenting (Özdemir, et al. 2013). Self-control is needed to resist the urge to commit aggression in any form. According to Travis Hirschi and Gottfredson (in Aroma and Suminar, 2012) self-control is a tendency to consciously consider the various possibilities that occur from certain actions, which then become obstacles that individuals have from committing criminal or problematic acts. In the adolescence phase, the most prominent thing is inner turmoil or the feeling of wanting to be free from the rules (Kushnir, 2018). This turmoil is usually used as the reason for the conflict between adolescent expectations and social norms. But to deal with this, they need what is called self-control. Gailliot et. al. (2012) shows that self-control has a high correlation with a person's compliance in obeying the rules. The research is similar to Hirschi's theory that self-control is an obstacle that individuals have to prevent them from committing crimes.

Gillebaart (2018) defines self-control as a capacity to provide alternative conditions and certain responses. Self-control is a response pattern that is used to replace something with something else, for example, responses related to diverting attention from something desired, changing emotions, and resisting certain urges. Baumeister, Vohs, and Tice (2007) suggested that self-control is the ability to change one's own responses, especially to bring them into conformity with standards such as morals, ideals, values, and expectations, as well as pursuing long-term goals.

Self-control is often associated with aggression because self-control is an important skill that children must-have. Self-control is an important skill for all children to learn. This is because children must have power or control over their own actions. This means that children will know the right thing to do for the mistakes they made. Children who do not make choices for their own behavior but rely on other children, parents, teachers, or adults to make choices for them, do not learn self-control. The risk is that these children may follow bad choices, and are not responsible for what they do.

Sometimes children don't have the social skills or self-control to manage their behavior. But, self-control must be taught. When children cannot find the words to deal with aggressive feelings or are not encouraged to express themselves, they become frustrated. In other times, children cannot cope with the growing level of anger within themselves or at others. In both cases, children need to learn acceptable ways to assert themselves and learn skills to cope with their aggressive behavior.

Children must have the ability to control themselves to not imitate their not-worthy parents' behavior. Referring to that, this study aims to know whether self-control can be a predictor of aggressive behavior in children aged 9-12 (5th grade) at SDN Sawo 1, Tulungagung.

Based on the preliminary study, the regional and cultural factors around of SD Negeri Sawo 1 located in the southern region of Tulungagung Regency is a rural area that still adheres to the culture of adopting traditional

manners (*unggah-ungguh*) toward older people well. But, there were found students who had the courage to argue with the teachers' words during teaching and learning activities.

Researchers also base this research based on previous research. Research conducted by Sriyanti (2011) stated that deviant behavior, delinquency, promiscuity, and the failure of one's life are influenced by low self-control. Subsequent research conducted by Praptiani (2013) suggested that there is an influence of self-control on adolescent aggressiveness in dealing with peer conflict, there is no difference in self-control and aggressiveness between male and female adolescents in dealing with peer conflicts and there is a different interpretation on gender meaning between them in peer conflicts, aggressiveness, and adolescent self-control. In a previous study which was also conducted by Aroma and Suminar (2012) it was stated that there was a negative correlation between self-control and aggressive behavior of SMK X Kediri students but with a moderate level of tendency.

Research Problem

Children who behave aggressively increase in number and quality in the home, school and community environment. Aggressive behavior is behavior that is contrary to social norms so that it will have a negative impact on child development. Efforts to reduce aggressive behavior in children is to teach self-control. Based on various studies it can be concluded that aggressiveness is influenced by self-control, including in children. Self-control is needed to resist the urge to commit aggression in the form of whatever. Referring to this, the researchers wanted to know whether self-control is a predictor of aggressive behavior in elementary students, specially 5th grade students. Other questions want to be answered through this research, such as how is the level of elementary student aggressiveness and self-control.

Method

Research Model

The type of this research is non-experimental research and included in descriptive correlational research. The independent variable is self-control as a predictor of aggression.

Participants

Based on the data collected from SD Negeri Sawo 1, there are 231 students from all grades (1st to 6th grade). The students of 5th grade are chosen as the sample in this research (N=32; 10-12 years old). This period is considered a transition in their decision-making process (Santrock, 2002). At this age (5th grade) children make decisions not only because of a temporary intention but also their thoughts. With their thought, they can control themselves to decide to do something or not (to do or avoid the aggressive behavior).

Research Instruments

The variables of this research are measured by the Aggresional Attitude Scale to measure the level of attitudinal aggression of the students and the Self-Control Scale to measure the students' self-control.

Aggresional Attitude Scale

To measure the level of aggression, the scale used is such scale constructed by the researchers based on the theory of Johnson and Medinnus (in widyaningum, 1998). This scale uses four indicators of aggression namely Physical Aggression, Verbal Aggression, Aggression to Objects, and Violations against other people's property or attack other people's territory. Scale method used is a Likert model scaling method. The reliability of Aggresional Attitude Scale is 0.955.

Self-Control Scale

The self-control scale uses the scale created by the researcher itself based on the theory of Baumeister (1973). This scale uses four control indicators self, namely Self Discipline (self-discipline), Deliberate / Nonimpulsive (non-impulsive actions), Healthy Habits (healthy lifestyle), Work Ethic (work ethic), Reliability (reliability). The reliability of Self-Control Scale is 0,828.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the participant was analyzed with descriptive and correlational analysis by using the Pearson product moment' formula. Descriptive statistical analysis reveals the description of the participant's level of behavior aggression and self-control. Meanwhile correlational analysis determines the correlation of both variables. To predict the role of self-control toward aggression, a simple linear regression is used.

Procedure

All of the participants completed instruments (Aggressionsion Attitude Scale and Self-Control scale). The researcher supervised and observed them, then conducted a brief interview about the subject's parents and their living environment. The interview was based on a list of questions compiled by research and observation to record the behavior of parents when interacting with their children. The study was conducted on April 10, 2014.

Result

The result of this study finds 13 students (41%) with high level of aggressive behavior and 19 students (59%) with low level. The other result of this study finds 17 students (53%) with high level of self-control and 15 students (47%) with low level. See in the following table 1.

Table 1. The Result of Statistical Description

Interval	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Aggressive Behavior			
0-50	Low	19	59
51-76	High	13	41
Self-control			
0-50	Low	15	47
51-68	High	17	53

The hypothesis test, it begins by testing the normality and linearity of the data. Data from both variables, aggressive behavior and self-control, are normally distributed. The results of normality testing can be seen in the following table 2.

Table 2. Normality Test Data

Variable	KS Statistics	Sig	Note	Conclusion
Aggressive Behavior	0.118	0.200	$p > 0.05$	Normal
Self-control	0.093	0.200	$p > 0.05$	Normal

The linearity test results show that the relationship between the two variables is linear. In this study, the results of the linearity test to the aggressive behavior and self-control are F is as much of 0.731 with $p = 0.724$. The results of linearity testing can be seen in the following table 3.

Table 3. Data Linearity Test Result

Variable	F	Sig	Note	Conclusion
Aggressive Behavior and Self-control	0.731	0.724	$p > 0.05$	Linear

The hypothesis test show self-control correlate with aggressive behavior negatively and contributes 36,5% as a predictor of aggressive behavior ($R \text{ square} = 0,365$; $p = 0.000$) as seen in the following table 4.

Table 4. Data Hypothesis Testing Result

Variable	R	R Squared	Beta	Sig
Aggressive Behavior and Self-control	-0.604	0.365	-0.919	0.000

Conclusion

Aggression is defined as physical or verbal behavior to hurt another person (Myers, 2002); compulsive behaviors that includes physical and verbal are an antisocial reaction (Eron, in Cavell, 2000); violent behavior either physically or verbally against other individuals or objects (Moore and Fine, in Koeswara 1988). Physical aggression includes violence that is done physically, such as hitting, slapping, kicking and so on.

This study finds the Aggressive behavior of students of SD Negeri Sawo 1 Tulungagung can be clasified into two categories, the high level of aggressive behavior (N=13; 41%) and the low one (N=19; 59%). The differences of tedency level of aggressive behavior may be influenced by their enviromental. According to De Bord's (2000) that aggression can be influenced by environment, society, children's temperament, and family.

From the observations and interviews with their teacher, found that the aggressive behavior of them may be influenced by:

1) family, some them are left behind by their parents for working from morning to night or whose parents left them to work abroad. So, they are entrusted by their grandmothers. Supervising from their parents are less. However, some students have a good influence from their parents, such as not arguing in front of their children and accompany them to study every night. These positive thoughts and negative interactions from their family affect how their aggression is formed. They learn to imitate their family's behavior into adulthood, like how other family members handle their anger and frustration.

2) the traits, the traits of the students themselves are very important to be elicited to delve deeper into their aggressive behavior. Under certain conditions, an individual's trait is the part of personality that appears to be controlled by his or her genetics. The children are behaving relatively similar to their parents when they are at school.

3) the community, the community around of SD Sawo 1 is good can understand and support them to growth. Study from (Vazsonyi & Javakhishvili, 2019) found that positive infant socialization during their first two year can predict their self-control. Then positive characters correlate with aggression negatively (García-Vázquez et al., 2020)

4) the environment, several studies have found that housing, schools, and neighborhoods can contribute to aggression. During the research the researcher saw how the role of the teachers in the school environment were very good. They have to arrive a maximum of 15 minutes before the bell rings, then if there is a problem between students, the teachers do not immediately punish them, but asking first why it occurred. So, the teacher shows the good example of self-control. The self-control can control to not do aggressive behavior (Jiang et al., 2022).

Hypothesis testing on this data obtained the significance value of the Self-Control variable. Therefore, it can be concluded with an R value of -0.604, which means that self-control has a negative correlation with aggressive behavior. Then R is squared to 0.365 which means that self-control contributes 36.5% as a predictor of aggressive behavior from 5th graders at SD Negeri Sawo 1 Tulungagung and the rest is contributed by other factors.

Based on the results of the study, the subject who had the highest self-control behavior had a score of 68. While the subject who had the lowest level of self-control behavior had a score of 27. Of the research subjects as many as 32 students, there were 17 students who had a high level of self-control and 15 students who had a low level of self-control.

Hepler et al (2011) stated that individuals who have low self-control tend to act impulsively, prefer simple tasks and involve physical abilities. They are selfish, like to take risks, and easily lose emotional control because they are easily frustrated. Individuals with these characteristics are more likely to be involved in criminal and deviant acts than those with high levels of self-control.

The above results were strengthened by the researchers by conducting interviews with teachers and parents who stated that the self-control of grade 5 students at SD Negeri Sawo 1 could be said to be good, supported by school environmental factors. Teachers at this elementary school set an example by disciplining themselves first. Most of the teachers of SD Negeri Sawo 1 give examples of good behavior, the teachers do not directly punish their students. But they ask on how incidents start so that the teachers probably do not immediately give punishments and set an example

of good self-control. Then from the environmental factors of SDN Sawo 1 it was found that the surrounding community strongly supports non-violent education and the local community shows friendliness to others.

The results show that self-control is a strong predictor of aggressive behavior, meaning that self-control affects aggressive behavior more significantly than other factors that influence aggressive behavior as stated by Baron and Byrne (1994), namely external factors and learning factors. So, the results of this study are in accordance with previous research conducted by Sriyanti (2011) which states that deviant behavior, delinquency, promiscuity, and the failure of one's life are heavily influenced by low self-control. Subsequent research conducted by Praptiani (2013) suggests that there is an influence of self-control on adolescent aggressiveness in dealing with peer conflict, there is no difference in self-control and aggressiveness between male and female adolescents in dealing with peer conflicts and there is a vivid contrast on the definition on the role of the gender in adolescents' peer conflicts, aggressiveness, and self-control. In a previous study which was also conducted by Aroma and Suminar (2012) it was stated that there is a negative correlation between self-control and aggressive behavior.

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