

## The Effect of Parental Attachment on Adolescent Social Emotional Health Pengaruh Kelekatan Orang Tua Terhadap Kesehatan Sosial Emosional Remaja

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### Abstract :

Social emotional health is essential for adolescents to develop positive competencies both physically and psychologically. Social emotional health is influenced by parental attachment as an external factor. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of parental attachment on the social emotional health of adolescents as students. This study was conducted at Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Kupang with a total of 185 adolescents who were students in the first semester of 2022. This study used quantitative research methods. This research instrument uses a social emotional health scale compiled by Furlong et al. (2016) called social emotional health higher education and the parental attachment scale made by Armsden and Greenberg (2009) from the IPPA/Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment theory. The results of this study found there was a positive and significant effect of parental attachment on adolescent social emotional health with  $p = 0.000$  and  $F = 89.986$ ,  $R^2 = 0.330$ . Father's attachment has a contribution to adolescent social emotional health by 15% while mother's attachment to adolescent social emotional health is 18% so that overall parental attachment both father and mother has a contribution to adolescent social emotional health as a student by 33%. It is expected that adolescents can establish an attachment relationship with parents both father and mother to improve positive social emotional health.

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### 1. Introduction

Social emotional health is important for adolescents to develop positive physical and psychological competencies. These competencies can come from a person's good relationship with their environment, both as a child and their learning process until adulthood to occupy their social situation (Copper et al., 2008). Cruis et al. (2013) wrote that positive social emotional health is characterized by an individual's ability to assess the health of their social environment and intervene in groups as a reference for their social framework.

Furlong et al. (2013) surveyed 4,189 respondents to measure self-awareness, self-efficacy, perseverance, school support, peer support, family coherence, emotion regulation, behavior regulation, empathy, gratitude, enthusiasm, and optimism, and covered four aspects of socio-emotional health (self-confidence, trust in others, emotional competence, and engagement in life). Boys scored significantly higher in the areas of competence and self-confidence as adolescents than girls, while girls scored higher in the areas of trust in others and having good emotional control. In addition, this study found that these aspects do not underlie or measure positive individual psychological well-being in adolescents, but this study conceptualizes that positive psychological states contribute to positive mental health in adolescents.

There are several phenomena regarding social emotional health that exist in college students. Students themselves are known by society as someone who is educated and mature so that this view ultimately makes students condition themselves to be "attractive" and want to be considered by the surrounding environment. Teenagers who are new students and migrate away from their families need to adapt to their new environment, how to survive, view themselves and others which is the basis for skills. In addition, it underlies a person to relate to others to deal with others, and the ability to regulate emotions obtained from one's first environment, namely family or parents (Salkind, 2006)

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This is supported based on interviews with four teenagers who are students on the campus of the Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Kupang, especially in the study program of Christian education for children, Christian religious education study program, education management study program and pastoral counseling study program. The interview results to the first respondent said that studying in the current study program was not because of their own wishes but because of the wishes of their parents, which made the respondent feel lazy to study and come to college. The second respondent said he had skipped class for almost a month because he did not feel comfortable with the campus environment and his friends. Furthermore, the third respondent had a different answer from the previous respondent, namely the respondent felt that whatever he did on campus, for example organizations, there were lecture problems, he always told his parents and friends to find a solution.

Then the results of the last interview also claimed that the respondent felt able to adapt to the study program, campus and friends in his new environment. This was evident when interviewed, the respondent was "fun" joking with his friends on the sidelines of the break time. Another research from Georgetown University article ([www.ecmh.org](http://www.ecmh.org)) also reviews social-emotional health as the formation of a person's background, social and emotional health that comes from the environment to form close relationships or interactions. The findings show the influence of the environment on adolescents' social-emotional health.

Social-emotional health has several characteristics, including how a person has confidence in themselves (belief in self), confidence in others (belief in others), empathy for the environment (emotional competence), and responsibility for the decisions they have made (engaged living). Someone who is emotionally and socially healthy has trust with other people or people around him, both family, college environment and peers. Emotionally and socially healthy individuals also have the characteristics of being able to empathize with the surrounding environment to form and maintain positive relationships by being able to control emotions, having a sense of empathy or helping others and being able to control themselves.

In addition, factors that influence a person's emotional and social health are biological factors that are influenced by genetics and physical health, factors of how a person communicates with family, and environmental factors where a person lives, culture and ethnicity. In addition, it is also a factor of developmental experience, how a person can learn and develop themselves in interacting with others. Another thing is also explained by Furlong et al. (2013) that a person's social behavior competence in positive interactions with the environment forms a safe relationship, is able to make individuals feel and regulate emotions, and learn something to gain more knowledge more involvement in relationships. This mutually influential concept is referred to as covitality.

The social emotional condition of adolescents is influenced by their interactions with the surrounding environment. In this case, the family (parents) is one of the closest environments that has a lot of interaction with adolescents, both physically and psychologically. Emotions within the family become a crucial factor in the formation of adolescent characteristics. The relationship between parents and children has been formed since a child is born, parents are the first social beings that interact with a child. Erikson (Kaplan, 2000) wrote that parents are the first learning place for a child to influence further development, a well-established relationship between children and parents will form a strong bond in the form of attachment.

According Shaffer (2005) attachment is a relationship that has close emotional characteristics between two people, who love each other and the desire to maintain physical closeness. Attachment is a relationship that is formed when a person gets affection, a sense of security and physical and psychological closeness so that the attachment relationship helps adolescents cope with the changes that occur in themselves.

Good attachment will create a warm relationship between two parents and adolescents. According to Santrock (2011) attachment is the existence of a relationship or relationship between certain social figures and a certain phenomenon that is considered to reflect unique relationship characteristics. Attachment will last for a long time in the span of human life, starting with the child's attachment to the mother or other figures that replace the mother. Monks (2006) also said that attachment is seeking and maintaining contact with certain people only, the first person a child chooses in attachment is the mother (caregiver), father or close siblings. This definition is in line with

what Ainsworth (1969) stated that attachment is an emotional bond formed by an individual that is specific, considering them in a closeness that is eternal over time. Attachment is a relationship supported by attachment behavior designed to maintain the relationship. Therefore, parental attachment plays an important role in adolescents' emotional and social well-being.

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Conversely, children who have unpleasant parenting will develop suspicion and alienation and grow up as anxious children who are less able to establish social relationships. Similarly, Santrock (2011) explains that attachment to parents in adolescents can help adolescents' social competence and social well-being, as reflected in characteristics such as self-esteem, emotional adjustment, and physical health. Adolescents who have a comfortable relationship with their parents have good self-esteem and emotional well-being. Secure attachment between adolescents and parents will also increase the ability to interact with competent environments and positive close relationships outside the family. This is supported by Nora (2015) who conducted research on 50 children to measure the effect of attachment and self-esteem on children's socialization skills. The results of her research explain that parental attachment has a role in shaping children's character to interact with others and how to control themselves. Because parents are considered the most capable of providing education to children and parents are the first to interact with children.

Based on the description above, this study examines the influence of parental attachment on adolescent social emotional health. The purpose of this research is to determine the effect of parental attachment on the social emotional health of adolescents as early college students who are studying at Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Kupang.

## **2. Methods**

The method in this study is quantitative and ex-post facto research. Ex-post facto research aims to reveal information about the influence of parental attachment on adolescent social emotional health. Respondents in this study amounted to 185 first semester students in the Childhood Christian Education study program, Christian Religious Education study program, Christian Education Management study program, Pastoral Counseling study program, Misiology study program, Sociology of Religion study program and Christian Counseling Guidance study program at Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Kupang.

The variables used in this study are parental attachment and social emotional health. The data collection method used is a parental attachment scale based on aspects of Armsden and Greeberg (2009) who have designed the IPPA (Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment) to measure three aspects, namely communication / communication, trust / trust, alienation / alienate which totals 50 items consisting of 25 items for the Father scale and 25 items for the Mother scale. 50 items were proven valid using the corrected item coefficient test. total correlation, reliability value with Cronbach's alpha technique. The data analysis technique is simple linear regression analysis with descriptive analysis method. The data were processed using the SPSS 25.0 statistical program.

## **3. Results**

The results of this study can be described in the statistics of parental attachment and adolescent social emotional health which can be seen as follows:

**Table 1. Results Description of Parental Attachment**

Category	Score Interval	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	160 – 132	106	57%
High	131 – 103	56	30%
Low	102 – 74	22	12%
Very Low	73 – 45	1	1%
Total		185	100%

Table 1 shows the distribution of parental attachment scores based on the assessment of adolescents as students. Very high scores were obtained by 57% (106 adolescents), high categories by 30% (56 adolescents), low categories by 12% (22 adolescents), and very low categories by 1% (1 adolescent). The difference in parental attachment scores develops as a response to the assessment of students as adolescents in interacting with their parents as a social emotional bond in the family. According to Rohman et al. (2020) Parental attachment to adolescents is a relationship that materializes when adolescents get affection, feelings of security and closeness both in physical and mental form so that the attachment relationship between parents helps adolescents cope with all the changes contained in themselves.

**Table 2. Results Description of Social Emotional Health**

Category	Score Interval	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	216 – 174	120	65%
High	173 – 131	57	31%
Low	130 – 88	7	3%
Very Low	87 – 45	1	1%
Total		185	100%

Table 2 shows the distribution of adolescents' social-emotional health scores as university students. A very high score of 65% (52 adolescents), a high category of 31% (57 adolescents), a low category of 3% (7 adolescents), and a very low category of 1% (1 adolescent) were obtained. These results illustrate that adolescents have positive social emotional health. Furlong et al. (2013) wrote that social emotional health is the development and process of a person's social and emotional competence in dealing with various situations that occur interpersonally (between one another) and from this it can encourage a person's level of psychological well-being to be higher such as handling problems positively, adapting easily to the environment and so on.

**Table 3. Summary of analysis results multiple linear regression simultaneous test (F)**

Variabel	F	P	Description	Conclusion
Parental Attachment to Social Emotional Health	89,986	0,000	0,000 < 0,05	Hypothesis Accepted

**Table 4. Summary of the results of the coefficient of determination (R Square)**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.574 <sup>a</sup>	.330	.326	22.59155

Table 3 and table 4 show a summary of the results of simultaneous hypothesis testing (F) which shows that there is a significant positive relationship between parental attachment and students' social emotional health with a p value = 0.000 and F = 89.986 with R Square = 0.330. The effective contribution of parental attachment variables to students' socio-emotional health is 33.0% and the remaining 67% is explained by other variables. The results of research by Amseke and Logo Radja (2023) found a positive and significant influence of parent-adolescent relationship on adolescent emotional intelligence by 48, 3%.



**Tabel 5. Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis (T-Test)**

Variable	t	P	Effective Contribution	Conclusion
Parental Attachment to Social Emotional Health	9,486	0,000	0,000<0,05	Hypothesis Accepted

**Table 6. Effective Contributions Parental Attachment and Adolescent Social Emotional Health**

Variabel Bebas	$\beta$ (Standardized coefficients)	Correlation Coefficient X and Y	Effective Contribution
Father Attachment	0,286	0,526	15%
Mother's Attachment	0,334	0,540	18%
Total			33,0%

Table 5 summarizes the results of the hypothesis test (t) which shows that there is a significant positive relationship between parental attachment and students' social emotional health, obtained by a value of  $p = 0.000$  with  $t = 9.486$ . Table 6 shows that father attachment contributes to the social emotional health of adolescents by 15%, while maternal attachment to the social emotional health of adolescents is 18%, so that overall parental attachment contributes to the social emotional health of adolescents by 33% and the remaining 67% is explained by other variables.

#### 4. Discussion

This study proves the hypothesis that there is an influence of parental attachment on the social emotional health of adolescents as first semester students in 2020 in the Study Programs of Christian Education for Children, Christian Religious Education, Christian Education Management, Pastoral Counseling, Misiology, Sociology of Religion and Christian Counseling Guidance at Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Kupang.

This study is in line with the results of empirical evidence by Maharani (2018) found a positive relationship between parental attachment to adolescent social-emotional health where father's attachment with a correlation of  $r = 0.408$ , and mother's attachment with a correlation of  $r = 0.415$  (mother) with  $p = 0.000$  (father)  $p = 0.000$  (mother) ( $p < 0.05$ ). the higher or better a person's attachment to his parents, both father and mother, the higher or better the adolescent's social-emotional health.

Parental attachment in this study plays an important role in improving the social-emotional health of adolescents as university students. In addition, it is evident that maternal attachment is higher in value at 18% than paternal attachment with a value of 15%. Family systems theory assumes that fathers and mothers are the primary caregivers of an adolescent (Li et al., 2021). Interactions between fathers and children who are easy to communicate with, love, and provide support such as trust will support children's social development, while good interactions between mothers and children will result in a positive quality of life, not putting themselves first, having a sense of responsibility, and being tolerant (Santrock, 2011)

Lestari (Amseke & Logo Radja, 2023) wrote that the relationship between parents and adolescents is a first step in the process of developing adolescent emotional intelligence, because parents are the closest people for adolescents to interact and have emotional ties before adolescents interact with other people. Ananda and Satwika (2022) wrote that secure parental attachment is the basis of individuals' mental health as well as their social adaptation. Individuals who have a secure attachment with their parents are more likely to regulate the negative emotions they are feeling and when they are feeling the fear and threat of a problem, they have a hope or strategy to solve the problem they are experiencing. In addition, good parental attachment is a parent who can provide emotional feedback and can respond to their child's various emotions sensitively and consistently, so that children can adjust their emotions and develop their ability to regulate emotions.

Whereas poor parental attachment will provide less supportive and less constructive behavior to their children. Parents show limited ability to express their emotions and show withdrawal if there are negative influences in interactions with their children. As a result of such parents, children will follow or adopt unsafe and avoidant ways of emotion regulation to minimize the emotional expression of what they feel. Adolescents who do not get support from the family will have an impact on the poor emotions of adolescents (Yuniar & Darmawati, 2017). The research results Nuban and Amseke (2024) found that the attachment of parents and peers had a positive and significant contribution to the strength of adolescent character with an R Square value of 45.1%, so it was concluded that the attachment of parents and peers as a social environment was also responsible for forming and building better character strength in adolescents, thereby reducing negative adolescent behavior due to promiscuity.

The parental attachment relationship in adolescence encompasses the three dimensions of mutual understanding or trust, the quality of communication that parents are sensitive and responsive to their child's emotional needs, and alienation or isolation. Trust is a core feature of secure attachment throughout life. Trust will shape the self-concept or sense of identity in adolescence. Research conducted by Macdonald et al (2021) found that in mother-child relationships, trust diminishes during adolescence. A good trust relationship between parents and children can develop and explore themselves in challenging situations. Usually a mother is the primary caregiver for a child. So, the experience of trust in the mother-child relationship is very important. Research conducted by Macdonald et al (2021) and joining previous research, suggests that regardless of gender, trust with a mother or primary attachment figure has implications for emotional functioning.

According to BKKBN (Damara & Aviani, 2020) adolescents who have a low score on the communication aspect are due to the tendency of parents who speak more often than listen when communicating with their children, parents feel they have more life experience than their children, so adolescents are not given the opportunity to express their opinions. While adolescents who have a good score on the communication aspect means that the teenager can talk openly about the problems that occur to him even though the problems that occur to others, this is related to emotional intelligence in adolescents. The next aspect, trust, is also related to emotional intelligence. Good attachment between parents and adolescents will present two important foundations, namely fostering a sense of trust that makes adolescents have the ability to manage their emotions well. The last aspect of attachment that affects emotional intelligence in adolescents is alienation or abandonment. Abandonment by parents to adolescents will lead to poor emotional conditions and social adjustment. Meanwhile, good attachment will lead to good emotional conditions and social adjustment, in other words, this will make adolescents have a comfortable relationship with friends and family and reduce aggressive behavior.

According to Salkind (2006) in development, based on the quality of the child's relationship with their caregiver, they will develop a mental mechanism known as the internal working model. This mechanism is a skill that children perceive about themselves and others that is the basis for skills. The internal working model underlies children's ability to relate to others, deal with others, and the ability to regulate emotions. In this study, new students who migrated and adapted to a new environment had a good level of attachment to their parents (see table 1). This is in accordance with what Crisp and Turner (2014) explained that every child will experience cognitive psychological development that can help children to regulate and encourage positive development of their social and environmental conditions.

The conclusion of this study is that there is a positive and significant effect of parental attachment on the social emotional health of first semester students in the study programs of Christian Education for Children, Christian Religious Education, Christian Education Management, Pastoral Counseling, Misiology, Sociology of Religion and Christian Counseling Guidance at Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Kupang.

## **5. Conclusions**

The conclusion of this research is that there is a positive and significant influence of parental attachment on the social emotional health of students in the first semester in the Christian Education

for Children, Christian Religious Education, Christian Education Management, Pastoral Counseling, Missiology, Sociology of Religion and Christian Counseling Guidance study programs at Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Kupang.

It is hoped that parents will be the best models and mentors for teenagers as students by establishing close relationships by providing trust, alienation and communication for teenagers in order to improve the social emotional health of teenagers in students at the start of college.

## **6. CRediT Authorship Contribution Statement**

The contribution in carrying out this activity is Fredericksen Victoranto Amseke in charge of compiling and designing research, conducting research processes and analyzing data and writing manuscripts / articles to be published.

## **7. Declaration of Competing Interest**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

## **8. Declaration of Generative AI and Assistive Technologies in the Writing Process**

The author ensures and confirms that this research article, no AI tools were used at all, such as ChatGPT or Grammarly in compiling and editing this manuscript. The author will also be fully responsible for the accuracy and originality of this manuscript.

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## **10. Ethical Approval**

The author ensures that this research complies with the ethical principles applicable in the code of ethics of Psychology.

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