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Differences in Social Adjustment Among Grade VIII Students at SMP Angkasa: A Comparative Study of Classes VIII A and VIII B

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Abstract: *This study aims to examine the differences in social adjustment between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students at SMP Angkasa. The study employed a quantitative approach with a comparative research design. The participants consisted of 49 students, comprising 25 students from Grade VIII A and 24 students from Grade VIII B, selected using a total sampling technique. Data were collected using a social adjustment questionnaire consisting of 50 items with four response options. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, normality testing, homogeneity testing, and the Mann-Whitney test as the primary hypothesis-testing procedure. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in social adjustment between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students based on the Mann-Whitney test (U = 198; p = 0.041). The independent-samples t-test with Welch's correction also supported this finding (t = -2.088; p = 0.043). The mean social adjustment score of Grade VIII B students was 159.75, higher than that of Grade VIII A students (150.16), with a difference of 9.59 points. These findings indicate that Grade VIII B students tend to demonstrate higher levels of social adjustment than Grade VIII A students. The results may serve as a consideration for school counselors in developing guidance and counseling services that support students' social adjustment according to the needs of each class.*

Keywords: *social adjustment, junior high school students, comparative study, Mann-Whitney test*

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui perbedaan penyesuaian sosial antara siswa kelas VIII A dan VIII B di SMP Angkasa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain komparatif. Subjek penelitian berjumlah 49 siswa, terdiri atas 25 siswa kelas VIII A dan 24 siswa kelas VIII B yang dipilih menggunakan teknik total sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket penyesuaian sosial yang terdiri atas 50 butir pernyataan dengan empat pilihan jawaban. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan statistik deskriptif, uji normalitas, uji homogenitas, dan uji Mann-Whitney sebagai pengujian hipotesis utama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan penyesuaian sosial yang signifikan antara siswa kelas VIII A dan VIII B berdasarkan hasil uji Mann-Whitney (U = 198; p = 0,041). Hasil uji-t independen dengan koreksi Welch juga mendukung temuan tersebut (t = -2,088; p = 0,043). Rata-rata skor siswa kelas VIII B sebesar 159,75 lebih tinggi dibandingkan kelas VIII A sebesar 150,16, dengan selisih 9,59 poin. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa kelas VIII B memiliki kecenderungan penyesuaian sosial yang lebih tinggi dibandingkan siswa kelas VIII A. Hasil penelitian ini dapat menjadi bahan pertimbangan bagi guru Bimbingan dan Konseling dalam mengembangkan layanan yang mendukung peningkatan kemampuan penyesuaian sosial siswa sesuai dengan kebutuhan masing-masing kelas.*

Kata kunci: *penyesuaian sosial, siswa SMP, penelitian komparatif, Mann-Whitney*

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Introduction

Early adolescence, which generally coincides with the junior high school years, is a period during which individuals experience substantial changes in their social relationships. Adolescents begin to expand their social circles, regard peers as an important reference group, and are expected to adapt to the norms of the school environment. The ability to adjust socially determines whether students can be accepted by their peer groups, establish healthy relationships, and participate comfortably in learning activities.

Social adjustment is defined as an individual's ability to respond effectively and healthily to social realities, situations, and relationships, enabling them to meet the demands of social life in an acceptable and satisfying manner (Schneiders, 1964). Students with good social adjustment tend to be able to cooperate, respect rules, and establish positive relationships with both peers and teachers. Conversely, poor social adjustment may be reflected in behaviors such as social withdrawal, difficulty being accepted by peer groups, or actions that deviate from school regulations.

Students within the same grade level do not necessarily demonstrate the same level of social adjustment. Each class has a different student composition, peer-group dynamics, and social interaction climate. Therefore, it is important to determine whether students in different classes also demonstrate differences in social adjustment. Such information can help schools develop more appropriate guidance services and instructional approaches that address students' needs.

Based on this background, this study seeks to answer the following research question: Is there a difference in social adjustment between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students at SMP Angkasa? The purpose of this study is to determine whether such a difference exists and to identify which class demonstrates a higher level of social adjustment. The research hypotheses are formulated as follows: H0: There is no significant difference in social adjustment between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students. Ha: There is a significant difference in social adjustment between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students.

Several previous studies have compared the social adjustment of junior high school adolescents across different groups. These studies provide a theoretical and empirical basis for comparison in the present research.

Masruroh (2014) compared the social adjustment of junior high school students attending a full-day school (SMP Al Falah Deltasari Sidoarjo) and those attending a regular school (SMP Negeri 4 Sidoarjo), with 30 respondents in each group. The data were analyzed using an independent-samples t-test. The results indicated no difference in social adjustment between the two groups, with a significance value of 0.107 (greater than 0.05).

Intani (2020) compared the social adjustment of adolescents attending a single-sex school (SMP Daarut Tauhid) and a co-educational school (SMP Laboratorium Percontohan UPI Bandung). The study involved 66 Grade VIII students and employed a descriptive comparative design with non-parametric statistical analysis. The results revealed no significant difference in social adjustment scores between the two types of schools. Furthermore, the overall social adjustment of students in both groups fell within the maladjustment category.

Utari et al. (2022) examined the relationship between past experiences and social adjustment in the school environment among Grade VII and VIII students at SMP Negeri 1 Kota Jambi using a quantitative correlational approach. The findings were intended to serve as a reference for school counselors in providing guidance to students.

Previous comparative studies examined groups based on school types, namely full-day and regular schools, as well as single-sex and co-educational schools. Neither study found a significant difference in social adjustment between the groups being compared. The present study differs from those studies because it compares two classes at the same grade level within a single school, thereby excluding differences in school type as a factor that may influence the results. In contrast to the findings of the two previous comparative studies, the present study identified a significant difference in social adjustment between the two classes.

Method

Research Design and Setting

This study employed a quantitative approach with a comparative research design to examine differences in social adjustment between two groups of students from different classes. The variable examined was social adjustment, while the comparison groups consisted of Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students at SMP Angkasa. The study was conducted at SMP Angkasa from September to October 2026. This design was selected to determine whether the two classes differed in their levels of social adjustment.

Participants, Sample, or Data Sources

The study involved 49 Grade VIII students at SMP Angkasa, consisting of 25 students from Grade VIII A and 24 students from Grade VIII B. Grade VIII A comprised 12 male and 13 female students, while Grade VIII B comprised 14 male and 10 female students. The participants were selected using a total sampling technique, in which all members of the

target population were included as research participants. This technique was considered appropriate because the study aimed to compare the social adjustment levels of all students in the two Grade VIII classes. Accordingly, no students from either class were excluded from the study.

Instruments and Measures

Data were collected using a social adjustment questionnaire adapted from an instrument developed by Fransiska Oreng Sogemaking in her research entitled Profil Penyesuaian Sosial Siswa dan Implikasinya bagi Program Bimbingan Sosial Kelas VIIIA SMP Katolik Sancta Familia Kupang Tahun Pelajaran 2022/2023. The questionnaire consisted of 50 statements with four response options, each assigned a score ranging from 1 to 4. The total possible score ranged from 50 to 200. Social adjustment was operationally defined through the total score obtained by each student, with higher scores indicating better social adjustment.

The validity assessment showed that the five aspects examined obtained calculated r values of 0.638, 0.578, 0.703, 0.691, and 0.625, respectively. All values exceeded the critical r value of 0.515, indicating that the five aspects met the validity criteria based on the reported test results. The reliability test yielded a calculated r value of 0.984, which was higher than the critical r value of 0.515. These results indicate that the instrument met the reported reliability criteria.

Procedure and Research Ethics

The research was conducted at SMP Angkasa during September–October 2026. Data collection involved administering the social adjustment questionnaire to all 49 students in Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B. Each participant responded to 50 statements by selecting one of four available response options. The responses were then scored according to the established scoring procedure, with each item assigned a score from 1 to 4. The resulting scores were used to describe and compare the students' levels of social adjustment.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistical analysis was first conducted to describe students' social adjustment in each group based on the mean, standard deviation, minimum score, maximum score, and score categories.

Normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test with the Lilliefors correction and the Shapiro-Wilk test. The results indicated that the data for Grade VIII A were normally distributed, whereas the data for Grade VIII B did not meet the normality assumption. Variance homogeneity was examined using Levene's Test, which indicated unequal variances based on the mean-based result ($p = 0.006$).

Since the normality assumption was not met in one of the groups, the Mann-Whitney U test was employed as the primary method for hypothesis testing. An independent-samples t-test with Welch's correction was also used as a supplementary comparison because the group variances were unequal. All statistical tests were conducted at a significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected when the p-value was less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant difference in social adjustment between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students.

Results and Discussion

Results

Description of Social Adjustment Data

The social adjustment scores of Grade VIII A students ranged from 133 to 181, with a mean of 150.16 and a standard deviation of 12.64. Meanwhile, the scores of Grade VIII B students ranged from 120 to 178, with a mean of 159.75 and a standard deviation of 18.79.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Social Adjustment

Class	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
VIII A	25	150.16	12.64	133	181
VIII B	24	159.75	18.79	120	178

Based on Table 1, the social adjustment levels of Grade VIII A and VIII B students differed in their descriptive scores. Grade VIII A obtained a mean score of 150.16 with a standard deviation of 12.64, whereas Grade VIII B had a mean score of 159.75 with a standard deviation of 18.79. The score range for Grade VIII A was 133–181, while that for Grade VIII B was 120–178. These results indicate that the mean social adjustment score of Grade VIII B students was higher than that of Grade VIII A students, although the score distribution in Grade VIII B was also more dispersed. These descriptive findings provide an initial overview of the social adjustment tendencies in both groups before conducting statistical hypothesis testing.

Table 2. Categories of Social Adjustment

Category	VIII A (f)	VIII A (%)	VIII B (f)	VIII B (%)
High (>150)	12	48.0	15	62.5
Moderate (100–150)	13	52.0	9	37.5
Low (<100)	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**25**	**100**	**24**	**100**

Based on Table 2, the distribution of social adjustment categories shows that most Grade VIII A students were in the moderate category, totaling 13

students (52.0%), while the remaining 12 students (48.0%) were classified in the high category. In Grade VIII B, the majority of students were in the high category, comprising 15 students (62.5%), while 9 students (37.5%) were in the moderate category. No students in either class were classified in the low category. This distribution indicates that Grade VIII B had a higher proportion of students in the high social adjustment category than Grade VIII A. Nevertheless, these categorical findings alone cannot establish whether the difference is statistically significant; therefore, further hypothesis testing is required.

Normality Test

Table 3. Results of the Normality Test

Tests of Normality							
kelas siswa		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
penyesuaian sosial siswa	kelas A	0,114	25	.200*	0,943	25	0,175
	kelas B	0,225	24	0,003	0,842	24	0,002
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.							
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Based on Table 3, the normality test results indicate that the social adjustment data for Grade VIII A students obtained a Kolmogorov-Smirnov significance value of 0.200 and a Shapiro-Wilk significance value of 0.175. Both values were greater than 0.05, indicating that the data for Grade VIII A were normally distributed. In contrast, the data for Grade VIII B obtained a Kolmogorov-Smirnov significance value of 0.003 and a Shapiro-Wilk significance value of 0.002. Both values were lower than 0.05, indicating that the data for Grade VIII B were not normally distributed. Thus, the normality assumption was not satisfied in both groups simultaneously. This condition was taken into consideration when selecting the hypothesis-testing technique, with the non-parametric Mann-Whitney test employed as the primary analysis.

Homogeneity Test

Table 4. Results of the Homogeneity Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variances					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
penyesuaian sosial siswa	Based on Mean	8,118	1	47	0,006
	Based on Median	2,988	1	47	0,090
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	2,988	1	36,518	0,092
	Based on trimmed mean	6,838	1	47	0,012

The homogeneity test using Levene's Test based on the mean yielded an F value of 8.118 with a significance value of 0.006. Since this significance value was lower than 0.05, the variances of the social adjustment scores of Grade VIII A and VIII B students were considered unequal. Meanwhile, the test based on the median produced a significance value of 0.090, which was greater than 0.05. Nevertheless, based on the mean-based Levene's test, the assumption of variance homogeneity was considered unmet. This result provided the basis for using the equal variances not assumed row, or Welch's test, when the independent-samples t-test was employed as a supplementary analysis.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 5. Results of the Mann-Whitney Test

Ranks				
kelas siswa		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
penyesuaian sosial siswa	kelas A	25	20,92	523,00
	kelas B	24	29,25	702,00
	Total	49		

Based on Table 5, the Mann-Whitney test yielded a U value of 198.000, a Z value of -2.042, and a two-tailed significance value (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.041. Since the significance value was lower than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. This result indicates a statistically significant difference in social adjustment between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students. The difference was also reflected in the mean ranks, with Grade VIII A obtaining a mean rank of 20.92, while Grade VIII B obtained a mean rank of 29.25. The higher mean rank in Grade VIII B indicates that students in this group tended to have higher social adjustment scores than those in Grade VIII A. Furthermore, the effect size of 0.29 indicates that the magnitude of the difference between the two groups was small to moderate.

Table 6. Results of the Independent-Samples t-Test (Supplementary Analysis)

Independent Samples Test										
		Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	of the Difference Lower	of the Difference Upper
penyesuaian sosial siswa	Equal variances assumed	8,118	0,006	-2,104	47	0,041	-9,590	4,557	-18,758	-0,422
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,088	40,075	0,043	-9,590	4,593	-18,872	-0,308

Based on Table 6, the independent-samples t-test using Welch's approach yielded a t value of -2.088, degrees of freedom (df) of 40.075, and a significance value of 0.043. Since this value was lower than 0.05, the result indicates a statistically significant difference in the mean social adjustment scores between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students. The mean difference of -9.59 indicates that the average score of Grade VIII B was higher than that of Grade VIII A. This finding was further supported by the 95% confidence interval, which ranged from -18.87 to -0.31 and did not include zero. The Welch test results were consistent with those of the Mann-Whitney test, indicating that both analyses yielded statistically consistent conclusions regarding the difference in social adjustment between the two groups.

Discussion

The findings indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in social adjustment between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B

students at SMP Angkasa. Based on the Mann-Whitney test, a significance value of 0.041 ($p < 0.05$) was obtained, indicating that the null hypothesis was rejected. The social adjustment scores of Grade VIII B students showed a higher tendency than those of Grade VIII A students, as reflected in their respective mean ranks of 29.25 and 20.92. This finding is also supported by the descriptive analysis, which showed that the mean score for Grade VIII B was 159.75, whereas that for Grade VIII A was 150.16. In terms of categorization, 62.5% of Grade VIII B students were classified in the high category, compared to 48.0% of Grade VIII A students. These results indicate that although both groups demonstrated social adjustment levels ranging from moderate to high, Grade VIII B showed a more favorable tendency in social adjustment.

The difference in social adjustment between the two classes can be understood by considering the social interaction environments in which students engage at school. A classroom is one of the social settings where students establish peer relationships, communicate, cooperate, and adjust their behavior to group norms. Hurlock (1980) explains that the process of social adjustment is associated with an individual's ability to adapt to the expectations and demands of their social environment. In the context of this study, differences in student composition, friendship patterns, interaction habits, and the atmosphere of interpersonal relationships within each class are presumed to be associated with the observed differences in social adjustment. Nevertheless, these factors cannot be established as the causes of the differences because they were not directly measured in this study.

Another aspect that needs to be considered is the variation in social adjustment scores between the two groups. Grade VIII B had a standard deviation of 18.79, which was higher than that of Grade VIII A, at 12.64. The score range for Grade VIII B was also wider, from 120 to 178, whereas Grade VIII A had a range of 133 to 181. This condition indicates that social adjustment scores among Grade VIII B students were more varied. Therefore, a higher group average does not necessarily mean that all students in that class have equally good social adjustment abilities. These individual differences are an important consideration for school counselors when identifying students' needs, particularly those who still require support in developing their ability to interact and establish positive social relationships.

When compared with previous studies, the findings of this research differ from those of Masruroh (2014) and Intani (2020), which found no statistically significant differences in social adjustment among the groups examined. In contrast, the present study identified a difference in social adjustment between two groups of students within the same school environment. These differing findings suggest that the characteristics of the comparison groups and the social context of the research should be considered when understanding variations in students' social adjustment. However, this comparison should be interpreted cautiously because the participant characteristics and research contexts of the previous studies may not be identical to those of the present study.

In practical terms, these findings may serve as a consideration for school counselors and homeroom teachers when designing activities to support students' social adjustment development. Attention may be directed toward strengthening positive interactions, cooperation, mutual respect, and peer relationship skills, particularly in Grade VIII A, which had a smaller proportion of students in the high category than Grade VIII B. In addition, individual support remains necessary for students who demonstrate specific needs in social adjustment, including Grade VIII B students whose scores are relatively lower than those of their classmates. Such efforts can be implemented through group guidance, classroom guidance, and individual counseling services according to students' needs.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, there is a statistically significant difference in social adjustment between Grade VIII A and Grade VIII B students at SMP Angkasa (Mann-Whitney U = 198; $p = 0.041$). Grade VIII B students demonstrate a higher level of social adjustment than Grade VIII A students. These findings are expected to serve as a consideration for the school in developing group guidance services that address students' needs. Future research is recommended to involve a broader range of participants and examine other factors associated with social adjustment.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions (Optional)

The authors contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data collection, data analysis, and preparation of the manuscript. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Generative AI Disclosure

The authors used ChatGPT, a generative AI tool, to assist with academic language translation, paraphrasing, and manuscript

refinement. The authors remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

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