

## The Mediating Role of Hardiness Personality in The Relationship between Friendship Quality and Loneliness among First Year College Students

Fikrie<sup>1\*</sup>, Ceria Hermina<sup>2</sup>, Lita Ariani<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Muhammadiyah Banjarmasin, Banjarmasin, Indonesia

*\*fikrielutfiyah@gmail.com*

### ABSTRACT

This research aimed to examine the mediating effect of personality hardiness on the relationship between friendship quality and loneliness in adolescents first year students. This research used a quantitative method with cross sectional non experimental design. There were 300 (56 boys and 244 girls) subjects gathered by using incidental sampling technique. The researcher used loneliness scale, quality of friendship scale, and hardiness personality scale. PROCESS Macro model 4 Hayes were used to test mediation. The result of the study showed hardiness personality mediated the relationship between quality of friendship and loneliness in the first year students.

**Keywords:** friendship quality, hardiness personality, loneliness, mediation analysis

### Introduction

The dynamics of self-adjustment of first-year college students have their own challenge for said adolescent. The transition period changes the connection and security previously obtained in the family and the previous community will change and require readjustment in a new environment (college environment) (Benner, 2011). New academic system, starting new relationships with peers and living away from parents are some of the things that first-year students have to compromise on (Asher & Weeks, 2013; Hicks & Heastie, 2008; Smith & Wertlieb, 2011). Students, or in this case those who are in the adolescent development phase, who are able to develop themselves can help them make self-adjustments (Asher & Weeks, 2013), On the other hand, those who cannot will be lonely (Lou et al., 2012). Adolescents who experience loneliness in the first year are characterized as isolated, less connected with peers and unable to form relationships in their new community (Jonathan et al., 2012).

Loneliness is a condition where a person feels a mismatch between what they want and what they perceive both in quality and quantity in social relationships within their community (Asher & Weeks, 2013). In the context of loneliness experienced by adolescents, loneliness is not only a feeling of alienation from the community but loneliness can occur when they feel unable to try to adapt to their community (Lasgaard et al., 2011). Loneliness affects adolescents mental health (Heinrich & Gullone, 2006).

One of the factors that influence loneliness in adolescents is interpersonal relationships (Zhang et al., 2015). Specifically, Zhang et al., (2015) found that Friendship quality is one of the predictors that can affect loneliness in adolescents. Friendship quality is defined as a quality friendship relationship from someone who is considered their close friend (Olenik-Shemesh et al., 2012). Buote et al., (2007) described that the quality of friendship has a positive impact on self-

adjustment in the university environment, adolescents who have quality friendships can easily adapt to the university environment.

In addition to interpersonal relationship factors, personality factors also affect loneliness in adolescents (Uruk & Demir, 2003). In terms of its relationship with loneliness, Personality plays a role in directly influencing the formation and maintenance of social relationships by: (a) reducing one's social appeal or desirability (b) influencing his own interactional behavior, and (c) influences one's reaction to actual changes in social relationships and one's effectiveness in avoiding and reducing loneliness (Teppers et al., 2013). Hardiness is a form of personality. Hardiness is a collection of personality characteristics that function as a source of strength in the face of stressful events (Kobassa in Klag & Bradley, 2004). Someone who has a hardiness personality is a person who has confidence in achieving something desired and believes all problems are a challenge that must be faced (Ng & Lee, 2020).

This study attempts to explore the indirect effect of the personality variable hardiness on the relationship between friendship quality and loneliness in first-year students. Previous studies have explored the direct relationship between friendship quality with loneliness and personality traits with loneliness (Nayyar & Singh, 2011; Qualter et al., 2015; Wols et al., 2015). There has been no research that tried to place hardiness personality as a mediator variable. Through this research, it was hypothesized that the effect of friendship quality on loneliness in first-year students can be predicted through the mediation of hardiness personality variables.

## Method

This study uses quantitative methods with a non-experimental cross-sectional design. The population in this study were all first-year college students in Banjarmasin City. The number of subjects was 300 (male = 56, female = 244) which were taken using incidental sampling technique. The data collection instruments used were loneliness scale with Cronbach's Alpha 0,813, friendship quality scale with Cronbach's Alpha 0,868 and hardiness personality scale with Cronbach's Alpha 0,891. This study aimed to test the hypothesis of mediating effect of hardiness personality on the relation between friendship quality and loneliness in first-year students. To test this hypothesis, the study used mediation analysis using PROCESS Macro model 4 Hayes (Hayes, 2013).

## Result

Before hypothesis testing, researchers have tested all the assumptions underlying the correlation and mediation effect tests, namely normality, linearity and multicollinearity tests. All data has met these assumption tests. After that, the correlation and mediation effects were tested. Correlation between variables is done to determine the relationship between the variables of loneliness, hardiness personality and friendship quality. The following are the results of testing the correlation between variables (table 1).

**Table 1.**  
Descriptive Statistics of Correlation between Predictor Variables

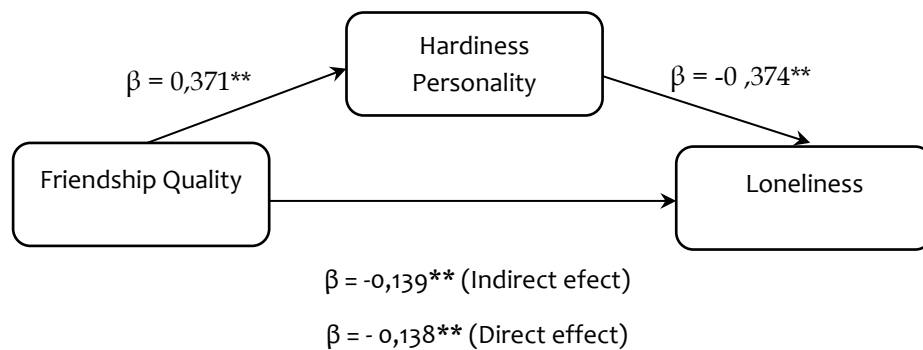
	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Loneliness	35.91	7.539	1	-.598**	-.451**
2. Hardiness Personality	87.59	9.991		1	.456**
3. Friendship Quality	114.84	12.285			1

Based on table 1, It can be concluded that all variables have a significant correlation. Hardiness personality is negatively correlated with loneliness ( $r=-0.598$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), friendship quality is negatively correlated with loneliness ( $r=-0.451$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) and friendship quality is positively correlated with hardiness personality ( $r=0.456$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

Next, the mediating effect of hardiness personality was tested on the relationship between friendship quality and loneliness in first-year students. The results of testing the mediation effect using PROCESS Macro model 4 Hayes in Figure 1 and Table 2 are as follows.

**Picture 1.**

Mediation model test results



**Table 2.**

Mediation test results

Relationship	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		Conclusion
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Friendship Quality -> Hardiness -> Loneliness	-0,277	-0,138	-0,139	-0,182	-0,099	Partial Mediation

Based on Figure 1 and Table 1, it can be concluded that hardiness personality significantly mediated the relationship between friendship quality and loneliness. The type of mediation was partial mediation, this was because both the direct effect and the indirect effect had a significant. In the direct effect, loneliness can be significantly predicted simultan by friendship quality and hardiness personality ( $\beta=-0.138$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) and in the indirect effect model, the relationship between friendship quality and loneliness was significantly mediated by hardiness personality ( $\beta=-0.139$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Based on these results, it can be concluded that friendship quality can affect loneliness in first-year students through the presence of hardiness personality.

## Discussion

The results showed that the quality of friendship affects loneliness in first year college student through mediation of hardiness personality. This means that the quality of friendship is one of the factors that shape the hardiness personality in adolescents, which in turn can reduce the potential to experience loneliness. The quality of friendship does not have a direct impact on loneliness in adolescents, because the quality of friendship owned by adolescents does not directly reduce their potential for loneliness, however, the quality of friendship owned by adolescents can form a hardiness personality in themselves which in turn will affect whether adolescents have the potential to experience loneliness or not.

Ali (Sari & Hidayati, 2015) explained that the family environment is a significant external factor affecting loneliness due to turmoil and conflict when interacting with parents. Conflicts and pressures experienced by a person in a family environment will affect adjustments in their social environment. When a person has difficulty establishing social relationships with others, it will easily

lead to feelings of loneliness. Teenagers will often be lonely when they feel rejected, alienated and unable to fulfill their role in the environment. According to Rice and Dolgin (2005) the loneliness felt by adolescents was due to their inability to form new relationships of intimacy in their interpersonal relationships.

Baron and Byrne (2004) described that adolescents feel lonely because they have a strong need for intimacy but do not yet have good social skills or relationship maturity to fulfill this need. They felt isolated and believed that they had no one who could provide intimacy. Adolescents feel uncomfortable in certain situations and lose confidence in their abilities. This hinders adolescent development and leads to social isolation, which makes it easier to feel lonely. Adolescents often describe their loneliness as emptiness, boredom, and alienation. Adolescents who have low self-esteem will easily experience loneliness, because they always compare themselves with other people who seem smarter, more charming and more attractive. Adolescents feel they have many shortcomings and conclude that they are worthless or unlovable (Hurlock, 2011).

Teenagers can deal with loneliness in their teenage years when they have a resilient personality or hardiness. By having a hardiness personality, adolescents will be able to adjust wherever they are so that they will be able to build relationships with peers. Adolescents with hardiness are committed and will be actively involved with various activities in their new environment related to interpersonal relationships, especially peers. They will be able to control external events and will not be easily affected by bad events (Clarabella et al., 2015). During adolescent development, friendship is a form of feeling accepted, valued, emotional closeness and social support. Santrock (2012) explains that interaction with peers makes adolescents learn about reciprocal relationships, recognize others and themselves, and understand the interests and views of peers, making it easier for adolescents to adjust to the activities of their peers and will not easily feel lonely. Hurlock (2011) added that adolescents can establish relationships with peers by sharing feelings of commonality which makes the formation of a relationship of mutual understanding and sympathy which will have a positive effect on the teenager.

Heinrich and Gullone (2006) explained hardiness as a personality dimension that develops early in life and is quite stable over time. Kobasa (Fikrie et al., 2021) defines hardiness as a collection of personality characteristics that function as a source of strength in the face of stressful events. A person who has the personality trait of hardiness is able to change his social perception into a good coping strategy, so that when someone gets pressure that has the potential to cause loneliness, he will be able to change his assessment of the pressure into something that does not threaten him and will be confident in overcoming the pressure (Hasel et al., 2011).

The results of this study indicate that hardiness partially mediates the relationship between friendship quality and loneliness in first-year students. This finding was in line with research conducted by Ng & Lee (2020), which placed hardiness personality as a mediator in the relationship between perceptions of loneliness and symptoms of depression. This finding has implications for future researchers to conduct other research variations by placing hardiness personality as a mediator variable. The limitation of this study is both effect, direct and indirect effect, have beta coefficients that are not much different (Direct Effect = - 0,138; Indirect Effect = - 0,139). Future studies are expected to explore other personality variable beside hardiness.

## Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that hardiness partially mediates the relationship between friendship quality and loneliness in first-year students. , it can be concluded that friendship quality can affect loneliness in first-year students through the presence of hardiness personality.

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