

The Role of Father Involvement in Predicting Aggressive Behavior among Juvenile Offenders in the Class I Medan LPKA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the relationship between father involvement and aggressive behavior among adolescents in conflict with the law within the Indonesian Muslim socio-cultural context, where paternal responsibility and emotional guidance are emphasized in Islamic family values. In Islamic teachings, fathers are regarded as primary figures in nurturing, moral development, and emotional regulation of children, making their involvement an important protective factor against maladaptive behavior. This study involved 150 adolescents at the Class I Special Child Guidance Institution (*Lembaga Pembinaan Khusus Anak/LPKA*) in Medan using a total sampling technique. Data were collected using the Aggressive Behavior Scale and Father Involvement Scale, consisting of 37 and 42 items, respectively. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment correlation. The results showed a significant negative relationship between father involvement and aggressive behavior ($r = -0.622$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that higher father involvement is associated with lower aggressive behavior among adolescents. Father

involvement contributed effectively 38.7% to aggressive behavior ($R^2 = 0.387$), while the remaining 61.3% was influenced by other factors. These findings suggest that strengthening paternal involvement may serve as an important preventive and rehabilitative factor in reducing adolescent aggression. Practically, the findings highlight the potential relevance of integrating Islamic family counseling and faith-based parenting interventions into juvenile rehabilitation programs to enhance father-child relationships and support adolescents' socio-emotional development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional developmental stage from childhood to adulthood characterized by substantial emotional, cognitive, and behavioral changes. During this period, adolescents increasingly prioritize peer relationships over family attachments and actively engage in identity exploration, often accompanied by impulsive decision-making and limited consideration of long-term consequences. This developmental stage is commonly described as a period of *storm and stress*, marked by emotional instability, heightened sensitivity, risk-taking behavior, and vulnerability to peer influence. While these characteristics are normative aspects of development, adolescents exposed to negative environmental influences may adopt maladaptive or deviant behaviors rather than socially acceptable ones (Situmorang & Pratiwi, 2018).

One of the most concerning manifestations of maladaptive adolescent behavior is juvenile delinquency, which includes a broad spectrum of norm violations, immoral conduct, and criminal acts (Safitri, 2019). In Indonesia, juvenile delinquency has become a growing social concern. Data from the 2020 Population Census indicate that approximately 23.46% of reported cases involve juvenile delinquency (Hasil Sensus Penduduk 2020, 2021). In

Medan specifically, juvenile crime rates increased by approximately 20% between 2019 and 2023, with offenses ranging from theft to drug-related crimes (Safitri, 2019) . Furthermore, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission reported that 29.2% of juvenile criminal cases in 2020 involved physical violence (Kompas, 2023). These data highlight the urgency of addressing aggressive and delinquent behavior among adolescents, particularly those involved in the juvenile justice system.

In Indonesia, adolescents involved in criminal acts may be placed in Juvenile Correctional Institutions (*Lembaga Pembinaan Khusus Anak/LPKA*), which function as rehabilitation facilities for children in conflict with the law. Under Law No. 11 of 2012 concerning the Juvenile Criminal Justice System, detention is applicable only to children aged 14 years and above who are suspected of committing criminal offenses punishable by imprisonment of seven years or more. The law also emphasizes limited detention periods and prioritizes rehabilitation over punishment (Kemenkumham, 2023). Accordingly, juvenile delinquency should be viewed not merely as an individual behavioral issue but as a complex social problem requiring structured intervention to promote behavioral reform.

Aggressive behavior is one of the most prominent forms of problematic conduct among adolescents involved in delinquency. Several high-profile cases in Indonesia demonstrate the severity of this issue. For example, a minor identified as AG was convicted of participating in a premeditated assault against a teenager named David, resulting in severe physical injury and a four-year prison sentence (Detik, 2023). Similar incidents include a violent assault motivated by romantic conflict in Lenteng Agung (Kompas, 2023) and a fatal gang fight in Bogor involving sharp weapons (Sindonews, 2024). These cases illustrate how aggression among adolescents may escalate into serious criminal behavior with significant social consequences.

Aggression is defined as intentional behavior aimed at harming others physically or psychologically (Sindonews, 2024). It may take both physical and non-physical forms and is carried out deliberately to inflict harm (Ferdiansa & Neviryani,2020). According to prior literature, aggressive behavior comprises four

dimensions: physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility (Siregar,2020), (Marpaung et.,al, 2020). Aggression in adolescence often emerges as a response to negative emotions, interpersonal conflict, or ineffective stress management, thereby posing threats not only to individual well-being but also to broader social order.

Previous studies have identified multiple factors contributing to aggressive behavior in adolescents, including conformity, emotional regulation, and family environment (Mukhti & Widyastuti, 2020), (Isnaeni, 2021), (Putryani, 2021). Among these, family dynamics are consistently recognized as one of the most influential determinants of adolescent behavioral outcomes. Although maternal influence has traditionally received greater scholarly attention, recent literature increasingly emphasizes the critical role of fathers in children's emotional, social, and behavioral development (Mukhti & Widyastuti, 2018).

Father involvement refers to the active participation of fathers in parenting through direct interaction, emotional support, supervision, monitoring, and responsibility for meeting children's developmental needs (Bayu & Yanna, 2024). Active father involvement has been shown to contribute positively to children's cognitive, emotional, and social development (Mirza et.,al, 2025). Conceptually, father involvement consists of three primary dimensions: *engagement*, referring to direct father-child interaction in shared activities (Sutanto & Suwartono, 2025); *accessibility*, referring to the father's physical and emotional availability when needed; and *responsibility*, referring to the father's commitment to ensuring the child's well-being and developmental needs are fulfilled.

Empirical evidence suggests that father involvement is associated with lower levels of aggressive behavior in adolescents. The absence of paternal presence has been linked to feelings of loneliness, jealousy, emotional deprivation, and difficulties in behavioral regulation (Ismail et.,al , 2016). Likewise, prior research found that adolescents who report higher levels of father involvement tend to exhibit lower aggressive tendencies (Wuda et.,al , 2023). Conversely, inadequate father involvement may increase vulnerability to aggression due to reduced supervision,

emotional support, and behavioral guidance during critical developmental stages.

However, despite growing evidence regarding the relationship between father involvement and aggressive behavior, several limitations remain in the existing literature. First, most prior studies have focused on general adolescent populations rather than adolescents involved in the juvenile justice system, leaving a lack of research on high-risk populations such as incarcerated youth. Second, limited empirical attention has been given to father involvement among adolescents residing in juvenile correctional institutions, particularly within the Indonesian context. Third, practical intervention strategies within juvenile rehabilitation settings require stronger empirical foundations regarding family-related protective factors. Therefore, investigating father involvement among adolescents in correctional institutions remains an important and underexplored area of study.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to examine the relationship between father involvement and aggressive behavior among adolescents serving sentences at the Class I Medan Juvenile Correctional Institution. Specifically, this study seeks to determine whether higher levels of father involvement are associated with lower levels of aggressive behavior in this population.

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational approach to examine the relationship between the two variables, namely, father involvement and aggressive behavior. The research was conducted at the *Class I Medan Juvenile Correctional Institution (Lembaga Pembinaan Khusus Anak/LPKA)*. This location was selected based on several considerations. First, it is one of the largest juvenile correctional institutions in North Sumatra, accommodating juvenile offenders from diverse social backgrounds and a wide range of criminal cases. Second, the institution has a relatively high number of incarcerated adolescents compared to other regions in the province, enabling the researcher to obtain more representative data regarding aggressive behavior and the level of father involvement in their lives. Additionally, the site was

chosen due to its accessibility for obtaining research permission, the availability of comprehensive administrative data, and institutional support for the research process. These factors were expected to contribute to producing accurate and relevant findings concerning the conditions of juveniles within the institution.

The population of this study consisted of 150 adolescents currently serving sentences at the Class I Medan Juvenile Correctional Institution. Following a screening process based on the research criteria, all individuals met the inclusion requirements, namely adolescents aged between 13 and 19 years who were undergoing rehabilitation within the institution. Therefore, the study employed a total sampling technique, in which all members of the population were included as research participants due to the relatively limited population size. According to (Sugiyono, 2020), total sampling is a sampling method that involves the entire population as research subjects, also referred to as a saturated sampling technique. Thus, the total number of respondents in this study was 150 juvenile inmates. The data collection process was conducted from May 19 to May 26, 2025, within the institutional setting.

This study utilized primary data collected directly from respondents through Likert-scale questionnaires to measure two variables: aggressive behavior and father involvement. The aggressive behavior scale was developed based on the theory of Buss and Perry, which includes four dimensions: *physical aggression*, *verbal aggression*, *anger*, and *hostility* (Khaira, 2023). Meanwhile, the father involvement scale was constructed based on Lamb's theory, consisting of three dimensions: *engagement*, *accessibility*, and *responsibility* (Mirza et.al, 2024); (Maslina et.al, 2024). Each scale included both favorable and unfavorable statements, with four response options: *Strongly Agree (SA)*, *Agree (A)*, *Disagree (D)*, and *Strongly Disagree (SD)*.

Prior to data collection, the instruments were tested for validity and reliability to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurement. Validity testing was conducted to assess the extent to which the items measured the intended constructs, with a minimum validity coefficient threshold of 0.30 (Azwar, 2019). Reliability testing was performed using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to evaluate internal consistency among items.

Data analysis was conducted using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation technique to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Sugiyono, 2020). Prior to hypothesis testing, prerequisite analyses were carried out, including normality and linearity tests. The normality test aimed to ensure that the data were normally distributed, with a significance value greater than 0.05 indicating normal distribution. Meanwhile, the linearity test was used to assess whether the relationship between variables was linear, with a significance value less than 0.05 indicating a linear relationship (Sugiyono, 2020). All data processing and statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 for Windows.

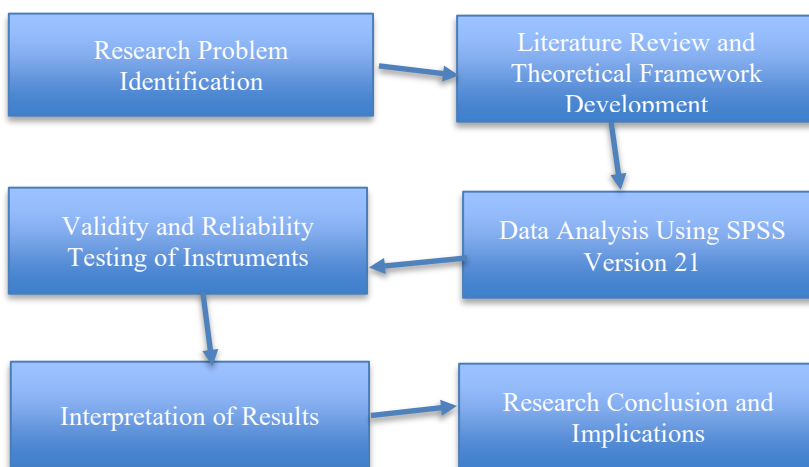


Figure 1. Research Flow Chart

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Comparison of Empirical and Hypothetical Data on Aggressive Behavior

Category	Subcategory	Frequency	Percentage %
Age	13	3	2.0%
	15	4	2.7%
	16	21	14.0%
	17	43	28.7%

Category	Subcategory	Frequency	Percentage %
Length of Sentence	18	51	34.0%
	19	28	18.7%
	< 1 year	23	15.3%
	1-2 years	57	38.0%
	2-3 years	29	19.4%
	3-4 years	16	10.7%
	> 4 years	25	16.7%
Ethnicity	Bali	1	0.7%
	Banjar	1	0.7%
	Banten	2	1.3%
	Batak	41	27.3%
	Jawa	74	49.4%
	Karo	9	6.0%
	Mandailing	7	4.7%
	Melayu	11	7.3%
	Minang	2	1.3%
	Padang	2	1.3%
Education	Elementary School (SD)	8	5.3%
	Junior High School (SMP)	96	64.0%
	Senior High School (SMA)	46	30.7%
	Biological father	93	62.0%
Father Status	Father deceased	22	14.7%
	Separated from father	35	23.3%
Mother Status	Biological mother	129	86.0%
	Mother deceased	10	6.7%
	Separated from mother	11	7.3%

Based on the demographic data, the majority of respondents were aged 18 years (34.0%) and 17 years (28.7%), indicating that

most participants were in late adolescence. Regarding the duration of incarceration, the largest proportion of respondents had been serving sentences for one to two years (38.0%).

In terms of ethnic background, the sample was predominantly composed of individuals from the Javanese ethnic group (49.4%), followed by those of the Batak ethnicity (27.3%). Concerning educational attainment, most respondents had completed junior high school (64.0%), reflecting a generally moderate level of formal education.

From a family perspective, the majority of respondents reported still having a biological father (62.0%) and a biological mother (86.0%), indicating that most participants originated from intact parental backgrounds, although variations in parental presence were still evident.

Overall, the respondents can be characterized as adolescents in the late developmental stage, with diverse social and educational backgrounds. These characteristics reflect a population currently undergoing institutional rehabilitation, providing a relevant context for examining behavioral and familial factors within this group.

3.1. Aggressive Behavior

The aggressive behavior scale consisted of 37 items, each rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4. Thus, the possible total score ranged from a minimum of 37 (37×1) to a maximum of 148 (37×4). Based on this range, the hypothetical mean was calculated as 92.5, and the hypothetical standard deviation was 18.5.

The empirical results showed that the respondents obtained a mean score of 115.33 with a standard deviation of 18.387.

Table 2. Comparison of Empirical and Hypothetical Scores of Aggressive Behavior

Variable	Empirical			SD	Hypothetical			SD
	Min	Max	Mean		Min	Max	Mean	
Aggressive Behavior	70	148	115,33	18,387	37	148	92,5	18,5

The analysis indicates that the empirical mean is higher than the hypothetical mean ($115.33 > 92.5$), suggesting that the level of aggressive behavior among the research subjects is relatively higher compared to the general population.

Table 3. Categorization of Aggressive Behavior Scores

No	Guide	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	$X < (\mu - 1\sigma)$	$x < 74$	Low	1	0,7%
2.	$(\mu - 1\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$74 < x < 111$	Medium	62	41,3%
3.	$X \geq (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$x > 111$	High	87	58,0%
Total				150	100%

The results show that the majority of respondents (58.0%) fall into the high category of aggressive behavior, followed by 41.3% in the moderate category, and only 0.7% in the low category.

3.2. Father Involvement

The father involvement scale consisted of 42 items with response options ranging from 1 to 4. The total possible score ranged from 42 to 168. The hypothetical mean was calculated as 105, with a hypothetical standard deviation of 21.

The empirical findings revealed a mean score of 70.98 and a standard deviation of 17.423.

Table 4. Comparison of Empirical and Hypothetical Scores of Father Involvement

Variable	Empirical			SD	Hypothetical			SD
	Min	Max	Mean		Min	Max	Mean	
Father Involvement	43	113	70,98	17,423	42	168	105	21

The findings indicate that the empirical mean is lower than the hypothetical mean ($70.98 < 105$), suggesting that the level of father involvement among respondents is relatively low.

There is a standard deviation $\sigma = (168-42): 6 = 21$, $\mu = (42+168): 2 = 105$ as the hypothetical mean of this study. Based on the formula, it is obtained $x < (105-20) = x < 85$, $(105-20) < x < (105+20) = 85 < x < 125$, $x > (105+20) = x > 125$.

Table 5. Categorization of Father Involvement

No	Guide	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	$X < (\mu - 1\sigma)$	$x < 85$	Low	117	78,0%
2	$(\mu - 1\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$85 < x < 125$	Medium	33	22,0%
3	$X \geq (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$x > 125$	High	0	0%
Total				150	100%

The data indicate that the majority of respondents (78.0%) fall into the low category of father involvement, while 22.0% are in the moderate category, and none fall into the high category.

3.3. Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis of this study proposed a negative correlation between father involvement and aggressive behavior among adolescents in the Class I Medan Juvenile Correctional Institution. To test this hypothesis, the Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis was employed.

Table 6. Correlation between Father Involvement and Aggressive Behavior

Analysis	Pearson Correlation	Significance (p)
Correlation	-0,622	0,000

The results show a correlation coefficient of -0.622 with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates a strong negative correlation between father involvement and aggressive behavior. In other words, higher levels of father involvement are associated with lower levels of aggressive behavior, and vice versa.

Table 7. Coefficient of Determination

	R	R Squared	Eta	Eta Squared
Father Involvement				
* Aggressive Behavior	-0,622	0,387	0,791	0,625

The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.387$) indicates that father involvement contributes 38.7% to the variance in aggressive behavior among adolescents in the institution. The remaining 61.3% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. This finding suggests that while father involvement plays a significant role, aggressive behavior is a multifactorial phenomenon influenced by various psychological, social, and environmental variables.

4. DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the study involving 150 adolescents serving sentences at the Class I Medan Juvenile Correctional Institution (LPKA), a significant negative relationship was found between father involvement and aggressive behavior. The Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficient was $r = -0.622$ with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This finding indicates that higher levels of father involvement in adolescents' lives are associated with lower tendencies toward aggressive behavior, and conversely, lower father involvement is associated with higher levels of aggression. This result is consistent with the findings of (Nabila et.al, 2025), which suggest that father involvement significantly influences the emergence of aggressive behavior in adolescents, particularly when fathers model negative parenting practices that may foster deviant behavior. Secure attachment to the father plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents' self-control, as the father serves as a key social reference in understanding appropriate behavior across various social contexts.

The findings also reveal that among the 150 juvenile respondents, only 1 individual (0.7%) demonstrated low levels of aggressive behavior, while 62 individuals (41.3%) fell into the moderate category, and 87 individuals (58.0%) were categorized as having high levels of aggression. This distribution indicates that the majority of adolescents in the institution exhibit moderate to high levels of aggressive behavior, reflecting difficulties in managing emotions and coping with psychological stress. High levels of aggression are manifested through expressions of anger, frustration, and impulsive behaviors, both verbal and physical, whereas moderate aggression is reflected in verbal resistance, irritability, or involvement in conflicts with peers.

Furthermore, the results indicate that most adolescents reported low levels of father involvement, with 117 respondents (78.0%) categorized as low and 33 respondents (22.0%) as moderate. No respondents were classified as having high father involvement, suggesting a generally weak emotional bond between fathers and their children. In the engagement dimension, most adolescents reported limited direct interaction with their fathers in daily activities. The absence of shared experiences, such as playing or communicating regularly, may hinder adolescents' ability to internalize social values and regulate their emotions effectively. This lack of paternal involvement contributes to reduced empathy, emotional instability, and an increased tendency toward deviant behavior. These findings align with previous research indicating that appropriate parenting patterns and parental approaches play a significant role in shaping children's psychosocial and moral development from an early age. A supportive family environment consistently provides positive stimulation that encourages children to internalize values and behaviors through observation and imitation, as children naturally tend to model the behavior of those around them (Harahap, 2023).

In the accessibility dimension, the physical and emotional absence of fathers may lead adolescents to experience feelings of isolation, thereby increasing the risk of anger and frustration (Fatihanna, 2024). Insufficient parental guidance and supervision may encourage adolescents to engage in social violations, while excessive control may also trigger impulsive behavior (Kompas, 2023). In terms of responsibility, fathers who fail to fulfill their caregiving roles may contribute to the absence of strong moral guidance and self-regulation in adolescents, making them more vulnerable to aggressive behavior. These findings are supported by (Sihombing, 2023), who reported a negative relationship between parent-child attachment and adolescent aggression.

The results of this study are further supported by (Kristianti, 2022), who found that adolescents with less involved parents tend to exhibit higher levels of delinquent behavior. Similarly, (Alfasma et.,al, 2022) highlighted that aggressive behavior is associated with the absence of a father figure and increased feelings of loneliness in children.

In conclusion, father involvement plays a critical role in reducing aggressive behavior among adolescents. Higher levels of involvement through direct interaction, emotional availability, and responsible parenting are associated with lower tendencies toward aggression. Conversely, low levels of father involvement may increase aggressive behavior due to weakened self-control, poor emotional regulation, and underdeveloped moral and social values. Therefore, strengthening the role of fathers in children's lives is essential for fostering more adaptive, prosocial, and empathetic behavior in adolescents.

5. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the relationship between father involvement and aggressive behavior among adolescents in a juvenile correctional setting. In line with the objective stated in the introduction, the findings confirm that father involvement is a significant predictor of aggressive behavior. The results demonstrate a statistically significant negative correlation between the two variables ($r = -0.622$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that higher levels of father involvement are associated with lower levels of aggressive behavior among adolescents. Conversely, limited father involvement corresponds to increased aggressive tendencies. These findings are consistent with the theoretical framework that emphasizes the role of parental attachment and social learning in shaping adolescent behavior.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.387$) indicates that father involvement accounts for 38.7% of the variance in aggressive behavior, while the remaining 61.3% is influenced by other factors. This suggests that although father involvement plays a substantial role, aggressive behavior in adolescents is a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by a combination of familial, social, and psychological variables.

From a practical perspective, these findings highlight the importance of strengthening paternal roles within rehabilitation contexts. Adolescents in juvenile correctional institutions are encouraged to develop better emotional regulation skills, particularly in managing conflict and reducing impulsive reactions that may lead to aggressive or criminal behavior. In addition, fostering closer relationships with family members, especially

fathers, may serve as a protective factor against maladaptive behaviors.

For parents, particularly fathers, active involvement throughout the rehabilitation process is essential. Emotional presence, consistent communication, and supportive engagement can contribute positively to adolescents' psychological adjustment and behavioral control. At the institutional level, it is recommended that juvenile correctional facilities design and implement family-based intervention programs that actively involve fathers in the rehabilitation process, thereby promoting healthier relational dynamics and reducing aggressive tendencies among adolescents.

For future research, it is important to explore additional variables that may influence aggressive behavior, such as maternal roles, peer influence, and emotional regulation capacity. Employing qualitative or mixed-method approaches may also provide deeper insights into the underlying dynamics of adolescent behavior within correctional settings. These directions are expected to enhance the development of more comprehensive intervention strategies and contribute to the advancement of research in adolescent psychology and juvenile rehabilitation.

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