



Friendship Quality and Happiness Among Adolescents Living Away from Home: Insights into Social and Academic Adjustment

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Article History:

Received:

10-08-2026

Revised:

11-07-2026

Accepted:

09-08-2026

Keywords:

Quality of friendship, happiness, adolescents, teenager

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Abstract:

Happiness can provide motivation, enthusiasm, and encouragement for teenagers in carrying out various activities both at school and outside of school. One way to get happiness for teenagers is through support and assistance from their family environment including parents, siblings and other extended family. On the other hand, there are some teenagers who live far apart from their parents and family as experienced by teenagers who migrate. Teenagers who feel happy will spend their time socializing and are happy to have more casual friends or close friends. Friendly friendships will help the social and emotional development of adolescents. This study uses correlational quantitative research, to determine the relationship between friendship quality and happiness in overseas adolescents. The results of the simple regression analysis showed a correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) = .582 at $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). A significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) indicates that there is a positive significant relationship between the quality of friendship and the happiness of overseas adolescents.

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Introduction (مقدمة)

Happiness is widely recognized as one of the fundamental goals of human life and an essential component of psychological well-being. Regardless of age, social status, cultural background, or religion, individuals naturally strive to achieve happiness because it contributes to a meaningful and satisfying life (Lestari & Palasari, 2020). Previous studies have demonstrated that happiness promotes positive emotions, optimistic thinking, and psychological resilience, all of which enhance individuals' motivation and increase the likelihood of achieving personal success

(Imania et al., 2019). Furthermore, positive emotional states associated with happiness have been shown to improve cognitive performance, productivity, and overall functioning (Achor, 2010).

During adolescence, happiness plays a particularly important role because this developmental period is characterized by rapid physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes. Adolescents who experience higher levels of happiness tend to develop more positive attitudes toward themselves and others, demonstrate greater motivation in academic and non-academic activities, and are more likely to engage in adaptive social behaviors (Lubis, 2019). Consequently, understanding the factors that contribute to adolescent happiness has become an important concern in developmental and positive psychology.

The literature suggests that happiness is influenced by both internal and external factors (Salavera et al., 2020). From the perspective of positive psychology, Seligman (2002) proposed that happiness consists of three interrelated dimensions: the pleasant life, the meaningful life, and the engaged life. Together, these dimensions explain how positive experiences, meaningful life goals, and active engagement in daily activities contribute to overall well-being.

Happiness also functions as a protective psychological resource during adolescence. It enables adolescents to cope more effectively with developmental challenges and social pressures, thereby reducing their vulnerability to psychological problems (Ryff & Singer, 2008). According to Giyati and Wardani (2016), adolescence represents an optimal period for developing individual potential, including talents, competencies, interests, and personal values. At the same time, adolescents experience increasing social expectations and interpersonal pressures, making them particularly vulnerable to emotional and psychological difficulties.

One group that may experience greater psychological challenges comprises adolescents living away from their families. These adolescents often leave their hometowns to pursue higher education or employment, requiring them to adapt to unfamiliar social and cultural environments. Although adolescence offers numerous opportunities for personal growth and happiness, separation from parents and family members may reduce access to emotional support, which is considered one of the primary determinants of adolescent well-being (Lestari & Palasari, 2020).

Living independently also exposes adolescents to multiple stressors, including academic demands, social adjustment, financial concerns, and homesickness. Successfully adapting to these challenges requires effective coping skills and psychological resilience. Individuals who are able to adjust successfully to new environments tend to respond more efficiently, maturely, and adaptively to environmental demands while effectively managing stress, frustration, and psychological conflict (Arnett, 2013).

Under these circumstances, friendships become increasingly important. Adolescents who experience greater happiness generally spend more time engaging in social interactions and tend to establish both casual and close friendships (Hapsari & Sholichah, 2022). As adolescents leave home to pursue education or employment, peer relationships gradually replace family as one of their primary sources of emotional and social support (Arnett, 2013).

Friendship is considered one of the most influential interpersonal relationships during adolescence. High-quality friendships provide emotional support, facilitate social adjustment, encourage self-disclosure, and promote healthy psychological development. Adolescents who maintain supportive friendships generally experience greater emotional security, improved self-esteem, and stronger feelings of social belonging (Damayanti & Haryanto, 2017). Likewise, Santrock (2010) emphasized that peer relationships play a fundamental role in adolescents' social and emotional development because peer groups constitute the first social context in which young people learn to establish relationships beyond their family environment.

Despite the substantial body of literature highlighting the importance of friendship for adolescent well-being, empirical evidence focusing specifically on adolescents living away from home remains relatively limited, particularly within the Indonesian context. This population experiences unique developmental and environmental challenges that may influence how

friendship contributes to their psychological well-being. Therefore, investigating the relationship between friendship quality and happiness among adolescents living away from their families is both theoretically and practically important.

Accordingly, the present study aims to examine the relationship between friendship quality and happiness among adolescents living away from home. It is hypothesized that friendship quality is positively associated with happiness, such that adolescents who report higher-quality friendships will also report higher levels of happiness, whereas poorer friendship quality will be associated with lower levels of happiness.



Method (منهج)

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design to examine the relationship between friendship quality and happiness among adolescents living away from their families. A correlational approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to determine the extent to which variations in friendship quality were associated with variations in happiness without manipulating or controlling any experimental conditions. This design allowed the researchers to examine the direction and strength of the relationship between the two variables within the participants' natural social context. Accordingly, the study focused on identifying the empirical association between friendship quality and happiness rather than establishing a causal relationship between the variables.

Participants

Initially, 78 adolescents participated in the study by completing an online questionnaire. Participants were recruited using a purposive sampling technique based on predetermined inclusion criteria relevant to the objectives of the study. Eligible participants were adolescents aged 18 to 22 years who were living away from their families for educational or other purposes and residing independently in boarding houses or dormitories, or staying with relatives. This criterion was applied to ensure that the participants shared the key characteristic of experiencing daily life away from their immediate family environment.

Following the data screening process, three questionnaires were excluded because they were incomplete and therefore did not meet the requirements for further analysis. After excluding these responses, the final sample consisted of 73 adolescents aged between 18 and 22 years. The participants came from various geographical regions and occupational backgrounds, providing some diversity within the study sample. The final dataset was subsequently used for the statistical analyses examining the relationship between friendship quality and happiness among adolescents living away from their families.

Instruments

Friendship quality was assessed using the **Friendship Quality Questionnaire (FQQ)** developed by Zou et al. (1998). The instrument consists of 16 items measuring several dimensions of friendship quality, including trust, communication, and validation. In the present study, the scale demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .802.

Happiness was measured using the **Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ)** developed by Hills and Argyle (2002). The questionnaire contains 29 items designed to assess individuals' subjective happiness and psychological well-being. The instrument showed good reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .853.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through an online questionnaire administered voluntarily after participants provided their consent to participate. Following data collection, reliability analyses were conducted using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The proposed hypothesis was subsequently

tested using simple linear regression analysis with IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. Statistical significance was established at $p < .05$

Result (نتائج)

The final sample consisted of 73 adolescents aged between 18 and 22 years, following the exclusion of three participants whose responses were incomplete. The exclusion of incomplete responses was conducted to ensure the completeness and quality of the data included in the subsequent analyses. Prior to conducting the main statistical analyses, preliminary assumption testing was performed to assess the distributional characteristics of the study variables. The results indicated that both friendship quality and happiness were normally distributed, as reflected by skewness and kurtosis values below 1.0. These findings suggest that the data did not substantially deviate from a normal distribution and therefore met the normality assumption required for the subsequent statistical analyses.

Table 1 Demographic data

Characteristics	N	%
Gender		
Male	25	34,24
Female	48	65,76
Age		
18-20	31	42,47
20-21	4	5,53
Region		
Jawa Timur	45	61,64
Jawa Tengah	19	26,03
Bali	6	8,21
Sulawesi Tenggara	3	4,12
Occupation		
Student	59	80,82
Entrepreneur	3	6,85
Private-sector employee	6	8,21
Other	5	4,12
Total	73	100%

Correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between friendship quality and happiness among adolescents living away from their families, with a correlation coefficient of $r = .569$ and a significance level of $p < .001$. The positive direction of the correlation indicates that higher levels of friendship quality were associated with higher levels of happiness. Conversely, adolescents who reported lower-quality friendships tended to report lower levels of happiness. The magnitude of the correlation suggests a moderate association between the two variables, indicating that friendship quality is meaningfully related to adolescents' happiness, although it does not fully account for variations in happiness levels. Overall, the findings provide empirical support for the proposed hypothesis that friendship quality is significantly and positively associated with happiness among adolescents living away from their families. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Normality test

Variabel	Skewness	Kurtosis
Quality of friendship	,393	,271
Happiness	,415	,459

To further examine the predictive relationship, a simple linear regression analysis was performed. The analysis demonstrated that friendship quality significantly predicted happiness ($r = .582, p < .001$). The positive regression coefficient indicates that improvements in friendship quality were associated with increased levels of happiness among adolescents living away from their families. Therefore, the proposed research hypothesis was supported

Table 3 Corelation test

Variabel	Mean	SD	1	2
Quality of friendship	76,692	8,484		,569**
Happiness	30,942	4,046	,569**	

** $p < .01$

Correlation analysis demonstrated a significant positive association between friendship quality and happiness among adolescents living away from their families ($r = .569, p < .001$). The moderate positive correlation indicates that adolescents who reported higher-quality friendships also tended to report higher levels of happiness. This finding supports the proposed hypothesis and suggests that friendship quality is an important interpersonal correlate of happiness among adolescents living away from home. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 2.



Discussion (مناقشة)

The findings of this study indicate a significant positive relationship between friendship quality and happiness among adolescents living away from their hometowns. This finding suggests that adolescents who experience higher-quality friendships tend to report higher levels of happiness. Conversely, lower friendship quality is associated with lower levels of happiness. Based on a simple linear regression analysis conducted using SPSS version 25.0 for Windows, the results showed a correlation coefficient of $r_{xy} = .582$ with a significance level of $p = .000$ ($p < .05$). These findings indicate a moderate positive relationship between friendship quality and happiness. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed in this study is accepted.

The present findings are consistent with previous research conducted by Astuti (2016), which demonstrated a significant positive correlation between friendship quality and happiness among adolescents. This finding reinforces the view that the quality of interpersonal relationships, particularly friendships, plays an important role in adolescents' psychological well-being. During adolescence, peer relationships become increasingly important as adolescents spend more time interacting with friends and gradually develop greater independence from their parents. Consequently, positive and supportive friendships can provide an important social environment in which adolescents can experience acceptance, emotional support, and a sense of belonging.

Similarly, Cheng and Furnham (2015) found that friendships with peers are important contributors to adolescents' happiness. Through friendships, adolescents can obtain social support, share experiences, participate in enjoyable activities, and receive positive feedback from their peers. Such interactions may contribute to positive emotional experiences and help

adolescents cope with challenges encountered in their daily lives. Therefore, friendships are not merely social relationships but can also function as an important psychological resource that contributes to adolescents' happiness.

Friendship relationships also represent an important source of support in the development of adolescents' social competencies. Close and supportive friendships can facilitate adolescents' social and emotional development by providing opportunities to communicate, cooperate, express emotions, resolve interpersonal conflicts, and understand the perspectives of others (Damayanti & Haryanto, 2017). Adolescents who experience high-quality friendships tend to engage in relationships characterized by mutual trust, openness, sharing, and emotional support. These characteristics allow adolescents to feel valued and understood by their friends, which may subsequently enhance their subjective well-being.

However, maintaining a high-quality friendship also involves mutual commitment and reciprocity. Individuals involved in close friendships may be required to share their time, attention, experiences, and personal information with one another. They may also make sacrifices to provide assistance or emotional support when their friends face difficulties. This reciprocal process can strengthen interpersonal bonds and create a greater sense of closeness and security within the friendship. Marita (2013) suggests that adolescents who have positive and supportive friendships tend to experience greater happiness because they have social relationships that can provide emotional comfort and a sense of belonging.

Furthermore, happy adolescents are generally able to establish and maintain positive relationships with people who are important in their lives, including friends, relatives, parents, and peers. The ability to listen to others, understand their emotions, communicate effectively, and respond appropriately to interpersonal situations represents an important aspect of social and emotional competence. Sandjojo (2017) explains that adolescents require basic social skills to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships, while emotional skills are necessary to understand and effectively manage their own emotions as well as the emotions of others. In this context, high-quality friendships may provide adolescents with opportunities to practice and develop these competencies, which in turn may contribute to greater happiness.

The findings of the present study therefore provide empirical evidence that friendship quality is significantly associated with happiness among adolescents living away from their hometowns. Adolescents who are separated from their families and familiar social environments may face various challenges, including adjustment to a new environment, reduced direct interaction with family members, and the need to establish new social networks. Under these circumstances, supportive and meaningful friendships may become particularly important. A positive friendship environment can provide emotional support, companionship, and a sense of belonging, thereby helping adolescents adapt to their new surroundings and maintain positive psychological well-being.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the data were collected through an online questionnaire, which meant that the researchers could not directly observe the participants while they completed the measurement scales. Second, the use of self-report measures may have introduced response bias, as participants' responses may have been influenced by their subjective perceptions, social desirability, or their current emotional conditions. Therefore, future research is encouraged to consider using multiple methods of data collection, such as interviews, observations, or reports from significant others, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between friendship quality and happiness. Future studies may also examine other factors that could contribute to adolescents' happiness, such as social support, loneliness, adjustment, family relationships, and psychological resilience.



Conclusion (خاتمة)

This study demonstrates a significant positive association between friendship quality and happiness among adolescents living away from their families. Adolescents who reported higher-quality friendships also tended to experience greater happiness, supporting the proposed hypothesis. Importantly, these findings highlight the particular relevance of peer relationships for adolescents who live away from their families and familiar social environments. In this context, high-quality friendships may provide adolescents with meaningful social connections, emotional support, and a sense of belonging that are important for maintaining positive psychological well-being while adapting to a new environment.

The primary contribution of this study lies in highlighting friendship quality as an important correlate of happiness within the specific context of adolescents living away from home, a population that may face distinctive social and adjustment challenges. The findings suggest that fostering supportive, trusting, and reciprocal friendships may be particularly valuable in supporting adolescents' well-being during periods of separation from their families. Although the findings should be interpreted in light of the limitations of the online self-report design, they provide a basis for future research to examine friendship quality and adolescent well-being using larger and more geographically diverse samples and multiple methods of data collection.

Acknowledgment (شكر وتقدير)

Acknowledgment is addressed to a person and/or groups and also the institution that helps research both in a direct and indirect way.



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