

# The Relationship Between Mental Health, Self-Confidence, and Self-Control with Fatherless in Grade IX Students

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The author(s) declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study aimed to analyze the relationship between mental health, self-confidence, and self-control with fatherlessness among grade IX students at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus. The hypothesis proposed that poorer mental health, lower self-confidence, and weaker self-control are significantly associated with higher fatherlessness.

**Research Method:** This research used an analytical observational design with a cross-sectional approach. The population consisted of 212 grade IX students, and 139 respondents were selected using Slovin's formula with proportional random sampling. Data were collected using structured questionnaires, including the MHC-SF, self-confidence scale, self-control scale, and Father Presence Questionnaire, then analyzed using univariate and Chi-Square tests.

**Results and Discussion:** The findings showed significant relationships between mental health and fatherlessness ( $p=0.000$ ), self-confidence and fatherlessness ( $p=0.000$ ), and self-control and fatherlessness ( $p=0.003$ ). These results indicate that lower paternal involvement is associated with poorer psychological well-being, reduced confidence, and weaker self-regulation among adolescents.

**Implications:** The findings highlight the importance of fathers' emotional presence in adolescent development and suggest strengthening family-based interventions and school counseling support, as well as further research on paternal involvement and adolescent well-being

**Keywords:** fatherlessness; adolescent mental health; self-confidence; self-control; paternal involvement; junior high school students; psychological well-being;

## 1. Introduction

In a family consisting of a father, a mother, and a child. Parents are the most influential people in educating children by providing guidance, direction, and examples of good behavior, helping children grow and develop appropriately at each developmental stage. Parents are motivators for children, encouraging their development and providing proper facilities to support it. A good and decent education from parents is a gift from God to the parents (Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono, 2021). Adolescence can be said to be a time full of psychological stress and problems, as individuals' emotions begin to change, leading to many issues that indirectly cause new sadness and conflicts (Jammah, 2016). One of the serious new conflicts is the phenomenon of fatherlessness, or the absence of fathers in childcare, which has become a global issue receiving attention in recent decades. This phenomenon refers to a situation in which a child grows up without a father's presence or involvement in his life, physically,



emotionally, or financially. The absence of a father can result from various factors, such as divorce, death, job relocation, or the father's unpreparedness to fulfill his role.

The impact of this phenomenon is widespread, affecting psychological, social, and economic aspects for children, families, and society as a whole. The impact of fatherlessness on child development has been widely researched. Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) show that fatherless cases rank third worldwide. In a country without a fatherless role (fatherless country), the fatherless phenomenon is increasingly complex due to cultural and economic factors (Maryam, 2022). Changes in family structure and social dynamics have exacerbated this phenomenon. Recent data show a significant increase in the number of single-parent families (fatherless), in which mothers are the sole caregivers. According to the National Fatherhood Initiative 2023, about 18.4 million children in the United States grow up without a father. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, this phenomenon is also getting fatter, especially due to the high rate of divorce and migration of fathers as Indonesian workers (TKI) abroad (Kompas, 2023).

In Central Java, the number of divorces reached 76,367. This affects a person's readiness to become a father. 13.35% of women became heads of households in 2017 due to divorce, both living and dead divorces. Meanwhile, 3.94% of men lead a family after divorce. The information presented here shows that the number of children who experience fatherlessness exceeds the number of children who experience motherlessness (Wahyuni, Khumas, and Eka Jafar 2023). Studies by Amato and Patterson (2021) show that children who grow up without a father tend to have difficulties in emotional, social, and academic development. They are more prone to behavioral problems, such as mental health disorders, lack of confidence, and difficulty controlling themselves. In addition, the absence of a father can affect children's self-concept, leading them to feel a loss of identity and emotional support (Härkönen & Bernardi, 2023). Previous research has shown that adolescents who do not have a father role in their development are more vulnerable to having poor well-being, mental, and behavioral conditions. A bad father's role also affects a teenager's self-esteem; a teenager without a father's role considers himself inferior and also does not understand why his father is leaning on him. Results from the Indonesia National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS), the first national mental health survey to measure the number of cases of mental disorders in adolescents aged 10 to 17 years in Indonesia, also provide additional information on mental disorders.

The results of the survey show that one in three Indonesian adolescents has mental health problems, while one in twenty Indonesian adolescents has a mental disorder in the last 12 months. This figure is equivalent to 15.5 million and 2.45 million adolescents. Adolescents in this group are adolescents who are diagnosed with mental disorders in accordance with the guidelines of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), which is a guide for the enforcement of the diagnosis of mental disorders in Indonesia. The government has increased access to health facilities, but few adolescents seek professional help for their mental health problems. Only 2.6% of adolescents with mental health problems use mental health facilities or counseling to help them cope with their emotional and behavioral problems (Gloria, 2022). Parents play a very important role in a child's mental health. The behavior he sees every day is an example of how he behaves in daily life. Fathers and mothers have different roles and figures when raising children. Parental support is the presence, willingness, and care of the person who loves us in helping us change for the better (Masithoh et al., 2023). A figure of parents who are expected to take full responsibility for providing optimal parenting and education from early childhood to adulthood (Khasanah, B. L., & Fauziah, P., 2020). A father has a great responsibility for maintaining the family's development. Fathers encourage their



children to take risks and solve problems, especially in regulating play activities, whereas mothers provide comfort and show greater love in stressful situations (Islamiah et al., 2023). The instruction and guidance given by parents are related to the love they give to their children, provide examples of discipline, and instill faith in each child (Khasanah, B. L., & Fauziah, P., 2020). Adolescent mental health is a condition of adolescent psychological, emotional, and social well-being that allows them to function optimally in their daily lives. There are many definitions of mental health and psychological science.

The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) defines adolescent mental health as "a condition in which an adolescent can cope with stress, interact healthily with others, learn well, and cope with the changes and challenges that occur during adolescence (Wedanthi, 2022). Covers important aspects such as adolescents' ability to cope with challenges that arise during adolescence, manage stress, and grow and develop positively in their psychological, emotional, and social aspects (Utama, 2022; Gunawan et al., 2022). Confidence is a component of personality in actualizing potential. Individuals who believe in themselves can achieve diverse goals with a positive perspective on their environment, situations, and themselves. On the other hand, confidence can encourage an individual to recognize their strengths and weaknesses (Hidayati & Savira, 2021). Teens with low self-confidence and poor self-control may engage in a variety of deviant behaviors. In real life, adolescents are less responsible and lack good self-control in social situations. In addition, adolescents' mental health is still considered trivial by some of their parents. Self-control is considered a mechanism that can help regulate and direct adolescent behavior. Self-control is essential for individuals before committing to an action, especially for teenagers. Self-control must begin with support from both outside and within. However, some adolescents do not receive adequate support from both parents to develop good self-control (Natasha, 2022). Self-control is the capacity of individuals to guide their behavior constructively by adhering to standards such as morality, values, and social norms. One of the first steps individuals can take to improve self-control is to increase self-confidence. Low self-confidence is also influenced by a lack of parental involvement in educating adolescents. Confidence influences the potential of adolescents. Low confidence can hinder the potential of superior self-worth in adolescents. Self-confidence also affects adolescents' social life, helping them form a strong, healthy, and capable figure that makes wise choices and is not easily influenced by others (Erya'nti, 2020). Therefore, efforts to overcome this phenomenon require collaboration between the government, communities, and non-governmental organizations. Programs that strengthen fathers' roles in the family, such as parenting education and financial assistance, need to be expanded to reduce the negative impact of a father's absence. Adolescents are in a phase where they should have the maturity to complete developmental tasks and prepare to enter adulthood. Given the importance of a father's role in a teenager's development, as explained by researchers. This prompted researchers to conduct a study on "The Relationship between Mental Health, Self-Confidence and Self-Control with Fatherless in Grade IX Students of SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus."

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a literature review and hypothesis development. Section 3 presents the research method and design. Section 4 provides a discussion. Section 5 is Concluding Remarks and Recommendations.



## 2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

### 2.1 Understanding Students

Junior High School (SMP) students are in the early adolescent stage, typically ages 12 to 15. At this stage, students experience various changes both physically, cognitively, and socially-emotionally. They have completed their basic education and are preparing to continue their education at a higher level, namely Senior High School (SMA) or equivalent. According to Sartika (2022) in the Journal of Social Studies Education and Learning, junior high school students are in a transitional period from childhood to adolescence, psychologically characterized by the onset of abstract thinking and social skills, and emotionally by instability. Therefore, the learning process provided needs to be adjusted to their age and developmental characteristics. Rahmawati & Hasan (2021), in the journal Laplace: Journal of Mathematics Education, stated that junior high school students have diverse thinking skills, ranging from the concrete operational stage to the formal operational stage according to Piaget's theory. This means they are starting to understand abstract concepts but still need guidance and a contextual, interactive learning approach. Meanwhile, according to Putra (2020) in the Journal of Psychology and Education, junior high school students are in a critical phase of cognitive development, during which they begin to develop critical, logical, and systematic thinking skills. Nevertheless, labile emotional characteristics and strong social and environmental influences make them a group that needs special attention in pedagogical approaches.

### 2.2 Fatherless

A fatherless child has a father but is not fully present in the child's development. The role of fathers makes the debate about the importance of building a household. The form of the household affects family relationships, in which family members support each other to build and strengthen the family's role. In social and psychological research, fatherlessness refers to the absence of a father figure in a child's life, both physically and psychologically. Fatherless refers to a situation where there is a lack of regular communication for a week or more due to the absence of the father's role in the family (East, L., Jackson, D., & O'Brien, L, 2016) According to Bradley, the physical, emotional, and spiritual absence of a father in his children's lives is called fatherlessness. A child who has a father figure in his life will feel that he understands his thoughts and feelings, can interact with him in various ways, and can ask for his help and guidance. If the child does not show the symptoms mentioned above, he can be considered fatherless (Wibiharto, B. M. Y., Setiadi, R., & Widyaningsih, Y., 2021).

### 2.3 Mental Health

Mental health is a condition in which a person cannot feel guilt about himself, accept the lack of guilt about himself, accept the shortcomings that exist in him or his strengths, and have the ability to face his life problems and have the happiness that exists in him (Erfianto, 2021). Mental health in adolescents is the psychological, emotional, and social well-being that allows them to function optimally in their daily lives. There are many definitions of mental health and psychological science. The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) defines adolescent mental health as a condition in which an adolescent can cope with stress, interact healthily with others, learn well, and cope with the changes and challenges that occur during adolescence (Wedanthi, 2022). Covers important aspects such



as adolescents' ability to cope with challenges that arise during adolescence, manage stress, and grow and develop positively in their psychological, emotional, and social aspects (Utama, 2022; Gunawan et al., 2022).

### 3. Research Method

This study uses an analytical observational research design with a cross-sectional approach to analyze the relationships among mental health, self-confidence, self-control, and fatherless conditions among grade IX students at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus. The research population comprises all grade IX students for the 2024/2025 school year, totaling 212 students, with a sample of 139 students determined using Slovin's formula at a 5% margin of error. The sampling technique was carried out in proportional random sampling with a cluster sampling approach, so that each student had the same opportunity to be selected as a respondent according to the proportion of the class. Data collection techniques used structured questionnaires, including Mental Health Continuum–Short Form (MHC-SF) to measure mental health, a confidence scale based on Lauster's theory, a Self-Control Scale (SCS) for self-control, and a Father Presence Questionnaire (FPQ) to measure fatherlessness, all of which used the Likert scale. The data obtained were analyzed using univariate analysis to describe the frequency distribution and percentage of each variable, as well as bivariate analysis with the Chi-Square test at a confidence level of 95% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) to determine the relationship between variables, which was strengthened by the calculation of the Odds Ratio (OR) to see the strength of the relationship that occurred.

### 4. Results and Discussion

#### 4.1 Analysis Results

##### 4.1.1 Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate analysis is used to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables in this study. The test used is the Chi-Square test because all variables are categorical. This analysis aims to determine whether there is a statistically significant relationship between mental health, self-confidence, and self-control, and fatherlessness among grade IX students at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus. In addition to assessing the significance of the relationship, bivariate analysis provides an overview of its direction. The results of the analysis are presented as a cross-tabulation and include p-values to determine the significance of the relationship between the variables studied.

##### 4.1.2 The Mental Health Relationship with Fatherlessness

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that most students with moderate mental health have a low rate of fatherlessness, which is as many as 56 students (64.4%), while students with high and low mental health have a smaller proportion. In the group of students with low mental health, there were 22 students (68.8%) who were in the category of low fatherless, while in the group of high mental health, there were 10 students (50.0%). Although there are variations within each category, the tabulation results generally show differences in the proportions of mental health and fatherlessness across student groups. This indicates that there is a link between mental health conditions and the level of fatherlessness experienced by respondents. The results of the Pearson Chi-Square test showed a value of 20.263 with a p-value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a significant relationship between mental health and



fatherlessness among grade IX students at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus. This value shows that the difference in proportions between groups is not due to chance but reflects a real effect. This means that the lower the level of mental health of a student, the more likely they are to experience a fatherless condition. These results reinforce the finding that the role of the father has an important contribution to the psychological well-being and emotional stability of children in adolescence.

**Table 1. The Relationship between Mental Health and Fatherlessness in Grade IX Students of SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus in 2025**

Mental Health	Fatherless				Total N	P Value	Pearson Chi-Square
	Low		Medium				
	N	%	N	%			
Low	22	%	10	31.3%	32	0.000	20.263
Medium	56	%	31	35.6%	87		
Height	10	%	10	50%	20		
Total	88	63.3%	51	36.7%	139		

Source: Data processed using SPSS Version 26

#### 4.1.3 The Relationship of Confidence with Fatherless

Based on Table 2, the cross-tabulation results show that most respondents with moderate confidence have a low level of fatherlessness, namely 51 students (64.6%). In contrast, those with high and low confidence have smaller proportions. Students with moderate and high confidence were more likely to be in the low fatherless category compared to students with low confidence. These results indicate a difference in the distribution of proportions, suggesting a relationship between self-confidence and fatherlessness among students.

The results of the Pearson Chi-Square test showed a value of 13.368 with a p-value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a significant relationship between confidence and fatherlessness among grade IX students at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus. These results show that students' confidence levels are influenced by the involvement of father figures in their lives. Students who receive less support or attention from their fathers tend to have lower self-confidence than those with strong fatherly roles. Therefore, these results underscore the importance of emotional support and a father's presence in forming positive confidence in adolescents.

**Table 2. The Relationship of Confidence with Fatherless in Grade IX Students of SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus in 2025**

Confidence	Fatherless				Total N	P Value	Pearson Chi-Square
	Low		Medium				
	N	%	N	%			
Low	19	61.3%	12	38.7%	31	0.000	13.368
Medium	51	64.6%	28	35.4%	79		
Height	18	62.1%	11	37.9%	29		
Total	88	63.3%	51	36.7%	139		

Source: Data processed using SPSS Version 26



4.1.4 Self-Control Relationship with Fatherless

Based on Table 3, the tabulation results show that most students with low self-control have a low fatherless rate, with 45 students (63.4%), while in the group with moderate self-control, 28 students (66.7%) are in the low fatherless category. Meanwhile, students with high self-control were less common, with 15 students (57.7%) in the low fatherless category. Although the difference does not appear to be large, the tabulation results indicate a tendency for variation in self-control to be related to the level of fatherlessness students experience. The results of the Pearson Chi-Square test showed a value of 8.861 with a p-value of 0.003 ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a significant relationship between self-control and fatherlessness among grade IX students at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus. These results show that students with low self-control tend to experience higher levels of fatherlessness than those with high self-control. Low self-control can arise from a lack of direction, supervision, or emotional closeness with the father figure at home. Thus, the active role of fathers in shaping children's disciplined behavior and self-control is an important factor in adolescents' psychosocial development.

**Table 3. The Relationship of Self-Control and Fatherlessness in Grade IX Students of SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus in 2025**

Self-Control	Fatherless				Total N	P Value	Pearson Chi-Square
	Low		Medium				
	N	%	N	%			
Low	45	63.4%	26	36.6%	71	0.003	8.861
Medium	28	66.7%	14	33.3%	42		
Height	15	57.7%	11	42.3%	26		
Total	88	63.3%	51	36.7%	139		

Source: Data processed using SPSS Version 26

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 The Relationship between Students' Mental Health Conditions and Fatherlessness at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus in 2025

Based on the table of research results, most students at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus are in the low fatherless category, with 88 students (63.3%), while the medium category has 51 students (36.7%). At the mental health level, students with moderate conditions are the largest group, namely 87 students (62.6%), followed by the low category with 32 students (23%), and the high category with 20 students (14.4%). This proportion indicates that the majority of students have a fairly stable mental health condition, but there are still some who show symptoms of emotional distress. Meanwhile, the number of students in the low fatherless category indicates that there are still quite a few teenagers who do not receive emotional attention or have a father figure present. Furthermore, the Pearson Chi-Square test yielded a value of 20.263 with a p-value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This means that there is a significant relationship between the level of fatherless involvement and students' mental health. The lower the level of the father's involvement, the higher the likelihood of students experiencing poor mental health conditions. These results illustrate that the role and presence of fathers have an important effect on children's psychological balance, especially in shaping emotional calm, a sense of security, and the ability to cope with environmental stress. Therefore, the results of this study confirm the importance of fathers' emotional support in maintaining adolescents' mental stability during school.



Interpretations of these results suggest that students who receive less attention and emotional support from fathers are more at risk of experiencing mental distress, stress, or anxiety. Low paternal involvement can lead to a lack of guidance and emotional closeness that adolescents need in dealing with psychosocial changes during puberty. In contrast, students who have a close relationship with their fathers generally show better emotional balance, greater self-control, and the ability to channel stress in healthy ways. This condition aligns with attachment theory, which emphasizes the importance of the father figure as a source of emotional attachment, shaping a child's sense of security and psychological resilience. Research by Wu et al. (2023) supports these findings, with the result that high paternal involvement can lower the risk of depression in children and adolescents because it provides consistent emotional support and a stable sense of presence. The research is in line with the results of this study, where students with low fatherlessness (lack of attention from fathers) tend to have low mental health conditions. Father's support has proven to be one of the protective factors against psychological disorders of children who are in the transition period to adulthood.

The results of this study are also supported by a study (Flouri & Buchanan, 2003) that states that fathers' involvement since childhood can protect individuals against the risk of maladjustment problems in adolescence. The research reinforces the findings that father figures play an important role in helping children develop emotional stability, social responsibility, and self-esteem. In the context of SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus students, the low condition of fatherlessness can be interpreted as a lack of time or attention from the father in building emotional communication with the child. Another study by Williams et al (2024) found that children who grow up without a father are twice as likely to experience anxiety disorders as children who grow up in families with active paternal roles. These results reinforce the study's conclusion that minimal paternal involvement not only affects children's social behavior but also directly impacts their mental state and psychological well-being. In the context of education, this can lead to decreased motivation to learn and increased academic stress.

Theoretically, the existence of a father figure serves as an emotional balancing act and a source of psychological support for children. A responsive father helps children develop the ability to cope with emotional stress in positive ways. The lack of a father's role makes the child more susceptible to feelings of isolation and emotional instability. Therefore, schools and families share responsibility for strengthening communication and affective relationships between fathers and children, so that adolescents' mental health can be well maintained during their development. In conclusion, this study confirms a significant relationship between fatherlessness and students' mental health at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus in 2025. The low involvement of fathers is directly proportional to increased susceptibility to psychological disorders. These results are expected to serve as a basis for schools and parents to increase emotional support, especially from father figures, to help students develop mental balance and the ability to adapt to social pressures in school and family environments.

#### 4.2.2 *The Relationship between Confidence and Fatherless Condition at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus in 2025*

Based on the data analysis in Table 4.7, the majority of students at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus fall into the low fatherless category, with 88 students (63.3%). In contrast, the medium category has 51 students (36.7%). When viewed by confidence level, students in the medium category occupy the highest position, with 79 students (56.8%), followed by the low category with 31 students (22.3%) and the high category with 29 students (20.9%). This distribution shows that most students have a fairly good level of self-confidence, although a group of students still have low self-confidence due to a lack of support



and the absence of a father figure. The results of the Pearson Chi-Square test showed a value of 13.368 with a p-value = 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates a significant relationship between the level of fatherless involvement and student confidence. The lower the father's involvement, the more likely the student is to have low self-confidence. These results illustrate that the father figure plays an important role in building confidence by providing motivation, appreciation, and examples in daily life. Thus, positive fathers' involvement can be a protective factor in helping children develop a strong, stable self-perception.

These findings suggest that students who receive less attention from their fathers tend to have low self-confidence, lack the courage to express their opinions, and doubt their abilities. The lack of positive reinforcement from the father figure can make children lose their sense of competence and feel unappreciated. Instead, intense paternal involvement can boost self-confidence through emotional validation and social support. This is in line with attachment theory, which states that a warm relationship between children and their parents, including fathers, forms the basis of emotional attachment and self-worth. Research by Hendricks et al. (2010) supports these results, showing that the absence of a father figure is associated with lower self-confidence in adolescents. The researchers explained that children who do not receive attention and guidance from their fathers are more likely to have difficulty developing a positive self-view. These results reinforce the study's findings that low fatherlessness is associated with low self-confidence, due to the absence of a figure who provides recognition and direction in the child's psychological development.

Another study by Suri et al. (2016) also shows that fathers' involvement is positively associated with children's self-esteem development. Children who have a strong emotional connection with their father show higher self-confidence compared to children who lack parental support. This research aligns with the condition of SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus students, who show that a lack of paternal attention is associated with lower self-confidence. This means that the presence of a father figure not only provides a sense of security but also plays an important role in fostering confidence in children's abilities. In addition, research by Nguyen et al. (2024) found that high paternal involvement can improve children's psychological well-being, including aspects of self-esteem and optimism in the face of social challenges. This reinforces the finding that the role of fathers is not only economic or supervisory but also in providing emotional support that builds children's confidence. Thus, the quality of the father-son relationship directly affects adolescents' positive mental development and self-confidence.

Conceptually, the father figure serves as a source of psychological reinforcement and as a role model that shapes the child's self-image. Fathers who show affection, appreciation, and trust in their children's abilities will foster a sense of competence and self-confidence. On the other hand, the father's absence or indifference can cause doubts and insecurities in the child. Therefore, schools and families need to encourage positive communication between fathers and children to strengthen adolescents' confidence at a young age. In conclusion, this study demonstrates a significant relationship between fatherlessness and student confidence at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus in 2025. Low attention and involvement by fathers are associated with suboptimal self-confidence. These results confirm the importance of fathers' involvement in building children's self-identity, courage, and confidence in the social and educational environment. The role of the family, especially the father figure, is a crucial factor in shaping children's character and psychological well-being.



#### 4.2.3 *The Relationship between Self-Control Conditions and Fatherlessness at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus in 2025*

Based on the table, the analysis showed that of the 139 students, 88 (63.3%) were in the low fatherless category, while 51 (36.7%) were in the medium fatherless category. When viewed at the level of self-control, students in the low category numbered 71 (51.1%), the medium category 42 (30.2%), and the high category 26 (18.7%). This distribution shows that most students do not yet have optimal self-control and tend to be in a low fatherless condition. This means that many students still do not receive attention or involvement from father figures in their daily lives. The results of the Pearson Chi-Square test showed a value of 8.861 with a p-value of 0.003 ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a significant relationship between student self-control and the level of fatherless involvement. The lower the father's involvement, the more likely the student is to have low self-control. This shows that the role of fathers in supervision, guidance, and instilling discipline has an important contribution to children's ability to regulate emotions, behaviors, and actions. Thus, the father figure serves as a model of self-control that helps children in adjusting to social and academic demands. The interpretation of this study's results indicates that students who lack attention, supervision, and communication from their fathers tend to have difficulty regulating emotional and behavioral impulses. The lack of guidance from the father makes the child more impulsive and less likely to consider the consequences of his actions. On the other hand, positive parental involvement can help children understand boundaries and responsibilities and manage stress more rationally. In other words, the father's presence plays an important role in instilling the value of self-control through consistent example and discipline within the family environment.

Research by Nadhifa (2024) supports these results, finding that paternal involvement is positively related to adolescent self-control. Adolescents who receive emotional support and active involvement from their fathers tend to have better self-regulation skills. This is in line with research at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus, where students with a low level of fatherlessness exhibit suboptimal self-control. Consistent paternal involvement helps children build a sense of responsibility, perseverance, and the ability to resist negative impulses. Research by Tangney et al. (2020) also indicates that self-control is influenced by parenting styles, including the support, rules, and guidance provided by the father figure. A warm and attentive parenting style can help a child develop the ability to delay gratification and manage impulses wisely. These findings show that when the father figure is absent or does not play an active role, the child loses an important model for learning to regulate his emotions and behavior.

In addition, research by Deci and Ryan (2021) found that autonomy support from parents, including fathers, can improve self-control skills through strengthening children's internal motivation. Children who feel trusted and valued by their father tend to be more able to control their behavior and make mature decisions. These results reinforce the study's findings that positive emotional relationships between fathers and children contribute to the formation of adolescent self-control. Theoretically, the father serves as a source of external control that the child gradually internalizes as internal self-control. Through supervision, counsel, and behavioral examples, fathers teach children to organize their actions and understand the consequences of their decisions. The absence of the father can cause the child to lose moral guidance and stable self-regulation mechanisms. Therefore, families need to strengthen the father's role in supporting the child's character formation and self-control. In conclusion, this study shows a significant relationship between fatherlessness and the self-control of SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus students in 2025. The low level of fathers' involvement is directly proportional to the decline in the child's ability to regulate emotions and behavior. These results confirm the importance of fathers'

involvement in the formation of children's personal discipline and responsibility. Efforts to improve the quality of father-child relationships can be an effective strategy to strengthen adolescents' self-control and psychological balance.

## 5. Concluding Remarks and Recommendation

This study concludes that there are significant relationships between mental health, self-confidence, and self-control with fatherlessness among grade IX students at SMP Negeri 4 Bae Kudus. Adolescents who experience lower paternal involvement tend to show poorer mental health conditions, lower confidence, and weaker self-control. These findings confirm that the father figure plays an important role not only in physical presence, but also in emotional support, guidance, supervision, and value formation during adolescence. In the school context, fatherlessness may contribute to emotional instability, reduced self-belief, and limited ability to regulate behavior, all of which can affect students' social and academic adjustment. Theoretically, this study strengthens the view that paternal involvement is a protective factor in adolescent psychosocial development. Practically, the findings suggest the need for stronger collaboration between families, schools, and communities to improve adolescents' psychological well-being through parenting education, counseling services, and programs that encourage fathers' active participation in child development. Future studies are recommended to explore broader populations, longitudinal designs, and additional variables such as peer support, parenting style, and socioeconomic conditions to provide a more comprehensive understanding of fatherlessness and its impact on adolescents.

## Statement of Use of Generative AI

During the preparation of this work, the author used ChatGPT to assist in improving clarity and readability of the text. The author reviewed and edited the output and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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