

Profile of Adolescent Friendship Relationships in West Java Province, Indonesia, and Implications for Guidance and Counseling

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Abstrack

This research is motivated by the need for adolescents to be accepted by their social environment. Environmental and peer influences largely shape the formation of adolescent social attitudes and behaviors. These peer relationships facilitate adolescents' ability to establish friendships. This study aims to collect empirical data on the profile of friendship relationship skills of high school students and their implications for guidance. High School students and their impact on guidance and counseling. The results indicate that the level of friendship-building skills among high school students falls within the low category, with a mean of 208.083 and a standard deviation of 26.411 across interaction skills, empathy, self-disclosure, emotional support, and trust. The profile of male students' ability to establish friendships indicates a lower level of mastery than that of female students.

Keywords: adolescent, friendship, guidance and counseling

Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh kebutuhan remaja untuk dapat diterima oleh lingkungannya sebagai makhluk sosial. Pembentukan sikap dan perilaku sosial remaja banyak ditentukan oleh pengaruh lingkungan dan teman sebaya. Hubungan teman sebaya tersebut memfasilitasi remaja dalam memperoleh kemampuan menjalin relasi pertemanan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengumpulkan data empiris mengenai profil kemampuan menjalin relasi pertemanan siswa Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) dan implikasinya bagi bimbingan dan konseling. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain penelitian survei. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan tingkat kemampuan menjalin relasi pertemanan siswa Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) berada pada kategori rendah dengan nilai mean sebesar 208.083 dan standar deviasi sebesar 26.411, baik pada aspek kemampuan berinteraksi, kemampuan berempati, pengungkapan diri, dukungan emosional, dan kepercayaan. Gambaran profil kemampuan menjalin relasi pertemanan siswa laki-laki menunjukkan tingkat penguasaan kemampuan menjalin relasi pertemanan yang lebih rendah dibandingkan siswa perempuan.

Keywords: remaja, pertemanan, bimbingan dan konseling

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INTRODUCTION

The need to be accepted by one's environment is essential for adolescents as social beings. Every individual entering adolescence will face social adjustment challenges, including difficulties with peer relationships. Their interest in peer activities increases, and their desire to be accepted as a group member grows stronger. They will be happy if they are accepted into the group. Additionally, through socialization, friends tend to become more similar to one another over time (Dishion et al., 1996; Giletta et al., 2011). Flexibility in socializing is a characteristic of adolescents as they develop emotional and social maturity (Yusuf et al., 2021). To fulfill social development needs, navigate life changes and phenomena, and take advantage of opportunities, choices, and chances, every adolescent needs the ability to establish social relationships, including friendships.

The ability to form friendships is essential for social relationships; individuals are social beings, and a lack of strong social skills can lead to a life characterized by loneliness and stress. Weak social relationship skills can lead to various difficulties, particularly in forming interpersonal relationships with parents, teachers, friends, and relatives. Even an individual's level of learning and academic challenges are indirectly attributable to weak social relationship skills (Cartledge, 1992; Suherman, 2006; Rohimah, 2024). Parker and Asher (Erdley & Day, 2017) state that children who are less accepted experience lower-quality friendships in terms of validation, conflict resolution, assistance and guidance, and intimate exchange than their more accepted peers.

The ability to form friendships enhances students' capacity to initiate and maintain social relationships and resolve social conflicts. This ability also provides students with opportunities to compare themselves with others and learn to work in groups. The ability to form friendships is an essential aspect of adolescent life that influences the quality of their interpersonal relationships (Rohimah, 2024). Hartup & Stevens (Erdley & Day, 2017) state that establishing healthy and positive relationships with peers can help adolescents build self-confidence, improve communication skills, and feel emotional support, which are essential to their development. The ability to establish close friendships is closely related to the ability to develop interpersonal relationships. The ability to form friendships refers to an individual's skills in establishing, maintaining, and creating healthy, meaningful relationships with others. The ability to form friendships encompasses social skills, empathy, openness, support, and trust (Rubin et al., 2006; Rohimah, 2024).

Reviewing the literature map of research on friendship-building skills, at least four areas of research have been identified as areas of concern for researchers, namely that friendship plays a vital role in individual development and adaptation across major developmental transitions by providing support, socialization, and emotional connections (Hartup & Stevens, 1997; Bagwell et al., 1998; Erdley & Day, 2017), the exploration of factors influencing friendship (Oswald et al., 2004; Oswald, 2017), and the identification of the number of friends in friendships (Parker & Asher, 1993; Erdley & Day, 2017). Relatively limited research has examined the profile of friendship-building abilities, particularly among high school students. To date, two studies have described the profile of friendship-building skills, as reported by Rohimah (2009) and Rohman (2016), both of which focused on junior high school students.

The profile of friendship-building abilities among high school students revealed in this study provides empirical evidence for the development and improvement of personal and social guidance and counseling programs, particularly in fostering social maturity competencies among high school students. Thus, the ability to establish



friendships in this study is defined as the capacity required by individuals to form, maintain, and develop healthy, meaningful relationships with others. The ability to establish friendships in this personal-social guidance program will focus on five aspects of ability, namely: 1) social skills, 2) empathy, 3) self-disclosure, 4) emotional support, and 5) trust.

METHOD

The research approach used in this study is quantitative, involving the collection of numerical data and statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey research design. Survey research design is used to collect data from large, diverse samples (Cresswell, 2012). By administering a survey, the researcher can collect data from many students at State High School 1 Cigugur, Kuningan Regency, West Java Province, thereby obtaining a more accurate picture and enabling better generalizations about adolescents' ability to establish friendships. This study involved 180 participants, namely 10th-grade high school students aged 16-17 years. These participants were Sundanese and were selected via random sampling, ensuring that each student had an equal chance of selection. The scale used in this study was the Likert scale. The Likert scale is widely used in instruments to measure opinions, beliefs, and attitudes (DeVellis, 2017). The Likert response scale ranges from 1 to 4, with the following categories: very appropriate (4), appropriate (3), not appropriate (2), and wildly inappropriate (1). Positive statements were scored as very appropriate (4), appropriate (3), not appropriate (2), and wildly inappropriate (1). Negative statement items are scored as "strongly disagree" (4), "disagree" (3), 'agree' (2), and "strongly agree" (1). By employing statistical and mathematical models, this quantitative method aims to optimize research outcomes (Cresswell, 2012).

The development of this instrument for assessing high school students' friendship-building skills was synthesized from friendship theories developed by several experts, namely Parker and Asher (1993), Hartup (1997), Bagwell, Newcomb, and Bukowski (1998), Berndt (2002), Fox and Boulton (2006), and Rubin and Bukowski (2006). The High School Students' Friendship Relationship Ability Inventory, developed through RASCH psychometric testing, has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.95, which is categorized as very good and represents the interaction between the person and the items as a whole. The person's reliability is 0.92 (excellent), and the item's reliability is 0.96 (amazing). Based on the person and item reliability values, it can be concluded that the consistency of the respondents' answers is good and the quality of the items in the instrument is excellent.

Five aspects support the development of teenagers' ability to establish friendships: interaction skills, empathy, openness, emotional support, and trust. More specifically, the elements of the ability to develop friendships in this study are as follows.

1. **Social Skill:** To measure social interaction skills. This instrument comprises 17 favorable and six unfavorable statements assessing the ability to initiate and maintain conversations, listen well, read facial expressions and body language, and respond appropriately to social situations.
2. **Empathy:** To measure the ability to understand and feel the feelings and experiences of others. This instrument comprises aspects of understanding and feeling the feelings and experiences of others, showing sensitivity to the needs of friends, and showing compassion for others' suffering, with seven favorable statements and two unfavorable statements.



3. Self-Disclosure: Openness refers to the ability to be honest, open, and authentic in friendships. This instrument includes indicators of honesty, openness, and genuineness in friendships, with six favorable statements and two unfavorable statements.
4. Emotional Support: measures the ability to provide emotional support within friendships. This instrument comprises indicators of concern for friends, providing moral support when friends are experiencing difficulties or problems, and showing appreciation for friends, with 11 favorable statements and two unfavorable statements.
5. Trust: Trust creates a sense of security and comfort between friends, enabling the formation of strong and lasting relationships. This instrument comprises indicators of protection and comfort in friendships, keeping one's word and promises, being willing to be a place to express feelings, and being willing to be a place for friends to keep secrets, with nine favorable and three unfavorable statements.

The data were analyzed using a descriptive statistical approach. The response scale was ordinal, ranging from 1 to 4. The ordinal data were analyzed using the Rasch Model with the Winsteps program (version 3.73) to assess the ability to establish friendships among high school students. The Rasch Model provides high levels of accuracy, reliability, and validity (Bond & M. Fox, 2015). The activity records were analyzed descriptively to give an overview of the activities that support the formation of friendships among high school students.

Data analysis in this study employed a descriptive approach using the statistical software JASP to provide an overview of the ability to establish friendships among students at State High School 1 Cigugur. The data were analyzed by calculating the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum for each aspect of friendship formation. Additionally, this data analysis used ANOVA to assess differences in the ability to form friendships by gender, based on the p-value (significance). The results of this analysis were divided into three categories based on score intervals to provide an overview of friendship-building abilities: low, moderate, and high. The results of this study are expected to give a general overview of the profile of friendship-building skills among students at State High School 1 Cigugur, and to inform the development of guidance and counseling services to enhance friendship-building abilities.

Table 1.

	Summary Statistic			
	Mean	SD	Reliability	Cronbach Alpha
Person	1.10	0.75	0.92	0.95
Item	0.00	0.59	0.96	

Based on the table above, the average respondent value is 1.10 logit, indicating that participants' abilities exceed the instrument's difficulty level. The Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.95, which falls within the "outstanding" category, indicating high internal consistency across items. The person's reliability is 0.92, which falls in the 'excellent' category, and the item's reliability is 0.96, also in the 'excellent' category. Based on the person and item reliability values, it can be concluded that the consistency of the respondents' answers is good and the quality of the items in the instrument is excellent.



RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study was conducted in Kuningan Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to 180 high school students aged 16-17 years. The number of research participants is shown in table 1.

Table 2.

Demographic Overview by Gender

School	Class	Gender		Jumlah
		Male	Female	
State High School 1 Cigugur	1	6	11	17
	2	13	20	33
	3	16	20	36
	4	14	17	31
	5	8	17	25
	6	4	6	10
	7	7	14	21
	8	2	5	7
Total		70	110	180

The ability to establish friendships among high school students comprises five aspects: interaction skills, empathy, openness, emotional support, and trust. The level of ability to develop friendships among high school students is indicated by logit scores derived from Rasch Model analyses, using Winstep version 3.73.

The findings of the descriptive analysis of the friendship-building ability profile of high school students at State High School 1 Cigugur, are presented in the following table.

Table 3.

Descriptive Analysis Results

Aspek	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Category
Social Skill	180	72.365	9.514	35.000	89.000	Low
Emphaty	180	29.558	4.701	12.000	36.000	Low
Self-Disclosure	180	23.972	4.204	11.000	32.000	Low
Emotional Support	180	41.144	6.210	22.000	52.000	Low
Trust	180	41.044	5.738	22.000	48.000	Low
Total		208.083	26.411	113.000	252.000	Low

The descriptive analysis in Table 3 shows that the overall profile of students' ability to establish friendships at State High School 1 Cigugur is significant, with a mean (average) of 208.083 and a standard deviation of 26.411, placing in the low category. The profile of students' ability to establish friendships at State High School 1 Cigugur, as assessed across all aspects, indicates a low level. The findings of the profile of the ability to develop friendships among students at State High School 1 Cigugur consist of five aspects, namely the social skill aspect, which has a mean value of 72.365 and a standard deviation of 9.514; the empathy aspect, which has a mean value of 29.558 and a standard deviation of 4.701; the self-disclosure element, which has a mean value of 23.972 and a



standard deviation of 4.204; the emotional support aspect, which has a mean value of 41.144 and a standard deviation of 6.210, and the trust aspect had a mean value of 41.044 and a standard deviation of 5.738.

The results of the analysis of differences in the ability to establish friendships among students at State High School 1 Cigugur, based on gender, are as follows.

Table 4.
 Descriptive Analysis Results Based on Gender

Aspek	Valid		Mean		SD		Coefficient of Variation	
	L	P	L	P	L	P	L	P
Social Skill	70	110	70.529	73.523	8.466	9.983	0.120	0.136
Emphaty	70	110	28.514	30.216	3.881	5.059	0.136	0.167
Self-Disclosure	70	110	23.229	24.441	4.157	4.184	0.179	0.171
Emotional Support	70	110	39.957	41.892	5.686	6.432	0.142	0.154
Trust	70	110	39.300	42.144	5.908	5.368	0.150	0.127
Total Aspek	70	110	201.529	212.216	28.098	31.026	0.727	0.755

Based on Table 4 of the descriptive analysis, the profile of high school students' ability to establish friendships by gender generally falls within the low category. In terms of social skills, the average score was 70.529 with a standard deviation of 8.466. In contrast, empathy scored an average of 28.514 with a standard deviation of 3.881, self-disclosure with an average score of 23.229 and a standard deviation of 4.157, emotional support with an average score of 39.957 and a standard deviation of 5.686, and trust with an average score of 39.300 and a standard deviation of 5.908. Male students are in the low category.

Meanwhile, female students obtained an average score of 73.523 with a standard deviation of 9.983 for social skills, an average score of 30.216 with a standard deviation of 5.059 for empathy, an average score of 24.441 and a standard deviation of 4.184, emotional support with an average score of 41.892 and a standard deviation of 6.432, and trust with an average score of 42.144 and a standard deviation of 5.368 female students were categorized as low.

Table 5.
 Results of Tests Based on Gender Difference

Aspect	Mean	Mean Square	P - Value
Social Skill	72.365	384.797	0.039
Emphaty	29.558	124.344	0.017
Self-Disclosure	23.972	63.150	0.058
Emotional Support	41.144	160.691	0.041
Trust	41.044	347.253	0.001
Total	208.083	4903.503	0.008

The results of the difference test in Table 5 show that the overall profile of friendship-building abilities differs significantly between males and females ($p < 0.05$; $p = 0.008$). Based on the findings of the above study, data was obtained showing extreme



differences in the profile of friendship-building abilities with a p-value of <0.05 , namely in the aspects of trust at 0.001 and empathy at 0.017. Based on the above research findings, there are significant differences in the profile of friendship-building abilities based on gender among students at State High School 1 Cigugur.

Discussion

The profile of friendship-building skills among male and female students shown above indicates low mastery across both groups, with male students demonstrating lower mastery than female students. Low mastery of friendship-building skills will affect adolescents' mental and personal development. The absence of intimate and satisfying social relationships can leave adolescents feeling isolated. Adolescents will also become very unhappy and uncomfortable. They will always feel pressured in their social interactions. This is in line with Schmidt's statement (Eliasa, 2010) that being an adolescent with good academic achievement but failing in interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships often makes adolescents feel dissatisfied with their social life, isolate themselves, have chaotic relationships, engage in violence in social relationships, become depressed, and tragically, decide to end their lives.

Every child entering adolescence will face social adjustment problems, one of which is peer acceptance. The formation of social attitudes and behaviors in adolescents is primarily shaped by environmental and peer influences (Steinberg, 2015). If the social environment facilitates or provides positive opportunities for adolescents, they will achieve mature social development. Adolescents are considered socially mature when their behavior reflects successful socialization, enabling them to fit into their environment and be accepted as members of society. Social maturity facilitates adolescents' orientation and socialization in the external world, namely, the community (Sumiati, 2010).

It will also make it easier for them to socialize independently, thereby reducing the likelihood that adolescents will become dependent on their social environment. The development of adolescents' social life is characterized by an increasing influence of peers, with most of their time spent interacting with them.

In an investigation, it was found that children spent 10% of their time each day interacting with peers at age 2, 20% at age 4, and more than 40% between ages 7–11 (Santrock, 2012). Social development during adolescence is influenced more by peer groups than by parents (Conger, 1991; Papalia & Olds, 2001; Firmansyah, 2020). Parental support remains relevant during adolescence (Bagwell and Schmidt, 2013; Way, 2013; Flynn et al, 2017) however, adolescents spend more time with their friends and seek validation and advice from peers more than they did in their childhood (Bagwell and Schmidt, 2013; Way, 2013). Compared with children, adolescents engage in more activities outside the home, such as school and extracurricular activities, and spend more time with friends. Thus, during adolescence, the role of peer groups is significant. In adolescents, the influence of the environment on behavior is recognized as quite strong. Although adolescents have reached a stage of cognitive development sufficient to make independent decisions, their self-determination in behavior is strongly influenced by peer pressure. Peer groups are recognized as influencing adolescents' considerations and decisions regarding their behavior. Conger et al (Firmansyah, 2020) state that peer groups are the primary source of reference for adolescents regarding perceptions and attitudes related to lifestyle. For adolescents, friends become a source of information, for example, about how to dress attractively, what music or movies are good, and so on.



During adolescence, social cognition develops, which is the ability to understand others (Yusuf et al., 2021). This ability encourages adolescents to form social relationships with peers. The philosophy of friendship formation provides a framework for guidance and counseling tailored to the general aim of promoting prosocial behavior and harmonious interpersonal relationships (Rodgers et al, 2005).

The ability to form friendships in adolescence has essential implications for guidance and counseling practices. Guidance and counseling, in accordance with Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 111 of 2014, aim to help students achieve maturity and independence in various aspects of life, including personal, social, academic, and career domains, as well as the healthy and responsible use of digital technology. A deep understanding of the importance of friendship in adolescents' lives can help guidance and counseling teachers create a supportive environment that fosters adolescents' social maturity and helps them manage their friendships in healthy and positive ways. Guidance and counseling teachers need to help adolescents understand how to choose peers who are positive and supportive of their growth. Additionally, it is crucial to equip adolescents with strong social skills to form healthy, beneficial friendships that support their social development. With a deeper understanding of the dynamics of adolescent friendships, guidance and counseling can provide more effective support in helping adolescents manage their peer relationships (Kuruzović, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the overall profile of friendship-building skills among students at State High School 1 Cigugur is in the low category. This indicates that students at State High School 1 Cigugur demonstrate a relatively strong level of mastery of friendship-building skills and require substantial improvement through targeted intervention. Consistent with the general profile, the descriptive analyses of each aspect of friendship-building skills indicated low levels of social skills, empathy, self-disclosure, social support, and trust. This means that students at State High School 1 Cigugur do not yet have optimal friendship-building skills. Meanwhile, the descriptive analysis of friendship-building skills by gender shows significant differences in the development of friendship values. The implications of this study for guidance and counseling are that a preventive-enhancement approach is needed to improve friendship-building skills among high school students. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of student behavior, including peer relationship maturity. The study contributes to the identification of student needs, providing a reference for designing appropriate intervention programs to develop optimal friendship-building skills. This study has limitations, including a small sample size and a single school. Further research could use a larger, more diverse sample, including elementary schools, junior high schools, senior high schools, vocational schools, and universities, as well as demographic factors such as age, culture, economy, social status, and residential area.

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