

## The Effect of Forgiveness and Self-Acceptance on Students Resilience through Social Support as the Mediator

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### Abstract

Resilience is important for individuals to rise in facing risky and stressful situation. It is done by using defensive ability as well as positive and flexible adaptation towards the problems faced. This research identified and analyzed the effect of forgiveness and self-acceptance on resilience through social support as the mediating variable. It was correlational research with ex post facto design which involved 369 students as the population and 160 as the sample selected using random sampling technique. Their data were collected using resilience scale, forgiveness scale, self-acceptance scale, and social support scale. After that, the collected data were analyzed using SEM method on AMOS software. Findings showed an indirect effect of social support on the influence of forgiveness and self-acceptance on resilience. Finally, this research can be a basis for the future research.

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## INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is somewhat a hard period to pass by children who are searching for self-identity. Changes in biology, social, and psychology as well as sensitivities within individuals cause adolescents feel confused, empty, anxious, and indecisive. All these things make adolescence felt more complex than other periods in human's life. When adolescents can pass this period, they are supposed to grow optimally. According to Sari & Aryansyah (2020) the initial average condition of early adolescents is at medium category; in other words, they still feel anxious in dealing with problems during study from home, have inability to perfectly analyze those problems, low empathy with surrounding environment. However, these adolescents quiet believe that the pandemic or other problems they encounter can be solved well, and have desire to optimize skills to obtain the best results.

In agreement with Purwanto, et al. (2020), during COVID-19 pandemic all learning process must be done online, but not all students are accustomed to this new habit. Similarly, not teachers and lecturers have equal proficiency in utilizing technology of the internet or social media to teach. Thus, the adaptation process of online learning does not run well to some extent due to various problems faced by students and teachers. Here, resilience needs to be improved so that students, in this case university students become optimistic, certain, calm, able to manage emotion, and solve problems well. Petranto (in Hadianiti, et al., 2017) states resilience is the extent to which someone's resistance is in dealing with stress, adversity, and misfortune.

At the research site, some students had low and medium levels of resilience. It was seen from the absent of efforts, surrender to the situation, lack of problem-solving ability, and low control of negative emotion so that their actions are not in line with the existing norms. The ninth-grade students of Darul A'mal are demanded to achieve high scores for their MTs or Islamic

Junior High School graduation. Obviously, it makes the students feel burdened and often consult with school counselors for this matter. One of counselee's rights is to have a chance to maximize his potential, and problem solving ability because these aspects can help students in their formal and non-formal lives, maximize development, and being happy as well as healthy. The previous explanation indicates resilience issues in students. Rutter (2006) explains resilient individuals are those who have self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-confidence, adaptation ability, and social problem solving.

Resilience can also be defined as individuals' ability to keep stable and functioning well physically and psychologically, capacity to gain positive experience and emotion although being faced to traumatic situations (Mancini & Banano, 2006). It consists of personal characters and skills, and protective factors (family, social environment, and religious beliefs) (Ziaian et al., 2012). Having resilience allows us to understand the way people develop adaptive competence and coping skills although they face difficult situation (Catalano, et al., 2011). Resilient individuals will quickly restore their condition before trauma and adapt to stress (Ellis, Bianchi, Griskevicius, & Frankenhuis, 2017). Resilience can be used by individuals in overcoming difficult situations and improve their quality of life (Widuri, 2013).

Vijayakumar (2006) mentions that adolescents who have resilience tend to successfully pass difficult life situation, such as during a disaster. Resilience is an important thing to investigate because its development can reduce trauma vulnerability and be beneficial for the future developmental phase (Clauss-Ethers et al, 2008). In accordance with Santrock (2012) changes require individuals to be more mature as expected by environment. These phenomena often cause problems for those who cannot adapt and are still emotionally unstable. Lack of adaptability will cause maladaptive behaviors which can endanger others.

One factor influencing resilience is forgiveness. It can influence psychological well-being and resilience in encountering difficulties (McNulty & Fincham, 2012). Forgiveness is part

of a slow and gradual process. This process starts with someone talking about pain after a painful event, then progresses to undergoing corrective experiences that rebuild trust and intimacy. Again, this process is done voluntarily gradually, day by day (Spring and Spring 2006). According to aresearch by Rienneke and Septianingrum (2018) someone who can forgive can make himself happier. It is also supported by research by Wulandari and Megawati (2020) that adolescents tend to use egos which even in turn cause them difficult to tolerate problems they face.

Individuals' resilience is influenced by self-acceptance. Rogers (in Lynn, 2010) states that the development of self and others acceptance leads to more positive perspectives of oneself and others. Ellis (Flett, et al., 2003) argues self-acceptance as a condition that fosters personal adjustment and well-being or happiness. Meanwhile, Hurlock (2009) considers individuals who accept, like, are satisfied with themselves will consider themselves valuable, able to accept themselves accurately and more realistically.

As stated by Yonanda (2017) self-acceptance is the first step in one's efforts to attain resilience. By accepting their own conditions, people will improve their survivability. At this acceptance stage, people try to accept what has happened to them intellectually and emotionally so that their lives become more positive. Self-acceptance is a benchmark for the extent to which someone accepts his personal characteristics and makes use of them to live his life. Moreover, a person who accepts himself will discover strengths and weaknesses without blaming himself.

Shelley H. Carson & Ellen J. Langer (2006) state that self-acceptance is significant for mental health. The absence of can result in various emotional difficulties, such as uncontrolled anger, and depression. People who are trapped in self-evaluation rather than self-acceptance may need more attention and personal resources to exaggerate themselves to compensate personal deficit perception. What is more important is the ability and willingness to let others see one's true self.

Another factor influencing resilience is social support. Based on Everall (2006) social support can improve one's resilience. In the same way, Holaday (1997:349) reveals resilience is influenced by internal and external factors, such as cognitive skills, psychological resources, and social support. Sherborne and Hays (in Taylor, 1997:436) argue that social support can be from partner, family, peers, social and community, group, and work partners or boss. Adolescents need social support to help guide the correct ways when facing problems. The directed guidance can emerge the feelings of progressive, creative, and willingness to develop. It is because adolescents feel affection, support, and attention from others (Robinson in Papalia, 2004:617). Oktavia, et al., (2021) think social support plays an important role in describing individuals' resilience, so social support is perfect for the predictor of resilience. In their research, they only investigated resilience on subjects with specific problems so that there is a need for further research examining the same topic on subjects with general problem, such as COVID-19 pandemic.

About the above background, the current research aimed to discuss the contribution of the influence of forgiveness and self-acceptance on resilience through social support among high school students. For the future, it is hoped that this research can help to provide information on the importance of growing resilience abilities in order to avoid the occurrence of non-resilient behavior for their lives in the future.

## **METHODS**

The populations in this research were all students of class IX of MTs Darul A'mal in Metro City. In total, there were 369 people from the twelve classes. They were sampled using random sampling technique by Ferdinan (2006) and resulted 160 respondents.

To collect the data, this research utilized scales related to the variables of resilience, forgiveness, self-acceptance, and social support. The scales were measured using Likert scale scoring system, including the answer choices of

strongly agree (SS), agree (S), hesitate (R), disagree (TS), and strongly disagree (STS).

After the instruments were validated, the forgiveness scale obtained 18 valid items, self-acceptance scale obtained 23 valid items, social support obtained 23 valid items, and resilience variable had 33 valid items. In terms of reliability test, the instruments gained the following cornbach alpha value as presented in table 1.

**Table 1.** Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Information
Resilience	0.802	Reliable
Forgiveness	0.715	Reliable
Self-acceptance	0.889	Reliable
Social support	0.815	Reliable

The present research used ex post facto method with correlational design. Meanwhile, the hypotheses testing was done using SEM (Structural Equation Modelling) operated using AMOS program. SEM is a statistical technique that is able to analyze the relationship patterns between latent constructs and their indicators, latent constructs with each other, as well as direct measurement errors. SEM allows analysis between several dependent and independent variables directly (Hair et al, 2006). The relationship is built between one or several independent variables (Santoso, 2010).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

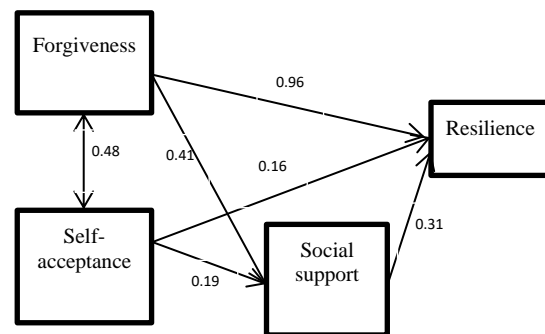
This study consisted of one dependent variable, two interdependent variables, and one mediating variable. The dependent variable was resilience, the independent variables were forgiveness and self-acceptance, and the mediating variable was social support. After the descriptive statistical analysis, the researchers obtained mean and standard deviation as follows.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics Analysis Results

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Forgiveness	43	86	71.99	8.51

<b>Self-Acceptance</b>	51	111	91.27	11.27
<b>Social support</b>	52	113	92.42	10.11
<b>Resilience</b>	76	157	133.08	14.56

Based on the above analysis, the value of resilience was (M = 133.08; SD = 14.56), forgiveness was (M = 71.99; SD = 8.512), self-acceptance was (M = 91.27; SD =11.27) and social support was (M=92.42; SD=10.11). All results showed the mean was higher than standard deviation. Hence, the data distribution was illustrated as follows.



**Figure 1.** Mediator Model Analysis Results

Ferdinand (2006) states that a model can be said as fit if it fulfills some criteria 1) the ideal X2 value <3.2) GFI value ≥ 0.90 3) RMSEA value ≤ 0.08 4) CFI 0.94 5) AGFI ≥ 0.90. The results of the evaluation of the goodness of fit index criteria in this research model were obtained as follows (x2 = 478.99 x2/df = 1.228; GFI = 0.977; AGFI = 0.954; RMSEA = 0.032; TLI = 0.975; and CFI = 0.978). Regarding these results, the model used in this research was categorized as Good Fit.

The results of the model analysis in figure 1 showed that forgiveness had a positive and significant relationship with social support (β=0.41; p<0.01). Self-acceptance had a very significant positive relationship with social support (β=0.19; p<0.01). The relationship between forgiveness and resilience showed a significant positive relationship (β=0.96; p<0.01). The relationship between self-acceptance and resilience also showed a very significant positive relationship (β=0.16; p<0.01).

Two mediator roles of social support were confirmed in this research, namely 1) social support had a mediating role in forgiveness towards resilience ( $\beta = 0.812$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and 2) Social support had a mediating role in self-acceptance towards resilience ( $\beta = 0.173$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). These indicated that there was an indirect effect of social support on forgiveness and self-acceptance on student resilience.

The findings of this research indicated a significant effect between forgiveness and resilience. Enright (2006) states that resilience is inseparable from forgiveness. During difficult situation, forgiveness will affect psychological well-being and resilience. By forgiving, students can recover their traumatic situation and release painful experience by learning to transform cognitive process, affection, behavior, and negative motivation into more constructive things. It is similar to research by Haryati (2015) that there is an effect of forgiveness on students' resilience. The tendency to forgive significantly influences individuals to recover from adversity which in turn has an impact on their happiness.

Hasan's research (2013) found the feelings of anger, sad, self-blaming, and depression need positive feeling to make individuals more optimistic so that they can release burden or negative feelings, easy to appreciate, and forgive those who have hurt them. Nalle & Khotimah (2020) assume forgiveness needs strong power from within individuals. The power will be greater if there is support from social. To be able to forgive causes someone to get help from others so that he can ensure he can forgive people who hurt him or any painful events.

Another finding in this research is that social support has a mediating effect on resilience. It is supported by Oktavia, et al's research (2021) that social support plays an important role in describing individual's resilience. Specifically, the increase in social support can improve one's resilience, so it can be the predictor of resilience. Human as a social being needs help and social support from people surrounding to encounter any trouble. Maraya's research (2017) also states the same thing, namely

social support is a significant moderator for career resilience.

Sarafino (2014) further explains "social support is a form of one's or group's acceptance towards individuals which causes the individuals feel loved, cared, appreciated, and helped." This explanation means social support is heavily needed by everyone in interacting with others for the sake of his life in the middle of society. The greater social support from surrounding people, the greater students' resilience is. It is because social support is an influential factor for resilience, said Reisman Gwyther, and Roberto (2011). Bilgin and Tas (2018) indicate social support is truly required to improve the resilience of people who are addicted to social media. Another supporting research is from Salim, Borhani, Pour, and Khabazkhoob (2019) that high social support can increase resilience.

Apparently, there found an indirect effect of social support in the relationship between forgiveness and resilience. This is in line with previous research conducted by Fadhil (2018) which states that there is an indirect effect of forgiveness on student's resilience through social support. According to Howard & Hughes (2012), social support that is received can effectively help the growth of resilience so that it is finally able to cope with stress in a healthy way. With social support taking part as a predictor in viewing the effect of forgiveness on resilience, things look more comprehensive. With external support, it is hoped that the role of forgiveness will significantly affect student's resilience, and vice versa.

Self-acceptance can make students have more positive opinion on themselves, reduce stress, perform emotional self-adjustment, and environmental adjustment (Hurlock, 2014). Social support means existence, willingness, and care from reliable, respectful, and loving people. It can be inferred that social support is understood as a form of beneficial and helpful interpersonal relationship. Likewise, Etzion (in Tresna, 2011) explains "social support is a form of interpersonal relationship indicated by several characteristics, namely physical help or assistance, emotional care, provision of information and complement."

By this definition, a more operational concept that describes the essence of social support is any behavioral patterns which aim to help and care about others.

School counselors are expected to encourage students to improve their resilience as best as they can and give services with the focus of the development of students' resilience so that students can get prevention and solution for the future challenges. Besides, the counselors need to pay attention to other factors and uniqueness of every student or particular social group. Given the importance of resilience, theoretically, there needs evaluation for individual's resilience to determine possible interventions to improve resilience during the pandemic era. Further research are hoped to seek for other influencing variables for students' resilience, use methods, such as experimental, mixed method, and developmental model, and include other factors absent from this research.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this research have proved that social support has a mediating role between forgiveness and self-acceptance towards resilience. Thus, it can be a reference or information for counselors in the way they serve students to improve resilience and accept themselves with the help provided by environment. Hence, school counselors are projected to have ethical responsibility to facilitate personal, social, academic development of all students at school until the highest level through quality and targeted guidance and counseling services. Further, the future researchers are recommended to use quantitative methods, such as experimental procedures, mixed-method, and developmental model, not to mention including other factors not included in this study.

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