



## **Aggressive Behavior Among Seventh-Grade Students at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang**

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**Abstract:** *This study aimed to identify the forms of aggressive behavior, the contributing factors, and the impacts of aggressive behavior among seventh-grade students at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang in the 2025/2026 academic year. This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. The research subjects consisted of 10 students who exhibited aggressive behavior, one Guidance and Counseling teacher, one homeroom teacher, and one school principal, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis employed the Miles and Huberman model, which included data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was established through triangulation and member checking. The findings showed that the forms of aggressive behavior included physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility, with verbal aggression being the most frequently exhibited form among the students.*

**Keywords:** *aggressive behavior; physical aggression; verbal aggression; anger; hostility; junior high school students*

**Abstrak:** *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bentuk-bentuk perilaku agresif, faktor-faktor penyebab, serta dampak perilaku agresif pada siswa kelas VII UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang Tahun Pelajaran 2025/2026. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian studi kasus. Subjek penelitian terdiri atas 10 siswa yang menunjukkan perilaku agresif, 1 guru Bimbingan dan Konseling, 1 wali kelas, dan 1 kepala sekolah yang dipilih secara purposive. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan. Keabsahan data diuji melalui triangulasi dan member check. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bentuk perilaku agresif yang muncul meliputi agresi fisik, agresi verbal, marah (anger), dan kebencian (hostility), dengan agresi verbal sebagai bentuk yang paling sering ditunjukkan siswa.*

**Kata kunci:** *perilaku agresif; agresi fisik; agresi verbal; kemarahan; kebencian; siswa SMP*

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## Introduction

Schools should ideally serve as safe and comfortable environments where students can grow and develop themselves. However, empirical realities indicate that aggressive behavior is increasingly found in interactions among students within the school environment. Such behavior appears in various forms, ranging from verbal aggression, such as teasing, insulting, and humiliating peers, to nonverbal aggression, such as pushing, hitting, and other physical acts. The increasing intensity of aggressive behavior in schools raises concerns because it may disrupt students' comfort, safety, and the quality of their social relationships. Furthermore, aggressive behavior has the potential to trigger prolonged conflicts that may hinder the overall personality development of students.

This phenomenon does not occur solely within the school environment but is also related to broader contexts of social life, ranging from road environments and residential areas to digital spaces through social media. The rapid flow of information resulting from technological developments has made students increasingly exposed to violent content, either directly or indirectly. Ma'ruf (2015) stated that aggressive behavior is frequently reported by mass media, such as cases of student brawls broadcast on television or published in newspapers. More recent findings have reinforced this concern. Anggraini et al. (2023), in their literature review, emphasized that exposure to violent content through mass media and social media is one of the external factors that consistently contributes to the emergence of aggressive behavior among adolescents. Exposure to such news or media content may shape students' ways of thinking and behavioral patterns, particularly when it is not accompanied by adequate guidance from families and schools. This condition highlights that aggressive behavior is a social problem requiring serious attention from various parties to prevent its continued development among adolescents.

The vulnerability to aggressive behavior is particularly relevant because seventh-grade junior high school students are in the early stage of adolescence, a period characterized by substantial emotional, psychological, and social changes. During this phase, adolescents tend to experience emotional instability and are engaged in a process of identity exploration, making them more susceptible to influences from their surrounding environment. Putri (2019) stated that developing adolescents are often associated with myths and negative labels, such as being perceived as rebellious, restless, and unstable. If left unaddressed, such labels may affect adolescents' self-concepts, causing the psychological pressure they experience to be expressed through aggressive behavior. Consistent with this view,

Yunalia & Etika (2020), in their study of aggressive behavior among adolescents in junior high schools, found that identity crises and emotional instability during the transitional period may contribute to aggressive behavior. This condition occurs because adolescents tend to seek recognition or acceptance from their peer groups, including through inappropriate means such as engaging in violent acts toward peers.

Conceptually, aggressive behavior can be understood as an intentional act aimed at harming another individual, either physically or psychologically. The term aggression itself originates from the word aggression, which refers to a behavioral tendency to harm others through physical, verbal, or psychological actions. Myers (as cited in Sobur, 2016) emphasized that aggressive acts are physical or verbal behaviors intentionally performed to hurt or harm others. Thus, intentionality is a primary characteristic distinguishing aggressiveness from merely spontaneous reactions. Aggressiveness needs to be understood as behavior arising from particular drives originating both within the individual and from influences in the surrounding environment. In the educational context, aggressive behavior among students not only affects victims but also the perpetrators themselves because it may interfere with the learning process and disrupt the overall school climate. Therefore, an appropriate understanding of the concept of aggressive behavior is an important foundation for formulating appropriate intervention efforts.

Broadly, experts classify aggressiveness into several forms. Atkinson and Hilgard (as cited in Putri, 2019) identified three forms of aggressiveness: physical aggressiveness, verbal aggressiveness, and aggressiveness that affects the psychological condition of others, such as causing fear, anxiety, or psychological distress. This classification is consistent with the concept proposed by Buss and Perry (as cited in Wojdat & Ossowski, 2019), who divided aggressiveness into four aspects: physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. Physical aggressiveness is characterized by violent acts such as hitting or kicking, whereas verbal aggressiveness is characterized by hurtful statements such as insults and threats. Meanwhile, psychological aggressiveness may take the form of excluding or humiliating others. These forms of aggressiveness may occur simultaneously in students' daily lives and, if not addressed appropriately, have the potential to develop into harmful behavioral patterns for both perpetrators and victims.

Every behavior displayed by an individual has contributing factors, and the same applies to aggressive behavior among seventh-grade junior

high school students. Alhadi et al. (2018) explained that aggressive behavior is influenced by two major factors: internal factors related to emotional conditions, personality, and psychological states, and external factors involving influences from the family environment, school, peers, and media. These findings are reinforced by Anggraini et al. (2023), who concluded that the interaction between adolescents' psychological conditions and social environmental factors, particularly family parenting patterns and peer relationships, is among the most consistently identified determinants in studies of adolescent aggressive behavior. In line with this, the intensity of social media use has also been found to contribute to adolescents' aggressive tendencies. Istiqomah (2017) found a positive relationship between social media use and the level of adolescent aggressiveness. Understanding the relationship among these various factors is important for identifying the underlying causes of aggressive behavior among students so that appropriate interventions can be targeted effectively.

The theoretical findings described above are consistent with conditions identified in the field. Based on preliminary interviews and observations conducted with students and a Guidance and Counseling (GC) teacher in November 2025 at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang, indications of aggressive behavior were found among seventh-grade students. The most frequently observed forms included verbal bullying, such as teasing and humiliating peers; physical behavior, such as pushing or hitting during conflicts; and the dissemination of rumors or false information through social media. The interview findings also indicated that such aggressive behavior was influenced by less harmonious family conditions, particularly parental conflict or insufficient attention at home. These conditions were further reinforced by negative peer environments as well as the academic and emotional pressures experienced by students.

Based on the description above, aggressive behavior among students at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang cannot be viewed as a single problem but rather as the result of a complex interaction between internal factors, such as psychological conditions and the ability to control emotions, and external factors, including the family environment, social relationships, and media influences. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the forms, contributing factors, and impacts of aggressive behavior among students is needed so that the problem can be understood more comprehensively. Based on these issues, this study aims to identify and describe the forms of aggressive behavior exhibited by seventh-grade students at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang, the factors contributing to the emergence of aggressive behavior, and the impacts of aggressive behavior on seventh-grade students at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang in the 2025/2026 academic year.

## Method

### Research Design and Setting

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was selected to obtain an in-depth understanding of students' aggressive behavior, its contributing factors, and its impacts within a natural context. Moleong (2014) explained that qualitative research aims to understand phenomena experienced by research subjects through descriptions in words and language within a natural setting. The study was conducted at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang, Jl. Prof. Dr. Herman Johanes, Lasiana, Kelapa Lima District. The study was conducted over six months, from January to June 2026, with field data collection carried out from June 4 to 6, 2026.

### Participants, Sample, or Data Sources

Participants were selected purposively and consisted of 10 seventh-grade students who exhibited aggressive behavior as the main informants, one Guidance and Counseling (GC) teacher, one seventh-grade homeroom teacher, and one school principal as supporting and key informants. Participants were selected based on their involvement in and knowledge of the phenomenon of students' aggressive behavior. The students were identified based on indications of aggressive behavior obtained through observation and preliminary information from the school.

### Instruments and Measures

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument (human instrument) responsible for determining data sources, collecting and interpreting data, and drawing conclusions. Supporting instruments included observation and interview guidelines. Data were collected through direct observation and in-depth interviews. Observation was conducted to obtain an overview of aggressive behavior and the school environment, while interviews with students, the GC teacher, the homeroom teacher, and the school principal were conducted to explore the forms, contributing factors, and impacts of aggressive behavior. Documentation was also used as supporting data.

### Procedure and Research Ethics

Data collection was conducted through preparation and implementation stages. During the preparation stage, the researcher developed observation and interview guidelines and obtained research permission through the Guidance and Counseling Study Program, faculty, and UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang. During the implementation stage, direct observations and interviews were conducted from June 4 to 6, 2026. The research process followed ethical considerations, including obtaining

permission from relevant parties and maintaining the confidentiality of participants' identities.

### Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman as cited in Sugiyono (2016), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved selecting and focusing on information relevant to the research focus. The data were then systematically displayed according to themes related to the forms, contributing factors, and impacts of aggressive behavior. Finally, conclusions were drawn and continuously verified throughout the research process. Data trustworthiness was established through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from students, the GC teacher, the homeroom teacher, and the school principal, as well as through member checking to confirm the accuracy of the information obtained.

## Results and Discussion

### Results

#### Forms of Aggressive Behavior

##### Physical Aggression

Based on the interview results, several students admitted to having engaged in physical aggressive behavior toward their peers. One student, RK, stated, *"I have pushed a friend before."* HA stated, *"I have gotten into a fight with a friend."* Another student, AM, said, *"When I was angry, I once punched and kicked my friend."* According to the students' accounts, these actions generally occurred because of teasing, bullying, and uncontrolled emotions. After a fight occurred, the students explained that their peers usually attempted to break up the fight or report the incident to a teacher. The teacher then provided advice and worked with the Guidance and Counseling (GC) teacher to provide further guidance. Some students also expressed regret, as RM stated, *"I regretted it after fighting,"* while AM stated, *"Sometimes I still want to retaliate when my friend starts again."*

The interview findings were supported by observations showing that several students had been involved in physical aggressive behaviors, such as pushing, hitting, kicking, and fighting with peers. When fights occurred, nearby students attempted to break them up or reported the incidents to teachers, allowing teachers to provide immediate intervention. Based on the interview and observation findings, it can be concluded that physical aggression among students was influenced by teasing, bullying, uncontrolled emotions, and conflicts with peers.

##### Verbal Aggression

Based on interviews with students, several students admitted to having engaged in verbal aggressive behavior toward their peers. One student

stated, *"I have cursed at a friend because I was angry"* (AM). Another student stated, *"If my friend insults me first, I respond with harsh words"* (RK). Another student said, *"Sometimes I make fun of my friend's physical appearance just as a joke, but eventually they get offended"* (AW). In addition, one student admitted, *"I have insulted my friend's parents when we were arguing"* (RK). The interview findings indicated that verbal aggressive behavior was generally triggered by anger, resentment, and excessive joking.

The observations supported these findings. During the research process, several students were still found using harsh words, cursing, making fun of their peers' physical appearance, and insulting their peers' parents during interactions at school. When targeted by harsh words, some students responded with similar verbal aggression, while others chose to distance themselves, and some reported the incidents to teachers. Teachers then provided advice and guidance to students who engaged in verbal aggressive behavior. Based on the interview and observation findings, it can be concluded that verbal aggression was still found among several seventh-grade students. Such behavior was influenced by uncontrolled emotions, conflicts with peers, and the habitual use of harsh language in everyday social interactions.

##### Anger

Based on interviews with students, several students admitted that they became easily angered when they received unpleasant treatment from their peers. One student, RK, stated, *"I get angry when my friend keeps teasing me."* JP stated, *"When I am bullied, I cannot control my emotions."* Another student, AW, said, *"Sometimes I come to school with a lot on my mind because of problems at home, so I get angry easily."*

According to the students' accounts, anger was often triggered by teasing, bullying, excessive joking, and personal problems that were carried over into the school environment. The interview findings were supported by observations showing that when angry, some students expressed their emotions by hitting their peers or challenging them to fight. However, some students chose to sit quietly or go to the canteen to calm themselves until their emotions subsided. Based on the interview and observation findings, it can be concluded that students' anger was influenced by teasing, bullying, conflicts with peers, and personal problems. The inability to regulate emotions made students more likely to engage in aggressive behavior.

##### Hostility

Based on interviews with students, several students admitted to having feelings of hatred or dislike toward peers because of conflicts, resentment, or treatment they perceived as hurtful.

One student, JP, stated, *"I do not like him anymore because he once made fun of me."* HA stated, *"I am still upset because he once hit me, so I do not want to be friends with him."* Another student, RK, said, *"When I meet him, I still remember what happened before, so I want to retaliate."* According to the students' accounts, these feelings made them uncomfortable when encountering peers whom they perceived as having hurt them.

The interview findings were supported by observations showing that some students chose to avoid peers they disliked, while others displayed a desire for retaliation by challenging them to fight or encouraging other students to become involved. Such behavior had the potential to trigger prolonged conflicts within the school environment. Based on the interview and observation findings, it can be concluded that students' feelings of hostility were influenced by unresolved conflicts and resentment. These feelings encouraged negative attitudes and aggressive behavior toward peers.

### Factors Contributing to Aggressive Behavior

Based on interviews with students, the Guidance and Counseling (GC) teacher, homeroom teacher, and principal, it was found that students' aggressive behavior was influenced by several factors, including peer influence, resentment, conflicts with peers, and difficulty controlling emotions. In addition, the school and family environments also contributed to the emergence of aggressive behavior among students. One student, AW, stated, *"I joined the fight because my friend asked me to, and I was already upset with that friend."* The GC teacher also explained, *"Students' aggressive behavior is usually triggered by peer influence, conflicts among friends, and a lack of ability to control emotions."* Based on these interview findings, it can be concluded that students' aggressive behavior was influenced by internal factors, such as emotions and resentment, as well as external factors, such as peers, the school environment, and the family environment.

### Impacts of Aggressive Behavior

Based on the interview findings, aggressive behavior was found to have an impact on students' social relationships at school. Several students reported being avoided by their peers, experiencing strained friendships, and feeling that the learning environment became less comfortable due to frequent conflicts. Student AM stated, *"After I got into a fight, some of my friends did not want to be friends with me anymore."* The GC teacher also explained, *"Aggressive behavior not only harms the perpetrator and the victim but also disrupts the learning process in the classroom because the atmosphere becomes less conducive."* Based on these interview findings, it can be concluded that aggressive behavior negatively affected peer relationships, caused some students to

be avoided by their peers, and disrupted the learning process at school.

### Discussion

The findings showed that aggressive behavior among seventh-grade students at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang appeared in four forms: physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. Physical aggression was manifested through pushing, hitting, kicking, and fighting, which were triggered by teasing, bullying, and uncontrolled emotions. Verbal aggression was reflected in the use of insults, mocking peers' physical appearance, and insulting peers' parents during conflicts. Anger emerged when students were teased, bullied, or brought personal problems from home into the school environment, making them more easily provoked. Meanwhile, hostility was reflected in avoiding certain peers, holding grudges, and having a desire to retaliate against treatment perceived as hurtful in the past. These four forms are theoretically consistent with the framework developed by Buss & Perry (1992) in the Aggression Questionnaire, which categorizes human aggression into the same four dimensions: physical and verbal aggression as behavioral components that directly harm others, anger as an affective component involving emotional arousal, and hostility as a cognitive component involving suspicion and antagonistic attitudes embedded within the individual.

The consistency between the field findings and the theoretical framework reinforces the view that students' aggressive behavior is not a single phenomenon but rather a series of interconnected processes involving actions, emotions, and internal attitudes. Among the four forms, verbal aggression was the most dominant form identified among seventh-grade students. This dominance may be attributed to the fact that verbal aggression is relatively easy to engage in, does not require direct physical contact, is often perceived as joking and therefore carries a lower risk of teacher sanctions than fighting, and has become part of students' everyday language in peer interactions. This tendency is consistent with the findings of Ferdiansa & Neviyarni (2020), who found that aggressive behavior among students at school occurred most frequently in verbal forms, such as teasing and using harsh language, compared with other forms of aggression. Similar findings were reported by Putra et al. (2024) in a survey of junior high school students, which identified verbal intimidation as one of the most frequently occurring forms of aggressive behavior in the school environment, alongside fighting and social exclusion. The dominance of verbal aggression is also consistent with Buss & Perry (1992) view that verbal aggression constitutes an instrumental component that does not cause physical injury but remains effective in causing psychological harm, making it a relatively accessible

response for students when dealing with conflicts with peers.

The emergence of aggressive behavior among students does not occur independently but is influenced by several interconnected factors. The first factor is limited emotional regulation. Students who are unable to manage their anger tend to express it through physical or verbal actions when they experience teasing or unpleasant treatment. This condition is consistent with Putri (2019) finding that adolescent aggressive behavior is closely associated with weak self-control, in addition to family and school factors. The second factor is the social environment or peer influence. Students who associate with peers who display aggressive tendencies are more vulnerable to being influenced to fight, tease, or become involved in conflicts, as acknowledged by one student who reported that involvement in a fight was triggered by a friend's invitation as well as pre-existing resentment. This phenomenon is relevant to Bandura (1977) social learning theory, which explains that aggressive behavior can be learned through observation and imitation of behavioral models in the immediate environment, including peer groups, particularly when such behavior is perceived to provide social benefits, such as recognition or status within the group.

In addition to emotional regulation and peer environment, family conditions also contribute to the emergence of students' aggressive behavior. The GC teacher and homeroom teacher in this study reported that problems occurring at home could become a source of pressure carried by students into the school environment, thereby triggering anger and aggressive actions. This finding is consistent with Putri (2024), who found that a lack of parental attention and emotional support, particularly among students from single-parent families, contributed to verbal and physical aggressive behavior as a form of self-defense against emotional pressure. Another factor that may influence aggressive behavior is social media exposure. Exposure to harsh content, hate speech, and aggressive communication patterns in digital spaces may be carried over into students' face-to-face interactions at school. This is supported by Istiqomah (2017), who found a positive relationship between the intensity of social media use and adolescent aggressiveness, indicating that higher levels of social media use were associated with higher tendencies toward aggressive behavior. Thus, the internal factor of emotional regulation interacts with external factors, including the peer environment, family conditions, and social media exposure, in shaping students' tendencies toward aggressive behavior.

Aggressive behavior among students does not end with the behavior itself but produces broader

consequences, one of which concerns the learning process in the classroom. The GC teacher in this study emphasized that aggressive behavior disrupted the learning process because repeated conflicts among students made the classroom atmosphere less conducive. Tension arising from teasing, verbal abuse, or fighting can interfere with learning concentration among perpetrators, victims, and other students who witness the incidents. This condition is consistent with the findings of Putra et al. (2024), which indicated that high levels of aggressive behavior among junior high school students not only disrupt the learning process but may also indicate deeper psychosocial problems among students. In addition to affecting the learning process, aggressive behavior also influences the overall school climate. A school environment characterized by frequent teasing, verbal violence, and student fights may create an atmosphere that is less safe and comfortable for the entire school community, requiring teachers and Guidance and Counseling personnel to continuously provide guidance and mediation. If left unaddressed, this pattern may become repetitive because other students may imitate the aggressive interaction patterns they observe, consistent with Bandura (1977) principle of observational learning that repeated exposure to aggressive behavioral models increases the likelihood that such behavior will be imitated by others in the surrounding environment.

Another impact of aggressive behavior can be observed in students' social relationships. The interview findings showed that students involved in fights or those who frequently used harsh language tended to be avoided by their peers, resulting in strained friendships. As one student reported, engaging in a fight had caused several friends to become reluctant to maintain their friendship with him. This condition demonstrates that aggressive behavior can be detrimental to both the perpetrator and others because, in addition to causing physical or psychological harm to victims, perpetrators may also experience social rejection from their peer group. This pattern is consistent with Putri (2024) finding that feelings of exclusion and being underestimated, which may be experienced by students as a consequence of their own aggressive behavior, can worsen social relationships and generate further emotional distress. Deteriorating social relationships may, in turn, strengthen hostility among students who feel rejected, potentially creating a recurring cycle of aggression if the situation is not promptly addressed through support from the GC teacher.

Overall, the discussion demonstrates a clear connection between the forms, contributing factors, and impacts of aggressive behavior among seventh-grade students at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang. The identified forms of physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility stem from internal

factors, particularly limited emotional regulation, and external factors, including the peer environment, family conditions, and social media exposure, which collectively shape how students respond to conflicts. When these factors are not properly managed, students tend to use verbal aggression as an easily accessible means of expressing their emotions, as emphasized by Buss & Perry (1992) and supported by the findings of Ferdiansa & Neviyarni (2020). This ultimately results in tangible consequences, including disruptions to the learning process, deterioration of the school environment, and strained social relationships among students. These consequences may subsequently reinforce the contributing factors; for example, students who are socially rejected may develop resentment or hostility, which may in turn trigger new aggressive behavior. Therefore, students' aggressive behavior cannot be understood in isolation but rather as a cycle in which its forms, contributing factors, and impacts continuously influence one another. Consequently, its management requires a comprehensive approach involving teachers, GC teachers, parents, and the students themselves.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that aggressive behavior among seventh-grade students at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang in the 2025/2026 academic year was still found in several forms, namely physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. Among these four forms, verbal aggression was the most dominant in students' daily interactions within the school environment, particularly in the form of teasing, harsh language, and sarcastic remarks toward peers. Such aggressive behavior was influenced by several factors, including students' limited ability to regulate their emotions, peer environment, family conditions, and uncontrolled social media influences.

Aggressive behavior among seventh-grade students had negative impacts on the classroom learning process, including disrupted learning concentration, reduced comfort within the school environment, and less harmonious social relationships among students. Therefore, it can be concluded that aggressive behavior among seventh-grade students at UPTD SMPN 10 Kupang affects not only the students directly involved but also the overall learning atmosphere and social interactions within the school. Consequently, appropriate intervention and collaborative efforts from relevant parties are needed to address the issue effectively.

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## Conflict of Interest

*The authors declare no conflict of interest.*

## Author Contributions (Optional)

*The authors contributed to the conceptualization of the study, methodology, investigation, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation of the findings. The authors also contributed to writing the original manuscript, reviewing and editing the manuscript, and approving the final version for publication.*

## Generative AI Disclosure

*The authors used generative AI-assisted tools in the preparation of this manuscript, particularly for language translation and academic language refinement. The authors remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the article.*

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