Well-being among boarding school students: 
Academic self-efficacy and peer attachment as predictors

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Abstract: Students in Indonesian boarding schools (pondok pesantren) have longer study hours than those in non-boarding schools. They also interact with the same friends all day. This situation makes them vulnerable to boredom and depression, and they also run the risk of being bullied. Therefore, student well-being in boarding schools needs to be studied further, with peer attachment and academic self-efficacy as predictors. This study aims to examine the effect of peer attachment and academic self-efficacy on the well-being of students attending boarding school. The study uses a quantitative approach with the linear regression method. It involves 284 students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Islamic Junior High School), aged between 13-15 years old, selected using the stratified random sampling method. The data collection instruments employed were the Peer Attachment Scale, Academic Self-efficacy Scale, and School Well-being Scale. The result shows that peer attachment and academic self-efficacy significantly affect school well-being (p < .01, F = 156.181, effective contribution of predictors = 52.3%). It indicates that peer attachment and academic self-efficacy simultaneously significantly influence well-being among students in boarding schools. Students should improve their peer attachment and increase their academic self-efficacy to live well in boarding schools.

Keywords: school well-being; peer attachment; academic self-efficacy

Abstrak: Di Indonesia, siswa sekolah berasrama (pondok pesantren) memiliki jam belajar yang lebih lama dibandingkan dengan sekolah yang bukan asrama. Para siswa juga berinteraksi sepanjang waktu dengan teman yang relatif sama. Kondisi tersebut menjadikan siswa rentan mengalami kejenuhan, perasaan tertekan, dan mendapatkan perundungan. Oleh karena itu, kesejahteraan siswa di sekolah asrama perlu ditingkatkan terutama dengan efisiensi belajar yang diperoleh hingga terhadap kesejahteraan siswa yang bersekolah dengan sistem asrama. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh kelembatan teman sebaya dan efikasi diri akademik terhadap kesejahteraan siswa yang bersekolah dengan sistem asrama. Penelitian ini melibatkan siswa Madrasah Tsanawiyah dengan rentang umur 13–15 tahun yang bersekolah dengan sistem asrama sebanyak 284 peserta, dipilih dengan metode stratified random sampling. Instrumen pengumpulan data menggunakan Skala Peer Attachment, Skala Academic Self-efficacy, dan Skala School Well-being. Data kemudian dianalisis dengan regresi linier berganda. Hasilnya menunjukkan nilai yang signifikan (p < 0,01 dan F = 156,181, sumbangan efektif = 52,3%). Artinya, kelembatan teman sebaya dan efikasi diri akademik memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kesejahteraan siswa asrama. Implikasinya, siswa dapat meningkatkan efikasi diri akademik serta kelembatan dengan menabung lebih sejahtera saat di sekolah.

Kata Kunci: kesejahteraan siswa di sekolah; kelembatan teman sebaya; efikasi diri akademik

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Introduction

*Pondok pesantren* is one of the boarding school models in Indonesia (Rizkiani, 2017). This type of school combines the national curriculum with the Islamic religious curriculum (Awalia et al., 2018). All students are required to live in the school area because the school provides lodging facilities (Rasyid, 2012). They are also required to take part both in academic and religious learning activities in boarding school (*pondok pesantren*). Therefore, the learning activities of boarding school students are longer than those of non-boarding school ones.

Living in a boarding school for 24 hours can be a challenge and a problem for students. They must manage themselves well because they also have to complete school's academic assignments and complete extra-religious learning assignments (Musiran, 2012). In addition, the students are also required to have adequate social skills due to the limited scope of student friendships. If they cannot solve these problems, they may be prone to feeling bored or reluctant to study; they may also not feel at home and want to leave (Musiran, 2012). According to Cahyaningtyas and Muis's findings (2017), problems faced by boarding school students include issues in the learning process, health, recreation, and difficulties with teachers and friends. At the same time, they also have to adjust to the boarding school environment, such as sharing bedrooms, bathrooms, and other public facilities.

Pratiwi and Sari (2017) explain that being together for 24 hours with the same friends can lead to bullying. According to Asiyai (2015), cases of bullying are more common in boarding schools than in non-boarding ones. Such behavior includes hitting, threatening, spreading gossip, giving nicknames, and blackmail. Based on data from preliminary research in the form of interviews with a school counselor at boarding school *Madrasah Tsanawiyah X*, bullying still happens to both male and female students. The form of bullying towards male students was sarcastic behavior, which led to physical fights.

Bullying towards female students also included sarcastic behavior, isolation, and cynical looks. As a result of the bullying, students could become uncomfortable and finally decide to leave school. Other problems experienced by students were difficulties in social adjustment, making friends, and lack of interest in attending the boarding school despite the will of their parents. Coupled with the academic demands of the boarding school, which require memorization at every grade level, grade VII students who are not familiar with religious learning make the task of the boarding school difficult.

*Madrasah Tsanawiyah X* is a school within the boarding school system that requires all students to attend and live in the school and its dormitories. The boarding school learning program is an extra learning program for students, held after attending regular classes (Perawironegoro, 2019). According to Rasyid (2012), boarding schools combine national and religious curricula. The same applies to *Madrasah Tsanawiyah X*; in addition to providing learning materials in accordance with the national curriculum set by the government, it also implements a religious learning system including memorizing the Koran, reciting the yellow book (*kitab kuning*), *mujāhadah*, and other Islamic religious activities.

Suppose a student withdraws from school because they do not feel at home, either because of the social environment or the curriculum system. In that case, it can be understood that they were not comfortable with their life as a student in a boarding school. On the other hand, a good school can provide comfort as it can provide the best experience (Kurniasih & Lestari, 2017). According to Karyani (2015), students are said to prosper if they feel comfortable, safe, healthy, and happy in the school environment. Konu and Rimpela
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(2002) explain that students will feel prosperous if their basic needs are satisfied, including those with school conditions, social relations, fulfillment, and health status.

Studying in a boarding school, students experience a change, living separately from their parents. They are required to learn independence, strict rules, and demanding study hours (Pritaningrum & Hendriani, 2013). Pritaningrum and Hendriani (2013) explain that students who have difficulties adjusting to such changes can appear aloof, cry, do not want to mix with their friends, not respond to teachers, do not eat, and do not do their assignments. Khatimah (2015) mentions that unpleasant experiences at school can be a source of stress and reduce the quality of life for students. In addition, the more students experience pressure, the greater the negative perceptions of their school (Fatimah, 2010).

One of the factors that can affect students' quality of life is the peer factor (Keyes & Waterman, 2003). Students who can establish close relationships with peers will manage their emotions well, especially when facing stressful situations (Rasyid, 2012). Those who can make friends also show higher psychological well-being (Putri & Novitasari, 2017). A sign that students can establish attachments with peers is that they can build positive communication and trust and not feel isolated in the social environment (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). Such attachment makes students feel more valuable because of the interaction process and the positive response from peers (Gorrese & Ruggieri, 2013). Having feelings of worth and good emotional management are also signs that the student is prospering (Kumiai Tuti & Azwar, 2014).

Other than external factors, factors internal ones can also affect student well-being. Two such factors are academic integrity (Ramdani & Prakoso, 2019) and an optimistic attitude (Keyes & Waterman, 2003). Such an attitude and commitment to completing their academic tasks can be interpreted as self-efficacy in academic abilities or self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy is students' belief that they can complete and achieve their academic targets (Bandura & Watts, 1995). Indicators that students have high academic self-efficacy include the ability to solve difficulties in their assignments, optimism, diligence, and developing strategies to overcome any academic difficulties (Bandura & Watts, 1995). Students who have confidence in their academic abilities also view their assignments positively (Saraswati & Ratnaningsih, 2017). Students will consider both complex and easy tasks as part of the learning process that must be faced. Firmanila and Savitri (2015) assessed that students with high academic self-efficacy also felt high levels of well-being at school. Students will also show their efforts and sincerity to learn and complete learning targets.

Based on the discussion above, if students have poor quality friendships, the school situation or environment will be less comfortable, coupled with low confidence in completing assignments at school. The heavy learning load for boarding school students can trigger problems in their school well-being. Therefore, the researchers consider it essential to study the relationship between peer attachment, academic self-efficacy, and school well-being amongst boarding school students. It is hypothesized that peer attachment and academic self-efficacy influence the school well-being of boarding school students.

Previous research has found that attachment toward peers enabled students to manage their emotional regulation better (Rasyid, 2012). Peers attachment also had a strong effect as predictor to adolescents' well-being (Balluerka et al., 2016). Another evidence was also implied the contribution of self-efficacy to students' well-being (Sofia et al., 2020). Despite all the evidence, the research that examines the role of peer attach-.
ment and academic self-efficacy as a predictor of school well-being in boarding school students is still very limited (Sofia et al., 2020). However, there is very limited research that examines how peers' attachment and academic self-efficacy influence the school well-being in boarding school.

Method

The study uses a quantitative approach with the linear regression method to test the relationship between the variables (Creswell, 2009). The research population were students of boarding school Madrasah Tsanawiyah X in Yogyakarta, totaling 284 respondents, male and female, aged 13-15 years. The stratified random sampling technique was used.

The instrument used in this study was based on a peer attachment scale, academic self-efficacy scale, and school well-being scale. The first adapted the corresponding scale compiled by Mudzkiyyah and Nuriyatiningrum (2021), modified with items in line with the context of the research subjects, boarding school students. The number of items on the scale before trialing was 23, from which six were dropped after the trial with 50 subjects. These were declared invalid because they had an item discrimination index with a correlation coefficient of less than .30. The final scale had item discrimination index scores from .307 – .743 and a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach’s alpha score of \( \alpha = .913 \).

The academic self-efficacy scale was compiled based on the efficacy theory developed by (Bandura & Watts, 1995). This scale comprised 36 statement items. Based on the test results, all these had an item discrimination index value with a correlation coefficient of \( \geq .3 \). The lowest coefficient was .351, and the highest was .749, with a Cronbach’s alpha score of \( \alpha = .946 \).

The researchers compiled the school well-being scale based on the school well-being theory of Konu and Rimpelä (2002). It had 32 items, six of which were declared invalid after the trial. These six items had discrimination index values below .30. The remaining items had correlation coefficient scores ranging from .374 to .787, with a Cronbach’s alpha score of \( \alpha = .938 \).

Data analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis using the multiple linear regression method, with the help of SPSS 22 for Windows. Before testing, descriptive statistical and classical assumption tests were conducted, namely normality tests, multicollinearity tests, and heteroscedasticity tests.

Results

The study result can be seen in Table 1. The table shows the percentages of the three measurement categories in relation to the peer attachment, academic self-efficacy, and school well-being variables.

The subsequent analysis tested the classical assumptions in normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. Normality was assessed by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test; the results show a normal distribution of data, with a p-value score \( p = 0.200, p > .05 \) in the distribution of the peer attachment, academic self-efficacy, and school well-being data.

This was followed by a multicollinearity test. The results are shown in Table 2 and those of the heteroscedasticity test in Table 3. The distribution of data in Table 2 shows that both the peer attachment and academic self-efficacy variables are free of multicollinearity. This is reflected in the tolerance score > .10 (.853), and the VIF score < 10 (1.173).

The results of the heteroscedasticity test shown in Table 3 indicate that neither the peer attachment nor academic self-efficacy variables display heteroscedasticity, as seen from the significance value, which is \( p = 0.906, p > 0.05 \) for peer attachment and \( p = 0.209 \) for academic self-efficacy.
The results of the research hypothesis test can be seen in Table 4. Table 4 indicates that both peer attachment and academic self-efficacy have a significant influence on school well-being. The significance of this effect is evident from the score of \( p < .05 \), namely peer attachment \( (p < .01) \) and academic self-efficacy \( (p < .01) \). Furthermore, the linear regression equation of the test results is shown in formula 1 and 2.

\[
\begin{align*}
Y &= \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 \\
Y &= 1.032 + 0.463X_1 + 0.400 X_2
\end{align*}
\]

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Test Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Peer Attachment</th>
<th>Academic Self-efficacy</th>
<th>School Well-being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2**

*Multicollinearity Test Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Collinearity Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Attachment</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Self-efficacy</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent variable: School Well-being

**Table 3**

*Heteroscedasticity Test Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Attachment</td>
<td>.902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Self-efficacy</td>
<td>.209</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: School Well-being

**Table 4**

*Partial Regression Test Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients (B)</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>11.032</td>
<td>2.862</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Attachment (X1)</td>
<td>.463</td>
<td>7.531</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Self-efficacy (X2)</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>11.875</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Predictor: Peer Attachment (X1), Academic Self-efficacy (X2)
b) Dependent variable: School Well-being (Y)
Table 5  
**Hypothesis Test Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>R adjusted</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X1, X2</td>
<td>.726</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td>.523</td>
<td>156.181</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Predictor: Peer Attachment (X1), Academic Self-efficacy (X2)  
b) Dependent variable School Well-being (Y)

The hypothesis testing was conducted by observing the simultaneous influence of the peer attachment and academic self-efficacy variables on school well-being, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 indicates that the two predictors both have a significant effect on school well-being, as seen from the score of p < .01. Meanwhile, the level of influence of peer attachment and academic self-efficacy on the school well-being of students at boarding school is 52.6%. These results indicate that peer attachment and academic self-efficacy significantly influence the well-being of students at boarding school with F score = 156.181, and a significance level of p < .01. The influence level of peer attachment and self-efficacy simultaneously on the well-being of students at boarding school is 52.3%. The remaining 48.7% is influenced by other factors. Therefore, it can be concluded that they have a significant effect on the well-being of boarding school students.

**Discussion**

Attachment to peers is an important predictor to help students prosper when attending a boarding school. The predictor of attachment to peers has a partially significant effect on the school well-being of students, as shown by the results of the t-test = 7.531 with a significance of p < .01. The findings of this study are similar to those of Balluerka et al. (2016), who explain that peer attachment is closely related to psychological well-being in students. They explain that the more attached students are to their peers, the more they will prosper.

The findings show that students at boarding school (*Madrasah Tsanawiyah X*) are attached to their peers because they have a longer time to interact with them (Rasyid, 2012). Extracurricular activities held at the school increase the close relationships. Students who can build strong emotional bonds with their peers have more interest in school, and show good academic results and good relationships with their fellow students (Muntamah & Ariati, 2019). In addition, those who develop attachments will not readily become anxious, depressed, or isolated. In addition, the characteristics of well-adjusted students include a lack of negative emotions and psychological problems, which are indicators of the health aspect of student well-being (Konu, 2002).

This study found that peer attachment affected the well-being of boarding school students. This can be explained because they undertake many activities together (Noviana & Sakti, 2015). In addition, the students also depend on each other, such as by sharing information and advice. Carlivati (2001) explains that the relationship between attachment and peer relations predicts student satisfaction with school and with their performance in an academic environment. In addition, those who are satisfied with their situation and with their school will normally be successful students (Konu, 2002). The more students can build positive attachments with their peers, the better able they will be to manage their emotions when under pressure (Rasyid, 2012).

Putri and Novitasari (2017) show that the closer students’ attachment to their peers, the
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... that can improve student well-being at school. This explanation is in accordance with the findings of Keyes and Waterman (2003), that the presence of friends, free time, and social relationships can affect student well-being.

Furthermore, academic self-efficacy has a significant influence on student well-being in boarding schools. The strength of this role can be seen from the value of t = 11.875 with a significance level of p = .00, p < .05. This is in line with Alfinuha and Nuqul (2017) research, which demonstrates that self-efficacy can affect subjective well-being. Students with high academic self-efficacy will consider that the school assignments they are given, both difficult and easy, are part of the learning process (Saraswati & Ratnaningsih, 2017). High self-efficacy also facilitates students to perform well at school. In other words, students who go to schools employing the boarding school curriculum system can complete the tasks given and have high self-confidence in achieving learning targets. In addition, they can also organize their learning activities independently (Baron & Byrne, 2003). According to Bandura (1997), the factors that can affect the academic self-efficacy of boarding school students include their achievements, the experience of others in completing tasks, other people's belief in their abilities, and being in a physiological and psychological healthy condition. Achievements increased students' efficacy in completing tasks and facing academic difficulties. Based on this experience, they can make strategies or learn from previous experiences as a way to solve problems. In addition, boarding school students also have more opportunities to observe how their peers solve problems because they have a longer time together. They also have accompanying teachers who monitor students' progress more intensely. Therefore, the response and support from the teachers also makes students more confident in their abilities (Rizkiani, 2017).
According to the findings of this study, the more confident students are in their academic abilities, the more rewarding they will feel their lives as school students. This aligns with research by Firmanila and Sawitri (2015), who found that academic self-efficacy had a positive relationship with student well-being. The more students feel confident in their academic abilities, the more their welfare will increase. Students who have confidence in their academic abilities are emotionally involved in their school (Chang & Chien, 2015). In addition, those who have a orientation which looks for meaning in the learning process also show a high level of school well-being (Setyawan & Dewi, 2015). Therefore, academic self-efficacy has a close relationship with student well-being at school.

On the other hand, failure to achieve is related to symptoms of depression, low self-involvement with school activities, and high violations of school norms (Firmanila & Sawitri, 2015). However, students who feel comfortable, happy, and valuable will have a positive assessment of their school (Firmanila & Sawitri, 2015). This is in line with Chattu et al. (2020) and Bulhari and Khanam (2017) who explain that academic performance is related to the well-being of students.

The ability to adapt to the school environment is related to the well-being of students (Rizki & Listiara, 2015). Those who become familiar with and adapt well to physical amenities such as school facilities and social environments such as administrative staff and teachers and can adapt to these conditions will feel more comfortable. This is in contrast to a stressful and unpleasant school environment, which makes students judge the school negatively (Huebner & McCullough, 2000).

Negative school assessments make students feel more depressed during their school life (Fatimah, 2010). However, those who enjoy social support by having close friendships with their peers find it easier to adapt or adjust to the school’s academic atmosphere (Inayah & Indriyani, 2015).

Students who study in boarding school curriculum system schools have the potential to reach a high level of overload (Rizkiani, 2017). Building solid attachments with peers will make them feel happier, have fewer negative emotions, and enjoy the dominance of positive ones (Raisachalva & Handayani, 2020). In addition, they will also feel more satisfied with their life as students living in dormitories (Raisachalva & Handayani, 2020). Those who can establish communication with friends will build trust with each other, and not feel alienated, so will prosper in performing their roles as boarding students. Coupled with better academic performance, and a positive learning experience, this makes it easier for them to adjust to the academic atmosphere of the boarding school. Therefore, attachment to peers and academic self-confidence are important predictors that can help students prosper at boarding schools.

**Conclusion**

Peer attachment and academic self-efficacy have a significant effect on well-being in boarding schools (pondok pesantren). The level of the influence is 52.3%, with the remainder influenced by other factors. The more students are attached to their peers and the higher their academic self-efficacy, the more they will prosper in their boarding school.

**References**


