

# The Influence of Anger Management on Aggression Behavior and Peer Acceptance as a Mediation Variable

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*Abstract. Aggression behavior can get worse when individuals do not have anger management skills. Anger management or the ability to manage emotions and anger becomes important to reduce the level of aggression in adolescents. When adolescents individually learn to build relationships with their social so that they can be accepted by their peer group. The study aims to measure the aggression and anger management behavior mediated by peer acceptance. This research was conducted at the Panti Sosial Petirahan Anak Bimasakti (PSPA) as social institution with a population study involving all teenagers in the institution with 200 subjects. The results showed an indirect effect of 0.1153 which means that there was a relationship between anger management and aggression behavior mediated by peer acceptance, so that aggression behavior will decrease if the individual has the ability to manage anger emotions well accompanied by the acceptance of their peers.*

*Keyword : Anger management, aggression behavior, peer acceptance, adolescent*

## Introduction

Aggression is a behavior that is often found in children and adults (Loeber & Hay, 1997; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Loeber, 2000). Emotional conditions are relatively unstable which can be a trigger aggression, in the study show that if individuals can manage their emotions, it can reduce the risk of maladaptive behavior, including aggression behavior (Roberton, Daffern, & Bucks, 2012). Aggression is a behavior that is carried out with the aim of hurting others by committing physical harm (Archer & Coyne, 2005) and verbal (Xie, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002) intentionally causing a person to be injured both physically and psychologically (Leary, Twenge, Quinlivan, Leary, & Quinlivan, 2006).

Aggression behavior can be one of the triggers of prolonged behavioral problems, such as violence, crime, bullying, and other delinquency (Yonas, O'Campo, Burke, Peak, & Gielen, 2005). Aggression behavior increases in age between 8 to 14 years and reaches its peak in early adolescence. In adolescence aggressive behavior can develop due to lack of social skills and lack of awareness to establish interpersonal relationships with other individuals (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Cairns, Cairns, Neckerman, Ferguson, & Et Al, 1989; Xie, Swift, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002).

Social learning theory explained that aggression behavior is a results from the learning process. Bandura explained that aggressive behavior is formed from observing other people or direct experience that has positive and negative reinforcement, training or instruction, and odd beliefs (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963). An important mechanism in the learning process is reinforcement as an accompanying process that will determine whether the previous imitation behavior will be internalized or not. If a behavior gets reinforcement or feels good, then there is a desire to repeat it. The factors

that cause the emergence of aggression behavior such as provocation, diverted aggression, media violence, increased stimulus, influence of alcohol and as well as the results of the study of the environment (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Another factors that cause are self-regulation (Zimmerman, 2002), frustration biological factors and unbalanced body hormones.

Problems with anger and aggression are the most common things found in adolescents. The inability to control the emotions of anger can be a trigger the emergence of aggression. Anger management is the ability to regulate thoughts, feelings, lust, anger in the right way and positive and socially acceptable. In the study stated that anger management only has a mild to medium effect on reducing negative emotions and negative behavior including aggression (Candelaria, Fedewa, & Ahn, 2012). Another study explained that anger management training can reduce total aggression which in school teenagers. (Valizadeh, Davaji, & Nikamal, 2010).

In addition to their anger management abilities, aggression behavior can also arise when individuals do not receive good acceptance from their friends or refusals from the social environment, parents, and peers (Christakis & Fowler, 2007; Mercken, Snijders, Steglich, & de Vries, 2009; Steglich, Snijders, & Pearson, 2010). Peer acceptance becomes one of the factors teenagers may experience social rejection and aggressive behavior (Hughes, Cavell, & Prasad-Gaur, 2001). Research finds that individual behavior is determined by friends (Mouttapa, Valente, Gallaher, Rohrbach, & Unger, 2005). Other studies show that peer acceptance is not a major factor in the formation of aggression behavior, but bad interaction skill and bad emotiona regulated can be a trigger aggression (Phillipsen, Bridges, McLemore, & Saponaro, 1999).

Starting from the assumption that good peer relations and being able to accept other friends as part of their social life and having good anger control skills can reduce aggression in children. So that behavior that can harm others can be prevented. Maladaptive behaviors such as aggressiveness as an outlet of anger over rejection are obtained and as a way to attract attention from peers in order to be accepted. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of anger management with aggression and peer acceptance as a mediating variable.

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **Anger management and aggression**

Anger management is the skill to recognize signs that you are angry, and take action to deal with situations in a positive way. Anger is normal human emotions, healthy emotions when properly expressed. Problems related to anger are one of the most common reasons why children and adolescents are referred for psychological services (Abikoff & Klein, 1992). The terms anger, hostility and aggression are often used interchangeably. However, some researchers consider that hostility, anger and aggression can represent the cognitive, affective and behavioral components of the same multidimensional construction (Buss & Perry, 1992). Anger management interventions in schools are carried out and led by school psychologists, and often take the form of groups held at lunch or other natural breaks from the academic curriculum (Flanagan, Allen, & Henry, 2010) and has produced a moderate effect for the group as a whole (John E. Lochman & Wells, 2003). The negative effects of anger are not limited to aggressive individuals because aggressive behavior has the potential to cause damage or injury to others, awareness is needed to understand how to manage anger in each individual.

#### **Anger management and peer acceptance**

Understanding how teens manage their anger in social relationships is important. Where the period of adolescent development is characterized by changes involving social, cognitive, and psychological functions (Hubbard, 2004). Peer relationships are important for the development of children and adolescents, where they can learn how to build relationships. In addition, individuals learn to identify emotions themselves and others. so as to be able to express emotions appropriately. Several studies have found an association between social acceptance and emotional expression in primary school (Hubbard, 2001; Jones, Eisenberg, Fabes, & MacKinnon, 2002; Underwood, Coie, & Herbsman, 1997). Other studies find adolescents who experience rejection tend to be easier to express their anger compared to adolescents who have average acceptance (Hubbard, 2001; Underwood et al., 1997).

#### **Peer Acceptance dan Aggression**

Peer acceptance is defined as the level of a child socially accepted or rejected by a peers(Slaughter,

Dennis, & Pritchard, 2002). In general, positive behavior can be accepted by peers and negative behaviors such as aggression experience rejection. Peer acceptance is positively associated with relational aggression and is negatively related to physical aggression (Merten, 1997; Xie, Cairns, et al., 2002). So this clarified the relationship between aggression and the social function of peers. It was found that children who are relationally aggressive likely as children who are not physically aggressive and their friendship is characterized by a high level of intimacy compared with their peers who aggressively (Johhn E Lochman & Wayland, 1994; Olweus, 2017; Slaughter et al., 2002). Based on the explanation above, this research is to find out the mediating effect of peer acceptance on anger management and aggression. So that the presence of peer acceptance as a mediating variable can predict the indirect effect of anger on where and how aggression.

### **Methods**

This study used quantitative research methods, namely systematic research that collects data more dominant by using numbers, using a paradigm to find research problems, methodologies, concepts, hypotheses, and find data analysis tools (Fischer, Boone, Fischer, & Boone, 2014). The research subjects in this study used a population study at a social care institution for the Bimasakti children, were early adolescents who had been shown to experience social dysfunction and behavioral problems. The characteristics of the subject of this study consisted of men (46.5%) and women (53.5%) as many as 200 subjects with an age range of 9 years-13 years.

The independent variable was anger management and dependent variable was aggression behavior, while peer acceptance became as mediation variable. Data collection used 3 scales adapted from previous research. Aggression behavior was measured using the aggression questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992) , which has been widely used to measure a person's level of aggressiveness, has 29 items consists with a reliability score of 0.803. Anger management measurements use Novaco anger scale-provocation inventory (Moeller, Novaco, Heinola-Nielsen, & Hougaard, 2016; Novaco, 2003) items and have a reliability score of 0.840. Peer acceptance is measured using the peer relation index (IPR) (Forte & Green, 1994), 25-item instrument designed to measure the extent, severity, or magnitude of the problem the respondent has with peers and has a reliability score of 0.755.

The research procedure was to determine the subject of study population, prepare the instrument used as a measuring instrument, conduct the initial survey, test the measuring instrument and carry out the research.

This study used a mediation regression analysis approach. Data management in this study uses the SPSS program (Statistical Package for Social Science). Before hierarchical regression analysis is performed, several tests must first be carried out, such as validity and reliability testing.

## Result

Statistical test result indicated the value of mean and deviation standard to each variable. Variable of Anger management has average value ( $M=50.027$ ;  $SD=9.411$ ). Aggression behavior variable has average value ( $M=49.973$ ;  $SD=9.472$ ). Peer acceptance variable has average value ( $M=49.978$ ;  $SD=8.967$ ).

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation

Variable	Mean	SD
Anger Management	50.027	9.411
Aggression behavior	49.973	9.472
Peer Acceptance	49.978	8.967

Further, normality test is to get value that  $p=.200$ , means that test result is normally distributed and could do the next examination.

Based on calculation result at Hayes test relation direct value and indirect value then being used as decision making at hypothesis test that showed at this illustration:

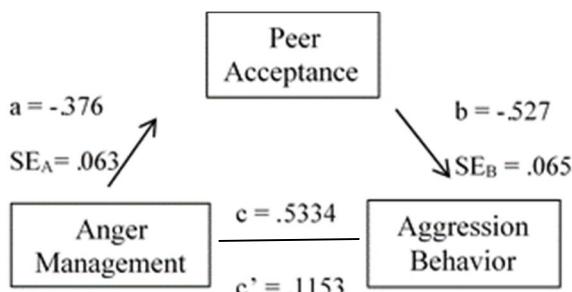


Figure 1. Test Result

Calculated results of direct relation value is  $.5334$ . This results indicate there is direct relation between anger management to aggression behavior in the amount of 53%. Calculated results of indirect relation value use the Hayes test at relation between anger management that mediated by peer acceptance gets the results in the amount of  $.153$ . Based on that results peer acceptance get the function as mediators between anger management and aggression behavior. Total calculated relation result at the model get value at  $0.648$ . This value showed that contribution of anger management and peer acceptance influence the aggression behavior at 65%. It means that there 35% of other variables that influence aggression behavior that not measured at this research. This research result means that there is direct relation between anger management to aggression behavior, that equal to  $\beta = .648$ . But, after input the variable of peer acceptance as mediation, relation between anger management to aggression behavior is reduced at ( $\beta = .1153$ ), so it can be said that the mediation that has happened is an partial mediation. Partial mediation that has happened showed the peer acceptance can predicted indirect relation between anger management and aggression behavior. Although there's not peer acceptance as mediation

variable, anger managemenet still has significant direct relation to aggression behavior.

## Discussion

This research result indicated that there was direct relation between anger management to aggression behavior, that the higher emotional management capability and anger management so aggression behavior be decreasing. This is accordance with research that anger management can support children to control the emotional so that maladaptive behavior can be decrease. (Candelaria et al., 2012). Another research mentioned that it will more effective when extra treatment is given to drop the aggression behavior. Previous studies also mentioned that cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) is the most effective treatment to drop the children's aggression behavior so that children's learn about good coping strategy and with role play, so that unwanted negative behavior can be prevented. (Gansle, 2005; Sukhodolsky, Kassinove, & Gorman, 2004).

Meta-analysis research indicates that there is positive effect at anger management programs at schools to prevent aggression behavior and support children to manage the anger (Kaufman et al., 2010). Moreover, with these program children's can get direct lesson or role play to manage anger even at some research mention that there is no statistically significant difference between every emphasis method or focus to anger management program, indicate that handling is effective regardless of focus (Lipman et al., 2006; Johhn E Lochman & Wayland, 1994).

The study also found that peer acceptance significantly mediates the relationship between anger management and aggression behavior. This finding showed that a positive relationship between anger management and peer acceptance explained aggression behavior. So that individuals with good peer acceptance are likely to have the potential to reduce aggression behavior in adolescents who are able to manage anger. Previous research explained that children with aggressive behavior report that they are children who are hostile or hostile to their peers so that if there is a stressor in the form of provocation from friends, then the aggression behavior will emerge, especially physical aggression carried out. (Crick et al., 2002).

Individuals who engage in aggression are individuals who are in frustrated situations, children and adolescents more often show unpleasant feelings by showing negative behaviors. (Crockenberg, Leerkes, & Bárrig Jó, 2008; Gilliom, Shaw, Beck, Schonberg, & Lukon, 2002; Helmsen & Petermann, 2010; Melnick & Hinshaw, 2000). Therefore, the need for anger management skills to overcome stressors or sources of frustration and minimize aggression (de Castro, 2004) with the ability to manage the anger of aggressive and non-aggressive adolescents to be able to control the expression of anger and reduce acts of aggression (Cole, Zahn-Waxler, & Smith, 1994; Underwood et al., 1997).

Based on the above explanation, it can be concluded that peer acceptance is able to improve the relationship between anger management and aggression behavior. Anger management can be used as an internal factor that can manage individual anger and peer acceptance is an external factor that can strengthen anger management so that unwanted aggression can be minimized. However, to work on and see the consistency of research, further research can be conducted by discussing other variables that influence aggression behavior.

### **Conclusion**

The results of the study showed that there was a significant relationship between anger management and aggression behavior, the higher the ability to manage anger emotions, the more aggressive behavior of aggression. There was also a significant relationship between anger management with peer acceptance meaning that the higher the higher the ability to manage the emotions of anger, the higher the individual can be accepted by his peers. There was a significant relationship between peer acceptance and aggressive behavior, meaning that the higher the individual's height can be accepted by his peers, the lower the aggression behavior shown. Next, it was also found a relationship between anger management and aggression behavior mediated by peer acceptance, which means that aggression behavior will decrease if the individual has the ability to manage emotions of anger well accompanied by the acceptance of their peers. The mediating effect obtained from statistical analysis showed that peer acceptance is capable of being a mediating variable.

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