

## What Factors Influence Teenagers' School Readiness?

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### **Abstract**

*Students' willingness to participate in academic and extracurricular activities at school is correlated with their readiness for school. Several elements influence students' motivation to participate in school activities, both academic and extracurricular. This research aims to determine the factors that shape the school readiness of junior high school students. The research method used is quantitative with a correlation research design. The research sample was 507 junior high school students in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and was determined using a proportional random sampling technique. Data collection techniques used the school readiness scale, social support scale, self-esteem scale, and conflict resolution skills scale. Data analysis techniques to uncover research problems use path analysis. The research results showed that social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution skills explained 92.5% of the factors forming the school readiness of junior high school students in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Social support makes a high contribution to school readiness compared to conflict resolution skills and self-esteem.*

**Keywords:** School Readiness, Middle School

### **INTRODUCTION**

School readiness is closely related to an individual's readiness to take part in activities at school, both general learning and additional extracurricular activities. Each level of education has its indicators that show students' readiness to take part in school activities. In the context of early childhood, High (2008) stated that school readiness includes children's readiness, school readiness, and social support from family and community. In addition, the capabilities of a child also play a significant role in determining school readiness, they do not constitute the sole factors that can predict future outcomes for the child (Christensen et al, 2020).

Students' school readiness is viewed from the theory of ecology, emphasizing the influence of the environment on individual growth and development, and giving rise to individual uniqueness in behavior and interactions (Salsabila, 2018; Trappes, 2022). This is due to diverse social experiences and different ways of life because of interaction and obtaining the resources that individuals need from their environment. Yuliawan and Taryatman (2020) asserted that the interactions of individuals with their surroundings are shaped by the influence of parental figures, educators, and peers. Thus, social support is the first factor that has an impact on individual school readiness, both academically and non-academically.

According to Haugan (2021), social support is related to the level of influence that individuals receive from their social environment, whether through information, material, affection, or direction. This influence can guide both academic and non-academic behaviors in school, as individuals feel motivated to act. Fung & Chung (2023) state that the motivation or encouragement within an individual arising from social support in their environment can shape an individual's school readiness. Thus, it can be said that social support will impact an individual's willingness to attend school because the individual feels driven to exhibit the expected academic and non-academic behaviors.

The expected academic and non-academic behaviors to support school readiness need to be presented interactively and healthily. This can be achieved by adding life skills that individuals require to adapt to new situations and withstand future challenges, including the development of self-esteem and conflict resolution (Nurbrata, 2022). Self-esteem has an impact on school readiness as it is associated with academic and non-

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academic withdrawal among students in school (Nazifi et al., 2023), while conflict resolution can affect school readiness because it relates to individuals' ways of exhibiting respectful behavior, enabling empathy towards others (Sekerci & Yilmaz, 2021). Thus, individuals with good self-esteem and conflict-resolution skills will demonstrate a willingness to attend school because they do not experience withdrawal and can exhibit empathetic behavior.

A study conducted by Valiente (2021) underscores the significance of preparing students adequately for formal education to enhance academic achievement. School readiness carries significant implications for children's academic and life success, as it is correlated with the advancement of academic accomplishments, self-regulation, interpersonal relationships, and communication skills (Józsa et al., 2022; Fink et al., 2018). Research conducted by Ricciardi (2021) indicated that school readiness at the age of 4 can have a lasting impact on academic achievement during elementary school, emphasizing the significance of socioemotional skills as a crucial aspect of preparedness for school. In another study using a literature review approach, it was found that the dimensions of school readiness include physical readiness, teacher readiness, and program readiness (Kartal, 2018). These results show that school readiness is closely related to the match between individual readiness and the expectations that are expected to be met at school.

Junior high school students fall into the teenage category with an age range of between 13-15 years. According to Erikson (Chung, 2018), this age range is a period when teenagers begin to search for their identity and spend a lot of time with peers. Peer social support is an important and determining part of the development of adolescents today considering that they are undergoing a transition from family to peer interactions (Telzer et al., 2018). As a transition period from childhood to adulthood, adolescents usually encounter various challenges in achieving good developmental expectations (Kreniske et al., 2020) physical, social, emotional and moral. Based on data from various studies, problems that often arise in junior high school-age adolescents are related to adjustment issues including juvenile delinquency, bullying, and risky behavior (Ballerina & Immanuel, 2019; Novendra & Widodo, 2022; Saliman, 2016). These problems will usually have an impact on student performance at school so that student's readiness to face problems, challenges, and assignments at school is an important indicator of achieving good educational output (Hoffmann, 2020; Pan, 2019).

Therefore, this research was carried out to find out the factors forming school readiness in junior high school students. School readiness is broadly not limited to the context of a student's readiness to enter school during childhood, but school readiness also needs to be measured at every level of education. This is done to ensure that student development can be optimized. The dimensions of school readiness that will be measured include self-esteem, conflict resolution skills, and social support in junior high school students in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The hope is that this research can provide recommendations regarding school programs that need to be developed or maintained to support students' school readiness. Furthermore, guidance and counseling teachers can provide appropriate services to facilitate the needs of students to be ready for school.

## **METHOD**

The research method used to reveal the factors that shape students' school readiness in Yogyakarta is quantitative with a correlation research design. A correlation research design was used to determine the relationship between the variables studied (Lin et al., 2023), so as to obtain scientific evidence of variables related to students' school readiness, namely social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution skills. The research procedures carried out are (1) determining research variables, (2) formulating relationships between variables and the proposed model, (3) compiling research instruments, collecting data, (4) analyzing data, and (5) interpreting research results.

This research was conducted on junior high school students in Yogyakarta and were classified as teenagers. The sample for this research was 507 junior high school students in Yogyakarta obtained using proportional random sampling techniques. Data collection techniques used the school readiness scale, social support scale, self-esteem scale, and conflict resolution skills scale. The social support scale was developed based on the theory of Rose et al. (2013) and shows aspects of social support, including (a) parents, (b) teachers, and (c) friends. The self-esteem scale was developed based on the theory of Oattes & Offman (2007) showing that aspects of

self-esteem can be seen from (a) experiences of success in the past, (b) having an interest in participating in academic activities, (c) accepting failure and success in tasks, and (d) obtain recognition from other people. The conflict resolution skills scale was developed based on the theory of Bodine & Crawford (1998) stating that aspects of conflict resolution skills include (a) orientation ability, (b) perception ability, (c) ability to manage emotions, (d) communication ability, (e) creative thinking ability, and (f) critical thinking skills. The school readiness scale was developed based on the theory of Maxwell & Clifford (2023) showing that aspects of school readiness include (a) readiness for school, (b) school readiness for children, and (c) child development support.

Testing the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument uses Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA) assisted by SPSS 24 to determine the construct validity of the scale. The use of EFA to identify factors forming constructs through score variance by taking into account the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value to test indicator correlation ( $> 0.5$ ) and Bartlett's test and anti-image correlation ( $> 0.5$ ) so that further testing can be carried out (Septianingsih & Jerusalem, 2021). Meanwhile, the reliability of the research instrument was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha (Yildiz et al., 2022) with the help of SPSS 24. The data measurement scale was tested using EFA using factor analysis by looking at the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test values. and the following results were obtained: (1) The KMO and Bartlett's Test value of the school readiness scale was  $0.880 > 0.5$  and 29 items were declared valid; (2) The KMO and Bartlett's Test value of the social support scale is  $0.839 > 0.5$  and 22 items are declared valid; (3) The KMO and Bartlett's Test value on the self-esteem scale is  $0.857 > 0.5$  and as many as 23 items were declared valid; and (4) The KMO and Bartlett's Test value of the conflict resolution skills scale was  $0.874 > 0.5$  and 17 items were declared valid. Furthermore, the reliability of the school readiness scale is 0.976, the reliability of the social support scale is 0.962, the reliability of the self-esteem scale is 0.947, and the reliability of the conflict resolution skills scale is 0.958.

Path analysis is the data analysis technique used to determine the factors that shape students' school readiness. Path analysis is a structural equation model to describe the correlation between two or more variables that have a direct or indirect influence (Wooldredge, 2021). Before carrying out path analysis, it is necessary to test the data's normality, autocorrelation, and heteroscedasticity. The results of the data normality test show the Asymp.Sig value. (2-tailed)  $0.108 > 0.005$ , meaning the data is normally distributed. The results of the autocorrelation test using Durbin-Watson show a value of 2.102. If you look at the Durbin-Watson table, the measurement results show that there is no autocorrelation because 2.102 is greater than the upper limit ( $du = 1.799$ ) and less than ( $4-du = 2.201$ ). Meanwhile, regarding the heteroscedasticity test, the significance value of the variables social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution is  $1,000 > 0.05$ , so the data shows no heteroscedasticity. Thus, based on the results of normality, autocorrelation, and heteroscedasticity testing of the data, it shows that the path analysis can be conducted.

## RESULTS

This research aims to determine the factors that shape the school readiness of junior high school students in the city of Yogyakarta. The measurement results can be seen in the table 1 below.

**Table 1. Results of School Readiness Summary Mode**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.925a	.856	.855	6.876
a. Predictors: (Constant), resolution, self-esteem, support				

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ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	135736.430	3	45245.477	956.872	.000b
	Residual	22791.266	482	47.285		
	Total	158527.695	485			
a. Dependent Variable: readiness						
b. Predictors: (Constant), resolution, self-esteem, support						

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.289	1.701		2.521	.012
	support	.823	.055	.642	14.868	.000
	self-esteem	.173	.051	.125	3.370	.001
	resolution	.332	.071	.187	4.682	.000
a. Dependent Variable: readiness						

Based on the test results in table 1, it shows that 92.5% of students' school readiness is explained by the variables of social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution, while the remaining 7.5% is explained by other factors. Judging from the magnitude of the calculated t value, social support has a higher influence than conflict resolution which is in second place and self-esteem is in third place. This means that good social support can influence an individual's ability to resolve conflicts that occur and have an impact on their self-esteem so that in the end it will influence the individual's readiness for school.

**DISCUSSION**

School readiness is not only needed by pre-school children before entering formal education. A description of school readiness at each level of education is also needed to see to what extent a student can successfully participate in the educational process at that level. School readiness extends beyond assessing the student's preparedness for education, it also encompasses evaluating the readiness of the student's family, school, and community to provide support for the student's attendance at school (Williams et al., 2019). According to research, various factors influence an individual's school readiness, such as social support, self-esteem, conflict resolution abilities, self-regulation abilities, parenting patterns, and transition adjustment programs at school (Shi, 2022; Yong & Abdullah, 2022). Meanwhile, this research found that at the junior high school student level in the Yogyakarta province by taking a sample of 5 schools with around 100 respondents each (N=507) found that social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution skills are the factors that together influence students' school readiness.

This research shows that the factors of social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution abilities have a joint influence of 85.6% on the school readiness of junior high school students. This means that several important factors that determine a person's readiness to study at the junior high school level are social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution abilities. Only 14.4% of other factors that influence school readiness have not been revealed in this research. Salsabila (2018); Yuliawan & Taryatman (2020); and Trappes (2022) state that school readiness, as viewed through ecological theory, is associated with the influence of the environment on

students' academic and non-academic behavior and interactions. The behaviors and interactions generated by students necessitate social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution to support individual school readiness.

Based on the order of magnitude of the influence of each factor, it can be seen that social support has a greater influence than the other two factors according to the t value. In the research conducted by Wen and Li (2022), it is revealed that social support can foster an optimistic attitude in students, thereby contributing to their school readiness. Furthermore, social support can enhance the vitality of students, thereby positively contributing to their academic performance (Carmeli et al., 2020).

Based on research by Yong and Abdullah (2022), factors that influence school readiness can include self-regulation abilities, parenting patterns, and school orientation programs. School activities that support students during the transition to school level have the potential to have a positive impact on student development. Research by Mangestuti (2022) highlights the importance of student well-being, underscoring the need for a successful school model, characterized by a student-centered learning approach, humanistic social relations, and supportive infrastructure. Apart from that, Shi (2022) found that the factors of school readiness in his research were social support, mental health, self-esteem, and resilience. In general, the results of the research conducted show the consistency of social support and self-esteem as factors that influence school readiness. Meanwhile, conflict resolution factors are still found to have an indirect influence, for example, seen from Shi's research findings where part of the resilience dimension also includes conflict resolution abilities.

In the context of this research, social support is defined as the influence provided by the social environment around an individual (Haugan, 2021). The influence in question can be in the form of empathy, affection, material, advice, direction, and information. Haugan further stated that social support is one aspect of reducing the problems experienced by teenagers, especially in academics. This supports the findings in this research, that social support has a significant influence on the school readiness of junior high school students who are included in the adolescent category.

Other research conducted by Bono, Sy, and Kopp (2016), shows that social support has a direct influence on a person's social abilities, especially in black children as research subjects. The social abilities of children entering junior high school become an important part because during adolescence peer relationships become central and an important part of developmental tasks (Christie & Viner, 2005). One of the obstacles that children often encounter when entering junior high school is the problem of adapting to different situations, for example, friendships and learning. Furthermore, student factors like ability, self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and gender, along with family characteristics, can impact their transition negatively, affecting adjustment to school and social systems (Vans Rens et al., 2017).

In research at lower levels, for example, kindergarten, orientation activities were found to have a positive influence on readiness to attend school (Yong & Abdullah, 2022). In general, students have time to adapt well if they are facilitated with activities that support the development of their self-confidence and self-esteem (Welsh, Bierman, Nix & Heinrichs, 2020). This is in line with the findings in this research that self-esteem is an important factor in school readiness. In addition, student self-esteem demonstrates a positive predictive relationship with academic engagement, that individuals with higher levels of self-esteem are more likely to be academically engaged than those with lower levels of self-esteem (Zhao et al., 2021; Filippello et al., 2019).

Apart from that, Shi's (2022) research findings that resilience turns out to be a mediator between social support and school readiness, mental well-being, and self-esteem indicate that indirectly the conflict resolution factors that are part of resilience also influence school readiness. Another study revealed that as self-esteem increases, there is a concurrent positive and statistically significant elevation in academic motivation among the participants in the study (Vahedian-Azimi & Moayed, 2021).

The results of this research have implications for strengthening the factors found to significantly influence school readiness so that they can be optimized by schools. Social support, self-esteem, and material conflict resolution can be used as references for schools to create orientation activities that lead to honing these abilities. Furthermore, social support plays a crucial role in fostering cognitive engagement and influencing academic performance among students (Achdiyah et al., 2023). Regarding social support, teachers and students need to

work together with family support in providing positive encouragement so that students feel ready to take part in teaching and learning activities at the junior high school level. Cultural differences in junior high schools, which tend to have diverse backgrounds, also pose a challenge in terms of school readiness. Friction or conflict can arise in heterogeneous situations,

Although this research has succeeded in uncovering the major factors of social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution, this research has not looked specifically at which dimensions of each factor have the greatest contribution. Further research is needed to reveal more in-depth aspects of each factor both quantitatively and qualitatively to be able to help with more specific orientation programs that students need. This research also has not considered how cultural factors influence students' readiness to attend junior high school.

## CONCLUSION

In general, research on junior high school students in Yogyakarta Province shows that social support, self-esteem, and conflict resolution skills have a significant contribution to school readiness. The students need social support to give them motivation in their studies, so self-esteem and conflict resolution can increase to improve their willingness to study. This implies how important it is to prepare these abilities before students enter junior high school. This research also recommends that schools prepare orientation programs that can include material from the three factors studied because they have been proven to have a significant effect. However, further research is still needed to reveal the specific aspects of these three factors that have the most significant influence.

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