



## The Effect of Emotional Intelligence on The Delinquency Behavior of Broken Home Adolescents

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Received: June 12, 2025

Revised: July 3, 2025

Accepted: August 12, 2025

Online: September 30, 2025

### Abstract

Adolescents raised in disharmonious family environments often experience emotional dysregulation, increasing their vulnerability to delinquent behaviors such as minor crimes, rule violations, and social aggression. This study investigates the predictive role of emotional intelligence in mitigating delinquency among adolescents from broken-home families. Utilizing a culturally adapted questionnaire based on Goleman's emotional intelligence framework and Hawkins' delinquency model, data were collected from 130 participants aged 12–21 years. The findings indicate that emotional intelligence significantly contributes to reducing delinquent behavior, accounting for 33.1% of the variance in this context. The study theoretically underscores the role of emotional regulation as a protective factor in developmental psychology. In practical terms, this study offers empirical evidence to support school- and family-based interventions aimed at strengthening adolescents' emotional skills.

**Keywords:** *Emotional intelligence, delinquent behavior, broken-home families, emotional regulation, adolescent development, family dysfunction, psychosocial intervention*

### INTRODUCTION

A family is the smallest social unit that plays a critical role in shaping an individual's emotional, cognitive, and social development (Awaru, 2021). According to Wirdhana et al. (2013), the core functions of the family include religious, socio-cultural, emotional, protective, reproductive, educational, economic, and ecological roles. When these functions break down, family disharmony may occur, leading to what is commonly referred to as a "broken home."

A broken home refers to a family environment that is characterized by unresolved conflict, neglect, or parental separation, resulting in a lack of harmony and emotional security for children (Noviandari et al., 2021). Such conditions often cause emotional disturbances and social adjustment difficulties in adolescents. Muttaqin and Sulistyo (2019) identified several contributing factors to family dysfunction, including divorce, prolonged silence during conflict ("silent treatment"), and prolonged emotional distancing ("cold war"). According to Ariyanto (2024) divorce in the family is often triggered by economic problems and verbal violence, the various impacts experienced by children from broken-home families include changes in children's behavior that vary, some continue to behave well and some show poor behavior, besides that broken homes can affect child development, including behavior patterns, psychological conditions, and changes in children's sensitivity.

Divorce is a growing concern in Indonesia. Data from the Badan Pusat Statistik (2023) indicate that in 2023, there were 447,743 recorded divorce cases. This represents a slight increase from 447,743 cases in 2022 and a continued upward trend over the last five years. The leading cause of divorce was constant disputes (54.58%), followed by economic issues (15.29%) and domestic violence. This trend reflects systemic issues in family communication and stability, which have profound consequences on adolescent psychological well-being.

Children from broken-home families are at greater risk of engaging in delinquent behavior.

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Data from the Pusat Informasi Kriminal Nasional (Pusiknas) recorded that between January and February 2025, 437 minors were involved in theft, 460 in assault cases, and 349 in drug-related offenses. Many of these adolescents reportedly came from broken-home backgrounds. These statistics suggest that emotional neglect and a lack of consistent parental presence may significantly contribute to juvenile delinquency. This phenomenon reflects the increasing trend of children's involvement in crime in Indonesia, which is influenced by various internal factors such as identity crisis and psychological trauma, as well as external factors such as lack of affection and negative social environment influences. This highlights the critical role of family and environment in preventing juvenile delinquency and the need for appropriate interventions to shape children's character and emotional intelligence.

Research by [Sinaga et al. \(2023\)](#) shows that children of divorce victims tend to have a higher risk of being involved in promiscuity, such as smoking, alcohol consumption, brawls, and dating behavior that is not age appropriate. Various factors, such as lack of attention and education from parents, an unsupportive social environment, internet abuse, and weak control and self-awareness of adolescents, influence this. However, this study also confirms that not all children from broken homes experience behavioral deviations. Emotional support, good parenting, and a positive social environment can be protective factors that prevent adolescents from engaging in deviant behavior. These findings reinforce the importance of emotional intelligence in shaping the psychological resilience of adolescents from intact families.

Adolescents raised in such unstable environments often struggle with emotional regulation. [Kartono \(2006\)](#) describes these family systems as "emotionally unhealthy," where chaotic interaction patterns lead to internal emotional conflict and poor behavior regulation in adolescents. This turmoil may manifest as mood swings, withdrawal, hostility, or risky behavior. Adolescents in this phase require parental role models for emotional guidance. Without this support, they are vulnerable to engaging in negative peer groups and delinquent acts ([Willis, 2010](#)).

Juvenile delinquency is the tendency of individuals to commit behavior that is immoral, antisocial, violates the law, and leads to criminality, such as: lying, skipping school, running away from home, defying parents, carrying dangerous objects (pistols, knives), prostituting themselves, either for economic or other purposes, consuming alcohol or drugs, free sex, suicide, attempted murder, to be involved in murder, abortion, persecution that causes someone's death ([Nawafilaty, 2015](#)). [Yuniningsih \(2024\)](#) revealed that the number of juvenile delinquents in 2024 showed a significant increase. Some forms of delinquency that often occur include bullying, brawls, and drug abuse. This phenomenon is of concern to society because it can hurt the development of adolescents and their social environment.

Juvenile delinquency encompasses a range of behaviors that violate social and legal norms—such as lying, truancy, aggression, substance abuse, and criminal acts ([Nawafilaty, 2015](#); [Yuniningsih, 2024](#)). Emotional instability and lack of family support are key predictors of such behaviors. Emotional intelligence, which enables individuals to regulate their emotions and empathize with others, is an important protective factor against these tendencies ([Bar-on, 2006](#)). Prior research has shown that adolescents with higher emotional intelligence exhibit greater resilience and lower levels of delinquency ([Vionita & Savira, 2022](#); [Kaimal et al., 2021](#)).

Given the rising prevalence of juvenile offenses in Indonesia and the documented impact of family dysfunction, this study seeks to examine how emotional intelligence can buffer adolescents against delinquent behavior within broken-home contexts. However, recent international studies also emphasize that emotional intelligence is closely linked to adolescents' resilience against deviant behavior in various cultural contexts. Research by [Kaimal et al. \(2021\)](#) showed a significant negative relationship between delinquent behavior and emotional intelligence in adolescents living in juvenile detention centers. This study confirms that adolescents with low emotional intelligence

tend to exhibit higher levels of delinquent behavior. The results of this study highlight the importance of developing emotional intelligence as one strategy for preventing and managing delinquent behavior in adolescents. Recent research by [Lumangkun et al. \(2025\)](#) also confirms that emotional intelligence and character strength can significantly reduce juvenile delinquency rates. In addition, interpersonal intelligence acts as a mediator that can strengthen the influence of these two variables in reducing juvenile delinquency behavior. These findings are based on a study of 250 vocational high school students in Cilegon City, which showed that improvements in emotional intelligence and character strength, both directly and indirectly, can reduce juvenile delinquency.

Grounded in recent findings and the growing concern over youth delinquency, this study aims to examine the influence of emotional intelligence on delinquent behavior among adolescents from broken-home families. This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Does emotional intelligence significantly influence delinquency behavior in broken-home adolescents?
2. How much is the contribution of emotional intelligence in reducing delinquency behavior in broken-home adolescents?

In addition, this study is expected to contribute theoretically by strengthening the social-emotional development model in adolescents, especially in the context of broken-home families. By focusing on emotional intelligence, this study provides empirical evidence that emotional intelligence can serve as an internal protective factor against delinquency behavior, thereby expanding the understanding of adolescent development in high-risk family conditions.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Factors Affecting Juvenile Delinquency**

Juvenile delinquency has long been viewed as the result of complex interactions among individual, familial, and societal factors. [Hawkins \(1996\)](#) proposes that personal traits such as impulsivity, low cognitive functioning, and weak emotional regulation increase vulnerability to deviant behavior. Additionally, [Kartono \(2013\)](#) emphasizes that delinquency is a symptom of failed socialization processes, particularly when parental supervision and value transmission are absent or insufficient. Supporting this view, [Santrock \(2003\)](#) categorizes delinquent behavior into three major groups: status offenses (such as truancy), socially disruptive acts (such as bullying), and criminal violations (such as theft or assault). These classifications indicate that delinquency can manifest in a range of behaviors depending on how adolescents interpret and respond to social expectations.

Environmental conditions also significantly contribute to delinquency. Socioeconomic hardship, exposure to domestic violence, and peer conflict are frequently cited as aggravating factors. Adolescents from broken-home families often experience these stressors more intensely due to fragmented parental roles and limited emotional support ([Noviandari et al., 2021](#); [Ariyanto, 2024](#)). Therefore, both internal psychological readiness and external social support must be considered in understanding the roots of delinquent behavior.

### **Emotional Intelligence as a Protective Factor**

Emotional intelligence (EI) is increasingly recognized as a psychological buffer that can reduce adolescents' vulnerability to maladaptive behavior. [Goleman \(2005\)](#) defines EI as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others. His model outlines five core components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These abilities enable adolescents to navigate social complexities, resolve interpersonal conflict, and adapt to stress in healthy ways.

According to [Bar-on \(2006\)](#) and [Gardner \(2003\)](#), individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to develop better social adjustment skills and demonstrate greater resistance to negative peer influences. A growing number of studies support this notion. [Vionita and Savira \(2022\)](#) found that adolescents with high emotional intelligence showed fewer instances of behavioral problems. Similarly, [Adibussholeh \(2022\)](#) found a correlation between low emotional intelligence and increased tendencies toward substance use and disobedience.

Evidence from international research further strengthens the argument. [Kaimal et al. \(2021\)](#) conducted a study among adolescents in juvenile detention centers in India and found a strong inverse relationship between emotional intelligence and violent behavior. A study by [Lumangkun et al. \(2025\)](#) conducted in Cilegon, Indonesia, found that emotional intelligence, when combined with character strength and mediated by interpersonal intelligence, effectively reduces the risk of delinquency. These findings collectively suggest that emotional intelligence is a reliable internal resource for managing stress and maintaining self-control, regardless of external circumstances.

### **The Influence of Broken-Home Conditions on Adolescent Development**

Family structure plays a critical role in shaping adolescent emotional and behavioral outcomes. In broken-home situations, parental separation, unresolved conflict, or neglect often result in diminished emotional security and weakened guidance. Research conducted by [Ariyanto \(2024\)](#) and [Sinaga et al. \(2023\)](#) reveals that adolescents from broken-home families are more likely to experience emotional instability, low academic achievement, and behavioral issues such as truancy, fighting, or risky social behaviors. However, these outcomes are not absolute.

Individual differences among adolescents indicate that not all children from broken homes exhibit deviant behavior. [Sinaga et al. \(2023\)](#) point out that those who receive sufficient emotional support and benefit from consistent routines or adult mentorship often exhibit adaptive behavior. This highlights the importance of psychological and social mediators, including emotional intelligence, in determining adolescent outcomes.

In other words, while broken-home conditions may present significant challenges, they do not necessarily lead to negative behaviors if adolescents have access to protective internal resources and a supportive external environment.

### **Synthesizing the Relationship: Emotional Intelligence as a Moderator in the Context of Family Disruption**

In summary, the reviewed literature reveals that emotional intelligence has a mitigating effect on the risk factors associated with juvenile delinquency. The theoretical framework proposed by [Goleman \(2005\)](#) provides insight into how emotional competencies support self-regulation and social functioning, especially during adolescence. At the same time, the delinquency model developed by [Hawkins \(1996\)](#) illustrates how deviant behavior can emerge from an interplay of individual characteristics and environmental pressures.

When combined, these theories suggest that emotional intelligence may serve as a key internal mechanism that buffers adolescents from the negative effects of broken-home environments. Adolescents with well-developed emotional intelligence are more likely to reflect on their behavior, manage impulses, and empathize with others. These skills can help them resist peer pressure, cope with emotional distress, and avoid risky behaviors, even in the absence of stable family support.

This study builds upon these insights by empirically examining the role of emotional intelligence in reducing delinquency among adolescents from broken-home families. The findings are expected to enrich the understanding of emotional intelligence as both a psychological asset and a practical tool for youth development in high-risk contexts.

### Theoretical Framework

This study integrates two theoretical perspectives: [Goleman's \(2005\)](#) Emotional Intelligence Theory and [Hawkins' \(1996\)](#) Delinquency Model. Goleman's framework highlights how emotional competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and self-regulation contribute to adaptive functioning. Meanwhile, Hawkins' model explains delinquency as the result of multiple interacting factors, including individual traits, family dynamics, peer influence, and environmental conditions. In the context of broken-home adolescents, emotional intelligence may serve as a protective factor that counteracts the risks identified in Hawkins' framework.

### Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature reviewed, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Emotional intelligence significantly influences delinquency behavior among adolescents from broken-home families.

H2: The higher the emotional intelligence, the lower the level of delinquent behavior in broken-home adolescents.

### RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative explanatory research design aimed at examining the influence of emotional intelligence on delinquent behavior among adolescents from broken-home families. The population targeted in this study consisted of adolescents aged 12 to 21 years who had experienced family separation or dysfunction. A total of 130 respondents were selected using a snowball sampling technique, considering the sensitivity of the research topic and the difficulty in identifying participants directly.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire composed of three sections: demographic information, a delinquency behavior scale, and an emotional intelligence (EI) scale. The EI scale was adapted from [Goleman's \(2005\)](#) five-component model: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Each domain was operationalized into measurable items, such as: "I can stay calm when I feel angry" (self-regulation) and "I understand how others feel even when they do not say it" (empathy). The delinquency scale was based on [Hawkins' \(1996\)](#) framework, which categorizes juvenile offenses into status offenses, disruptive behaviors, and criminal violations. Sample items included: "I have skipped school without permission" and "I was involved in a fight."

The instruments underwent a thorough content validity process. Three experts in adolescent psychology and educational assessment reviewed all items to ensure conceptual clarity, cultural appropriateness, and alignment with theoretical constructs. Feedback from this panel resulted in the refinement and elimination of several items. Item discrimination analysis using item-total correlation was also conducted. Items with correlation values below 0.228 were removed from further analysis. The final version of the EI scale included 25 items, and the delinquency scale consisted of 43 items. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding values of 0.875 for emotional intelligence and 0.902 for delinquency, indicating high reliability ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ).

Informed consent was obtained at the beginning of the online questionnaire (Google Form), where participants were clearly informed that their responses would be used solely for academic research purposes. The form emphasized the voluntary nature of participation and assured respondents of the confidentiality and anonymity of their data. Written or verbal consent was secured prior to data collection. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, measures were taken to ensure the psychological safety and anonymity of participants throughout the research process.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Participant Characteristics

This study involved 130 adolescents from broken-home families, aged 12–21 years. Based on gender, there were 43 male participants (33.1%) and 87 female participants (66.9%). Most respondents were aged 20 and 21.

**Table 1.** Participant Profile by Gender

Gender	n	(%)	Delinquency Mean	Category	Emotional Intelligence Mean	Category
Male	43	33.1%	99.47	Low	97.70	High
Female	87	66.9%	94.51	Low	94.64	High
Total	130	100%	96.22	Low	95.65	High

**Table 2.** Participant Distribution by Age

Age (Years)	n	Percentage (%)	Mean Delinquency Score	Delinquency Category	Mean EI Score	EI Category
12	1	0.8%	94.00	Low	94.00	Medium
15	15	11.5%	94.87	Low	97.07	High
16	16	12.3%	95.25	Low	93.00	Medium
17	8	6.2%	99.75	Medium	92.88	Medium
18	11	8.5%	95.55	Low	99.27	High
19	21	16.2%	97.95	Low	93.57	Medium
20	27	20.8%	91.41	Low	96.78	High
21	31	23.8%	99.77	Low	96.26	High
Total	130	100%	96.22	Low	95.65	High

### Instrument Validity and Reliability

The validity test for the delinquency scale showed that 43 of 63 items were valid ( $r = 0.228$ – $0.568$ ), while the emotional intelligence scale showed that 25 of 34 items were valid ( $r = 0.299$ – $0.640$ ). Meanwhile, the reliability test results showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.902 for juvenile delinquency and 0.875 for emotional intelligence. This indicates that both instruments have high internal consistency ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ).

**Table 3.** Reliability of Emotional Intelligence Scale Items

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,875	25

**Table 4.** Reliability of Delinquency Scale Items

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,902	43

### Assumption Testing

Before conducting the hypothesis testing, assumption tests were carried out to ensure that the data met the prerequisites for simple linear regression analysis. Two main assumptions were tested: normality and linearity.

The normality test was conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method. Results showed that the delinquency variable had a significance value (Sig.) of 0.200, which is greater than the threshold of 0.05. This indicates that the delinquency data were normally distributed. However, the emotional intelligence variable had a Sig. Value of 0.036, which is less than 0.05, suggests that this variable was not normally distributed. Despite this, the large sample size ( $n = 130$ ) supports the robustness of the regression analysis, as per the Central Limit Theorem, which states that parametric tests remain valid with sufficiently large samples, even if normality is slightly violated.

Next, the linearity assumption was tested to examine whether a linear relationship existed between emotional intelligence and delinquent behavior. The results showed that the significance value of deviation from linearity was 0.756, which exceeds the 0.05 threshold. This confirms that the relationship between the two variables is linear, and the regression model is appropriate for further analysis.

### Hypothesis Testing

To examine the influence of emotional intelligence on delinquent behavior among adolescents from broken-home families, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. The analysis produced a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 0.331, indicating that emotional intelligence accounts for 33.1% of the variance in delinquent behavior. The remaining 66.9 percent is likely explained by other factors that were not included in this study, such as peer influence, parenting style, or socioeconomic background.

The F-value obtained from the regression model was 63.456, with a significance level (p-value) of 0.000. Since this value is below the threshold of 0.05, it indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. The regression coefficient ( $B = -1.016$ ) shows a negative relationship between emotional intelligence and delinquent behavior. This means that higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with lower levels of delinquent behavior.

Based on these results, the hypothesis that emotional intelligence significantly influences delinquent behavior in adolescents from broken-home families is supported by empirical evidence.

**Table 5.** Hypothesis Testing Results – Simple Linear Regression

Variable	F	ig. (p-value)	Square ( $R^2$ )	Coefficient	Interpretation
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b> → <b>Delinquent Behavior</b>	63.456	0.000	0.331	-1.016	Significant and negative relationship

### Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the overall level of emotional intelligence and delinquent behavior among adolescents from broken-home families. The classification of categories was based on a comparison between the empirical mean, the hypothetical mean, and the hypothetical standard deviation, following a normal distribution approach.

The analysis revealed that the empirical mean score for delinquent behavior was 96.22, which falls below the hypothetical mean of 129 and within the range of  $H - 2SD$  to  $H - 1SD$ . Therefore, delinquency levels among participants are categorized as low. In contrast, the emotional intelligence variable showed an empirical mean of 95.65, which falls between  $H + 1SD$  and  $H + 2SD$ ,



indicating a high level of emotional intelligence among participants.

These findings suggest that, despite coming from broken-home backgrounds, most adolescents in this study demonstrate a relatively well-developed capacity to manage emotions and maintain behavioral control.

## Discussion

The results showed that emotional intelligence has a significant negative influence on delinquent behavior. This means that the higher the level of emotional intelligence in adolescents, the lower their tendency to engage in deviant acts. This finding is consistent with [Goleman's \(2005\)](#) theory, which states that individuals with high emotional intelligence can manage emotions effectively, empathize with others, and demonstrate self-control in stressful situations. In the context of broken-home adolescents, those with low emotional intelligence tend to experience difficulties in emotional regulation, making them more vulnerable to adverse external influences such as peer pressure or unstable environments.

Although emotional intelligence plays a key role, other external factors such as peer influence, parenting styles, and lifestyle also contribute to delinquent behavior. However, these factors were not examined in this study and are recommended for future research. A multivariate approach in subsequent studies may reveal more complex patterns and interactions among psychological and environmental variables.

The findings of this study are in line with previous research conducted by [Yunia et al. \(2019\)](#), which found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and juvenile delinquency. Similarly, [Aziz \(2001\)](#) emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence in self-adjustment and the prevention of deviant behavior in adolescents. These studies support the conclusion that adolescents with high emotional intelligence tend to manage emotions more effectively and adapt more positively to their social environment.

On the other hand, this study differs from the findings of [Obungwah \(2022\)](#), who reported no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and delinquent behavior among secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria. Cultural differences, sample characteristics, or variations in research design and measurement tools may explain this discrepancy. It also emphasizes the importance of considering contextual factors when interpreting the influence of emotional intelligence.

From the perspective of developmental psychology, adolescence is a crucial period in the process of identity formation. Adolescents are in a developmental stage where they navigate between identity formation and role confusion, exploring different social roles in order to build a stable sense of self. Adolescents who lack emotional support from their families due to parental separation may seek affirmation from peers or other external sources. If emotional intelligence is underdeveloped, these adolescents are more likely to engage in problematic behaviors such as delinquency, substance use, or aggression.

From a sociological perspective, strong bonds with family and adherence to social norms act as protective factors against deviant behavior. In situations where the family structure is disrupted and external control weakens, emotional intelligence functions as an inner regulatory mechanism that helps adolescents maintain appropriate conduct and resist harmful influences. This view emphasizes that emotional competencies can operate as internalized social control when external supports are unstable.

Furthermore, this research extends Goleman's emotional intelligence framework by demonstrating its role as a protective factor in high-risk family environments. While Goleman emphasized the emotional and interpersonal benefits of emotional intelligence, this study highlights how these competencies interact with family structure and social pressures to influence



behavior. Emotional intelligence is not merely an individual trait, but also a contextual and adaptive resource that supports resilience in adverse conditions.

From a practical standpoint, these findings support the integration of emotional intelligence training into youth development programs, particularly for adolescents from families with disrupted structures. School-based programs, such as social-emotional learning (SEL) curricula, peer mediation initiatives, and counseling services, can help adolescents develop emotional awareness, empathy, and self-regulation skills. Guidance and counseling teachers also need to be equipped to identify emotional difficulties and provide targeted support for students.

At a broader policy level, emotional intelligence should be incorporated as a key developmental focus within national education systems and child protection strategies. Programs that promote emotional resilience, embedded in parenting education, school activities, and mental health services, can contribute to the prevention of delinquency among adolescents. Community-based youth services should also consider culturally appropriate and evidence-based interventions that are responsive to the emotional and familial contexts of adolescents.

In conclusion, the findings of this study emphasize the critical role of emotional intelligence in promoting healthy behavioral development among adolescents from broken-home backgrounds. Emotional intelligence serves as both a psychological resource and a social skill skills, enabling young people to cope with adversity, maintain self-regulation, and build constructive social relationships during a vulnerable stage of development.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This study demonstrates that emotional intelligence has a significant negative influence on delinquent behavior among adolescents from broken-home families. The higher the level of emotional intelligence, the lower the tendency for adolescents to engage in deviant behavior. This finding supports the proposed hypothesis and aligns with existing theories and empirical studies in the field of adolescent psychology.

The results indicate that emotional intelligence serves as a protective internal factor, helping adolescents regulate their behavior, especially in the absence of strong external support from their family. Most participants in this study showed high emotional intelligence and low levels of delinquency, reinforcing the importance of emotional regulation in at-risk youth populations.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the field of developmental and educational psychology by providing empirical support for Goleman's emotional intelligence framework in the context of family disruption. It also strengthens the understanding of emotional intelligence as a moderating factor that buffers adolescents from the psychological and behavioral impacts of broken-home environments.

Based on these findings, the development of emotional intelligence should be prioritized in educational, counseling, and family-based programs. Strengthening this internal capacity can serve as a preventive strategy against delinquent behavior and support the emotional and social adjustment of adolescents facing family dysfunction.

## **LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH**

Although this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between emotional intelligence and delinquent behavior among adolescents from broken-home families, several limitations should be acknowledged.

First, the sample was limited to 130 adolescents who were selected using a snowball sampling technique. While this method was appropriate considering the sensitivity of the topic, it may introduce selection bias and limit the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. Participants were primarily drawn from specific networks and regions, which may not represent

the full diversity of broken-home adolescents in Indonesia or other cultural settings.

Second, the data collection process relied entirely on self-report questionnaires. Although the instruments used were valid and reliable, self-report methods are susceptible to social desirability bias, particularly when addressing sensitive issues such as delinquent behavior. Adolescents may underreport their deviant behaviors or overreport their emotional regulation skills, either consciously or unconsciously, to present themselves in a socially acceptable manner.

Third, this study focused exclusively on emotional intelligence as the independent variable influencing delinquent behavior. While emotional intelligence is undoubtedly an important psychological factor, adolescent behavior is shaped by a combination of personal, familial, peer, and environmental influences. Factors such as parenting style, attachment to parents, peer group pressure, school environment, media exposure, and socioeconomic status were not considered in this study, even though they may significantly contribute to delinquent tendencies.

Fourth, the cross-sectional design of this study only provides a snapshot of the relationship between emotional intelligence and delinquency at a single point in time. It does not allow for causal inferences or examination of how these variables might change or interact over time. A longitudinal approach would provide a deeper understanding of how emotional intelligence develops and influences adolescent behavior throughout different stages of development.

Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to address these gaps. Expanding the sample to include adolescents from different regions, socio-economic backgrounds, and school types would enhance the generalizability of the findings. Incorporating qualitative methods such as interviews, focus group discussions, or observational techniques could provide richer and more nuanced insights into the lived experiences of broken-home adolescents, particularly regarding their emotional challenges and coping mechanisms.

Furthermore, future studies should include multiple variables to build a more holistic model of delinquency. These may include parenting practices, peer relationships, community support, exposure to violence, and access to educational or counseling services. Including these variables would enable researchers to explore potential mediators or moderators in the relationship between emotional intelligence and delinquency.

Finally, there is a need for intervention-based studies that evaluate the effectiveness of emotional intelligence training programs in reducing delinquent behavior among at-risk adolescents. Such research would have substantial practical implications for educators, counselors, and policymakers working to support youth from broken-home families. By developing and testing evidence-based interventions, future studies can contribute not only to theory-building but also to real-world applications in educational and mental health settings.

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