

The Role of Emotional Intelligence as a Moderator of the Influence of Peer Conformity on Juvenile Delinquency

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Abstract: Juvenile delinquency is behavior carried out by young children due to social neglect so that deviant behavior is formed. Delinquency does not appear without factors influencing it, one of which is when adolescents conform to their peers. The influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency is weakened when adolescents have emotional intelligence. By having emotional intelligence, adolescents can express their emotions appropriately and have adaptive emotional regulation. The purpose of this study was to find out whether emotional intelligence can moderate the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency. This study is quantitative with research subjects of as many as 350 adolescents. Measurement using Self Report Delinquency (SRD), Peer Conformity Disposition Scale (PCSD), and Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) instruments. Data analysis using Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA). The results showed that emotional intelligence did not act as a moderator on the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency ($\beta=0.558$; $p=0.081$).

Keywords: Peer Conformity; Juvenile Delinquency; Emotional Intelligence



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Introduction

Juvenile delinquency is a case that has been heard a lot and is a little difficult to overcome. When devoting emotions to get recognition, acceptance and attention from others, it makes teenagers go the wrong way in determining their life path, resulting in teenagers committing dangerous actions that harm themselves and others. These dangerous acts can be in the form of acts of violence, crime, robbery, theft, extortion, fraud, persecution, drug abuse, liquor, sexual behavior before marriage, abortion, fights, speeding on the street, skipping school, smoking, drugs (Sarwono, 2013).

Quoted from CNN Indonesia, KOMNAS Perempuan said that the dispensation for child marriage has increased 7 times since 2016, the total number of dispensation applications in

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2021 reached 59,709. The application cannot be rejected because most of the children who do the dispensation are already pregnant. Then in 2021 KPAI stated that 23% of the residents of the Special Children's Development Institution (LPKA) were perpetrators of theft, 17.8% were entangled in narcotics crimes and 13.2% (bnn.go.id) cases. In addition, KPAI also said that brawls between teenagers had decreased during the pandemic in 2020, but brawls increased again after face-to-face learning was enforced, brawls between teenagers increased again and peaked in 2022.

KPAI also explained that the death toll due to brawls in 2022 is very high (metrotvnews.com). The Indonesian Education Monitoring Network (JPPI) attached data as of September 2024 where there have been 293 cases of violence in schools. Among them are sexual violence, bullying, physical violence, psychological violence and policies that contain violence. The number of cases increased from 2023, which was 285 cases (kompas.com). These cases are some evidences of juvenile delinquency that occurred in Indonesia. This of course makes the community, especially the parents of teenagers, worried, because the delinquency committed will have a bad impact on the future of teenagers and also harm the surrounding environment.

Based on a survey conducted by researchers in Kempas Jaya village, it shows that juvenile delinquency occurs. Such as smoking, speeding on the road, skipping school, some are even expelled because they are caught doing indecent acts and end in pregnancy. The results of an interview with a teacher at one of the schools said that students are now very disrespectful, some have created a group to demonize one of the teachers, some have deliberately skipped school when the lesson is taking place. Smoking, speaking rudely, and not using school supplies while at school. The teacher also explained that most of them went along with their classmates or groups. The people there also confirmed the existence of juvenile delinquency, such as large events, several teenagers were caught committing indecent acts and getting drunk, and driving motor vehicles at high speed until some ended in accidents.

There are several factors that cause juvenile delinquency, including identity, self-control, gender, parental influence, expectations for education, achievement in school, peer influence, socioeconomic status and the quality of the surrounding environment (Santrock, 2003). Of all the factors above, the peer factor has a great influence on adolescents, it is because peers can provide emotional support when adolescents are dealing with problems from home and school (Fatimah, 2017). Peers can be a source of information and reference in behaving to gain recognition and acceptance in a community or group. This is often done by adolescents when their friends display these behaviors and they follow them or commonly called conformity (Sears et al., 1991).

Conformity is an action that is in accordance with the values of a group, whether the value is in accordance with itself or not and is carried out so that a person is accepted into the group (Arianty, 2018). Conformity in peers affects adolescent personality patterns in two types. First, the self-concept that adolescents have will be in line with the members of their group. Second, adolescents are more likely to develop behaviors that will be recognized by the group (Mariyati

et al., 2021). Peer groups are the main source of reference for adolescents in perceptions and attitudes related to the lives of adolescents even though adolescents have reached an adequate stage of cognitive development to determine their own actions, but in adolescent behavior is greatly influenced by peer groups (Jahja, 2011).

Berndt (1979) mentions aspects of peer conformity including; first, there is pressure to conform to group norms, which creates a desire to be accepted by peer members. Second, there is a social influence in the formation of adolescent identity, where a person tends to adopt behaviors or actions that are considered acceptable in the group.

The influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency is supported by the *theory of differential association* proposed by Edwin H. Sutherland. According to this theory, a person learns the delinquent behavior of others who supports lawlessness and the value is received through an intimate process of communication (Maloku, 2020). Sutherland's theory does not explain why someone becomes a perpetrator, but explains how it happens (Raturi et al., 2022). This theory also states that adolescents become delinquent because they are involved in the midst of a social environment, where delinquent thoughts and behaviors are used as a stepping stone to overcome problems. Therefore, the longer the child gets along and the more intense the relationship with naughty children, the longer the process of differential association occurs (Kartono, 2013).

This is emphasized by other research that states that peer conformity is one of the factors for juvenile delinquency (Sadida et al., 2018). Ganta & Soetjiningsih (2022) say that peer conformity is positively correlated with juvenile delinquency, but different results were found in several other studies. Among them, the results of research from Situngkir & Wibowo (2021) said that there was no relationship between peer conformity and juvenile delinquency. In addition, peer conformity has no effect on cyberbullying behavior and drinking behavior (Arianty, 2018; Sutristia, 2021).

From several research results related to the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency, there are different results. In this case, there is a suspicion that there are other factors that determine the relationship between the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency, one of which is the skill of adolescents in recognizing and managing their emotions (Fitriani & Septiyanah, 2020). Because emotional intelligence is influenced by awareness and self-control, part of self-awareness requires a person to know the emotions of himself and others and to understand and estimate a person's emotional reaction to the situation he or she is facing (Rini et al., 2009).

Salovey & Mayer (1989) explained that emotional intelligence is the ability to monitor one's own feelings and emotions and those of others, which are used to guide one's thoughts and actions. Emotional intelligence is considered a mental ability, as it involves the ability to understand, assess and express emotions well, the ability to facilitate thinking through feelings, the ability to manage emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Fernández-Berrocal et al., 2006).

The Bar-On model explains that emotional-social intelligence is part of the interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills, and facilitators and establishes how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate to the social environment and cope with daily demands (Bar-On, 2006). Meanwhile, according to Goleman (1996), emotional intelligence refers to a person's ability to recognize and understand one's own feelings and the feelings of others, as well as to motivate oneself, as well as manage emotions well in ourselves to relate to others.

Emotional intelligence has 4 aspects, namely Self Emotional Appraisal (SEA), related to the ability of individuals to understand their own emotions, moods, and thoughts and be able to express their emotions; Others Emotional Appraisal (OEA), the ability to understand the emotions of those around them. Individuals with this ability will have sensitivity to the feelings and emotions of others and have good relationships with others; Regulation of Emotion (ROA), is the ability of individuals to regulate their emotions, thereby helping individuals in recovery when experiencing psychological stress; and Use of Emotion (UOE), related to the ability of individuals to utilize their emotions by directing to constructive activities and individual performance will be more controlled (Wong et al., 2002).

The results of research from Yunalia & Ethics (2020) revealed that emotional intelligence is able to reduce the level of peer conformity. Because by having emotional intelligence, adolescents will have the ability to understand their own emotions well, have the ability to always motivate themselves to try their best, have a good understanding of the people around them, and always maintain social relationships (Dewi & Yusri, 2023).

Based on the explanation of the above problem, this study aims to determine the role of emotional intelligence as a moderator of the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency. The results of this study are expected to be a reference for future research related to the same variable and further studies can be a guideline in efforts to prevent juvenile delinquency.

Method

This study aims to see if the variable of emotional intelligence can play a role as a moderator variable on the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency. This study uses a quantitative method with an ex-post facto design. Ex-post facto research examines unmanipulated relationships. Ex-post facto is research conducted after an event has occurred (Creswell, 2014) The independent variable in this study is peer conformity, the dependent variable in this study is juvenile delinquency, and emotional intelligence as the moderator variable. The population in this study is adolescents who live in Kempas Jaya, boys and girls who are 12-18 years old and are sitting in junior high school and high school equivalent, using accidental sampling obtained as many as 350. All respondents stated their availability to fill out the questionnaire through the informed consent given. Research procedures in this study is searching for references related to juvenile delinquency research, peer conformity and emotional intelligence, then searching and compiling research instruments. The second stage

of the researcher carried out data collection, this was carried out on October 5, 2023 – November 20, 2023 through a *google form* and also in the form of a printout distributed through individuals. From the measuring tools distributed, 390 were collected, but only 350 subjects could be carried out at the data analysis stage. Finally, analyze the data obtained from SPSS 25 assistance.

This study uses a self-reported delinquency (SRD) instrument to measure juvenile delinquency which is a scale developed by Curcio et al., (2015). This scale has been translated into Indonesian by Laure et al., (2020). This scale contains 30 statement items, this scale is in the form of a guttman scale, starting from 1 (ever) and 0 (never), on this scale it has a reliability value ($\alpha=0.753$).

The measurement of the peer conformity variable was measured using The Peer Conformity Disposition Scale (PCDS) developed by Berndt, which has been translated into Indonesian by Fadillah (2018). This scale is in the form of a Likert of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). This scale totals 16 items with a reliability value ($\alpha=0.794$).

The measurement of emotional intelligence variables using the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) instrument developed by Wong & Law (2002) has been translated into Indonesian by Ningrum (2021). This instrument is in the form of a Likert scale with 4 answer options from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). This instrument amounted to 16 items with a reliability value of ($\alpha=0.934$).

The data from the results of this study were then analyzed using the moderator regression analysis (MRA) method, with the help of SPSS 25 software. This data analysis technique was used to measure the variables of peer conformity to juvenile delinquency moderated by emotional intelligence.

Result

Table 1 is a description of the research variables that shows the minimum score value, maximum score, hypothetical mean, empirical mean, and standard deviation value obtained from the data collection results. Table 1 presents the results of the variable score test by showing the Mean and Standard Deviation values for each variable. In this research sample, juvenile delinquency (Y) was in the medium category with an empirical mean value ($M=12.19$). The peer conformity variable (X) is in the medium category with an empirical value ($M=37.61$). The emotional intelligence variable (M) is in the medium category with an empirical value ($M=41.09$).

Table 2 shows that the correlation value of the peer conformity variable with the juvenile delinquency variable has an r value of 0.214 ($p<0.01$), which means that the influence between these two variables is significant and has a positive relationship. The correlation value between emotional intelligence variables and adolescent delinquency variables has a negative relationship with an r value of -0.090 ($p<0.05$). The correlation value of the peer conformity

variable with emotional intelligence had a negative relationship with an r value of -0.113 ($p < 0.01$).

Table 1
Descriptive Analysis

Variabel	Mean empirik	Staggering deviation	Low	Keep	Tall
Juvenile Delinquency (Y)	12.19	4.68	63	216	71
Peer Conformity (X)	37.61	6.71	55	243	52
Emotional Intelligence (M)	41.09	10.54	70	233	47

Table 2
Correlation between Variables (N=350)

Variable	Juvenile delinquency	Peer conformity	Emotional intelligence
Juvenile delinquency (Y)	1	0.214**	-0.090*
Peer conformity (X)		1	-0.113**
Emotional intelligence (M)			1

Table 3
Hypothesis Test Results

Variable	B	t-count	p-value	R2
Model 1				
Peer conformity	0.206	3.913	0.000	0.050
Emotional intelligence	-0.067	-1.271	0.205	
Model 2				
Peer conformity	-0.123	-0.630	0.529	0.058
Emotional intelligence	-0.547	-1.960	0.051	
Interaction (X*M)	0.558	1.752	0.081	

Y=Juvenile Delinquency

The hypothesis test in this study uses moderated regression analysis (MRA) with the help of SPSS 25. The results of the hypothesis test in Table 5 show a moderation value of $\beta = 0.558$; $p = 0.081$ ($p > 0.05$), thus it can be concluded that the hypothesis that emotional intelligence can play a role as a moderator of the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency is rejected. This means that the variable of emotional intelligence does not play a role or does not contribute to the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency. A summary of the interaction of the three variables can be seen in Figure 1.

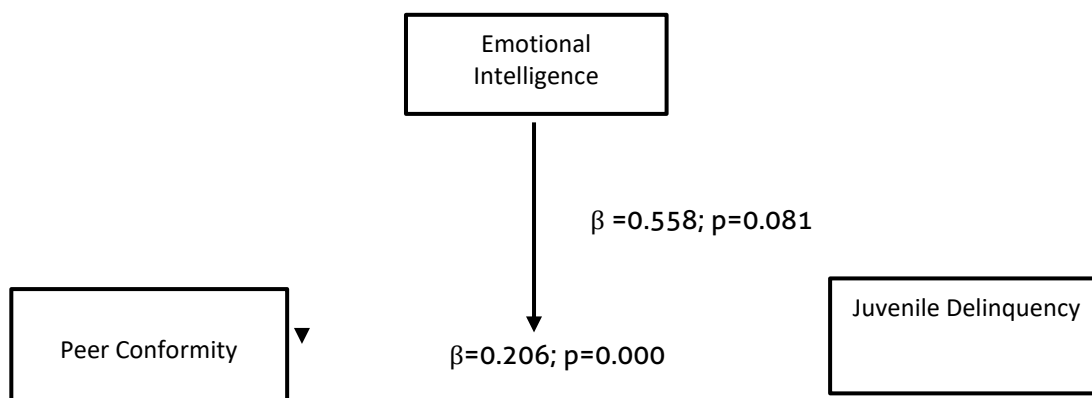


Figure 1 The regression result of X to Y moderated by M

Based on the results of the emotional intelligence regression test as a moderator of the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency, seen in Figure 2, peer conformity significantly affects juvenile delinquency ($\beta=0.206$; $p=0.000$). However, emotional intelligence did not play a role as a moderator of the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency ($\beta = 0.558$; $p=0.081$).

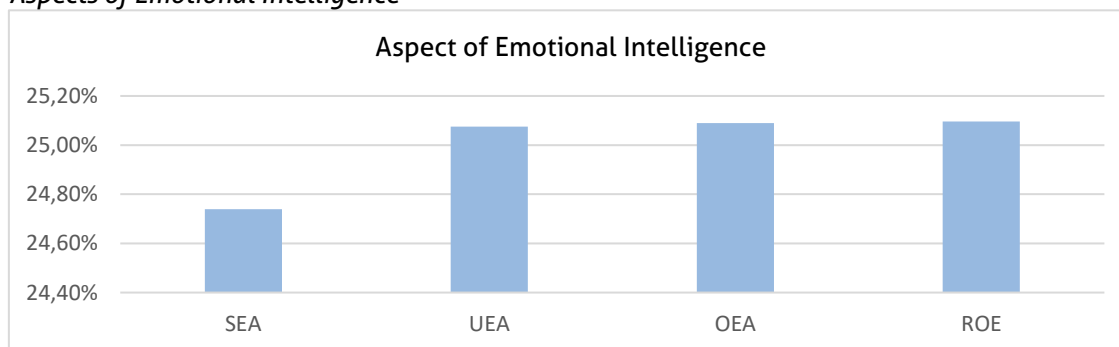
Discussion

This study was conducted to look at the interaction between peer conformity to juvenile delinquency and emotional intelligence as a moderator variable. The results of the hypothesis analysis test showed that emotional intelligence did not contribute to the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency, meaning that emotional intelligence was not the right variable to weaken the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency.

Emotional intelligence cannot be a moderator variable in this study for several reasons. First, because emotional intelligence here plays more of a role as *coping* with the pressure felt by adolescents, but this study does not discuss the problem of *coping* at all, which can be seen in Table 5.

Graptic 1

Aspects of Emotional Intelligence



From the table above, the highest score in the aspect of emotional intelligence is in the aspect of regulation of emotion (ROE) with a value of 25.10%. This aspect is the ability of individuals to be able to manage their own emotions, which aims to recover from the psychological pressure experienced by adolescents (Wong & Law, 2002). In adolescents, emotional intelligence can be coping when adolescents face negative events such as bullying (Extremera et al., 2018) and cyberbullying (Extremera et al., 2018). These events can occur because adolescents are different from their groups and make adolescents experience stress so that a way is needed to reduce the negative impact on adolescents mentally. The coping to overcome that needs to be owned by adolescents is to have good emotional intelligence. The better the emotional intelligence that adolescents have, the weaker the indirect impact that adolescents have when they experience pressure due to bullying such as suicidal ideation (Quintana-Orts et al., 2021).

The second cause is because the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency can still be determined by many things, one of which is parental parenting (Nuaringisih et al., 2023). Because when entering adolescence, the existence of parents is needed to guide adolescents to form a good personality. In addition, adolescence is a transitional phase and identity search that often causes problems at any time. Therefore, parenting carried out by parents at home can form a good character for adolescents, so that adolescents can avoid peer conformity that will lead to mischievous behavior (Jailani et al., 2023).

Conclusions

Based on the results of the above discussion, it can be concluded that peer conformity has an effect on the occurrence of juvenile delinquency and emotional intelligence does not play a role as a moderator on the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency. This means that emotional intelligence cannot contribute to weakening the influence of peer conformity on juvenile delinquency. This is because emotional intelligence plays a more coping role to reduce negative effects when adolescents experience stress.

In the results of the calculation in this study, the aspect of peer confinement, namely social influence, received the highest result, which was 50.17%. Which means that the adolescent friendship environment has a great influence on the formation of adolescent behavior. Therefore, families, especially parents, can pay attention to who their children hang out with, so that this can prevent a child from committing mischievous acts as a result of conformity to peers. Contrary to this study, the recommendation for future research is that if you want to research the conformity of peers with juvenile delinquency, then use other variables to be a moderator, such as parental parenting. Further research can also try to make emotional intelligence an independent variable instead of a moderation variable.

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