

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTAL ATTACHMENT AND INDEPENDENCE IN MIGRANT ADOLESCENTS: A STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITAS PRIMA INDONESIA

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## Abstract

Parental attachment is one of the key factors influencing the development of adolescent independence, particularly among adolescents who live away from their families. This study aims to examine the relationship between parental attachment and independence among adolescents living away from home in the Faculty of Psychology. The respondents in this study were adolescents aged 17–21 years who lived apart from their parents. The research sample consisted of 233 respondents selected using a purposive sampling technique. The data were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment correlation test, which yielded a correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.266$  with  $p = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between parental attachment and independence among adolescents living away from home. This means that the higher the level of parental attachment perceived by adolescents, the higher their level of independence, and vice versa. These findings can serve as a basis for designing emotional support programs for adolescents living away from home to enhance independence through strengthening parent–child relationships.

**Keywords:** Attachment; Independence; Parents

## INTRODUCTION

Human life consists of several developmental stages that individuals must go through, one of which is adolescence. This period represents a transitional phase from childhood to adulthood, during which individuals still maintain a considerable level of dependence on others, particularly their parents. Adolescence generally ranges from the ages of 11 to 21 years and is divided into three phases: early adolescence (11–14 years), middle adolescence (15–17 years), and late adolescence (18–21 years). According to Santrock (2012), this phase is characterized by significant biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional changes. Erikson (in Ajhuri, 2019) emphasizes that adolescents not only strive to discover their identity but also attempt to understand their existence within a social context. Identity formation at this stage is greatly influenced by recognition from the surrounding environment, making the need for acceptance, self-confidence, and independence crucial, particularly toward the end of adolescence.

The phenomenon of migrant students represents one of the real challenges of independence faced by late adolescents. Wahyudi Kholilullah (2024), in his article *Meniti Jalan yang Berliku: Realitas Kehidupan Mahasiswa Perantauan*, describes various obstacles encountered by migrant students, such as managing finances to meet academic expenses, housing, and daily needs. Some students choose to work part-time to compensate for financial shortages, while others struggle to cope with homesickness. Observations conducted by the researcher among students of the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Prima Indonesia indicate variations in adaptation: some students are able to manage their lives independently, while others experience difficulties in managing time, making decisions, and maintaining their living environment. Some students also reported feelings of anxiety and lack of confidence when dealing with tasks that were previously handled by their parents. Independence, according to Steinberg (in Imas, 2012), is the result of the integration of the concepts of autonomy and independence. Independence refers to the ability to act on one's own without direct reliance on others, whereas autonomy refers to the capacity to regulate oneself in making decisions. Lamman (in Nurvica, 2017) identifies several indicators of independence, including responsibility, assertiveness, decision-making ability, self-control, self-confidence, initiative, and freedom. The factors that shape independence can originate from internal aspects (such as

intelligence, physical changes, and cognitive development) as well as external aspects (such as parenting style, parent-child relationships, and culture) (Hurlock in Nurvica, 2017). Attachment between parents and children is one of the important external factors that support adolescent independence. Bowlby (in Cenceng, 2015) defines attachment as an emotional bond formed through interactions and shared experiences that provide a sense of security and emotional support. Migrant students with secure attachment tend to have greater self-confidence and better ability to manage pressure compared to those with insecure attachment. Armsden and Greenberg (in Suparman et al., 2020) mention three main aspects in measuring parental attachment, namely trust, communication, and alienation.

Previous studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between parental attachment and adolescent independence. Harri et al. (2022) found a correlation of  $r = 0.522$  ( $p < 0.01$ ) among MTsS students, indicating a positive relationship with moderate strength. Research conducted by Renny Anggreani et al. (2021) on migrant students at Universitas Mulawarman also found that self-disclosure positively correlates with self-adjustment. However, most previous studies have focused on middle school students or university students in the early stages of college, and few have specifically examined late adolescents living away from home while considering comprehensive dimensions of attachment. The research gap in this study lies in the limited empirical studies examining the relationship between parental attachment and independence within the context of migrant university students in Indonesia, particularly among late adolescents. In addition, previous studies rarely integrate the psychosocial aspects commonly experienced by migrant students, such as financial pressure, social adaptation, and the management of daily life. Therefore, this study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions that are more relevant to the actual conditions experienced by migrant students. Based on the description above, the hypothesis proposed in this study is that there is a positive relationship between parental attachment and independence among adolescents living away from home. The higher the level of secure attachment, the higher the level of independence possessed by the adolescents.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Adolescence**

Adolescence is a developmental stage that bridges childhood and adulthood and is characterized by rapid physical, cognitive, and psychosocial changes. Santrock (2012) defines adolescence as the developmental period that begins around the ages of 11 to 12 and continues into the early twenties. During this stage, individuals experience significant biological maturation, cognitive development, and socio-emotional changes. Adolescence is commonly divided into three stages: early adolescence (11–14 years), middle adolescence (15–17 years), and late adolescence (18–21 years). Late adolescence is often associated with increased independence, identity exploration, and the development of personal values and goals. According to Erikson's psychosocial development theory (in Ajhuri, 2019), adolescents face the crisis of **identity versus role confusion**, where they attempt to establish a coherent sense of self and determine their role within society. In the context of higher education, many late adolescents begin to live away from their families in order to pursue their studies. This situation requires them to adapt to new environments and develop greater independence in managing their daily lives.

### **2. Independence in Adolescents**

Independence is an important developmental task during adolescence. Steinberg (in Imas, 2012) explains that independence is formed through the integration of **autonomy** and **independence**. Independence refers to the ability to function without relying heavily on others, while autonomy refers to the capacity to regulate one's own behavior and make personal decisions. Lamman (in Nurvica, 2017) identifies several indicators of independence, including responsibility, assertiveness, decision-making ability, self-control, self-confidence, initiative, and freedom. Adolescents who demonstrate independence are able to manage their lives effectively, solve problems, and take responsibility for their actions. According to Hurlock (in Nurvica, 2017), independence is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include intelligence, emotional maturity, and cognitive development. Meanwhile, external factors include parenting style, family environment, cultural background, and the quality of relationships between parents and children. For students who study away from home, independence becomes particularly important because they must manage various aspects of life such as finances, time management, academic responsibilities, and social relationships without direct parental supervision.

### **3. Parental Attachment**

Attachment refers to the emotional bond that develops between children and their caregivers. Bowlby (in Cenceng, 2015) describes attachment as a strong emotional connection formed through repeated interactions and experiences between children and their caregivers. This bond provides a sense of security that allows individuals to explore their environment and develop confidence. Attachment theory suggests that early relationships with caregivers play a significant role in shaping individuals' emotional and social development. When adolescents experience secure attachment, they tend to feel valued, supported, and confident in facing life challenges. Conversely, insecure attachment may lead to feelings of anxiety, insecurity, and dependence on others. Armsden and Greenberg (in Suparman et al., 2020) propose three main dimensions of parental attachment: trust, communication, and alienation. Trust refers to the extent to which adolescents feel that their parents understand and support them. Communication reflects the openness and quality of interaction between parents and adolescents. Alienation refers to feelings of anger, isolation, or emotional distance from parents. These dimensions are commonly measured using the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA),

which is widely used in psychological research to assess attachment relationships during adolescence.

### **4. The Relationship Between Parental Attachment and Independence**

Parental attachment plays a crucial role in the development of adolescent independence. Adolescents who experience secure attachment with their parents tend to develop higher levels of self-confidence, emotional stability, and problem-solving abilities. These qualities support their ability to function independently. Secure attachment also allows adolescents to explore new environments while maintaining emotional support from their parents. This supportive relationship encourages adolescents to take responsibility, make decisions, and manage challenges more effectively. Previous studies have shown a positive relationship between parental attachment and independence. Harri et al. (2022) found a positive correlation ( $r = 0.522$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) between parental attachment and adolescent independence among MTsS students. This finding indicates that stronger parental attachment is associated with higher levels of independence. Similarly, research conducted by Anggreani et al. (2021) on migrant university students at Universitas Mulawarman found that self-disclosure is positively related to self-adjustment. These results suggest that supportive interpersonal relationships contribute to the development of adaptive and independent behavior among students who live away from home. Despite these findings, limited research has specifically examined the relationship between parental attachment and independence among late adolescent migrant university students. Therefore, further research is needed to explore how parental attachment influences the independence of students who must adapt to life away from their families.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational design to examine the relationship between parental attachment as the independent variable and independence as the dependent variable. This approach was chosen because it allows the relationship between the two variables to be measured objectively through numerical data and statistical analysis (Sugiyono, 2019). The population of this study consisted of 700 university students. The sample size was determined based on the Isaac and Michael table with a 5% margin of error, resulting in 233 respondents. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, which involves selecting respondents based on predetermined criteria. The criteria included students from the Psychology Study Program aged 18–22 years who live away from their parents. The research instrument used a Likert-scale questionnaire consisting of two parts. The first part was the Parental Attachment Scale, developed based on the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) adapted by Wahyuni & Asra (2014). This scale consists of three aspects: parent trust, parent communication, and parent alienation, with a total of 32 items (20 favorable and 12 unfavorable items). The second part was the Independence Scale, developed based on the aspects of independence proposed by Lamman (in Nurvica, 2017), which include seven aspects: responsibility, assertiveness, decision-making, self-control, self-confidence, initiative, and freedom, consisting of 24 items (13 favorable and 11 unfavorable items). The scoring system used a range of 4 to 1 for favorable items, while the scores for unfavorable items were reversed. Before being used in the main study, the instruments were pilot-tested on a sample with characteristics similar to the research population. The validity test was conducted using the item-total correlation with the Pearson Product Moment, and items were considered valid if the calculated  $r$  value was greater than 0.25 (Soewadji, 2012). The reliability test was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, and the instrument was considered reliable if the alpha value exceeded 0.60 (Ghozali, 2018). The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 2021. Data analysis was conducted through several stages. First, a normality test was

performed to ensure that the distribution of each variable approached a normal distribution, with  $p > 0.05$  indicating normal distribution. Second, a linearity test was conducted to confirm that the relationship between the independent and dependent variables was linear, with  $p > 0.05$  indicating a linear relationship. Third, hypothesis testing was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment correlation to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between the variables. The interpretation of the correlation coefficient referred to the criteria proposed by Guilford (1956). The research procedure began with the preparation stage, which included preparing the research proposal, determining variables and indicators, and developing the research instruments. Next, the instrument trial was conducted to test validity and reliability, followed by revisions if necessary. The next stage was data collection, where respondents meeting the criteria were selected and the questionnaires were distributed either directly or online. The collected data were then processed by entering them into SPSS, followed by normality testing, linearity testing, and Pearson correlation analysis. The final stage was the preparation of the research report, which includes the results, discussion, conclusions, and recommendations.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The respondents in this study consisted of **233 migrant students from the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Prima Indonesia**. The characteristics of the respondents were not described in detail demographically because this study focuses on analyzing the relationship between the variables of **independence and attachment**.

The description of independence and attachment data was obtained through the categorization results of respondents' answers to the research scales that had previously been tested for validity and reliability.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Independence and Attachment**

Variable	N	Hypothetical Min	Hypothetical Max	Hypothetical Mean	Hypothetical SD	Empirical Min	Empirical Max	Empirical Mean	Empirical SD
Independence	233	24	96	60	12	42	96	74.46	10.272
Attachment	233	32	128	80	16	35	128	100.73	14.176

The empirical mean values for both variables are higher than the hypothetical mean values, indicating that migrant students have **relatively high levels of independence and attachment** compared to the ideal population average.

**Table 2. Categorization of Independence and Attachment Scores**

Variable	Category	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Independence	Low	$X < 64.19$	2	0.4%
	Moderate	$64.19 \leq X \leq 84.73$	36	15.4%
	High	$X > 84.73$	195	84.1%
Attachment	Low	$X < 64$	2	1.3%
	Moderate	$64 \leq X \leq 96$	40	17.2%
	High	$X > 96$	190	81.5%

Based on Table 2, the majority of respondents fall into the high category, both for independence (84.1%) and attachment (81.5%). The moderate category for independence is **15.4%** and attachment **17.2%**, while the low category is 0.4% for independence and 1.3% for attachment. This indicates that migrant students generally maintain strong emotional relationships with their parents without reducing their level of independence. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test obtained a significance value of  $p = 0.141 (>0.05)$ , indicating that the data are normally distributed and meet the requirements for Pearson correlation analysis. The **linearity test** showed a significance value of  $p = 0.000 (<0.05)$  and a Deviation from Linearity value of  $p = 0.242 (>0.05)$ . Therefore, the relationship between independence and attachment is **significantly linear**. Based on the **Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis**, the correlation coefficient obtained was  $r = 0.266$  with a significance value of  $p = 0.000 (p < 0.05)$ . This indicates a **significant positive relationship between independence and attachment among migrant students**. This means that the higher the level of students' attachment to their parents, the higher

the level of independence they possess, and vice versa. The **R Square value = 0.071** indicates that **attachment contributes 7.1% to independence**, while **92.9% is influenced by other factors**, such as parenting style, life experiences, individual characteristics, and the social environment.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results of the study involving 233 respondents who were migrant students from the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Prima Indonesia (UNPRI) indicate a positive correlation between parental attachment and independence. The **R value of 0.266** shows a relationship between independence and parental attachment. The **R Square value of 0.071** indicates that **7.1% of the level of independence can be explained by attachment**, while **92.9% is influenced by other factors**, such as intelligence, gender, developmental stage, physical changes, and cognitive development internally, as well as birth order in the family, parenting patterns, socio-cultural conditions, and parental activities externally (Hurlock, in Nurvica, 2017). The results of this study are supported by **attachment theory developed by Bowlby (in Cenceng, 2015) and Ainsworth (in Wina Lova Riza, 2018)**, which states that **secure attachment with parents plays a significant role in the development of adolescent independence**. These findings are also supported by **Armsden and Greenberg (in Suparman et al., 2020)** who demonstrated that the quality of attachment to parents correlates with the development of independence. This study supports the findings of **Harri (2022)**, which show that adolescents with high parental attachment tend to have a good level of independence in living away from home. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is proven to be correct, where the higher the level of parental attachment, the higher the level of independence in adolescents, and conversely, the lower the level of parental attachment, the lower the level of independence. An interesting finding from this data is the strength of the relationship between attachment and independence, which reached **R = 0.266**, higher than several previous studies. This may indicate that migrant students in the Faculty of Psychology at UNPRI have a stronger attachment to their parents, which directly influences their level of independence while living away from home. The analysis also shows that students who obtained high scores on the attachment scale also showed high scores on the independence scale.

This means that the stronger their perception of a warm, supportive, and open relationship with their parents, the greater their ability to **make independent decisions and adapt to life away from home**. Conversely, the weaker their perception of such relationships, the weaker their ability to make independent decisions and adapt in migrant life. Meanwhile, students who obtained **moderate scores on the attachment and independence scales** tend to have **fairly stable emotional relationships in decision-making**, but have not fully developed their independence potential (Arnett, J.J., 2024). Students who maintain attachment with their parents tend to demonstrate **more stable independent adaptation abilities**. The analysis indicates that migrant students who maintain emotional attachment with their parents show **more positive responses in aspects of independence**. The quality of emotional relationships with parents during adolescence has **long-term effects on independence** (Scharf & Maysseless, 2020). This finding is supported by **Costa et al. (2022)**, who found that **secure attachment during adolescence improves emotional regulation**, which indirectly affects the level of independence. Although the overall results show that migrant students tend to have **high levels of attachment with their parents**, this does not hinder their independence. Instead, it **supports the healthy development of independence**. Positive and secure attachment can become a **source of emotional strength** that encourages students to face the challenges of living away from home with greater confidence and adaptability.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between independence and attachment among migrant students of the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Prima Indonesia. The correlation coefficient value of  $r = 0.266$  with  $p = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that the higher the level of students' attachment to their parents, the higher the level of independence they possess. Although the contribution of attachment to independence is relatively small (R Square = 0.071), this finding reinforces the view that a healthy emotional relationship with parents serves as a supporting factor in the development of independence. The remaining 92.9% of the variance in independence is influenced by other factors such as life experiences, parenting patterns, personality, and the social environment. These results confirm that independence and attachment are not contradictory concepts but rather complementary, especially in the context of migrant university students who need to maintain a balance between emotional support from their parents and the ability to manage their lives independently.

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