

Correlation Between Parenting Styles and Adolescent Depression Tendencies

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ABSTRACT

Adolescent depression is a significant mental health concern that requires serious attention, as it can affect their social, emotional, and academic functioning. This study aims to examine the association between parenting styles and the tendency toward depression among adolescents. A quantitative approach was employed using a correlational analytic design with a cross-sectional method. The sample consisted of 447 seventh- and eighth-grade students from SMPN 13 Semarang. Depression levels were assessed using the Children’s Depression Inventory (CDI). The findings show that 37.6% (168) of the respondents exhibited depressive tendencies. Most adolescents reported experiencing authoritarian parenting. Chi-square analysis revealed a significant relationship between parenting styles and adolescents’ depressive tendencies ($p = 0.009$). These results highlight that parenting style plays an important role in adolescents’ psychological well-being, underscoring the need for parental education and targeted interventions to prevent and reduce the risk of depression.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are a population highly vulnerable to mental health disorders. Global data show that symptoms of depression among adolescents have increased in recent years and have become a serious public health concern. Depression in adolescence can negatively affect academic performance, social relationships, and increase the risk of engaging in harmful behaviors, including suicide. Suicide is currently the fourth leading cause of death among adolescents worldwide. Most psychological conditions in this age group remain undetected, resulting in the absence of appropriate interventions (Kemenkes, 2023; WHO, 2025).

Globally, it is estimated that approximately one in seven adolescents aged 10–19 years (around 14.3%) experience mental health disorders. According to data from the NCHS, between August 2021–2023, about 13.1% of adolescents reportedly experienced depression (Brody & Hughes, 2025). Based on data from the SKI (2023), 630,827 individuals in Central Java were identified as experiencing depression (Wicaksono A., 2023). Meanwhile, a report from Semarang City documented that 620 adolescents (45.8%) were experiencing depression, including two cases of suicide attempts (Wahyuni & Astuti, 2025).

Among adolescents and adults with depression, 87.9% reported experiencing difficulties with household tasks or social activities as a result of depressive symptoms. Despite this, the majority of these cases remain undiagnosed and do not receive adequate intervention (WHO, 2025; Brody & Hughes, 2025).

One of the factors associated with adolescent mental health is parenting style. Numerous studies have shown that authoritative parenting is generally linked to more adaptive psychological outcomes, whereas authoritarian or less supportive parenting styles tend to be associated with increased symptoms of depression and anxiety in adolescents (Khadka et al., 2025). Similarly, a study by Keijser et al. (2020) found a significant relationship between adolescents' perceptions of parenting and depression levels: parenting characterized by excessive control, lack of warmth, or inconsistent rules was associated with heightened depressive symptoms; conversely,

supportive and structured (authoritative) parenting was associated with lower depression risk. Given these concerns, the present study aims to examine the relationship between parenting styles and depressive tendencies among adolescents.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach with a correlational analytic design using a cross-sectional method, in which data were collected at a single point in time to describe the prevalence of specific characteristics within a population (Nursalam, 2014).

The study population consisted of students at SMPN 41 (State Junior High School) Semarang, and the sample included all 7th- and 8th-grade students, determined using a total sampling technique. The inclusion criteria were: adolescents in grades 7 and 8, able to read and write, having depressive tendencies as measured using the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI), willing to participate from the beginning to the end of the study, and having obtained parental or guardian consent. The exclusion criteria were: students with special needs and those who did not complete all stages of the research process.

Depressive tendencies were measured using the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI), an instrument adapted from the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and developed to assess depressive symptoms in children aged 7–17 years. CDI is a self-report instrument completed directly by the child. It has a test–retest reliability coefficient of 0.87 ($p < 0.001$) in clinical populations and 0.38 in community samples (Kovacs, 2015). The instrument has a sensitivity of 69% and specificity of 43%. CDI consists of 27 items covering five dimensions: negative mood, ineffectiveness, anhedonia, negative self-esteem, and interpersonal problems. Each item is scored from 0–2, where 0 indicates no symptoms, 1 indicates moderate symptoms, and 2 indicates severe symptoms. The total score ranges from 0–54, with a score ≥ 13 indicating depressive tendency (Rivera et al., 2005).

The research procedures began with a preparation phase, including the development of the proposal and submission for ethical clearance. The implementation phase included conducting socialization activities with teachers regarding the assessment of depressive tendencies in adolescents. Afterwards, informed

consent was distributed, followed by the administration of the research questionnaire to 7th- and 8th-grade students through Google Forms. The final stage involved data collection and data analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study was conducted from July to August 2025. Screening was carried out on 447 students in grades 7 and 8 at SMPN 13 Semarang, and a total of 168 students (37.6%) were identified as having depressive tendencies. The characteristics of the respondents are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Characteristics of Adolescent Respondents in Semarang City (n = 168)

Characteristics	f	%
Age (years)		
11	2	1.2%
12	3	1.8%
13	68	40.5%
14	60	35.7%
15	35	20.8%
Sex		
Male	75	44.6%
Female	93	55.4%
Number of Siblings		
0	7	4.2%
1	50	29.8%
2	58	34.5%
3	47	28.0%
4	5	3.0%
≥5	1	0.6%
Birth Order		
First child	87	51.8%
Second child	50	29.8%
Third child	18	10.7%
Fourth child	11	6.5%
Fifth child	2	1.2%
Father's Education		
No formal education	4	2.4%
Elementary school	20	11.9%
Junior high school	35	20.8%
Senior high school	70	41.7%
Higher education	39	23.2%
Father's Occupation		
Civil servant	17	10.1%

Private employee	98	58.3%
Entrepreneur	48	28.6%
Unemployed	5	3.0%

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Table 1 shows that among the 168 respondents, the majority were female (55.4%) and first-born children (51.8%). Most parents (fathers) had a senior high school level of education (41.7%) and worked as private employees (58.3%).

Depressive Tendencies

Depressive tendencies were assessed using the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI). The distribution of depressive tendencies among adolescents in Semarang is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Depressive Tendencies Among Adolescents (n = 447)

Category	f (%)
Depressed (CDI ≥ 13)	168 (37.6%)
Not Depressed (CDI < 13)	279 (62.4%)

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Parenting Styles

Table 3. Distribution of Parenting Styles

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Parenting Style	Authoritarian	120	71.4%
	Permissive-Indulgent	18	10.7%
	Permissive-Neglectful	30	17.9%

Table 3 shows that the dominant parenting style experienced by respondents was the authoritarian parenting style (71.4%).

Bivariate Analysis

Table 4. Bivariate Analysis of Parenting Style and Depressive Tendencies (n = 168)

Variable	χ^2 (Pearson)	df	p (Asymp. Sig.)
Parenting Style	42.057	42	0.009

Based on the Chi-Square test results; a significant

relationship was found between parenting style and depressive tendencies in adolescents ($p = 0.009$). These findings highlight the crucial role of parenting in maintaining adolescents' mental health, particularly in reducing the risk of depression.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the majority of respondents were female (62.5%), suggesting that adolescent girls are at greater risk of experiencing depressive tendencies compared to boys. This is consistent with Liu et al. (2025), who reported that psychological capital serves as a more protective factor for males than females, explaining why female adolescents tend to be more vulnerable to depression. Similarly, Shawon et al. (2024) found a significantly higher prevalence of depression among females than males (e.g., 5.4% vs. 1.7% in their national sample), with females demonstrating a higher odds ratio even after demographic adjustments. Toro et al. (2025) also confirmed that sex differences persist across studies, with females consistently showing higher rates of depressive symptoms and depression-related suicide risk.

This study further demonstrates a significant association between parenting style and depressive tendencies among adolescents. This reinforces existing evidence that parenting style is strongly correlated with adolescent mental health and psychological well-being. For instance, a study titled *Parenting Style and Depression Among Students: The Mediating Role of Self-Esteem* conducted in Bekasi reported that authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles exert direct effects on depressive symptoms among senior high school students ($\beta = -0.257$ for authoritative; $\beta = 0.181$ for authoritarian; $\beta = 0.109$ for permissive; $p < .01$). Moreover, both authoritative and authoritarian styles indirectly influence depression through self-esteem as a mediating factor, highlighting that parenting shapes adolescents' mental health through internal psychological mechanisms (Jannah et al., 2022).

Similarly, Wang et al. (2024) found that parenting style has substantial effects on emotional and behavioral problems among adolescents, with "resilience" serving as a significant mediator. Their findings suggest that adolescents raised in supportive and adaptive parenting environments demonstrate

higher levels of resilience, which in turn lowers the likelihood of developing depressive symptoms and emotional or behavioral difficulties.

In Indonesia, Supartini et al. (2023) also reported a significant relationship between parenting style and depression risk among adolescents ($p = 0.000$). These findings collectively strengthen the argument that parenting style is not merely a background or sociocultural factor but a crucial structural and psychosocial determinant of adolescent mental health.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that depressive tendencies among adolescents remain a significant mental health concern, with a prevalence of 37.6% among students at SMPN 13 Semarang. The results further reveal that the majority of respondents experienced authoritarian parenting, and a statistically significant relationship was found between parenting style and depressive tendencies ($p = 0.009$). These findings underscore the essential role of parenting style in shaping adolescents' psychological conditions and highlight the need for parental education and early preventive interventions to reduce the risk of depression.

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